RACIALIZED EMBODIMENT:
SUBJECT FORMATION AND ETHICS OF THE SELF
OF ASIAN CANADIAN TEACHER CANDIDATES

by

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ABSTRACT 

Through Foucault’s genealogy and ethics of the self, I examine the experiences of Asian teacher candidates in the K-12 Canadian school system and how those experiences influence what teaching means for them. I look at the connections between race, the body and education and ask, how do the embodied experiences of racialized students inform the formation of the racialized teacher candidate? In my study I reveal that discourses of racism and discrimination are embodied and constitute racialized subjectivity. Through using individual interviews and a focus group, I listen to the narratives of my participants as they recount experiences in education. These stories and my analysis have important implications for educators, scholars, researchers and policy-makers interested in race, the body and education as well as concerns of diversifying the teaching personnel and transforming curriculum.
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Preface

Even when our bodies have been battered by life, these artistic “languages,” spoke from the body, by the body, are still laden with aspirations, are still coded in hope and “un desrame ensagretado,” a bloodied truce. By sending our voices, our visuals and visions outward into the world, we alter the walls and make them a framework for new windows and doors. We transform the posos, apertures, barrancas, abismos that we are forced to speak from. Only then can we make a home out of the cracks (Anzaldúa, 1990, p. xxv).

This project comes from a place of deep respect and struggle. On various levels, it has presented many challenges that pushed me to grapple with ideas and processes that were initially unknown and even rejected. I owe much to you, my participants, the teacher candidates, who gave of your time during a very busy semester, let me listen to your stories and write them down. Many of us grew up in the same city and I have often felt like we shared the same high school experiences. Sometimes I thought to myself, I know that teacher or that group of students you were talking about; it seems the system and its hegemony is quite powerful. On the other hand, each one of the individual stories are different, unique and as valuable as the next. Many of you shared very private experiences of discrimination and racism that haunt many of you even today as teacher candidates. Those stories continue to resonate with me as well.

Yet you speak. And these experiences, you say, have pushed you towards change and radical transformation. For those who did not speak as much, we felt your bodily presence and the sound of your body as language is not enough and often fails. This writing process has indeed been very bodily. Writing about and through bodies, thinking and theorizing bodies has allowed me to acknowledge my own. Not only that, but my body as it exists among and with other and every body. That has been the ethic of this process, as well as the reward.

As racialized students in the Canadian educational system, we are grappling with how our bodies are seen, felt, heard and feared. This is important because we go to school here. Because we learn and teach here. Because many of us might say we’re Canadian and many might say Asian. Because we are both or in between Asian-Canadian. Because we don’t know. Because we want to know. Echoing Shirley Geok-lin Lim (1998) “because our countries are in our blood and we bleed them” (p.74).

This thesis is a small contribution to a very large world of academic learning. As my participants’ stories crack through experiences in space and time, I hope that my work can find its way through the cracks. And maybe even create some cracks of its own.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Every cultural change is signified through and on the body” Shirley Geok-lin Lim (in Bow, 2002, p. 8).

I begin with a quote from Shirley Geok-lin Lim because she emphasizes the body as the site through which the specific inscription of events take place. Like Michel Foucault, Lim traces the varied histories that are systematically and often violently encoded through and on the body. Explaining that, “my Westernization took place on my body” (in Bow, 2002, p. 8), she highlights an important connection between the historical experiences of Asian Canadians and their bodies. In my project, I am also interested in this very connection: race and the body.

Stemming from my own political interest with women’s bodies as the site of both oppression and resistance, I look at education as a system that enacts relations of power and discourse onto the bodies that navigate this space. These discourses inscribe a particular experience onto the body and influences who that person becomes. It is important to analyze the experiences of racialized students, specifically Asian students, in the Canadian education system for two reasons: firstly, the changing demographics of Canada means that immigrants are mainly coming from Asia with China being the number one source country, closely followed by India and the Philippines (Statistics Canada, 2006a). While there are no statistics on the number of racialized (nor Asian) students in Canadian schools, researcher George Dei (2004) explains that close to one in three families in Toronto are born outside of Canada and have school aged children at home. Given the fact that South Asians, Southeast Asians, Blacks and Chinese are the leading visible minority groups in Ontario’s, Quebec’s and British Columbia’s major cities, one can easily see their presence in the majority of Canadian urban classrooms (Statistics Canada, 2006b). The second reason why it is important to examine the experiences
of racialized (Asian) students in Canada is because it allows us to trace how experiences emerged and the effect they have on the body of the student. In other words, following Foucault, we can trace a genealogy that exposes which discourses constitute the formation of the subject and how they are inscribed upon the body. Doing so, reveals the relations of power that structure institutions like education and/or the Canadian state and relationships of inclusion and exclusion to those institutions. Thus in my project I ask, what is the process of becoming for subjects who embody racialization?

To answer this question I used the experiences of Asian teacher candidates while part of both the K-12 school system and while attending Initial Teacher Education programs. I primarily looked at the experiences of Chinese, Filipina/o and South Asians and I explored the various ways racialization as “Asian” is experienced through schooling practices and how this racialized embodiment informs the kind of teacher they want to be. Therefore my case study specifically asked: how do the embodied experiences of a racialized student inform the formation of the racialized teacher candidate?

My project looked at two sites for Asian teacher candidate schooling experiences:

1) Elementary and secondary educational experiences
2) Teacher preparation or “teacher preservice” experiences

By examining these spaces, I aimed to articulate which discourses are involved in the production of the racialized student and understand how they embody experiences in these educational spaces. Embodiment through Foucault and Butler describe how the body is the effect of systems of power thus embodiment portrays the negotiations and/or resistance to these systems. What I call “racialized embodiment” refers to the processes of racialization that are inscribed upon the body. Racialized embodiment is interested in how the subject negotiates these systems and how the body responds such as resistance or conforming to them. I connect
racialized embodiment with subject formation as embodied experiences of racism and discrimination form who we are as racialized subjects in education. My study ventures out to explore the connections between one’s sense of self with their responsibility as teachers. I use Foucault’s “ethics of the self” to analyze how embodied experiences influence what teaching and pedagogy means for Asian teacher candidates.

For scholars, educators and those interested in issues of race and ethnicity, my research is important for three primary reasons: one, it sheds light on the experiences of Asian students in the school system and works to address how discourses of racism and discrimination systemically constitute these experiences; two, my work addresses the disparity of teachers of colour, specifically Asian teachers. I challenge debates around representation and diversity in the teaching personnel as I illustrate that teaching has very strong social and political implications that move beyond representation and towards structural and systemic transformation. Three, I illustrate how Asian teachers affect Asian students at the bodily level enabling them to feel more connected and welcome in their schools.

Pursuing research on Asians in Canada provides different insights about race, embodiment and education because this depicts that there are discourses and experiences that are unique and specific to Asians in Canada. I further explain in my review of current scholarly literature that the history of Asians in Canada reveals how processes of racialization through discriminatory policies and programs worked to position Asian Canadian invisibility. Recent research reveals how there is nothing at the institutional level that studies Asian Canadians; programs on Asian Canadian Studies does not exist in any higher Canadian educational institution (Coloma, in press b). My analysis into Asian Canadian embodied experiences and attempts at addressing this invisibility speak to “the representational power of racial inclusion, exclusion, and denial in Canadian curriculum studies” (Coloma, in press b, p.11) and in
mainstream experiences in the Canadian school system. My study focuses on the interconnectedness of embodied experiences within the larger institutions that frame and govern them. For example, I examine how stereotypical discourses are particular to Asian students and affects them at the bodily level. These embodied experiences are constituted by systemic inequalities that permit the emergence and production of such discrimination. Scholarship in Canada has yet to explore these experiences and I hope to shed light on them so as to combat their invisibility.

**Thesis outline**

To answer my question, how do the embodied experiences of racialized students inform the formation of the racialized teacher candidate, I used the qualitative methods of individual interviews and a focus group interview to explore these experiences. In Chapter 3, I highlight Patti Lather’s (1993) “Derridean rigour/rhizomatic validity” to outline three methodological phases in my research: a self reflexive phase, an empirical phase and a reciprocal phase. Using this validity frame in each phase of my research allowed me to question my position and privilege as a researcher and acknowledge the tensions, contradictions and investments in my work. Furthermore, these methodological phases allowed me to situate my work as a scholar, researcher and advocate within these experiences and reevaluate my commitment and responsibility to racialized, Asian communities.

I located my project within three scholarly and theoretical areas: racialization, embodiment and education. I worked to include experiences, both as an Asian student and as a teacher candidate, into a body of literature that looks at teachers of colour but focus on what is specific to the Asian teacher candidate. I hope that my project contributes to ongoing research and conversations about race and the body in education by providing an empirical study based on the experiences of Asian students in the Canadian context. Specifically, my research
addresses three gaps in scholarship of Asians in Canada: one, I focus on Filipina/o and South Asian youth to explore an under researched area with issues such as high school drop out rates and youth violence in Canada; two, I center my project around racialized experiences to address the challenges and concerns of Asian students and look at how these affect them at the bodily level; three, I analyze the limits of race and education to shift research towards an intersectional analysis of the role of teachers of colour (specifically Asian teachers) in order to identify systemic inequalities that affect marginal groups.

I chose to use Foucault as the main theoretical framework for my project because his ideas on discourse and power in relation to the Subject are significant to answering my research question. Unlike other theories, I think Foucault’s interest in the discursive production of the subject illustrates and dismantles how subjects come to be and which discourses are involved in that formation. Discourse is an important focus in spaces like education because they constitute the knowledge that is taught to students. For example, discourses of inclusion like multiculturalism are incorporated into the curriculum and I am interested in what my participants think about this and how this affects them. Foucault also traced the body as the site through which events, experiences and histories are inscribed and this enabled me to analyze racialized embodiment. In speaking about their experiences in education, I examined which discourses and regimes of power produced the embodied experiences of my participants. In each chapter, I worked to illustrate how these experiences emerged and what these mean in influencing what kind of teacher they want to become.

