Multiculturalism & identity

1. Administrative
2. Canadian multiculturalism
3. Ethnicity, race, identity, & the state
4. *Theoretical tradition 2*: symbolic interactionism

First synthesis essay
- Topics will be distributed by email early *next week*
- Essays due Feb 12

Canadian multicultural policy

1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, recommends official federal policy of bilingualism and biculturalism

1971 Pierre Trudeau announces policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism

1982 Multiculturalism enshrined in Charter of Rights and Freedoms

1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act

Motivations

- Divisions between French- and British-descended Canadians
- Increases in non-European immigration
- Formal response to existing cultural divisions

Key points

- Stated desire to maintain the cultural heritage of all groups in Canada's multicultural population
- Equity between visible minorities and those of French and British ancestry
- "Unity in diversity"

The ideal of the multicultural mosaic

(the stated goals)

- 'Each' ethnic group keeps its unique heritage and culture
- Intended to contribute to unified national identity
- No explicit hierarchy
- Intended to promote mutual understanding and tolerance

Salad bowl *vs* Melting pot

Implementation

- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
  "This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians."
- Broad array of policies, laws, and agencies provide legal protection and direct support for culturally and linguistically defined groups

Contrasting models

- Segregation
- Interculturalism (*Québec*)
- Melting pot
- Self-governed nations
- Special representation

Policy ↔ identity

- Policies shape perception and experience of cultural identity

Ethnicity, race, identity, & the state

23 What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's **ancestors**?

Ancestors may have:
- Indigenous origins (e.g., First Nations, Métis, Cree, Plains Cree, Mi'kmaq, Qalipu Mi'kmaq, Ojibway, Inuit, Inuvialuit, Mohawk, Iroquois [Haudenosaunee], Innu, Montagnais, Dene, Chipewyan [Denesuline], Blackfoot, Blood [Kainai], Salish, Secwepemc [Shuswap], Huron [Wendat], Cherokee), or
- origins that refer to different countries (e.g., Scottish, Chinese, Jamaican, Moroccan), or
- other origins that may not refer to different countries (e.g., Jewish, Acadian, Punjabi).

For additional examples of ethnic or cultural origins, visit **www12.statcan.gc.ca/ancestry**

Specify as many origins as applicable using capital letters.

24 Is this person First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit)?

Note: First Nations (North American Indian) includes Status and Non-Status Indians.

If "Yes", mark "Ⓧ" the circle(s) that best describe(s) this person now.

- ○ No, not First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit)
  ↳ **Continue with the next question**
  OR
- ○ Yes, First Nations (North American Indian) ⟶ Go to question 26
- ○ Yes, Métis
- ○ Yes, Inuk (Inuit)

FOR INFORMATION

This question collects information in accordance with the *Employment Equity Act* and its Regulations and Guidelines to support programs that promote equal opportunity for everyone to share in the social, cultural and economic life of Canada.

25 Is this person:

Mark "Ⓧ" more than one circle or specify, if applicable.

- ○ White
- ○ South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
- ○ Chinese
- ○ Black
- ○ Filipino
- ○ Arab
- ○ Latin American
- ○ Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)
- ○ West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan)
- ○ Korean
- ○ Japanese

Other group — specify:

Ethnicity

- Identification with a certain cultural, linguistic, religious, or national heritage
- Focus on *inheritance* of culture, traditions, history, and beliefs

Ethnicity versus race

- Tightly connected—distinction is fuzzy at best
- Race frequently defined socially in terms of physical characteristics (despite problems with that definition)
- Race tends to be defined *externally* (at least initially) while ethnicity tends to be defined *internally*
- Racial boundaries often sharper, more difficult to cross: race is treated as *essential*

1. *What was Mahtani's research question?*
   - What was not known that Mahtani wanted to know
   - What 'holes' in the literature was Mahtani trying to fill?

2. *What methods did Mahtani use?*
   - Which of of the categories we discussed in class best describes the methods? (*survey*, *experiment*, *field research*, *secondary data analysis*)
   - What data was used for the analysis and how was it collected?
   - Was the analysis *qualitative* or *quantitative*?

3. *Were Mahntani's methods appropriate and sufficient to answer her research question?*

Interrogating the Hyphen-Nation:
Canadian Multicultural Policy and 'Mixed Race'
Identities

MINELLE MAHTANI
University of British Columbia

ABSTRACT: *This paper examines the ways 'mixed race' women in Canada contemplate their relationship to national identity. Through qualitative, open-ended interviews, the research demonstrates how some women of 'mixed race' contest ideas of the nation as constituted through the policy of multiculturalism in Canada. To challenge the tropes of the national narrative, some women of 'mixed race' develop nuanced models of cultural citizenship, illustrating that national identities are formed and transformed in relation to representation. Refusing to be positioned outside the nation, they effectively produce their own meanings of identity by working through their own personally identified 'mixed race' bodies to the national body politic, where some of them see their own bodies as intrinsically 'multicultural'. The paper ends by addressing the paradoxes of multiculturalism, emphasising through narratives that the policy produces hierarchical spaces against which some 'mixed race' women imaginatively negotiate, contest and challenge perceptions of their racialised and gendered selves.*

