

THE CRIC PAPERS

A New Canada: An Identity Shaped by Diversity

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Preface

This CRIC paper looks at a country in transformation, a Canada where many values and attitudes prevalent 40 years ago have been replaced with a fresh outlook. At the beginning of the 1960s, a majority thought Canada should keep in place the restrictive immigration policy that kept non-whites out of the country.¹ Today, such a view would be resolutely rejected, as most Canadians, and an overwhelmingly large majority of younger Canadians, not only accept the country's diversity, they celebrate it. In fact, Canada stands out from other western countries in terms of the extent of its comfort with cultural pluralism. On the whole, the picture that emerges is of a country whose citizens are confident, at ease with one another, and comfortable with the pace of change.

In this paper, Andrew Parkin and Matthew Mendelsohn look at the contemporary national mindset in light of the extensive data from the CRIC-*Globe and Mail* survey on the new Canada. The survey, prepared under their direction, informed much of the newspaper's major series, *The New Canada*, which was published in June 2003.

Although many of the findings were featured in *The Globe and Mail*, there is a significant amount of survey information that is being analyzed by the authors for the first time.

METHODOLOGY

CRIC, *The Globe and Mail*, and the Canadian Opinion Research Archive designed the survey. It was carried out between April 21 and May 4, 2003 by Ipsos-Reid. A representative sample of 2,000 randomly selected Canadians was interviewed by telephone. A survey of this size has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.2 percent, 19 times out of 20. The survey sample included 1,000 respondents between the ages of 18 and 30, and 1,000 respondents 31 years and older.

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The authors would like to thank Erin Anderssen and Michael Valpy of *The Globe and Mail*, the lead journalists involved in the new Canada study. They participated in the design of the survey, contributed to the interpretation the results, and brought the data to life in their accounts of the lived experiences of Canadians. We would also like to thank Ed Greenspon, Editor-in-chief of *The Globe and Mail*, who conceived of the project, brought all the participants together, and shaped its outcome. Finally, we would like to thank all the journalists who worked on the series and participated in the unique collaborative exercise that was the new Canada project.

¹ Gallup polls, cited in: Nancy Tienhaara, *Canadian Views on Immigration and Population: An Analysis of Post-War Gallup Polls* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1974).

Introduction

At a meeting in Toronto earlier this year, Ed Greenspon, Editor-in-chief of *The Globe and Mail*, provided a set of questions that he wanted the series on the new Canada to answer: Who are we, as Canadians? How have we changed? How do we differ from others? And what differences exist among us? A public opinion survey conducted by CRIC and the newspaper in late April and early May sought to answer these questions. It polled Canadians on such public policy issues as the environment, poverty, and day care.

“The 3.9-million Canadians today in their 20s defy a label. They are the most fiercely educated generation ever produced by this country, yet evidence suggests that what drives them is not corporate success or material gain, so much as the goal of a balanced life. They are skipping election day in alarming numbers and lack faith in Ottawa, but they still expect a common fix for social problems and a state that will pay for day care, social housing, and nursing homes. They have abandoned religion, but place a premium on finding a spouse who shares their moral values. They see still big-picture racism, but not the color of a person’s skin. The women brace for a glass ceiling the men no longer notice. And for all their worshipping of American Idols, they think and live – more distinctly than ever – like Canadians. There is one label they do carry: they are the most deeply tolerant generation of adults produced in a nation known for tolerance. They were babies when the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was signed in the rain on the lawn before the Peace Tower, and now, as adults, they rank that piece of paper far higher than their parents do as a source of pride in their country. They live, as one young woman observed, what their parents had to learn. They are the latest draft of a work in progress, a reflection of the Canada their parents began constructing half a century ago.”

Erin Anderssen and Michael Valpy
“Face the Nation: Canada remade”
The Globe and Mail, June 7, 2003

It asked them about their expectations regarding their jobs and quality of life, the levels of stress in their lives and the challenges they face in balancing responsibilities inside and outside the home. As the questionnaire took shape, however, one theme came to dominate: attitudes towards the country’s growing and remarkable level of ethnic diversity. In the end,

one of the survey’s most important outcomes was to shed more light on how Canadians are responding to the deepening of their country’s multiculturalism.

The growing diversity of Canadians has been well documented.² The proportion of the population made up of immigrants, which stood at 18% in 2001, is significantly higher than that of other comparable countries, with the exception of Australia. More importantly, since the repeal in the early 1960s of regulations that impeded the immigration of those from non-Western countries, the number of Canadians with Asian, Caribbean, Latin American, and African ethnic origins has increased dramatically. In 2001, 13.4% of the country’s population was classified by the census as being members of a visible minority, up significantly from 4.7% twenty years earlier. Ethnic diversity is especially apparent in Canada’s major cities. In 2001, almost two out of five residents of the Toronto and Vancouver metropolitan areas were visible minorities.

How have Canadians responded to these changes? Canadians like to think of themselves as welcoming new arrivals from all corners of the earth, and opposing all forms of discrimination. The new Canada survey set out to discover if this self-image is justified. Are we really as tolerant as we think we are? How deep does our acceptance of diversity run? Are we becoming more or less accepting of difference over time?

Has the increasing ethnic diversity of Canada’s population produced serious divisions of opinion within the country that could manifest themselves as tensions or conflict between ethnic groups in the future? Are there new fault-lines emerging beneath society’s apparently smooth surface?

The survey produced a rich collection of data that allow us to answer these questions with a respectable degree of certainty.

² See: “A Changing People: Being Canadian in a New Century,” CRIC Paper No. 9 (Montreal, Centre for Research and Information on Canada, 2003).

PART 1: Diversity

ATTITUDES TOWARD DIVERSITY

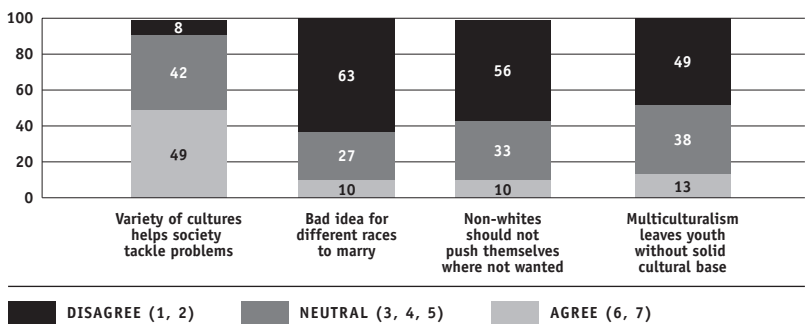
Acceptance of diversity is the norm in the new Canada. Many of the controversies that marked the old Canada are fading as the post-Charter generation increasingly makes its influence felt. While most Canadians consider their ethnic background as an important part of their identity, relatively few – and very few under the age of 30 – think that a person’s ethnic background is an important factor to consider when choosing with whom to socialize, or even to marry.

Specifically, the fact that Canadians, and particularly younger Canadians, are very comfortable with diversity is manifested in the very low levels of opposition to the multi-ethnic character of Canadian society, and the degree of openness to including people from different ethnic backgrounds in their communities and, indeed, in their immediate families.