My first data analysis chapter addresses the importance of the body in education and why I am highlighting the racialized body. Informed by the work of Judith Butler, why Asian bodies matter in education is a main concern because experiences are bodily and have different effects for different bodies. When talking about race, my participants unanimously expressed a
concern with the way their bodies are perceived in a stereotypical way, assumed to fit into a prototypical mold that represents their entire racial group. Many times these stereotypical assumptions made them feel frustrated and their time in school was more difficult because of the pressure to fit into models such as the highly successful academic student. Other times, they felt that they might have been stereotyped as being shy and timid, a high school drop out or affiliated with violence. I illustrate that stereotypes reveal experiences of racialization in education as subjects are affected by them in negative and hurtful ways often internalizing judgments and feeling subordinate to others. The function of stereotypes depict that to embody Asian in schooling often means being positioned as inferior, stupid, violent or submissive. My analysis uncovers these embodied experiences as a way to examine the inequalities and discriminatory discourses that persist in education for many Asian students.

The next data analysis chapter explored subject formation through the experiences of my participants and focused on genealogy’s descent and emergence as two features that emphasize the importance of the body. I looked at descent as systemically articulating discourse on bodies. These discourses are integral in forming racialized subjectivity. For example, I examine two of my participants’ experiences of racism and discrimination as systemic and connected to regulatory techniques of power. These techniques form the racialized subject such as Qara’s “alien-ated body” and Ann’s difference located in an “auditory economy.” Emergence lent itself to my ideas of racialized embodiment through my depiction of bodily responses to regimes of oppression. I looked at John and Michelle as examples of hybrid, mixed and/or diasporic subjects. I analyzed their bodies as sites of contestation in two ways: one, inscribed with regimes and histories of migration, their bodies defy typical racialized readings as Asian; and two, I highlight the resistance and struggle that arise from these contestations. The second half of this chapter uses both descent and emergence to examine discourses of inclusion like
multiculturalism and equity at OISE/UT. I explore how these discourses are lived at the bodily level and how they also constitute racialized subject formation.

My last data analysis chapter used Foucault’s ethics of the self to explore teaching as an ethics of the self through self transformation and as a practice of freedom. As I considered the ethics and role of Asian teacher candidates, I connected these with larger policy questions of the importance of diversifying teaching personnel and highlight what teachers of colour and Asian Canadian teachers bring to the school system. Self transformation involves the cultivation of the self and I examine the emergence of four figures: the hard working immigrant, the Asian role model, the community seeker and the consciousness raiser. These four figures move my discussion towards addressing the systemic inequalities that persist for many Asian Canadian students as well as the historical struggles that many Asian immigrants face which contribute to the production of these four figures. These four figures permit us to challenge debates around representation and diversity in the teaching personnel because they show us that the role of teachers have very strong social and political implications that move beyond representation and towards structural and systemic transformation. Moreover, I argue that teaching as an ethics of the self is a practice of freedom involving not simply understanding the ways historical conditions and experiences constitute us as racialized subjects but in changing those conditions as a larger structural transformation in education. I analyze how my participants understand themselves as racialized teacher candidates and how this implicates a relationship with students. I look how the ethics in teaching become a method of survival in order to make the educational system livable for themselves and then for students who feel oppressed.

Lastly, my final chapter looks at the limits of race and education as I raise three critiques throughout my thesis: the dominance and continuance of white ideology, the disavowal of race of some of my participants and the need for an intersectional analysis that accounts for the ways
race is intertwined with gender, class, sexuality and disability. I raise these critiques in line with Foucault’s notion of “limit-experience” that argues for pushing the ways we think in order to create better and more possibilities. These three critiques press for an assessment of the educational system and our role within it. They are concerned with evaluating how our work marginalizes, includes and excludes bodies and how can our work create possibilities and spaces for all and different bodies.

My thesis aims to highlight the experiences of Asian teacher candidates while they attended schools in Canada because I argue that these have unique and important insights into how we understand race and the body in education. Their experiences contributed to who they are as Asian teacher candidates and what they hope to achieve as educators. In doing so, my research illustrates the importance of the body as the site through which we can understand experiences and the role of the educational system. There are discourses that are particular to Asian students and an examination of these discourses reveals our work as educators, researchers, scholars and activists require a dismantling and resistance to the systemic, oppressive and discriminatory policies and practices.
CHAPTER 2: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

My study drew on Michel Foucault’s concepts of genealogy and ethics of the self because I aimed to analyze how experiences are inscribed upon the body and then how these embodied experiences are understood and utilized by the subject. This allowed for an examination and tracing of the experiences of a racialized student in the educational system and how this informed the formation of the racialized teacher candidate. Both genealogy and ethics of the self imply an important connection with institutions at large, as an apparatus and site of power relations. Thus I focused on the tactics at play in the educational system that are involved in the racialization of Asian bodies.

Firstly, it is important to highlight how Foucault’s conceptualization of the body is intricately linked to power and discourse. The individual body is the “effect” and the “vehicle” of power not its point of application, in other words, power shifts because individuals are “always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power” (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). Foucault focuses on how power is enacted through discourse and how discourse produces the Subject. It is the internalization of the discourse of power that creates the Subject. Throughout my analysis of embodied experiences in this work, I foregrounded which discourses work to dominate and form the racialized subject. Analyzing how power is employed and exercised on and by the racialized student through discourse in the educational system, I aimed to trace a genealogy which portrays what “tactics” are at play in these experiences (Foucault, 198, p.85). These tactics or techniques are used for producing particular truths which Foucault works to dismantle through genealogy or how these are marked on the body. Therefore, for Foucault, the body:

…Is the surface of the inscription of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of the dissociation of the Me (to which it tries to impart the chimera of a substantial unity) and a volume in perpetual disintegration. Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to
expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history’s destruction of the body (Foucault, 1971, p.375).

Secondly, Foucault is interested with history and its role on the body. Foucault seeks to dismantle how the production of truth proliferates a unity or origin of the body so the function of genealogy is to deconstruct truth in a way that exposes how truths have been historically constructed. The role of the institution is crucial in the construction of these truths (discourse) and how discourse historically forms a particular subject. This is portrayed in the first volume of *History of Sexuality* where Foucault gives the example of four figures that emerged through the proliferation of particular sexual discourses: the hysterical woman, the masturbating child, the Malthusian couple and the perverse adult (Foucault, 1978, p.105). In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977) Foucault shows the subjection and discipline of “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1977, p.138) in schools, hospitals and the military through tactics like enclosure (p.141), partitioning (p.143) and panopticism (p.200). In this way, genealogy framed my analysis of embodied experiences by illustrating the institutional strategies of power at play in discourses that produce the racialization of the subject such as discourses of multiculturalism, Asian stereotypes and Othering (“alien-ated” bodies).

Extending Foucault’s genealogy, I explored what the body does with these experiences. I engaged with Foucault’s notion of the “ethics” or “care of the self” as a means for understanding what racialized teacher candidates do with these experiences and how this ethic is formed through certain institutionalized discourses. According to Foucault, care or ethics of the self is related to power and the ways people exercise power within themselves and others. Foucault explains that one needs a “cultivation of the self” that precedes caring for others, it is a kind of “art” that can be an attitude, behaviour, “it evolved into procedures, practices, and formulas that people reflected on, developed, perfected and taught” (Foucault, 1986, p.45). I aimed to analyze how these processes of cultivating the self are linked to the larger discourses within institutions
like the State or the educational system. The institution is an apparatus of (re)producing power relations, inscribing particular discourses like migration onto the experiences of the bodies who negotiate these spaces. This framework allowed an analysis into thinking about what bodies of knowledge and knowledge of bodies take precedence in the classroom and larger educational system.

Moreover, I explored how teaching is practice of the self. Ethics of the self is a way to think about the ethics that govern how one lives their life through certain rules and principles and then involves relationship with others. It is predicated on power relations and the practice of freedom; ethical and right conduct is concerned with how power can operate with as little domination as possible. Care of the self implicates relations with others; thus this notion operates on two levels, as one cares for oneself then they can care for others: “the care of the self is ethical in itself; but it implies complex relationships with others insofar as this ethos of freedom is also a way of caring for others” (Foucault, 1997b, p.287).

This care for the self and for others also implicates a tension between the knowing subject and Foucault’s “death of the subject.” At the conclusion of the *Order of Things* (1970), Foucault says that the figure of man is a recent invention and man appears as “the effect of a change in the fundamental arrangements of knowledge” (p. 422). With the possibility of this disappearance, Foucault turns the death of the subject into subjectivity whereby “subject” means we are objects of ideology. In other words, objectification is the measure of subjectivity. The subject is the racialized immigrant, the refugee or oppressed student. As I grappled with this tension between Foucault’s “death of the subject” versus the knowing subject I thought about how subjectification provides ways of thinking about racialized embodiment. Subjectification is constituted by governmentality whereby in the art of governing there implies a finality, a convenient end for things that are governed. In Foucault’s *Governmentality* (1991) he
distinguishes that sovereignty which is circular in nature and is predicated on submission to the law; sovereignty has no end or finality but one must obey. Governing rather “employs tactics rather than laws... to arrange things in a way such ends may be achieved” thus the essence of the art of government is the creation of an economy, a way to ensure prosperity and management of the state. This means that subjectification is predicated on the art of governing; a process whereby subjectification is involved with the creation of an economy. As embodied racialized subjects, processes and tactics of racialization were formed in order to achieve an end: our subjectivity depends on our “usefulness” to the state.