- What is the role of one's ancestry in defining their ethnic identity?
- How is ethnicity shaped by everyday interactions with others?
- What influence does the state (government, laws, policy, state institutions) have over ethnic identity?
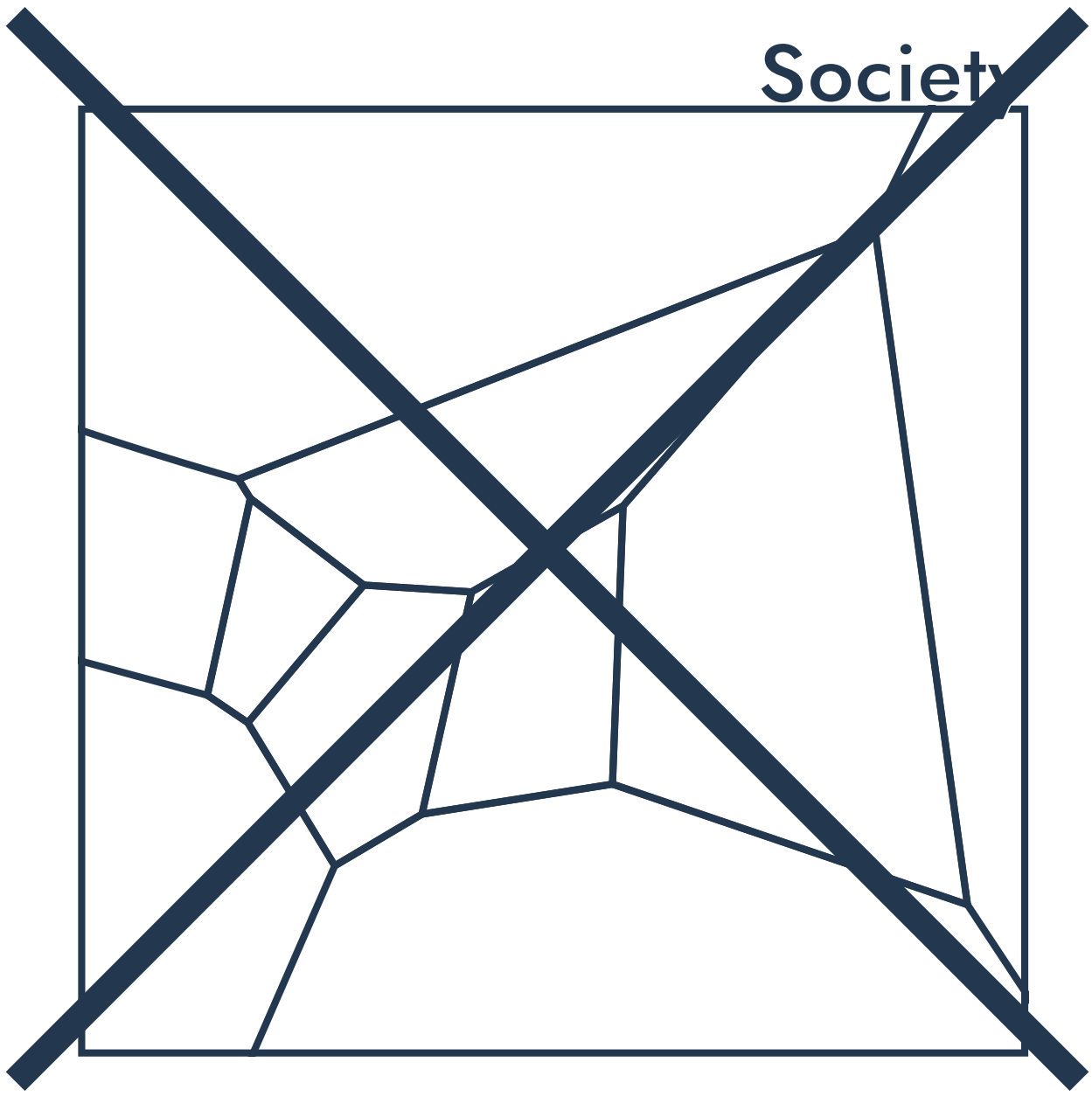
Symbolic interac-tionism

Throughout the semester, we will be be using *three broad theoretical lenses* to make sense of social phenomena:

1. Structural functionalism

Today ▶ 2. Symbolic interactionism

3. Conflict theory

Society

Micro-level explanation of society

Focus on *symbolic meaning*
- Explains institutions, behavior, social structure through the meanings people ascribe to objects in the social world

Focus on *interaction*
- Interactions (rather than classes, roles, or institutions) are basic building block
- Examines behavior—social psychology

Some major themes from symbolic interactionism:

Interaction as basis of self
(George Herbert Mead, Charles Cooley)

- Social world based on mental images of one another and our interactions
- Interaction involves imagining viewpoint of other person
- "Looking-glass self"
- Concept of self is same process, internalized

Multiple selves
(George Herbert Mead, Erving Goffman)

- Self is built through interactions with others
- Therefore: different conceptions of *who* we are depending on the social situation we are in

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Some major themes from symbolic interactionism:

Negotiation of social order
(Herbert Blumer, Erving Goffman)

- Institutions, norms, hierarchies, structures are negotiated through interactions
- Roles are created and recreated in situational contexts

  Mutual work of defining the situation
- Regularity of social roles from repeated interaction and expectations

Small-scale-structure
(Georg Simmel)

- Small-scale structures of groups (as small as three) have large-scale consequences
- Interactions are not in a vacuum
- *(More on this when we talk about relational sociology and network theory later in the term)*

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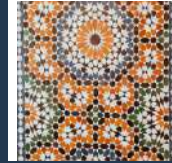
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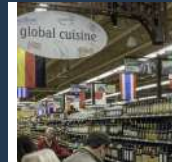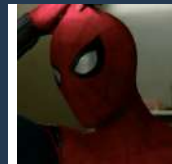
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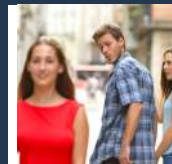
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