- Only 13% agree that “Canadian children growing up surrounded by people of different ethnic and cultural groups will be left without a solid cultural base.”
- Only 10% agree that “non-whites living here should not push themselves where they are not wanted.”
- Only 10% agree that “it is a bad idea for people of different races to marry one another.”
- Fifty-four percent say that multiculturalism makes them feel very proud to be Canadian, and only 8% say it does not make them proud at all (37% give a neutral response.)
- Eighty-eight percent say they would be comfortable, and only 11% would be uncomfortable, if a close relative, such as a sister or daughter, were to marry a person who was black. Similarly, 89% are comfortable, and 11% uncomfortable, with the idea of a close relative marrying an Asian Canadian.
- Canadians are less comfortable with a close relative marrying someone who is Muslim, but even here, a large majority (67%) express comfort, while only 31% say they would be uncomfortable.
- Eighty-three percent say they feel comfortable when they hear languages other than English or French being spoken on the street in Canada. Eighty-two percent of Anglophones hold this view, as do 84% of Francophones.

FIGURE 1 | ATTITUDES TO DIVERSITY

I'd now like to read you some more statements about life in Canada today. Please tell me how you feel about each statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where “1” means you totally disagree and “7” means you totally agree. a) A society that has a variety of ethnic and cultural groups is more able to tackle new problems as they occur; b) It is a bad idea for people of different races to marry one another; c) Non-whites living here should not push themselves where they are not wanted; d) Canadian children growing up surrounded by people of different ethnic and cultural groups will be left without a solid cultural base.



In each of these cases, younger Canadians (those between the ages of 18-30) were more likely than their older counterparts to give responses supportive of ethnic diversity. Thus 66% of Canadians in this age group say that multiculturalism makes them very proud to be Canadian, while only 4% say it makes them not at all proud. For those between 18 and 30, the level of comfort with a family member marrying someone who is black reaches 93%. Over 98% of those in this age group are comfortable with having a teacher or a boss who is black. Eighty-one percent are comfortable with a close relative marrying someone who is Muslim.

PART 1: Diversity

The extent to which younger Canadians are especially at ease with diversity is also evident in responses to a series of questions about the factors spouses should have in common. All Canadians were virtually unanimous in saying that it is important that spouses have similar attitudes towards family and children, similar moral values, and similar senses of humour. Factors related to religion, ethnicity, economic or class background, and education were deemed much less important (see Figure 2). But the level of importance attached to these four factors declines with respondents' age (see Figure 3).

THE BROAD BASE OF SUPPORT

It is also remarkable that the views of those who identify themselves as belonging to a visible minority by virtue of race or colour are very similar to the views of those who do not (see Table 1). Non-minorities are just as likely as visible minorities to reject the notion that interracial marriage is a bad idea, and are just as comfortable as visible minorities with a black person marrying into their family.

These findings support the argument that multiculturalism's appeal is not limited to minority groups or to recent immigrants to the country. While visible minorities and immigrants are more likely to say that multiculturalism makes them very proud to be Canadian, majorities of those who do not identify as visible minorities, and of non-immigrants, hold the same view. Very few of those in these latter groups say that multiculturalism makes them not at all proud to be Canadian (see Table 2).

There is little significant difference in the views of urban and rural Canadians, although ethnic diversity is usually less pronounced in rural areas. While 57% of respondents in the country's major cities say that multiculturalism makes them very proud to be Canadian, 52% of rural respondents feel the same way.³ Similarly, the number of rural Canadians who say that ethnic background is an important factor in choosing a spouse, at 32%, is only slightly higher than the 25% of big city residents who hold this view. On this last question, there is virtually no difference between the responses of rural and urban Canadians aged 18 to 30.

Overall, then, while responses vary slightly from group to group, the survey shows that most Canadians, whether immigrants or Canadian-born, visible minorities or not, urban or rural, share an accepting attitude towards the country's ethnic diversity.

The importance of this finding becomes clear in the context of a recent report on immigration policy. Author Martin Collacott pointed to the absence of research on how Canadians have reacted to the social changes resulting from immigration. He writes:

FIGURE 2 IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN CHOOSING A SPOUSE
FIGURE SHOWS % SAYING IT IS "VERY IMPORTANT" OR "IMPORTANT"

When choosing a spouse, is it very important, important, not very important or not at all important that both people share similar...

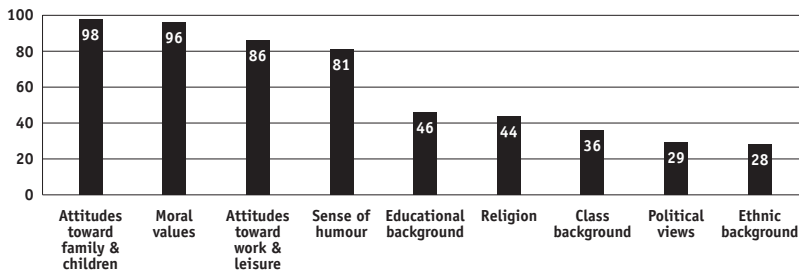
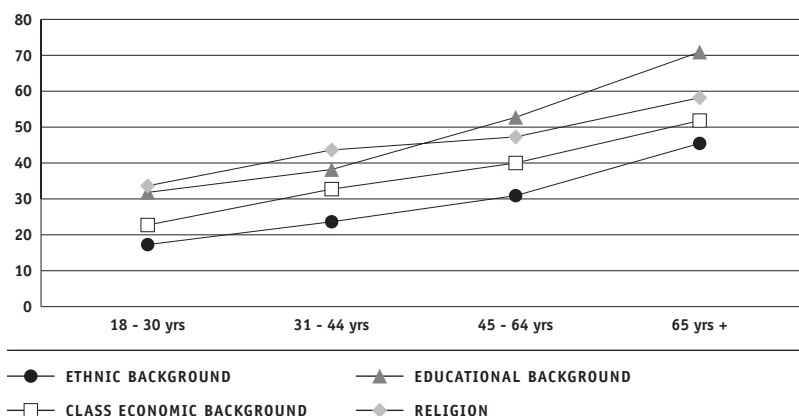


FIGURE 3 IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN CHOOSING A SPOUSE
BY AGE GROUP
FIGURE SHOWS % SAYING "VERY IMPORTANT" OR "IMPORTANT"

When choosing a spouse, is it very important, important, not very important or not at all important that both people share similar...



³ The major cities are Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

“While a good deal of research has been carried out on the economic and social problems experienced by newcomers themselves, relatively little has been done on the extent to which their arrival may be giving rise to problems and even a negative reaction on the part of the receiving community...

...the need for better data on attitudes towards immigrants is pressing...[H]owever, the government has shown little inclination to date to take a detailed and comprehensive look at how Canadians view current levels of immigration, particularly in the areas of greatest concentration—Toronto and Vancouver.”⁴

In the absence of the type of research he mentions, Collacott hints that there is a potential for Canadians – especially those in urban centres – to react negatively to the high number of immigrants from different cultures who have arrived in recent years. The *CRIC-Globe and Mail* study is, therefore, crucial in two respects: it begins to fill the research gap identified by Collacott; and it calls into question Collacott’s suggestion that Canada’s immigration policy may cause increased social tension among those of different ethnicities. The survey finds no evidence of an anti-immigrant backlash, either generally, or among non-immigrant and non-minority residents of Canada’s large cities. In the context of growing diversity, relationships between Canadians of different backgrounds are getting better every year, not worse.