For the study of racialization, this means that throughout Asian Canadian histories we see the effects and consequences of subjectification once the “usefulness” of the subject is deemed irrelevant and unwanted in the constructions of national imaginary. Although central in the building and sustaining of the nation, the racialized subject is barred from achieving equal status in the discursive, political and social realms. In the following section, I outline and describe racialization in Canada and what this process means in the experiences of Asian communities in Canada.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To understand the embodied experiences of racialized subjects, my study seeks to investigate and situate itself within literature that addresses: the processes of racialization for South Asian, Filipina/o and Chinese communities in Canada, their experiences in education, theories of embodiment and experience. In doing so, I am interested in exploring what is unique for the Chinese, Filipina/o and South Asian student and teacher candidate, what kinds of challenges are posed and what discourses are circulating in the existent literature. I mostly focused on studies of Chinese, Filipina/os and South Asians due to my sample of participants.
Racialization

As the three largest Asian groups in Canada, the Chinese, South Asian and Filipina/o communities have faced similarities in discriminatory policies, migration patterns and community formations yet each group has also faced distinct challenges. By examining these histories as Asian Canadians, I scrutinize what constitutes these experiences highlighting what many scholars believe is largely under researched and outside of popular discourse. Although these groups, Chinese, South Asian and Filipina/o are integral to the building and sustaining of the Canadian nation, they have all faced exclusionary laws and programs, barring them from citizenship, housing and other services. These created racist attitudes, perceptions and treatment towards these groups while simultaneously placing them outside of national belonging. What this means today is that these exclusions make invisible, masking the experiences of oppression as Asians in Canada. In other words, racialization as Asian Canadian means that we are virtually invisible as the largest visible minority in Canada. Therefore to study racialization for Asians in Canada sheds light on its historical formations and current, mainstream discourses and practices (Coloma, in press b). To pursue a racialization analysis in place of perhaps an ethnic or comparative ethnic analysis means to identify and reveal the role of institutions like the Canadian state in the legislated historical violences enacted upon racialized, Asian communities. In accordance with Roland Sintos Coloma (in press b) this “has relevance for other interdisciplinary fields, such as women’s studies, and other area studies programs, such as Caribbean studies and Middle Eastern studies, whose intellectual currency, symbolic standing, and material allocation in scholarly and institutional venues continue to remain disputed and uncertain” (Coloma, in press b, p.2). My inquiry provides insights into race, embodiment and education that depict the intersection of these three concepts as they are connected and are framed by their discursive, political and historical relationships.
In conjunction with Grace-Eduard Galabuzi (2006) I chose to examine “racialization” as a means to describe “the process of imposition, the social construction of the category and the attendant experience of oppression as opposed to seemingly neutral use of the terms ‘visible minorities’ or ‘racial minorities’ which have the effect of masking the oppression” (p.xvi). It is a process of oppression of racial minorities through various means such as government policies, programs and actions. By highlighting these three groups, I illustrate the connections between their common experiences of racism that have constituted Asian Canadian invisibility.

Government policies that restricted the immigration of non-preferred races such as the Chinese, South Asian and Filipino had the effect of entrenching racist ideologies within popular imaginary which Sunera Thobani (2007) explains exalts Whites as legitimate national identity. Throughout these policies we see highly raced and embodied connections which had primary influences in the passing of these policies. The Chinese community faced laws such as the Chinese head tax under the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 which banned Chinese immigration until 1947, the Continuous Passage Requirement of 1908, the institutionalization of race in the 1910 Immigration Act and the denial of voting rights to Chinese immigrants in British Columbia. By the early twentieth century, the idea of Asians and the Chinese in particular, as racially distinct and culturally inferior was well entrenched in the ideology and practice of Canada, creating a racial hierarchy favouring the White race. Peter Li (1998) notes that the historical treatment of racial minorities has created many deep-seated symbols and meanings to the notion of race in Canadian society (Li, 1998, p.35). Notions of race and the body are seen in the constructions of Asians as “filthy, immoral, lazy... deemed unworthy of citizenship, their lawlessness was seen as amply demonstrated in their lying, thieving, drug-dealing, gambling and prostitution-- practices which were all attributed to them as essential aspects of their character” (Thobani, 2007, p.85).
When entering Canada in the late nineteenth century, South Asians were viewed as the “Hindu invasion,” treated with the same racism and hostility as other groups. South Asians faced legislation that prevented their economic and social mobility through disenfranchisement in 1907, fearing that South Asians might participate in provincial elections that year. This raised fear and paranoia amongst the White population, creating an amendment to the B.C. Election Act, adding “Hindus” to other “Asian undesirables.” This denial of political rights meant like the Chinese and Japanese, South Asians were barred from entering professions in education, law and pharmacy (Henry, et al, 2000, p.77). They faced much discrimination and had much difficulty finding housing resulting in very poor living conditions (Bolaria and Li, 1988).

Elizabeth Nayar (2004) explains that for Sikhs, their early immigration to Canada was marked by much racism (p.16). In Vancouver, the government had proposed that they immigrate to British Honduras but this proposal was seen as simply a way to eliminate Sikhs from Canada. The Khalsa Diwan Society fought the Canadian immigration requirement of “continuous journey” that made it impossible for any ships from India to arrive directly in Canada. The Komagatu Maru ship in 1914 was the most evident form of discrimination for East Indians in Canada when the ship was prevented by a court order from docking in Vancouver (Nayar, 2004, p.17).

In the US, Filipina/os have historically played crucial roles in its the creation and sustaining of the country yet faced much racism as they were restricted from citizenship and owning property. Between 1850 to WWII, although Filipinos, Chinese and the Japanese were fundamental in building the railroads, agricultural economy, textile and service industries, they were still perceived as perpetual foreigners (Lowe, 1991, p.12; Ancheta, 2006). Filipinos were barred in 1934 from citizenship and owning property. The Alien Land Laws of 1913, 1920 and 1923 prohibited Asian immigrants from owning lands and other forms of property. Their
migration in the early twentieth century brought employment almost exclusively as domestic and agricultural servants. At this time, the Filipino immigrant population mostly consisted of young men whose bodies became “racially mutated into an economic instrument,” racialized, gendered and sexualized through the appropriation by “white male nativism and sexualized insecurities as ammunition for anti-immigration and exclusion initiatives” (Tapia, 2006, p.63). We see how the (raced) body plays a crucial role in much legislated exploitation and exclusion.

This history is linked to migration patterns in Canada, as labour demands have created the number of Filipino/a migrants to be the highest amongst all migrant groups yet most unrecognized. Bolaria & Li (1988) via Dixon et al (1982) explain that these workers represent a labour force that is “stateless, deprived of legal and political rights and therefore vulnerable and defenseless; a labour force that is isolated from the indigenous working class” (Bolaria & Li, 1988: 230). Established in 1955, Canada’s domestic workers’ program dealt with a shortage of workers not prepared to accept low wages and undesirable working conditions (Henry et al, 2000, p.84). It was initially targeted to women from the Caribbean and then later on women from the Philippines. Many of these women entering Canada as “domestics” were professionals in fields such as nursing and teaching. Compelled to marginal status in the Canadian work force, meant that many Filipina domestic workers had temporary work permits, denied the right to organize in trade unions thus could not bargain for better wages and in Ontario they were not (and still not) covered by the province’s health and safety legislation (Henry et al, 2000, p.85). Coloma (in press a) terms Filipino/as as “abject beings,” their absence in “scholarly and pedagogical discourse captures the epitome of abjection” within the Canadian narrative (p.2). As the largest number of domestics, Filipina women make up a staggering over 95% of Canada’s Live in Caregiver Program yet are virtually invisible or abject, lacking any political and social agency.
The various laws and policies (immigration, citizenship, voting, social services) that restricted access for the Chinese, South Asian and Filipina/os in Canada constructed them as racially inferior and undesirable. This had the effect of excluding Asian Canadians from national belonging making them virtually invisible. This history depicts the centrality of the raced body in legislated discrimination as exclusion, exploitation and marginalization were inscribed upon groups of Chinese, South Asian and Filipina/s bodies. In tracing this history we see how racialization is largely connected with notions of race, the body and education as Asian groups were barred from entering professions, social mobility and pushed outside the social, political and national arena.

*Embodiment and experience*

I explore the ways the body is the site where subjectivity and experience are realized through theorists in critical race, postcolonial and poststructuralism like Sarah Ahmed, Joan Scott, Gloria Anzaldúa, Eleanor Ty, Himani Bannerji and Yen le Espiritu. The body is analyzed through the ways it incorporates experiences of oppression, having an impact on the individual subject. These theories recognize these as embodied experiences but also located within discursive frameworks. The body as the site where discourse is historically inscribed cannot be separated from the larger institutionalized structures that structure embodied experiences. Foucault demonstrated the role of institutions like the prison, hospital, the church and the school which he argued constituted subjectivity through the art of governing. The theorists that I highlight in this section work within Foucault’s notion of subjectification because they are also interested in the processes and systems of power that form subjectivity. These systems of power produce and inscribe discourse onto bodies. My interest in the body is in the ways the incorporation of particular discourses within experiences informs the formation of a particular subject (Asian teacher candidate) or Foucault’s “discursive production of the subject.” This has
implications for how the body is conceptualized as not simply “natural” but as constituted and differentiated from and by other bodies and bodily experiences.

Sarah Ahmed’s Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-coloniality (2000) considers differentiation through the ways bodies are in a “complex set of temporal and spatial relations with other bodies, including bodies that are recognized as familiar, familial and friendly, and those that are considered strange” (p.40). For example, race becomes a signifier of difference and has theoretical and political implications. Citing how Elizabeth Grosz (1994) illustrates how race becomes “the figure for the differentiated body,” Ahmed describes this philosophy of difference does not necessarily involve a “recognition of the violent collision between regimes of difference” but configures the white subject as center who can reincorporate difference into their own being (Ahmed, 2000, p.42). For Ahmed, Foucault’s subjectification relies on the differentiation between bodies. Differentiation works within Foucault’s idea because it analyzes and reveals the tactics that differentiate one body from another. With differentiation, an “economy” is produced that consists of othered, strange bodies posited against the familiar bodies (Foucault, 1991).

Stuart Hall (1992a) also argues for the ways racialization is played out designating who becomes the black subject while keeping the white subject as center and constant. Embodying black skin colour was used as a colonial concept that signified otherness through colonial rule. In this way, there is no recognition between the “regimes of difference” of these racially embodied subjects and Ahmed’s interest urges a push towards addressing: “how do ‘bodies’ become marked by difference? How do bodies come to be lived precisely through being differentiated from other bodies, whereby the differences in other bodies make a difference to such lived embodiment?” (Ahmed, 2000, p.42). I think through these same questions in my study as my participants share how they are marked and differentiated from other bodies.
As my interest is on the experiences of racialized subjects in education, I aimed to focus on the historical processes, that through discourse, produce subjects. Moving away from using experience as true evidence, Joan Scott’s (1991) pivotal essay “The Evidence of Experience” contests the ways experience has been privileged rather than historicizing how subjects are constituted by their experiences. Experience often has the effect of excluding difference, naturalizing it and decontextualizing it. It does not question how subjects are constituted as different in the first place or how one’s vision is structured: about language (discourse) and history, “the evidence of experience then becomes evidence for the fact of difference, rather than a way of exploring how difference is established, how it operates, how and in what ways it constitutes subjects who see and act in the world” (Scott, 1991, p.777). She insists that it reproduces rather than contests given ideological systems and to historicize categories that appear ahistorical (desire, homosexuality, heterosexuality etc): “for that we need to attend to the historical processes that, through discourse, position subjects and produce their experiences. It is not individuals who have experiences but subjects who are constituted through experience” (Scott, 1991, p.779). In my study, I traced the formation of the racialized subject through the discourses that produce their experiences and subjectivity. Scott’s ideas work within Foucault’s notion of subjectification because she focuses on what produces the subject which aligns with Foucault’s focus on the processes and tactics that govern and form the subject. As previously illustrated, racialization is a historical process undergone by various immigrant groups like the Chinese, South Asian and Filipina/o and it is important to trace the discourses that produced these experiences. Various institutionalized discourses of migration, citizenship and labour laws were enacted and inscribed upon the bodies of racialized persons. In this way, embodiment can speak to the historicizing the ways subjects are constituted through experience. Embodiment fills that gap of difference by directly addressing: how the subject is differentiated and how
experiences of marginality and oppression produce the subject. For example, feminists of colour argue the marginalization of populations of women are constituted through her experiences of racism, sexism and classism. It comes from a very specific place where differences are treated through violent exclusion of the body. For feminists of colour, embodiment is a theory of the flesh and it is the place where this necessarily must be analyzed.

Gloria Anzaldúa talks about theorizing from the body as a means for understanding embodiment through experiences of race, class and gender oppression. However, using Foucault, we can understand these oppressions as systemic, as I previously outlined the processes of racialized oppression within the Canadian context. Foucault emphasizes how discourse inscribes experiences onto bodies which enable us to trace how discursive experiences of systemic barriers, institutional racism and discrimination have been felt by different Asian groups. I aimed to focus on merging these two theories as it is through the body that these experiences can demonstrate the material effects of intersecting forms of oppression. Similar to Scott and others, Anzaldúa’s theorizing from the body aligns with Foucault’s notion of subjectification in her emphasis on the systems of oppression that govern subjectivity. Foucault’s subjectification is achieved through the art of governing and relationships of power; this is evident in Anzaldúa’s ideas of subjectivity which focus on the systems that constitute the oppression inscribed on the body.

Feminists of colour have analyzed subject formation through theorizing the body: “a theory in the flesh means one where the physical realities of our lives-- our skin colour, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings--all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity” (Anzaldúa, 1980, p.23). Anzaldúa sees this as a necessity as the body (specifically the female body) has historically been the site where oppression has been enacted. To theorize the body, she holds that coloured women must recognize themselves as embodied subjects. Much of
the experiences that these subjects embody are multiple and layered patriarchal systems of oppression such as a linguistic suppression, racism, sexism, homophobia and/or classism. My study will be situated within exploring how embodying these systems of oppression inform why Asian students want to be teachers. In doing so, I ask if my participants see teaching as a site for political struggle? Is it a form of resistance in the hopes of systemic transformation?

Eleanor Ty (2004) highlights the visibility of the Asian body through differentiated representations in skin, hair, eyes and face compel the paradoxical implication of our invisibility in North American public and cultural spheres. Our “birthmarks” (Shirley Geok-lin Lim) of black hair and the shape of our noses and eyes, as a set of bodily attributes mark us as other, as Oriental, as exotic, subservient, mysterious, deviant or threatening. Yen le Espiritu (2003) demonstrates the history of Filipinos in America portrays how they were constructed as threatening social bodies. Although they were crucial to the building of the railroads and agriculture in the U.S. Filipinos remained invisible as citizens yet visible as targets of social and political exclusion. In the 1930’s, Espiritu describes how Filipino men were subjected to racial segregation that quarantined them, imposing an asexuality on heterosexual Filipinos. When they refused to be just working bodies and instead flaunted their sexual bodies, they were perceived as sexually threatening. This perceived threat then provided “justification” for anti-Filipino forces to brutalize their bodies, to enact laws to prevent Filipino-white marriages and to exclude them from immigrating to the United States (Espiritu, 2003, p.67).

To return to the issue of violence amongst immigrant groups, Himani Bannerji (2004) highlights the woman’s body as imbued with subordinate status, mediated and regulated through discursive systems like patriarchal family code, heterosexist codes and a legal dependency on her husband as she is often “sponsored” through Canadian government immigration laws. Bannerji notes that although the woman is powerless she is exalted to the embodiment of
(sexual) virtue and honour in the community. She says they are “disembodied into a metaphor” and objectified. Both disembodiment and objectification are the basis of violence against women such as “widow immolations in India, stoning of adulterous women in Pakistan, or female genital mutilation among some groups in Africa” (Bannerji, 2004, p.170). No longer a metaphor or symbol but are “actual violent, social relations which organize the society as a whole,” “discursivities entailed in these symbolic expression mediate and stabilize violent social relations through various forms of textualization” (Bannerji, 2004, p.170).

Education

The literature on Asian Canadians in education sets the groundwork for this research, identifying important concerns for Chinese, Filipina/o and South Asian students. The strengths in the extant literature lay out a good understanding of issues such as identifying language barriers for many Chinese students. For Filipina/o youth, literature highlighted their migratory and transnational struggles in the US but not in Canada. Literature did discuss how Filipina/o youth negotiate transnational identity in the US but more needs to be done in Canada. For South Asian students, there is research on the influence of family and tradition in their experiences but more work needs to be done outside of a familial analysis such as patterns and experiences in migration. Moreover, there was much literature on the significance of teachers of colour for students of colour but there was not enough research on the role of Asian Canadian teachers and their impacts on students (of colour or not).

However, the literature on Asian Canadians is quite limited and still requires much work in three areas: firstly, there is a very limited amount of research on groups like Filipina/os and South Asian youth. The existent literature has not yet explored the unique challenges of specific groups as Asian Canadian is certainly not a homogenous experience. The gaps in scholarly literature meant that I had to rely on the work done by community organizations especially for
Filipina/o and South Asian youth. There is very little scholarly literature on Filipina/o youth in Canada so I looked to the research done by community organizations like the Philippine Women Centre in Canada. More work needs to examine issues like increased high school drop out rates, the factors involved and how Filipino/a youth cope. Secondly, the literature does not adequately portray how students deal with the challenges they are confronted with on a daily basis. The literature does not address the effects of these challenges and barriers for the students and how they deal with them or overcome them. Thirdly, analysis needs to move beyond racialized experiences and look at the intersections with gender, class and ability. Moreover, there needs to be more work on the need for an intersectional approach to teaching and not solely focus on race. Teachers of colour cannot be homogenized and research needs to look at intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and ability in order to depict the systemic inequalities that affect marginal groups. In my research, I directly addressed these three gaps. I highlighted the experiences of my participants who are Chinese, Filipina/o and South Asian and discussed the importance in examining experiences from these communities. In my research, I directly addressed their main concerns and examined how they dealt with their challenges. Although outside the scope of my current research, I recognized that an intersectional approach was needed in analyzing experiences in education and I worked to include this consideration in my project when applicable.

In Canadian schools, researchers have documented the various changing racial and ethnic make up of students. Anti-racist educator George Dei (2004) notes that close to one in three families within the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area population, are born outside of Canada and have school-age children at home\(^1\). This shift in population has immense

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\(^1\) His research plays an important role in illustrating the challenges new youth in Canada face, highlighting disturbing statistics on high school drop out rates especially for newcomer youth. The general population is at a rate of 12% to 25% whereas for newcomers, it is approximately 46% to 74% in some jurisdictions. Dei explains newcomer youth are confronted with various factors such as: alienation
implications for education in Canada. One study by Guofang Li (2006) argues Asian students face a sense of cultural separateness. For many immigrants and their families, this can create discordant values and beliefs placing schooling and education as the forefront and embodiment of social and cultural conflicts (Li, 2006).

Many Asian students new to Canada face unique struggles in education and schooling. In efforts to deconstruct essentialist or stereotypical views on Asians, Jun Li (2001) explains what factors constitute the stereotype that Asians do well in school. Li notes various studies that show Asian students, regardless of social class and family economic background, usually have higher grade-point averages, complete more years of school and have lower drop out rates than other ethnic groups. However, in her study, Li explores how this success has deep connections with specific Chinese cultural values and the demands of acculturation. She found that Chinese parents played a significant role in their children’s achievement and their expectations were deeply rooted in their cultural beliefs and a particular ideology of overcoming minority obstacles in Canada. Despite Canada’s multicultural policy, she references other studies (Li, 1998; Sugiman, 1992) that contend the historical institutional, racial discrimination and violence inflicted onto the Chinese in Canada. Her data gathered from interviews highlights the significance of racial inequality in educational experiences, expectations and aspirations. Studies also cite other challenges newcomer Chinese students face such as language barriers (Minichielle, 2001; Gougeon & Hutton, 1992) as students find it difficult to communicate, make new friends, understand and meet educational expectations. Tara Goldstein (2003) looks at Cantonese-speaking youth in Toronto as they faced and strived for academic and social success in English speaking schools despite linguistic tensions and dilemmas. Goldstein found that

and discrimination in housing and social services (Dei, 2004). While specific factors highlight racialized groups like Somalis and Afghans that battle racialized and gendered poverty or homelessness, non-status, post-traumatic stress among students coming from war zones, challenges that students coming from Asian countries require attention as well.
youth capitalized on ethnic forms of diversity not to resist the dominant academic culture but to creatively negotiate socialization and participate in various communities in school.