SOME INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

This conclusion is reinforced by recent survey findings from other countries. By way of comparison, interracial marriage is opposed by 30% of non-black Americans – a figure three times as high as that for Canada.⁵ In Canada, 12% think that relations between different ethnic and racial groups are a very big problem, compared with 30% to 50% who feel this way in the US, the UK, France, and Italy. Similarly, only 18% of Canadians say that immigrants have a bad

influence on their country, compared with 43% of Americans, and 50% of those in the UK. The number of young people (aged 18 to 29) who hold this view is twice as high in the US as in Canada, and three times as high in the UK.⁶

TABLE 1 SUPPORT FOR CULTURAL PLURALISM

	Percent who agree that “it is a bad idea for people of different races to marry one another.”	Percent who would be uncomfortable if “a close relative, like your sister or daughter, was going to marry someone who is black.”
Respondents Who Identify as Visible Minority	9	12
Respondents Who Do Not Identify as Visible Minority	10	11

TABLE 2 PRIDE IN MULTICULTURALISM

I will read you a list of things and events that some people say make them proud to be Canadian. I would like you to tell me whether each of these makes you feel proud to be a Canadian. Please use a scale of 0-10, where 0 means it does not make you feel proud at all, and 10 means it makes you feel very proud. You can use any number between 0 and 10. How about multiculturalism?

	Very proud (8, 9, 10)	Neutral (3 to 7)	Not At All Proud (0, 1, 2)
All Respondents	54%	37%	8%
Identify as Visible Minority	58%	34%	9%
Do Not Identify as Visible Minority	54%	38%	8%
Immigrants (Born Outside of Canada)	65%	29%	6%
Born in Canada, At Least One Parent Born Outside Canada	58%	30%	11%
Born in Canada, Both Parents Born in Canada	51%	41%	8%

⁴ Martin Collacott, “Canada’s Immigration Policy: The Need for Major Reform,” *Public Policy Sources* No. 64 (February 2003), pp. 28-29. Available online at: <http://www.fraserinstitute.ca/admin/books/files/immigration-2ndEdition.pdf>.

⁵ Source: NORC and Roper Center, 2000.

⁶ Source: 2002 Global Attitudes Survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Available online at: <http://people-press.org/>.

PART 2: Discrimination

RACISM AND PREJUDICE

To say that Canadians, by and large, are comfortable with diversity is not to suggest that problems of discrimination and racism have been left behind. In fact, Canadians recognize that such problems remain to be overcome.

- Seventy-four percent of respondents say that there is still a lot of racism left in Canada, compared with 24% who say that there isn't much racism left in Canada.
- There is no difference on this question between the views of those who identify themselves as members of a visible minority, and those who do not.
- Women (80%) are more likely than men (68%) to say that there is a lot of racism left in Canada.

Despite the high level of agreement with this statement, however, only a minority believe that ethnic prejudice is a factor that holds many people back in the workplace or at school. Specifically:

- Thirty-two percent say that “many people are judged at work and school on the basis of their ethnic background, with some having a harder time due to prejudice.”
- By contrast, 65% say that “at work or at school in Canada, just about everyone succeeds or fails on the basis of how well they do their work.”
- Visible minorities are more likely to say that prejudice is a factor for many people at work or school: 42% hold this view, compared with 30% of those not identifying themselves as visible minorities. However, even among visible minorities, a small majority (52%) believe that people are judged more by the quality of their work than by their ethnic background. Young visible minorities (aged 18 to 30) are slightly more likely (57%) than those over the age of 30 (50%) to say that the quality of one's work is the more important factor.
- Similarly, while immigrants are more likely than non-immigrants to say that some have a harder time due to prejudice, a majority of immigrants (59%) say that just about everyone succeeds or fails on the basis of how well they do their work. Younger immigrants are more likely than older immigrants to say that the quality of one's work is the more important factor.
- Interestingly, the view that just about everyone succeeds or fails on the basis of how well they do their work, as opposed to some having a harder time due to prejudice, is held by a majority (62%) of those who say there is still a lot of racism left in Canada.
- Women (38%) are more likely than men (25%) to say that many people are judged on the basis of their ethnic background.
- Younger women (between the ages of 18 and 30) are even more likely (41%) to hold this view; only 26% of young men concur.

TABLE 3 FACTORS AFFECTING SUCCESS

Which statement more closely reflects your own view: (a) At work or at school in Canada, just about everyone succeeds or fails on the basis of how well they do their work; or (b) Many people are judged at work and school on the basis of their ethnic background, with some having a harder time due to prejudice?

	Just about everyone succeeds or fails on the basis of how well they do their work	Some have a harder time due to prejudice
All Respondents	65%	32%
Identify as Visible Minority	52%	42%
Do Not Identify as Visible Minority	67%	30%
Immigrants (Born Outside of Canada)	59%	37%
Non-Immigrants	66%	31%
Men	72%	25%
Women	59%	38%
Women Who Identify as Visible Minority	47%	48%
Men Who Identify as Visible Minority	56%	38%

- Among women who identify themselves as visible minorities, the number saying that many people are judged on the basis of their ethnic background reaches 48%. This is the only group more likely to say that prejudice is a factor than to say that most people are judged on the basis of how well they do their work (see Table 3).

- Seventeen percent of respondents, who are not members of a visible minority, say that the visible minority candidate would be favoured in a hiring competition. However, in Quebec, only 2% of non-minority respondents hold this view, compared to 22% in the rest of the country (see Figure 5).

Overall, a majority of those from different backgrounds – with the notable exception of women who identify as a member of a visible minority – are more likely to say that Canadians are judged on the basis of their work rather than their ethnic background. At the same time, the number saying that some people are held back due to prejudice is higher among visible minorities and women.

FAIRNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Somewhat similar results appear when respondents are asked more detailed questions about hiring and promotion in the workplace. One question read as follows:

If two equally qualified people applied for a job, one white and one a visible minority, who do you think would be more likely to get it? The white person, the visible minority person, or would both have an equal chance?

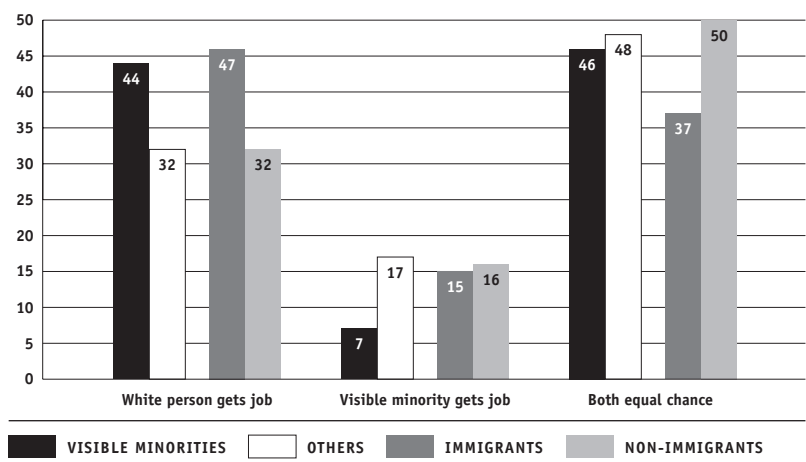
A second version of the question asked about two candidates being considered for a promotion at their workplace, rather than applying for a job.

Overall, about one in two Canadians think that both candidates would have an equal chance, about one in three think the white person would be favoured, and the remaining 15% think the visible minority person would be favoured. There are, however, some important additional observations:

- Forty-four percent of visible minorities think the white person would be favoured in a hiring competition, compared with 32% of other respondents (see Figure 4).
- Forty-seven percent of immigrants hold the same view, compared with 32% of non-immigrants. The number of immigrants who think the white person would be favoured is much higher than those who think both candidates would be treated equally (37%).