In recent years, migration patterns and Canadian labour demands has posed various challenges for many Filipina/o newcomer youth in Canada. The stereotype that, “Asians do well in school” might hold for many Filipina/os as many second generation youth look relatively successful in English language rates, high test scores and GPAs (Wolf, 1997) however scholars find that there is more lurking beyond the surface (Espiritu & Wolf, 2001; Wolf, 1997). Studies by Blake et al (2009) and Wolf (1997) look at the significance of familial relations and transnational struggles. Wolf (1997) describes how second generation Filipino youth navigate between familial expectations and values and their own hyphenated and hybrid identity as Filipino-American. Based in Montreal, Quebec, Blake et al (2009) examines the impact of experiences of discrimination from the Filipino and Caribbean community. Both Filipina and Caribbean women have histories as domestic workers in Canada and this has resulted in implications for socioeconomic segregation, family separation and one of the highest high school drop out rates for both communities (Blake et al, 2009). Research done by the Philippine Women Centre in Canada cite migration as one of the major factors for the prevalence of high school drop outs and work with the Filipino/a youth to change these conditions as a transnational community in Canada.

For the South Asian community, many youth experience conflicts with traditional notions of honour (izzat) and modern society as well as a concern over the prevalence domestic abuse. For third generation Sikhs in Canada, Nayar (2004) describes the challenges they have in living with mainstream society and their community’s sense of honour. She explains that honour is deeply entrenched into every aspect of their community and many youth find it hard to negotiate between tradition and modern society. Notions of honour often create conflicts with
ideas around marriage and dealing with issues that affect the community because issues such as women’s inequality, homosexuality and AIDS are not addressed. Himani Bannerji (2000) explains that many people are coming from countries already imbued with social organization and politics of class from national hegemonic systems, such as South Asians, all of which are as deeply patriarchal and gender organized as the social spaces in Canada (p.162). The status of women in many immigrant communities are one of “property,” “the object of patriarchal command... is actualized and reinforced by the secular construction and sanction of the Canadian state (p.168).” Bannerji uses the example of wives as “sponsored immigrants” who have no legal rights in Canada independent of their husbands. This means that there is a constant threat of deportation, loss of livelihood, displacement, family separation and social disgrace, all of which makes it difficult to leave their husbands and challenge patriarchal and cultural norms.

At the level of teacher education, studies by Gordon (1994), Guyton et al (1996), and Newton (2009) present voices from racialized teacher candidates that reflect their experiences of institutional barriers in the education system. A study by Rita Kohli (2009) explores the experiences of racism that women teachers of colour faced in the education system. Their reflections explain a pipeline issue in education that means they tie past experiences with racism as systemic, privileging certain groups in attaining academic success while marginalizing other groups. This pipeline can be illustrated within racial hierarchies in the teacher education system today. While literature highlights issues of institutional experiences of racism, sexism and other oppressions (Newton, 2009; Basit et al, 2006; Kohli, 2009) Kevin Kumashiro’s work in teacher education stresses the imperative of social justice and deconstructing hegemony in education, particularly in the area of sexuality. In Troubling Education (2002), Kumashiro presents four approaches for anti-oppressive education that conceptualize the nature of oppression and the curricula, pedagogies and policies needed to bring about change. With an emphasis on queer
reading practices and mobilizing post structuralist, feminist and queer readings of psychoanalysis, Kumashiro aims to disrupt discourses of the Other and provide frameworks for teachers (candidates) facing the prevalence of heterosexism and homophobia in schools.

Many studies look at teacher candidates perceptions on issues of “diversity,” namely race and language differences but these studies rarely discuss how the demographics (race, gender, class, sexuality etc) of these teacher candidates informs these perceptions (Adams, 2010; Howard et al, 2010; Ballantyne & Mills, 2010; Virta, 2009). Moreover, there is few research done in the Canadian context on Asian teacher candidates experiences as racialized subjects in their preservice program. I addressed these two gaps by highlighting some of the ways embodying Asian informs the formation of an Asian teacher candidate as they undertake preservice education and become future teachers.

Teachers of colour within the U.S. and Canadian literature discuss the various barriers and negative experiences for immigrant and teachers of colour broadly. Many share feelings of exclusion, isolation, alienation and lack of support in the workplace, educational system and school environment (Cheng, 2002). The importance of their role as teachers of colour has been extensively explored as they work individually and collectively to act as agents for social change, working to transform schools to mitigate the effects of racism, poverty and institutional barriers for minority students (Ladson-Billings, 1994; George Dei, 1994; Benyon et al, 2000). As previously mentioned, as a “pipeline” issue studies show how it is the failure of the educational system to generate and stream prospective students of colour into educational institutions or professions (Ryan et al, 2009). Studies of teachers of colour experiences support this pipeline concern as teachers cite reasons such as lack of effort in providing teaching-related information to ethnic high school students and financial and socioeconomic needs of ethnic students (Cheng, 2002; Quicho & Rios, 2000). They also explain various systemic barriers that
dissuade them from the profession such as lack of opportunities to attain teaching positions and career advancement, poor working conditions in public schools and feeling a lack of opportunities to make meaningful changes in teaching (Cheng, 2002).

Specifically for immigrant Chinese teachers in Toronto, Wang’s (2002) study highlights the importance of teachers of colour (specifically Asian) as the presence of immigrant teachers in the school system creates support and easier schooling experiences in the lives of immigrant students and their families (Wang, 2002, p.356). Wang cites a challenge between a cultural understanding of educational practices and the Canadian ways of thinking and acting. Immigrant Chinese teachers highlight this cultural tension as something the educational system neglects. As immigrants, they cite difficulties finding teaching jobs (Wang, 2002, p.39) and reject expected roles as “transmitter of Canadian culture heritage” even though these core values or patterns of behaviour are alien to them (Wang, 2002, p.41). This is echoed in a study by Benyon and Hirji (2000) of Punjabi Sikh teachers in British Columbia, researchers found that Punjabi Sikh teachers play a complex and important role in the B.C. education system. They bridge mainstream and Punjabi Sikh cultures between parents and school staff, they communicate school activities to parents and the cultural practices to school staff and, moreover they are confronting institutional racism and sexism by creating a new model of what it means to be a teacher.

Positive role models is a prevalent reason for the need for a presence of teachers of colour in schools. An earlier study by Patrick R. Solomon (1997) looks at teacher candidates in a Toronto teacher education program and their perspectives on role modeling and representation in schools. For them, teachers of colour share cultural experiences with students of colour so they are more sensitive or aware of their concerns than white teachers: “adults with whom they could identify and feel comfortable, ones who would understand and represent their
experiences” (Solomon, 1997, p.7). Teachers of colour as role models are also seen as being in the position to dispel negative stereotypes and establish productive and inspiring relationships with students and their communities (Solomon, 1997: 8). However, this “politics of representation” is being questioned for its lack of attention towards addressing inequalities in the system (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010). A recent case study of the influence and presence of Black male teachers in a Toronto school (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010) raise important questions about the figure of the teacher as an idealized role model. The limitations of this “flawed conceptual framework” (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010, p.38) tends to homogenize role modeling and does not examine the racial and systemic barriers to access for minority students and teachers. I hope to also examine this critique of representation by exploring how the embodied experiences of systemic oppression as it pertains to race (class, gender and sexuality) can raise questions about structural barriers. In doing so, I want to avoid homogenizing experiences of embodying Asian racialization and instead, focus on how discourses that contribute to systemic oppression inform the experiences of Asian students.

In conclusion, by describing some of the literature on the history of racialization in Canada, embodiment, experience and education, I aimed to highlight a space for the contributions of my research as well as fill the gaps in literature in each area. In racialization in Canada, I traced the history of racialization for the Chinese, South Asian and Filipina/o in Canada explaining some of the policies and laws that legislate their exclusion and marginalization. In embodiment and experience, I explored the ways the body is the site where subjectivity and experience are realized through theorists in critical race, postcolonial and poststructuralism like Sarah Ahmed, Joan Scott, Gloria Anzaldua, Eleanor Ty, Himani Bannerji and Yen le Espiritu. These theories recognize these as embodied experiences but also located within discursive frameworks. I explained that the body as the site where discourse is
historically inscribed cannot be separated from the larger institutionalized structures that structure embodied experiences. In literature on education in Canada I work to fill the gaps in three areas: the first area I aimed to address was on the experiences of Filipina/o and South Asian youth; secondly, I work to portray how students deal with challenges on a daily basis and through theorizing embodiment, I highlight the centrality of the body in these experiences; thirdly, I explain the need for an intersectional analysis in literature that addresses the challenges of racialized youth and communities.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

At the end of one of my interviews, a participant asked me “how are you going to do this research and how are you going to present it?” What had seemed like an obvious and self-explanatory answer (“well, I’m going to write what I heard in a very long thesis paper!”) suddenly did not suffice as a response. My participant presented complex methodological questions, both of which I was not prepared to answer. I had to ask myself (with my supervisor’s expertise) how exactly will I conduct this research, analyze and represent their experiences?

I decided to frame my methodology using Patti Lather’s (1993) “Derridean rigour/rhizomatic validity” and it consists of three phases that are similar to Erica Lenore McWilliam’s three phases in her work: a reflexive phase, an empirical phase and a reciprocal phase. Through these various phases, Lather’s frame of validity interrogates researcher privilege and position and enacts “what it means to let contradictions remain in tension, to unsettle from within, to dissolve interpretations by marking them as temporary, partial, invested, including her paradoxical continuing investment in transformative praxis” (p.681). My research process consisted of these unsettled tensions and dissolved, partial and temporary interpretations. There were many challenges present at every phase, from conception, execution and analysis.