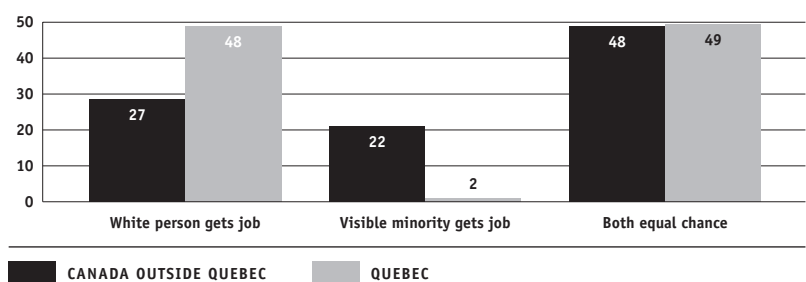
FIGURE 4 | FAIRNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

If two equally qualified people applied for a job, **one white and one a visible minority**, who do you think would be more likely to get it? The white person, the visible minority person, or would both have an equal chance?



**FIGURE 5 | REVERSE DISCRIMINATION?
RESPONSES OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT VISIBLE MINORITIES ONLY**

If two equally qualified people applied for a job, **one white and one a visible minority**, who do you think would be more likely to get it? The white person, the visible minority person, or would both have an equal chance?



PART 2: Discrimination

This last finding suggests that criticisms about the alleged practice of “reverse discrimination” – whereby qualified white candidates are shut out of job competitions in favour of a visible minority candidates – have had much more impact outside Quebec than inside that province. It is in Ontario, where affirmative action emerged as a heated election issue in 1995, that the number of non-visible minority respondents saying that the visible minority candidate would be favoured is highest (25%).

- Finally, it is notable in this context that visible minorities are more likely to agree that “government should refuse to give contracts to companies that do not have a fair proportion of ethnic and racial minorities” than are those who do not identify as visible minorities. The figures are 35% and 23% respectively. Thirty-nine percent of women who identify as members of a visible minority agree with this statement. What is perhaps most striking, however, is that only a minority of both visible minorities and other respondents agree.

THE POLICE

A final question on discrimination dealt with the treatment of minorities by the police. This is a controversial subject. Allegations of police racism have followed revelations about the treatment of Aboriginal peoples by police forces in such cities as Vancouver, Saskatoon and Winnipeg. In Toronto, media reports alleging police racism have been supported by many in the black community, but rejected by the police force.

The survey asked respondents in western Canada whether or not they agreed that “these days police in most cities treat Aboriginals as fairly as they treat whites.” Respondents in central and eastern Canada were asked the same question about the treatment of blacks, compared with whites. Overall, 51% agree that there is fair treatment, while 41% disagree (the remaining 8% are undecided). Further analysis, however, reveals some important differences of perception among different groups:

- A majority (53%) of visible minority respondents say that blacks or Aboriginals are treated unfairly by police, compared with 40% of other respondents.
- The number saying that treatment is not fair is even higher among visible minorities between the ages of 18 and 30. The figure is 61%, compared with 39% of other 18 to 30 year olds.

On this question, therefore, there is a clear a difference of opinion, with a majority of visible minorities on one side, and a majority of other respondents on the other.

To recap, in Part 1 we noted that a majority of all Canadians are comfortable with diversity. In Part 2 we have seen that a majority of both those who identify as visible minorities, and those who do not, agreed that success or failure at work or school is more a function of performance than of prejudice, although a greater proportion of visible minorities hold the opposing view. In terms of hiring, while many believe that equality is the rule, a significant number among visible minorities and immigrants are more likely to say that white people are favoured over minority candidates. A noticeable minority of non-minority respondents outside Quebec imagine a “reverse discrimination” scenario that gives the advantage to visible minorities. Finally, views differ on whether minorities are treated fairly by the police.

These findings serve to temper the “good news” findings on diversity in Part 1. However, it is not clear that they constitute grounds for concluding that there is a significant fault-line in Canadian society on the issue of the pervasiveness of discrimination. While visible minorities and immigrants are more likely to say that discrimination exists, their views are not consistently separated by a wide margin from those of other Canadians, and a majority from all backgrounds often hold the same view. At the very least, we can conclude that different groups do have different views on ethnic discrimination and racism. This suggests that in the new Canada, support for the principle of equality is not perfectly matched by the experience of equality in practice. Over time, if the sense that many opportunities are closed to visible minorities or new immigrants persists, it surely will become a source of tension in the new Canada.

GENDER

Some perspective can be added by considering the differences in the opinions of men and women. Earlier, we saw that women were more likely than men to say that there is still a lot of racism in Canada, and that many people are judged at work and school on the basis of their ethnic background.

Even more striking, however, are the answers to a question about the chances of equally qualified men and women, in terms of hiring and promotion at work. In the case of promotions:

- Forty-four percent of women say a male candidate is more likely to be successful, compared with 29% of men.
- Forty-eight percent of women say that a male and female candidate would have an equal chance, while 61% of men think this is the case.
- The gender gap is even larger among women and men age 18 to 30. Forty-six percent of young women think the man would get the promotion, compared with 25% of young men – a gap of 21 points. Forty-nine percent of young women think both candidates would have an equal chance, compared with 65% of men – a gap of 16 points.

What is especially interesting is that the gender gap on this question is as large, and in some cases even larger, than the gap between the views of visible minorities and others on treatment of white and visible minority job candidates (see Table 4).

This very important finding should be viewed alongside previous reports on the different opinions of men and women on social policy issues⁷, and additional findings on identity to be presented below. As mentioned at the outset, one objective of the CRIC-*Globe and Mail* study was to uncover any fault-lines underneath the surface of the new Canada.

It found that the fault-line between men and women is at least as significant as that between different ethnic or racial groups. This does not minimize the importance of the different perspectives on the question of ethnic discrimination documented above. It does suggest that the emerging new Canada contains within it many elements of the old Canada, notably contrasting perspectives between men and women about the state of equality between the sexes.

TABLE 4 | FAIRNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

	If two equally qualified people are being considered for a promotion at their workplace, one man and one woman, who do you think would get it? The man, the woman, or would they both have an equal chance?		If two equally qualified people applied for a job, one white and one a visible minority, who do you think would be more likely to get it? The white person, the visible minority person, or would both have an equal chance?		
	Female Respondents	Male Respondents		Respondents who identify as visible minority	Respondents who do not identify as visible minority
Man would get promotion	44%	29%	White person would get hired	44%	32%
Woman would get promotion	5%	8%	Visible minority person would get hired	7%	17%
Equal chance	48%	61%	Equal chance	47%	48%

AGE 18-30

	Female Respondents	Male Respondents		Respondents who identify as visible minority	Respondents who do not identify as visible minority
Man would get promotion	46%	25%	White person would get hired	47%	27%
Woman would get promotion	4%	8%	Visible minority person would get hired	9%	17%
Equal chance	49%	65%	Equal chance	42%	55%

⁷ See "Portraits of Canada, 2002," CRIC Paper No. 8 (Montreal, Centre for Research and Information on Canada, 2002).

PART 3: Identity

We can gain further insight by exploring findings related both to personal identity, and national identity.

“Canada, quite simply, is not a country in search of an identity, contrary to the polemics of poets, pundits and professors. It’s not a country continually on the verge of something but never quite there. Canadians are not a people who have nothing in common except their diversity.”

Erin Anderssen and Michael Valpy
“The Wrap-Up”
The Globe and Mail, July 1, 2003

NATIONAL IDENTITY

The survey addressed national or Canadian identity by asking respondents whether or not a given item made them proud to be Canadian.⁸ One significant finding was that most Canadians celebrate diversity as part of their national identity.

The vastness and beauty of the land tops the list of what makes people very proud to be Canadian. This is followed by the country’s traditionally high ranking on the United Nation’s index of development, which indicates that Canada is one of the best countries in the world in which to live. Coming up closely behind these factors are a number of items related to multiculturalism, tolerance, rights and freedoms, and the country’s contribution to resolving conflicts abroad (see Table 5). For instance, 71% say “the fact that

“In a Canadian generation marked by values of tolerance of diversity, social justice and adaptability to a complex world, young women are in the vanguard.”

Michael Valpy
“Dinner Dance”
The Globe and Mail, June 21, 2003

people from different cultural groups in Canada get along and live in peace” makes them very proud to be Canadian. In the case of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the figure is 62%, and, in the case of multiculturalism, 54%. By the same token, it is equally important to note the very small number of those who say these items do not make them proud to be Canadian. Those Canadians who are not strongly supportive tend to take a neutral view, rather than expressing opposition. What this suggests is that there is little polarization within Canadian society on these subjects.⁹

Some more specific findings are as follows:

- Younger Canadians (those between 18 and 30) are more likely than those over 30 to say that the items relating to diversity and tolerance make them very proud. In fact, the single biggest difference between these two age groups is on multiculturalism, which makes 66% of those between the ages of 18 and 30 very proud to be Canadian, compared with 50% of those over the age of 30.
- The differences between the views of immigrants and non-immigrants on these questions are modest, as are those between visible minorities and other Canadians. In the first instance, the list of the five items most likely to make each of these groups of respondents proud is virtually identical.¹⁰ Even in the case of recent immigrants to Canada – those arriving after 1990 – the factors most likely to evoke pride in Canada are more or less the same as the ones mentioned by non-immigrants.¹¹ The fact that immigrants, including recent immigrants, take pride in Canada for the same reasons as other Canadians supports the argument that there is no significant fault-line emerging as a result of immigration.

⁸ Respondents were asked about 18 different items. Six of the items were read to all respondents, and twelve were each read to one-half of the total respondents. This means that each individual respondent expressed views on twelve items in total.

⁹ This is not the case, however, with regard to bilingualism, as will be discussed below.

¹⁰ The five items (out of a list of 18) named by both immigrants and non-immigrants are: the vastness and beauty of the land, peaceful relations between different cultures, the UN’s high ranking of Canada, the landing on US planes on September 11, and peacekeeping (although the order of each item is not identical). The same five items are most likely to be named by those who do not identify as visible minorities; those who do identify as visible minorities include politeness and civility among their top five items, rather than peacekeeping.

¹¹ The only difference is that recent immigrants include the Charter in the list instead of the landing of US planes on September 11.

- There are, however, some differences in emphasis. For instance, 65% of immigrants say that multiculturalism makes them very proud to be Canadian, compared with 52% of non-immigrants. Similarly, the fact that people from different cultural groups in Canada get along and live in peace makes 81% of immigrants very proud, compared with 68% of non-immigrants.
- Such differences are not in evidence when comparing the views of visible minorities and other Canadians. Similar numbers within each group say that such things as multiculturalism, the Charter, and peaceful relations between people of different cultures make them proud to be Canadian.
- In fact, gender differences on these questions are more significant than the differences between visible minorities and others. Sixty-eight percent of women say that the Charter makes them proud to be Canadian, compared with 60% of men. In the case of multiculturalism, the respective figures are 59% and 49%.

While, in general, matters relating to the country's diversity were identified as sources of pride in being Canadian pride by a majority, there is one notable exception – bilingualism. Fifty-four percent say that multiculturalism makes them very proud to be Canadian, but only 42% say the same about “having two official languages, English and French.” Moreover, 21% say that two official languages make them not at all proud (the comparable figure for multiculturalism is only 8%). Only two other items among the 18 presented in the survey fared worse in this regard (see Table 5), suggesting that bilingualism is a more polarizing issue than multiculturalism and other dimensions of diversity.

TABLE 5 | PROUD TO BE CANADIAN

I will read you a list of things and events that some people say make them proud to be Canadian. I would like you to tell me whether each of these makes you feel proud to be a Canadian. Please use a scale of 0-10, where 0 means it does not make you feel proud at all, and 10 means it makes you feel very proud. You can use any number between 0 and 10. How about...?

	Very Proud (8, 9, 10)	Neutral (3 to 7)	Not At All Proud (0, 1, 2)
The vastness and beauty of the land	88%	11%	1%
When the United Nations ranks Canada as the best country in the world in which to live	82%	15%	3%
When Canadian airports took in American planes that were diverted on September 11, 2002	74%	20%	5%
The fact that people from different cultural groups in Canada get along and live in peace	70%	27%	3%
Canada's participation in peacekeeping activities around the world	70%	25%	5%
Canada's politeness and civility	67%	29%	4%
Canada's scientific inventions, like the Canadarm	66%	30%	4%
Canadian Olympic hockey team victories	63%	27%	10%
The Charter of Rights and Freedoms	62%	31%	6%
Canada's participation in key battles of World War I or World War II	61%	31%	7%
Multiculturalism	54%	37%	8%
The success of Canadian musicians or actors or artists	53%	40%	7%
When Canada decided to not participate in the war on Iraq	49%	26%	25%
Canada's health care system	42%	47%	12%
Having two official languages, English and French	41%	38%	21%
The CBC	39%	49%	12%
Pierre Trudeau	37%	43%	18%
The Queen	27%	37%	36%

PART 3: Identity

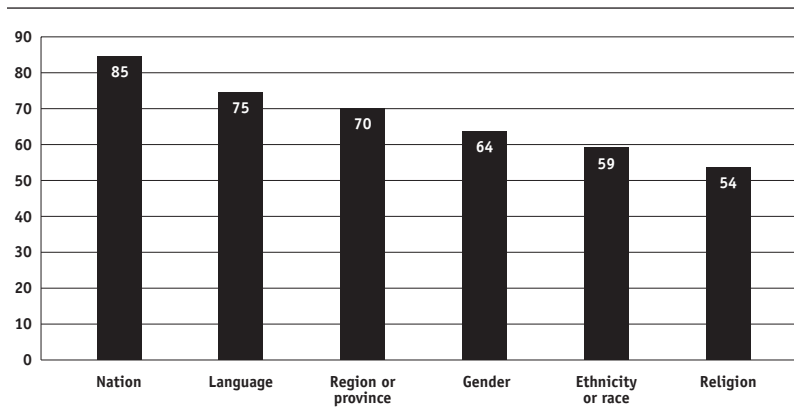
TABLE 6 PRIDE IN BILINGUALISM

I will read you a list of things and events that some people say make them proud to be Canadian. I would like you to tell me whether each of these makes you feel proud to be a Canadian. Please use a scale of 0-10, where 0 means it does not make you feel proud at all, and 10 means it makes you feel very proud. You can use any number between 0 and 10. How about... Having two official languages, English and French?

		Very Proud (8, 9, 19)	Neutral (3 to 7)	Not At All Proud (0, 1, 2)
Francophones in Quebec		56%	37%	7%
Anglophones outside Quebec		34%	39%	27%
Anglophones outside Quebec	Age 18-30	42%	42%	16%
	Age 31 and over	31%	38%	31%
	Men	27%	37%	35%
	Women	40%	41%	19%
	Men, age 18-30	30%	46%	25%
	Women, age 18-30	52%	40%	8%
	Men, age 31 and over	26%	25%	39%
	Women, age 31 and over	36%	49%	24%

FIGURE 6 IDENTITY
FIGURE SHOWS % SAYING IT IS "VERY IMPORTANT" OR "IMPORTANT"

I will read you a number of factors which may contribute to one's personal feeling of identity. For each, please tell me whether it is very important, important, not very important or not at all important to your own sense of identity.