Throughout these phases my supervisor would ask me, what are the methodological implications of my work? A loaded and complex question that would often leave me confused, I realized that this involved the consideration of my participant’s questions which centered on researcher goals, ethics and representation. Seemingly concerned with the representation of her experiences, I needed to address and ask myself, how, why and for whom do I do this research?
An initial reflexive phase

Throughout this initial phase, I analyzed how to structure my research and how it would be carried out. I began by looking at where my research will take place, who will be involved in it and the ways to begin thinking through what this research will look like. My research is part of a larger study with Dr. Roland Sintos Coloma entitled “Preparing Dreamkeepers: Analysis of Institutional Initiatives and Student Experiences at OISE/UT” in which I am a graduate research assistant. This is a year long study taking place between January and December 2010 and looks at the institutional efforts of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) in recruiting, retaining and graduating teacher candidates of colour. There are two components to this study: the policies and practices of OISE/UT administration and the experiences of teacher candidates of colour. Our data is obtained through interviewing both OISE/UT administrators involved in the development of equity and diversity projects and teacher candidates of colour in the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program.

My research is part of this study yet set apart and distinct in its focus, methods and analytical framework. I chose not to focus on the institutional policy aspect of OISE/UT for my research but only center on the experiences of the Asian teacher candidates and how these are embodied. I wanted to make my own mark in this research using my interests with race, the body, women’s rights and Asian Canadians in education. I saw this research as an opportunity to explore these issues further, outside the structure of my work with Dr. Coloma. Secondly, I used the focus group as a method which extended the original research project that only used an interview. I was interested in looking further into my participants’ experiences through their group dynamics. Later, I elaborate on the significance of this method and its advantages and challenges. Thirdly, the use of Foucault as my analytical framework distinguishes my research in the way I theorize these experiences through framing them with Foucault’s notions of the body, genealogy and ethics of the self. In gathering my data, the implications of this framework
meant that I structured my interview questions to relate and reflect Foucault’s ideas. I considered Foucault’s interests with the body and discourse when deciding on which questions to discuss in my interviews such as focusing a section on embodying race as an Asian student or their views on teaching (ethics) as teacher candidates (please see Appendix C for further details).

Setting - Institutional context

The research primarily takes place at OISE/UT. As the largest teacher preparation program in southern Ontario, OISE/UT enrolls over 1 200 teacher candidates annually in its one-year consecutive ITE program (Broad et al, in progress). OISE/UT has four pathways for Initial Teacher Education: the concurrent program, the consecutive program, Master’s of Teaching in Curriculum, Teaching & Learning and Master of Arts in Child Study (OISE/UT, 2010). I focus on the one year consecutive program as the largest stream that admits the most applicants and graduates earn a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree and are recommended for an Ontario teaching certification to the Ontario College of Teachers (OISE/UT, 2010). As explained in the article “The teachers Ontario needs” by researchers and educators Ruth Childs, Kathy Broad, Kelly Gallagher-Mackay, Yael Sher, Kerry-Ann Escayg and Christopher McGrath (2010), OISE/UT has developed various formal and informal policies and practices since the late 1990s to bolster the number of visible minority students who apply, enroll, and graduate from its ITE program.

Sampling and profile of participants

All of the names are pseudonyms in efforts to respect and protect the privacy of my participants.

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<th>Names</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Other details</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Filipina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Second generation Filipina. Grew up in Thornhill. Currently lives there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Gender</td>
<td>Other details</td>
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<td>Qara</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Second generation South Asian. Grew up in Markham. Currently lives there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Immigrated to Canada at 9 years old. Grew up in Markham. Currently lives there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Hakka-Chinese</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Family migrated from Hong Kong to India. Grew up in Markham. Currently lives there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Second generation Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>Egyptian and German</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Second generation, identifies as mixed race. Grew up in Hamilton. Currently lives in Toronto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Profile of participants

These details are the ways my participants identified themselves in regards to ethnicity, gender, family and migration history and sexuality. The racial demographic of my participant sample consists of: 2 Filipina/os, 2 Chinese, 1 Hakka-Chinese, 1 South Asian and 1 of mixed race, Egyptian and German. Out of the 7, there are 3 males and 4 females. They are all from a similar age group (mid twenties) and have similar education and teaching backgrounds. They have all graduated with undergraduate degrees from Ontario and have directly entered teacher preservice education. Five of the seven are second generation Asian Canadians while 2 of the 7 are first generation, born outside of Canada. There were not many differences among my participants except Brian, whose experiences and identification as gay were different from the rest. Socioeconomically, all of my participants except for Brian, grew up and currently live in middle class regions in Toronto (Markham, Thornhill and Hamilton). Brian identifies himself from a working class family, having spent time in Europe as his mother was an overseas foreign worker.
I interviewed 6 teacher candidates from the ITE program at OISE and 1 teacher candidate from another teacher preparation program at another university (7 in total). This is because prior to undertaking my research, this teacher candidate (non UT/OISE) has consistently expressed to me his interest in my research and his willingness to speak about his experiences. As this study is precisely about exploring how teaching and pedagogy are used to understand Asian identity, I agreed to include him in my research. The 6 Asian teacher candidates from OISE/UT are enrolled in 2 sections of Dr. Coloma’s EDU3508H “School and Society” course during Winter term 2010. “School and Society” is a mandatory educational foundations course at OISE/UT that is taken by all teacher candidates.

The choice to interview this number of participants primarily stems from the research concerns and questions about the lack of teachers of colour in the Canadian educational system. When we sent out the invitation to participate in our study, Dr. Coloma and I invited students of colour (this process is elaborated in the following section) from his two classes and out of the small number of students of colour available, 6 agreed to participate. Moreover, I have chosen 7 (6 from OISE, 1 from another school) people to interview because I think that this sample size would provide solid data, with the right focus, to enable me to address my research question. Jennifer Mason (2007) explains “how large your sample should be is that it should be large enough to make meaningful comparisons in relation to your research questions, but not so large as to become diffuse that a detailed and nuanced focus on something in particular becomes impossible.” Thus I think that my methodological choice in choosing 7 interviews is sufficient to gather meaningful data and address my research concerns and question. In having 7 participants I focused my questions and gathered unique experiences that speak to my research concerns without “diffusing” my analysis (Mason, 2007).

This self reflexive phase required that I looked at the setting of my research, how and where I recruit participants and most importantly, my place in the research. This phase thought
through researcher theoretical and political investments by moving back and forth among various contestatory discourses in a way that resituated the researcher away from the “transformative intellectual” come to “save” the oppressed. I considered the “crisis of representation” in what interrogates representation (Lather, 1993, p.676). Validity in representation as “it is not a matter of looking harder or more closely, but of seeing what frames our seeing--spaces of constructed visibility and incitements to see which constitute power/knowledge” (Lather, 1993, p.675). Foucault’s notions of the discursive production of the subject lent itself well to this, in that I could analyze what discourses informed and were produced from the experiences of my participants.

Moreover, as a “space of constructed visibility” (Lather, 1993, p.85) meant that I needed to question what are the “specific ways of seeing” (Donna Haraway, 1998, p.583) and what is framing that. One aspect that constructed what I saw (and/or wanted to see) in my research is my background and experiences within education, teaching and community work. My research questions and concerns on education and embodiment have been largely informed by my experiences with youth and community work. I have a limited background in teaching in classroom settings but I have always engaged with educational issues and organizations that work to promote, enhance and transgress knowledge and education. I have much experience working with youth in high schools settings, looking at drama education, art and literacy. Working with youth through drama, theatre and other art forms has allowed me to explore embodiment in creative ways. I can see the importance of the body in thinking through issues of learning, pedagogy and markers of oppression in relation to identity as well as how the body negotiates between and within different spaces whether it be institutional, discursive or societal. My work with the Asian community is primarily with the Filipino/a community within inner city areas. In this capacity, I have informally researched (with activist-community organizations) issues that affect the Filipino community such as migration, settlement, systemic
oppression and women’s rights. These have raised and educated my concerns with the body and how experiences of oppression are embodied by women and marginalized groups.

Methodologically, thus far my experiences have offered me are opportunities to meet and interview various communities with different racializations, class, genders, sexualities and abilities.

Moreover, I find Lather’s concern with “what it means to rupture validity as a regime of truth” (p. 674) particularly useful as a researcher because it compels me to let go of my preconceptions, hypotheses and analyses that might affirm what I already know. Like Britzman’s “difficult knowledge” (1998) this question as a practice means that I must think the unthought of and learn to be uncomfortable in what I might find. For example, my study focuses on South Asians, Chinese and Filipino/as due to the participation of teacher candidates from those racial/ethnic groups. Because this research stems from a larger project with Dr. Coloma, this was the sample of participants we happened to receive (with no representation from other racialized groups). However, challenging this sample, I had a participant who is of mixed race and falls outside of the “Asian” category; she identifies herself as half German and half Egyptian from her parents’ country origins. As an anomalous case, I needed to figure out where to place her experiences within my scope of “Asian.” It was not easy and I tried ways to find out how she “fit.” I realized that perhaps what is important in my study and with what she shared with me was notions of diaspora and identifications as a body that is often differentiated and never quite understood. These were emphasized in our interview together and I think lends itself well in my project.

An empirical phase

The empirical phase focused on my data that I received from my participants. My analysis of their experiences as racialized students in K-12 schools and as racialized teacher candidates were informed by Foucault’s notions of the discursive production of the subject.
Thus in my data analysis, I moved across the multiple and varied discourses that constituted their subjectivity such as processes of migration and institutionalized discourses of Othering. In this section, I outline what was involved in gathering my empirical data through the methods of individual interviews and a focus group interview, the ethics and consent procedures and the various challenges in these processes.

**Gathering data: The individual interview**

The interview, described as “a conversation with a purpose” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.268) in order to “to access the perspective of the person being interviewed” (Patton, 1990, p.278) and is examined through a postmodernist perspective by James Scheurich (1997). He suggests that the researcher and the interviewee “have multiple intentions and desires, some of which are consciously or not consciously known” (Scheurich, 1997, p.62). This perspective is significant for my research as I considered and explained some of the benefits my participants could receive from sharing their experiences with me (Appendix D). In my letter requesting their participation, I explained that they will mainly benefit in sharing their experiences and concerns that can impact policies on teacher diversity at OISE/UT. This can be a liberating and empowering effect as they can voice their own feelings about their program and the education system.