As might be expected, there is a sharp divergence of views between Quebec Francophones and Anglophones in other provinces on this issue, as shown in Table 7. (It is striking that Allophones are more likely than Anglophones, and immigrants more likely than non-immigrants, to say that bilingualism makes them proud to be Canadian. This suggests that, contrary to what some have feared, multiculturalism is not in competition with Canada's bilingual character. To many new Canadians, and many of those whose first language is neither English nor French, having two official languages highlights Canada's openness to diversity, and it is something of which they are accordingly proud.)

Regional perspectives are also important. Only 24% of Westerners say that having two official languages makes them proud to be Canadian, compared with 42% in Ontario, 52% in Atlantic Canada, and 57% in Quebec.

Language and region are not the only basis for differences of opinion on this subject. Among Anglophones living outside Quebec, there are significant differences between age groups, and between men and women (see Table 6). Age and gender combine to produce an even more startling contrast – one between the views of younger women and older men. Only one in four Anglophone men over 30, outside Quebec, say that having two official languages makes them proud to be Canadian. However, Anglophone women age 18 to 30, outside Quebec, are almost as proud of bilingualism as are Quebec francophones.

There are tensions within the new Canada, but they are not always the ones we expect. Age and gender are powerful factors in determining attitudes to bilingualism. The issue is not simply differences of opinion between Quebec and the rest of Canada, or between Francophones and Anglophones.

PERSONAL IDENTITY

The survey asked respondents about different factors that might contribute to their personal sense of identity. Of the six mentioned, the most important is nation, which 85% said is important to their identity. The next most important factor is language (75%), followed by region or province (70%) and gender (64%). Ethnicity or race (59%) and religion (54%) are the least important, although they are still considered important by a majority of respondents (see Figure 6)

Is the pattern the same for Canadians of different backgrounds? The survey yields the following results:

- Nation and language are the two factors most likely to be identified as important both by those who identify themselves as a member of a visible minority, and by those who do not. However, ethnicity or race is more important for visible minorities (75%) than it is for others (56%). The same is true of religion, with 65% of visible minorities saying it is important to their personal identity, compared with 52% of others.
- Nation and language again top the list in the case of both immigrants and non-immigrants. Ethnicity is somewhat more important for immigrants (64%) than for non-immigrants (58%). The most significant difference between these two groups, however, is the relative importance of region or province. Seventy-two percent of non-immigrants say this is important to their own identity, compared with 56% of immigrants.
- This pattern is made even clearer when we compare the views of two quite specific groups: non-immigrants whose parents were also born in Canada, and recent immigrants (those arriving since 1990) (see Table 7). For the sake of convenience, we can call these two groups the “old Canadians” and the “new Canadians.” While old Canadians are more likely to say that nation is important, this factor is also the most frequently mentioned by new Canadians. Ethnicity or race is more important to new Canadians than to old Canadians. In fact, it is almost as important to new Canadians as is nation – yet it is important to a majority of old Canadians too. The most sizeable difference in views comes in the case of region or province, which is much less likely to be cited as important by new Canadians than by old.

TABLE 7 PERSONAL IDENTITY
TABLE SHOWS THE PERCENTAGE OF EACH GROUP WHO SAY THE FACTOR IS VERY IMPORTANT OR IMPORTANT

I will read you a number of factors which may contribute to one's personal feeling of identity. For each, please tell me whether it is very important, important, not very important, or not at all important to your own sense of identity?

	Nation	Province or Region	Ethnicity or Race	Religion
All Respondents	85%	70%	59%	54%
Visible Minorities	85%	69%	75%	65%
Others	85%	70%	56%	52%
Immigrants	81%	56%	65%	55%
Non-Immigrants	86%	72%	58%	54%
Born in Canada, Both Parents Born in Canada (“Old Canadian”)	87%	73%	58%	53%
Immigrants, Arrived Between 1990 and 2003 (“New Canadian”)	75%	53%	71%	60%

Thus, while different groups of Canadians tend to place greater or lesser emphasis on different aspects of personal identity, we should be careful not to overstate the difference. Within each group, nation is the most important factor. While immigrants and visible minorities are more likely to say their ethnicity is important, a majority of other Canadians hold the same view. If immigration has any profound consequences for the structure of personal identity in Canada, it is more likely to be in terms of a weakening of identification with region or province.

Another crucial finding is that the differences between the views of Quebecers and the rest of Canada on personal identity are as large, if not larger, than those between the groups we have examined so far. In fact, in contrast to other Canadians, language, not nation, is the factor most often cited by Quebecers as being important to their sense of personal identity (see Table 8). Moreover, language, region or province, and ethnicity or race are all much more important to Quebecers than to their counterparts in the rest of the country. Given Quebec's uniqueness as the only province with a majority Francophone population, these findings are hardly surprising. Yet they serve as a reminder that, to the extent that significant

PART 3: Identity

TABLE 8 PERSONAL IDENTITY, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE QUEBEC
TABLE SHOWS THE PERCENTAGE OF EACH GROUP WHO SAY THE FACTOR IS VERY IMPORTANT OR IMPORTANT

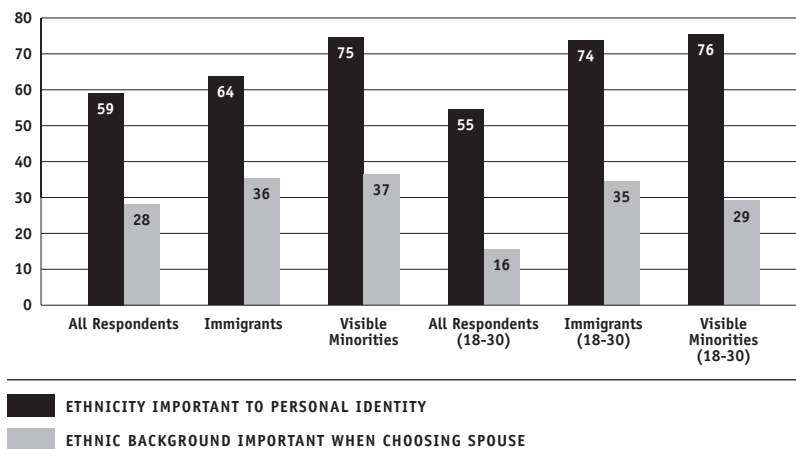
I will read you a number of factors which may contribute to one's personal feeling of identity. For each, please tell me whether it is very important, important, not very important, or not at all important to your own sense of identity?

	Canada Outside Quebec	Quebec	Canada Outside Quebec (18-30 yrs)	Quebec (18-30 yrs)
Nation	85%	87%	81%	78%
Language	70%	91%	67%	86%
Region or Province	64%	85%	62%	76%
Gender	59%	77%	64%	69%
Ethnicity or Race	53%	74%	53%	61%
Religion	54%	53%	49%	34%

FIGURE 7 THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHNICITY
FIGURE SHOWS % SAYING IT IS "VERY IMPORTANT" OR "IMPORTANT"

I will read you a number of factors which may contribute to one's personal feeling of identity. For each, please tell me whether it is very important, important, not very important or not at all important to your own sense of identity **ethnicity or race?**

When choosing a spouse, is it very important, important, not very important or not at all important that both people share similar **ethnic background?**



differences do exist between different groups of Canadians on identity, they do not necessarily stem from the experience of immigration and the reality of multiculturalism.

ETHNICITY WITHOUT WALLS

Canadians work, socialize, date, and marry people from all kinds of different backgrounds. While most think that ethnicity is important in terms of personal identity, they do not think it is important when choosing a spouse (see Figure 7). Moreover, for immigrants and visible minorities alike, the higher than average importance placed on ethnic or racial identity is not accompanied by a pervasive sense that it is important to build families along mono-cultural lines by avoiding marriage to someone from a different ethnic background. For most Canadians, regardless of background, the fact that their ethnicity is a mark of personal identity in no way means that it is grounds for excluding others.

Data on this issue help advance ongoing debates about the country's policy of multiculturalism. Some critics argue that the policy places too much emphasis on Canadians' different ethnic identities rather than their common Canadian identity, and is therefore divisive. Neil Bissoondath, for instance, contends that through the policy "we encourage a feeling of ethnic pride and belonging in narrowed communities."¹² Journalist Richard Gwyn has expressed similar concerns about the possibility of the policy fragmenting Canadian society.¹³ Philosopher Will Kymlicka has countered these arguments. He points out that multiculturalism actually encourages integration, not fragmentation. It delivers the message to immigrants that rather than choosing between preserving the best of their cultural heritage and full participation in Canadian society, they can do both.¹⁴

¹² Neil Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1994), p. 218.

¹³ Richard Gwyn, *Nationalism Without Walls: The Unbearable Lightness of Being Canadian* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), p. 156.

¹⁴ Will Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998).

The data support Kymlicka's view. It seems that most Canadians, and most immigrants or visible minorities, can value their ethnic identity without closing themselves off not only from inter-action, but, most importantly, from inter-marriage with persons from other ethnic groups. If Canada is not a "melting-pot," neither is it a society in which people build walls around their respective ethnic communities.

CHANGES IN QUEBEC

We have seen that young people in Canada are showing themselves to be more comfortable with cultural pluralism than are their elders. In many cases, however, it is in Quebec where the difference in attitudes between the generations is most profound.

Compared with other Canadians, Quebecers had some catching up to do. The survey shows that older Quebecers are less comfortable with different ethnic diversity than their compatriots in the rest of Canada. Yet, this difference in attitude is almost absent among the younger generations.

Consider the following:

- Quebecers over the age of 30 are less likely than their counterparts in the rest of the country to disagree with the notion that it is a bad idea for people of different races to marry one another, or that non-whites living here should not push themselves where they are not wanted. But the proportion of those age 30 and under who reject these propositions is the same inside and outside Quebec (see Table 9).
- The same pattern is visible when respondents are asked whether they would be comfortable if a close relative married someone who was black, or Jewish, or of Asian origin. In each case, Quebecers over 30 are less comfortable than their counterparts in the rest of the country. But the difference disappears among those 18 to 30. Attitudes among young Quebecers and young people in other provinces are indistinguishable, with both groups showing very high levels of comfort.

TABLE 9 TOLERANCE, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE QUEBEC
TABLE SHOWS THE PERCENTAGE OF THOSE *STRONGLY DISAGREEING* - ANSWERING 1 OR 2 ON THE 7 POINT SCALE. RESULTS ARE FOR RESPONDENTS WHO *DO NOT IDENTIFY AS VISIBLE MINORITIES ONLY*

I'd now like to read you some more statements about life in Canada today. Please tell me how you feel about each statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where "1" means you totally disagree, and "7" means you totally agree. A neutral answer would be "4".

	It is a bad idea for people of different races to marry one another		Non-whites living here should not push themselves where they are not wanted	
	18-30 yrs	31 yrs +	18-30 yrs	31 yrs +
Quebec	77%	50%	66%	48%
Rest of Canada	83%	60%	64%	56%

TABLE 10 SOCIAL CIRCLES, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE QUEBEC
RESULTS ARE FOR RESPONDENTS WHO *DO NOT IDENTIFY AS VISIBLE MINORITIES ONLY*

Please think about your few closest friends...

	Do any of them come from a different religious or ethnic background than you do? (% yes)		Do any of them come from a different racial background than you do? (% yes)	
	18-30 yrs	31 yrs +	18-30 yrs	31 yrs +
Quebec	75%	52%	69%	43%
Rest of Canada	77%	80%	71%	69%

- Perhaps the most revealing results come when respondents are asked whether any of their closest friends come from different ethnic, religious or racial backgrounds. Quebecers over the age of 30 are much less likely than the over-30 age group in the rest of Canada to say yes. But young Quebecers and young Canadians outside the province give similar responses (see Table 10). Quite simply, most young people in Canada, including in Quebec, move within social circles that are quite diverse. In contrast, the social circles of older Quebecers are more homogenous than is the norm for that age group across the country as a whole.

This last finding hints at one important cause of the transformation in Quebec. One reason young Quebecers are more likely than older Quebecers to socialize with a diverse group of friends is that the Charter of the French Language, adopted in the late 1970s, changed the school system by streaming the children of immigrants into French-language schools. The social world of the young became less homogenous. Young Quebecers, particularly young Francophones, grew up with a mixed group of friends, and their attitudes were shaped accordingly. A legal regime designed to protect Quebec's linguistic and cultural distinctiveness has done that, but in the process has produced a generation of young Quebecers whose attitudes on a variety of issues have drawn closer to those of other Canadians than was previously the case.

This does not mean that all differences are disappearing. Young Quebecers are much more likely to say that language is important to their sense of identity, and that Canada's official languages policy makes them proud to be Canadian. There are differences on other issues as well, with young Quebecers being more supportive of government action to reduce poverty, and of the Canadian government's decision to stay out of the US war against Iraq.

What the survey demonstrates is that Quebec has changed in one crucial respect. The greater reluctance to embrace cultural diversity, evident among older generations, is absent among the province's youth. Like other young Canadians, young Quebecers have developed a sense of identity based on an acceptance of cultural diversity.

RELIGION

The social cleavage that perhaps defines the "old Canada" in relation to the "new Canada" is religion. For example, tensions between Catholics and Protestants preoccupied Canadian political leaders throughout the 19th century and into the 20th. Now, it has little resonance. Meanwhile, church attendance continues to decline, particularly among the younger generations.

However, it would be an error to leave religion aside in a discussion of the new Canada. While no conflict looms between religious groups, there are important differences between those who are religious, regardless of their particular faith, and those who are not.

For example, there are very few differences between faith communities when it comes to the importance of religion itself. Christians of all denominations and followers of non-Christian faiths hold similar views as to whether it is important that spouses share the same religion, or whether religion is an important part of personal identity.

Where there is a big difference, however, is between those who have no religious affiliation, and those who do. Forty-nine percent of those with a religious affiliation say that it is important that spouses share a similar religion, compared with 24% of those with no religious affiliation. On the question of personal identity, 62% of those with a religious affiliation say that religion is an important factor, compared to 20% of those with no religion.

These last findings are not surprising, but do show that religion does matter for many Canadians – and, importantly, not just "new Canadians" who belong to non-Christian religions.¹⁵

¹⁵ Note that Canadians who claim affiliation are largely Christian. The 2001 Census reports that 77% of the Canadian population was Christian, 6% followed a non-Christian faith, and 16% said they followed no religion.