However, I did not anticipate the various motivations participants might have in participating in the study. I had assumed that they agreed to participate with an interest in the study or had seen value in the work. Throughout my interviewing process, I met with participants who were more or less enthusiastic about the study than others. I felt this because of the way I read their body language and responses in our interviews. On examining *Dominance, Resistance, Chaos/freedom* Scheurich (1997) explains that, “interviewees are not passive subjects, they are active participants in the interaction” (p.71) and I felt this through our conversations. I remained mindful of “‘seeing’ resistance, [finding] that interviewees are not just
the subjects of researcher dominance, they are also active resistors of such
dominance....interviewees carve out a space of their own, that they can often control some or
part of the interview, that they push against or resist my goals, my intentions, my questions, my
meanings” (Scheurich, 1997, p.71). I felt this in the resistance or brevity in the responses to
certain questions or in the participant who chose to not participate in my focus group interview.
In this light, I explained in my letter of consent to my participants (Appendix D) that sharing
personal experiences may bring complex emotions that may be difficult to manage and I was
mindful of possible resistance to certain questions and conversations. Conversely, I also explain
that they can “carve out a space of their own” as it might afford my participants, an opportunity
they may not have had as it is an open space to voice feelings and thoughts. On the other hand, I
was mindful of the limits that some participants may have placed in sharing their stories as
respect for their privacy and confidentiality.

As previously stated, my research comes out of Dr. Coloma’s larger study so the
individual interview questions originated from that focus. Through individual interviews, I
asked about my participant’s experiences while in: Ontario’s elementary, secondary and/or post-
secondary school system (K-12). My questions addressed general experiences in schooling in
relation to being a racialized student and specifically, of Asian heritage. For example, I asked: In
what ways has your racial and ethnic background/s impacted your schooling, prior to coming to
OISE? Especially being of Asian heritage [East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or West
Asian]? What difference do you think you’ll be able to bring to the schools, especially as a
teacher of colour? As someone of Asian heritage [East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or
West Asian]? These questions operated under my assumptions that my participants’ identities as
racialized students and/or Asian had an impact on their experiences in schooling. Moreover, I
assumed that their racialized identities and/or their experiences in schooling influenced their
professional choices.
I also asked questions about their time in OISE/UT’s ITE program (or another school’s teacher prep program). My questions focused on their experiences in their programs, coursework and school practicum and how these programs address issues of race and other markers of difference (gender, sexual orientation, class etc). Some questions I asked are: How have your courses and practicum addressed issues of race, ethnicity, and other forms of diversity? What do you think about the ways in which these issues have been addressed? How would you characterize the racial make-up of your B.Ed. classes? Of faculty, staff and administration at OISE? What do you think about that? These questions operated under the assumption that teacher education programs do include and addressed issues or race and other markers of difference.

With these questions, I assumed that their racialization as Asian shaped their schooling experiences and their career choice to become teachers. This contained possibilities for examining the structure, content and execution of curriculum in K-12 schools and teacher education. It also enabled an analysis of the role of race, specifically Asian, as it plays in perspectives on teaching and pedagogy. However, while I fore fronted race as the primary factor, I acknowledged the limitations such as not theorizing other forms of difference (gender, class and sexuality). In doing this, I did not aim to ignore other factors but focused on the significance of race as it categorizes, differentiates and marks bodies in conjunction with other forms of oppression. For a full description of my interview questions, please see Appendix A for a sample.

Gathering data: The focus group interview

The focus group worked as another step that uncovered another layer of experiences or insights of my participants (Casey & Krueger, 2000). While the individual interview questions came from my study with Dr. Coloma, the focus group interview extends the themes of race in education and explores how experiences of race in education are embodied. My focus and
interests extended the initial conceptualizations of that study by focusing on the discourses that inscribe that experience on the body, addressing processes of racialization that are unique for the Asian subject. I explored some of the major themes I found in the individual interviews and discussed them more fully in the focus group. Some questions I asked were: Do you think your racial/ethnic background had an effect on your experiences, such as making friends, integrating, communicating with classmates or the teacher, understanding the lessons? How about on how you were taught? What was unique about their experiences, for example, being of Chinese or Filipino descent? What does teaching and pedagogy means for them as Asian teacher candidates.

Although some of the topics that I covered in the focus group may seem similar to the individual interviews, I think the method of the focus group allowed my participants to think about their experiences and insights differently as they interact in a group setting (Casey & Krueger, 2000). My questions and topics I prepared were only guidelines for my group interview. In that setting, my participants would often extend someone else’s response which started another thread of discussion. For example, talking about race and ethnicity brought up much discussion around Asian stereotypes the ways their bodies are perceived by others. I did not anticipate such time and enthusiasm spent on the topic but felt it was necessary to continue talking about these concerns because everyone seemed to have something to say about the topic. The focus group method offers a dimension of group dynamics that can portray a deeper level of experience-sharing and an opportunity to compare and contrast where their experiences might converge or differ (Casey & Krueger, 2000). Moreover, the introduction of another teacher candidate from another school seemed to shift group dynamics and the aura of the group discussion. As explained, Brian, who is from another teacher education program, had expressed his desire to share his experiences in the very early stages of my study. It quickly became very evident that Brian’s perspectives on race, education and teaching were different from some of
the other participants. For example, Brian was very outspoken about race and the historical and systemic oppression the Filipino/a community has endured. What I explore in my data analysis chapters, Brian was quick to assert himself as a racialized teacher candidate while others were a bit hesitant in identifying themselves in this way. There was a power dynamic at play in the presence of this tension that I subtly felt as he did not shy away from disagreeing with other participants’ responses. Nevertheless, this power dynamic offered differences in opinions which was productive in generating discussion around topics like “empowerment” which Brian was specifically interested in.

Moreover, self reflection brought me to analyze my challenges in the interview as a result of the fact that it was my first time leading a focus group. I predicted some challenges such as discussions that might stray from my topic or power differences in group dynamics however, I could not predict how these would play out. I did not anticipate the fast pace of the conversation thus it was difficult to hone in on certain topics that may have emerged and been of interest to me. I felt that I could have asked more and deeper questions about the body and embodied experiences.

Furthermore, I assumed that I would be well equipped to handle some of these challenges but I did not adequately predict that these involved a conscious awareness of my position as researcher and the negotiation of that position in relation to my participants who were also my peers. In that respect, I negotiated the positions as both researcher and peer just as they negotiated the positions as participant and peer. Those positionalities are embedded with power differentials that were difficult to prepare for but I found that I was able to balance this as I had established a good relationship and level of trust with my participants beforehand (during our individual interviews) so the focus group interview did run smoothly.

I think the focus group interview offered my participants a safe space from which to share insights and experiences and examine these in new ways. At the end of our interview, all
of them expressed that they were thankful for that space and it was “fun” talking about these issues together. They explained that they rarely get to talk about these concerns in their program and felt connected with their peers and their experiences.

Data analysis

As I analyzed the data I received from my interviews, I had three considerations. Firstly, I looked at what seemed like important issues for my participants. I looked at this through counting the amount of times a theme would come up in discussions such as the prevalence of Asian stereotypes which was talked about in every interview. I also considered an issue important if there was ample time spent discussing it in my interviews. For example, Qara was the only participant who had spoken about South Asian youth violence and this only came up once but we had spent a lot of time discussing this concern so I felt that I needed to include this issue in my data analysis chapters.

Secondly, I thought it was important to consider the data’s relationship with my research question. I wanted to highlight themes that reflected my focus on racialized embodied experiences in education and what that means for my participants as Asian teacher candidates. As we discussed their experiences in education as Asian students, my participants spoke more about their experiences with race but not as much with how these experiences affected their bodies. I felt that this could have been due to my novice experience as a researcher and facilitator; I felt that at times during my focus group, I could have moved my questions towards concerns with the body. However, during my analysis of the transcripts I felt that these concerns were implicit in my participants’ responses and I needed to read in between what was explicitly being said. For example, Qara spoke about feeling like an alien in high school as a South Asian student. My analysis of the body and race allowed me to think through the ways her body was read and the implications of feeling alienated as a racialized body in Qara’s high school.
Thirdly, my Foucaultian framework was very important in the ways I understood my data. My focus on Foucault’s genealogy meant that I was often thinking through the discourses at play in my participants’ experiences. Ethics of the self helped me to analyze the role of teaching for them and what kind of teacher they want to be. These ideas were central in the overall structure of this thesis as genealogy analyzed the significance of their histories as racialized students and how these affect their ethics for themselves and others.

Some of the data that I chose to omit from this thesis was outside the parameters this project. I felt that in order to keep my analysis focused and detailed, some themes could not be included in this current work. For example, one question I asked in my focus group was about things my participants wished were discussed in school and we spoke about sexuality. Although the area of sexuality is extremely interesting to me, I felt that the responses did not reflect my research focus on race but is still important to consider in future research.

*Ethics and consent procedures*

As mentioned, my research stems from working with Dr. Coloma on his larger study “Preparing Dreamkeepers” so we had completed an ethics review protocol in December 2009. Six of the seven participants in my study are from Dr. Coloma’s EDU3508H “School and Society” course during Winter term 2010 and one from another Ontario teacher education program. During the first class session in January 2010, Dr. Coloma and other members of our research team identified potential participants in 3 ways: (a) by last name in the class lists; (b) through visual identification in class; and (c) through an in-class interactive exercise in which students will address issues of identity, privilege, and marginalization. By using 3 strategies, instead of relying on 1, we ensured that our research participants belong or self-identify as a member of a visible minority community, a person of colour, or someone racialized in Canada.