This helps put in context the finding, noted in Part 1, that Canadians, on the whole, are less comfortable with Muslims than with other groups. The number saying that they would be uncomfortable if a close family member married someone who is Muslim, at 31%, is three times as high than for a marriage to someone who is black or Asian.

Does this mean that many Canadians are truly prejudiced against Muslims? Perhaps not. It is notable that Canadians are just as likely (31%), to say that a family marriage to an atheist would make them uncomfortable, and even more likely (36%) to feel uncomfortable in the case of a close family member marrying a Christian fundamentalist. Views on these different relationships vary significantly according to whether respondents are regular churchgoers, or not (see Table 11). Those who attend religious services regularly are more uncomfortable with family marriages to both Muslims and atheists, while those who attend less frequently are more uncomfortable with Christian fundamentalists.

Thus many religious Canadians – the vast majority of whom are Christian¹⁶ – express unease with a marriage that might require changes to their family's usual religious practices. This applies whether it involves marriage to someone of a non-Christian faith, or someone with no faith at all. What this suggests is that, to some extent, factors other than outright ethnic prejudice shape attitudes to Muslims (though at the same time, the survey cannot be rule out prejudice as important in some cases).

Religion's importance to some Canadians also manifests itself in answers to questions dealing, in general terms, with morality or social norms. For example, 46% of those who attend religious services at least once a week would be comfortable if a close family member said they were gay. However, 71% of those who attend less than once a month would be comfortable in the same situation. These differences come into play in public policy disputes, such as the one that erupted in 2003 over the legalization of same-sex marriage.

Religion still matters. However, it matters much more to older Canadians than to younger ones. Fifty percent of those over 65 attend religious services at least once a week, compared with 29% of those between 18 and 30. In this sense, religion is still less relevant to the new Canada than to the old. There are, however, some caveats. Among younger Canadians, religion is more important to women than to men, and less important in Quebec than in other provinces. In fact, women between 18 and 30, living outside Quebec, are almost three times more likely than their counterparts in Quebec to attend religious services at least once a month. So while religion is less important to all younger Canadians, compared with their elders, it does remain much more important to some in the younger group than to others.

TABLE 11 THE ROLE OF RELIGION

Would you feel very comfortable, comfortable, uncomfortable or very uncomfortable if a close relative, like your sister or daughter, was going to marry...

	Someone who is Muslim		Someone who is an atheist		Someone who is a fundamentalist Christian	
	Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Comfortable	Uncomfortable
Respondents who attend church at least once a month	57%	42%	47%	51%	66%	32%
Respondents who attend church less than once a month	73%	25%	81%	18%	59%	39%
Respondents who say religion is important to their own identity	57%	42%	50%	47%	65%	32%
Respondents who say religion is not important to their own identity	79%	19%	87%	11%	58%	41%

¹⁶ In this context, it is worth noting that the reverse scenario holds: 64% of those of a non-Christian faith would be uncomfortable if a close family member married a Christian fundamentalist. Only 33% of Catholics and 30% of Protestants share this view.

Conclusion

“Today’s 20s are indeed the children of those who voted for successive 1960s’ and 1970s’ governments that enacted multiculturalism, decided the state had no place in the nation’s bedrooms, crafted the Charter to elevate individual rights into Canada’s supreme law and balance them against the rights of the collective, created the social programs that have allowed the great majority to grow up secure, healthy and well-educated, and wove tolerance and respect for diversity into the schools, courts and law books.”

*Erin Anderssen and Michael Valpy
“Face the Nation: Canada Remade”
The Globe and Mail, June 7, 2003*

WHO ARE WE, AS CANADIANS?

Down through the 20th century and, increasingly from the 1960s on, many dreamt of a Canada in which the tolerance of cultural difference and acceptance of ethnic diversity would be widespread. In the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the legislative planks underpinning this dream were put in place, notably in the form of the Bill of Rights, the liberalized immigration policy, the Official Languages Act, the multiculturalism policy, and ultimately the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In the first decade of the 21st century, tolerance is no longer a dream or a policy; it is a fait accompli for a rising generation that has never known a Canada that did not celebrate multiculturalism or constitutionally guaranteed equality rights. The experience of those under 30 has been of a country where cultural diversity is part of everyday life – in their communities, their schools, their social circles, and their families. Their society reflects the dreams and goals pursued by many of their baby-boomer parents, and others from earlier generations. If the Charter’s values did not fully reflect who we were as a country when it was adopted in 1982, they have shaped what we are today.

Profound social and attitudinal change does not happen overnight. A 25 year old Canadian is not radically different from a 35 year old, or even a 45 year old. But change there has been. Many older Canadians remember when Aboriginal peoples on reserves had no right to vote, non-white immigrants were unwelcome, there were quotas to limit the number of Jews at Canadian universities, women were barred from business clubs, and homosexuality was a criminal offence. Change has been gradual but, as the survey shows, inexorable. In contemporary Canada, young adults are comfortable with diversity, adamant about equality, and supportive of further change, such as recognition of same-sex marriage.

Canadian society has gone through this transformation without opening schisms between immigrants and those born in Canada, or between different ethnic or racial groups. The comfort level with diversity is growing. There is no evidence of any looming backlash against immigrants or minority groups. Indeed, the remarkable achievement is this: multiculturalism has become a source of pride for most Canadians – not only for immigrants or visible minorities. Rather than undermining Canadians’ sense of identity, immigration and multiculturalism are solidifying it.

Still, complacency is a luxury that Canadian society can ill afford. Immigrants and visible minorities are more likely to feel the sting of racism and discrimination than other Canadians. This is a reminder that some in Canada are threatened with social exclusion. The new census data make clear that recent immigrants are not doing as well economically or progressing as quickly as previous generations of immigrants. This is due to many factors, and discrimination probably plays a role. Moreover, other CRIC studies have shown that Canadian attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples are not always as accommodating as those to ethnic or linguistic minorities.

So long as the country continues to make progress in removing barriers to full participation in the country's social, economic, and political life, than the promise of the new Canada should be fulfilled. Moves in the opposite direction, however, could undermine part of what the new Canada has achieved.

The survey does not suggest that all groups share identical views. The good news is that the differences between immigrants and non-immigrants, or between visible minorities and others, are usually matters of degree. They are not substantive cleavages that are precursors of a clash of values between groups. No fault-line threatens to fracture Canadian society along ethnic lines. Indeed, gender is often a more important basis for opposing viewpoints than ethnicity of race.

Quebecers and other Canadians perceive certain issues quite differently, even if the views of young people inside Quebec, on certain matters, have become indistinguishable from those outside the province.

In the main, change has strengthened Canadians' sense of identity and distinctiveness. Young Canadians are less introspective about identity than previous generations, and less preoccupied with survival, even in an age of increased economic integration and cross-border interchange with the US. That they are more confident and secure than their forebears about their identity is reflected in the very different sets of values espoused by young Canadians and their American counterparts. The view that Canadians and Americans are becoming indistinguishable over time because their children watch US television shows and movies is a fiction.¹⁷

While Canadians are not smug about the new Canada, they do believe deeply that their land must be one where diversity holds pride of place with commonly shared values. It is a compelling ideal that rejects many aspects of traditional nationalism. It holds out the promise of a very special and civilized quality of life to Canadians, and a vision of what is possible to the world.

¹⁷ On this point, see "Canada and the United States: An Evolving Partnership," CRIC Paper No. 10 (Montreal, Centre for Research and Information on Canada, 2002), and Michael Adams, *Fire and Ice: The United States, Canada and the Myth of Converging Values* (Toronto: Penguin, 2003).

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