We generated a list of potential participants using these 3 strategies and the research assistants (me included) contacted 4 to 6 students per course section (8 to 12 total for both
sections) via email to seek their participation in the research study (Appendix C). Since the participants are students in Dr. Coloma’s courses, Dr. Coloma will not be informed as to who were contacted and who agreed to participate or not. He will only be informed after the final grades for Winter term 2010 have been submitted to the university. As guidelines, the research assistants were asked to consider that the participants reflect the diversity of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds, ages, genders, and subject area specializations. When the invitation to participate was sent through email, we attached a letter of consent that outlined all of the possible risks and benefits for their participation in the study (Appendix D). Interested teacher candidates contacted me and we agreed to meet at convenient on-campus locations for our interview. The interviews were about 45 minutes long and were tape recorded and took place between February and April 2010 (Appendix A).

After meeting with approximately 5 teacher candidates, I followed up with them through email and extended an invitation to further participate in a focus group with other teacher candidates (Appendix B). Informed consent is on-going and expressed through written emails. The focus group interview took place in mid April and was approximately an hour long. It was tape recorded as well. It took place outside of Dr. Coloma’s classroom context but inside the OISE/UT building.

Throughout the duration of meeting and interviewing participants, I transcribed all of the interviews (individual and focus group). I have set a deadline to complete all of the transcriptions by the first week of May in order to have adequate time for data analysis. All of the interview recordings, notes and transcriptions will be kept safe in a password locked electronic folder in my personal laptop so as to ensure privacy and confidentiality for my participants.
Final reciprocal phase

The reciprocal phase looks at (re)constructions of the researcher’s reading of the data in its various stages of analysis through using the techniques of peer debriefing and member checks. In this phase, a Foucaultian framework meant that I constantly think about the ethics in this research. Foucault was very interested in power, how people exercise power and its omnipresence. As the researcher, I held a position of power as the person who would write and represent my participants’ experiences. It was important for me to consider how I used this power and periodically consult others who held valuable insights in my data analysis. For my research, I also use “Lyotardian paralogy/neo-pragmatic validity” along with “Derridean rigour/rhizomatic validity” as both offer unique considerations to my study. What I find important in both are that they interrogate researcher’s position of privilege, constantly thinking about where they are located in the work. Using Lyotardian paralogy is useful in that it “is that which ‘refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable’ via the constant search for new ideas and concepts that introduces dissensus into consensus” (Lather, 1993, p.679). Lather gives the example of Woodbrooks’ research in which she using member checks and peer debriefing, Woodbrooks purposely locates herself in the contradictory borderland between feminist emancipatory and poststructural positions, she interrupts, “to shake, disrupt and shift” her feminist critical investments” and moves “toward unlearning her own privilege and displacing the colonizing gaze” (p.679).

Following Woodbrooks I used peer debriefing and member checks in the analysis of my data because I also found it important to examine my own investments, ideas and researcher privilege. I spoke with my supervising committee and some of my peers who provided insight and many conversations about my Foucauldian framework, theories of embodiment and references for literature on Asian Canadians. My supervisor greatly helped in making connections between Foucault’s notion of discourse and the data from the interviews. These
conversations were pivotal in understanding how I read the data and what it meant for me to undertake this kind of research. Member checks were done via email which my participants said was the most convenient way to communicate with them. I sent them a copy of their individual interview and focus group transcripts and a draft of some themes for their input in my on-going analysis of my data. I explained that I appreciated and encouraged any feedback or corrections on my analyses of their experiences. Some of them replied back (I presume others did not because it is summer holidays) and told me that the transcripts were accurate and the highlighted themes looked good and aligned with what they shared. Throughout data analysis, I have kept open communication with my participants via email, with any questions, clarifications or information/sources that I may require.

Conclusion

The use of Lather’s Derridean rigour/rhizomatic validity and Lyotadarian paralogy/neopragmatic validity deepened my analysis and allowed me to constantly question my goals, ethics and the representation of experiences. Using a Foucaultian framework in my research involved a consideration for his notions of the body, discourse, ethics and power; these were all present and structured much of my research. There were many methodological challenges such as the relationship between researcher and participant and power dynamics within my focus group interview. These challenges were productive because they allowed me to constantly think through my goals and ethics. Furthermore, it was very important for me to debrief and discuss ideas with my supervising committee and peers and to keep lines of communication open with my participants through encouraging feedback from my analyses of their experiences throughout my writing process. Lather’s models of validity allowed me to question my privilege as a researcher, investments with my work and what it means to do this work with and for others.
CHAPTER 4: RACIALIZED EMBODIMENT
WHY DOES THE (ASIAN) BODY MATTER IN EDUCATION?

This chapter opens with a set of questions that I constantly moved across throughout my data collection, interviews and analysis. Echoing Judith Butler, I first ask, why does the body matter, particularly in education? What role does the body play in an institution? How does the institution affect the body? Why is this concern important for my research and is this concern important to my participants? Does something different happen to racialized bodies? What about Asian bodies? In what way do the study of Asian bodies matter in education?

In this chapter, I listen to why my participants consider the way their bodies are read is important to them in efforts to think through what it means to embody race. To study why Asian students matter in education means to look at racialized embodiment as a means of negotiating processes of racialization and the body responding to that in particular ways. I explain that the study of Asian bodies in education reveals how Asian students experience schooling at the bodily level as well as what this reveals about the inequalities in the educational system. The experiences my participants shared with me speak to the ways the body responds to oppression and how this response shapes their subjectivity as a racialized body. Therefore as I looked at their narratives of racism and discrimination, I asked how do they embody that? Also, what effect did these experiences have in who they became?

In Bodies that Matter, Butler argues “materiality will be rethought as the effect of power, as power’s most productive effect” drawing attention and not refuting the “reality of bodies, the relevance of science, the alleged facts of birth, aging illness and death” (Butler, 1993, p.10).

This chapter and the next will draw on Foucault’s genealogy to think through the ways power operates on bodies through discourse. Like Butler, Rosalyn Diprose is also interested in gender and sex and uses Foucault to analyze “how one’s embodied ethos is constituted by social
discourses and practices... His work on disciplinary power is useful for articulating the ways in which embodied identities are constituted, normalized and marginalized” (Diprose, 1994, p.ix). This focus on techniques of discipline and power is important to consider in my analysis of racialized embodiment because it allows us to understand how techniques regulate the body, mechanizing it in particular ways. What this means for my participants is that these discourses of race affect their bodies and who they become as “regulatory regime(s) operative in the production of bodily contours or setting the limits to bodily intelligibility” (Butler, 1993, p.17). Experiences within education and schooling are bodily and have important implications for the Asian bodies in this system. An analysis of racialized embodiment enables us to address how the system operates, what are the integral discourses and how does these affect those who live within this system.

The focus of my analysis in this chapter looks at the production of bodies through discourses of stereotypes that are particular to Asian subjects. I explore what it means to be affected by stereotypes and embody them. In doing so, I examine what discourses are specific for Asian students and the conditions of emergence of these discourses through their relationship with the state as Asian Canadian (North American) subjects. For example, an analysis of stereotypes of academic excellence for many Asian students are connected to their histories of overcoming oppression in Canada. To embody this stereotype means to either work within it and academically excel or to reject it and choose not to be “typical.” Either way, the subject is still shaped by racialization and the power of these discourses still regulate the formation of that subject. Through the stories shared by my participants they explained how these kinds of discourses are tied to the body and create the perception of what Asian bodies are and should be. Not only that but these inform how they act and what kind of student they become.
Moreover, I examine what these discourses of stereotypes reveal about racialized embodiment in the educational system at large. The way stereotypes function, circulate and how students are affected by them speaks to the negative and powerful role this discourse has in the system. Students are read in ways that are often judgmental and hurtful. As a way of embodiment, sometimes they internalize these perceptions, making them believe they are subordinate to others. Stereotypes reveal that to embody being Asian often means being positioned as inferior, stupid, violent or invisible. As this can occur on a personal and one on one basis with students and teachers, this kind of racist discourse speaks to the institutional context that these take place. A deep and meaningful analysis of how Asian bodies are read through stereotypes in education means that we are able to examine the inequalities in the system that position minority subjects in perpetual minority and marginal positions.

Stereotypes

In *Politics of the Visible*, Eleanor Ty (2004) discusses what often marks Asian North Americans as what Shirley Geok-lin Lim calls “birthmarks,” visible hieroglyphs imprinted on our bodies—eyes, nose, hair, the resonance of another tongue, the haunting taste of another culture, “along with our yellow or brown colour, mark us indelibly as other, as Oriental, as exotic, subservient, mysterious, deviant or threatening” (Ty, 2004, p.3). Stereotypes function in this way: what is imprinted on the Asian (Canadian) body often becomes that which people make assumptions or judgments, to infer stereotypical characteristics. This means that identification as Asian offers very little possibility for anything other than being a prototypical model, a token or only seen for one’s use value. This function is connected to the historical and geo-political contexts of Asian subjects. We cannot separate the conditions of emergence of these perceptions as they are tied to larger systemic and institutional relationships. In Canada, Asians have histories of exclusion, exploitation and discrimination with various state laws that
legislated much violence upon Asian residents and migrants alike. For example, when South Asians arrived in British Columbia in the late nineteenth century, they were viewed as the “Hindu invasion” and were treated with much hostility. Like other Asian groups, they were seen as “undesirables” and restricted from economic and social mobility. As I outlined in my literature review chapter, what characterized Asians was their construction as “filthy, immoral and lazy... lying, thieving, drug-dealing, gambling and prostitution” (Thobani, 2007, p.85) and they were treated as such. This history bleeds into systems like education, perpetuating a racist discourse onto the bodies of Asian students. Discursively, it signifies how education is involved in systems of implicit and explicit inequalities and my participants’ narratives of stereotypes in schooling reveal that such discrimination is still very present and remains to be a structural concern.

The bodily effects of stereotypes reveal the ways students experience this discourse and how these affect what kind of student they become. In my conversations with my participants about how they think about their race, there was a prevalence of being seen as “typically Asian.” They experienced this on a day to day basis, in conversations with teachers or classmates. Their bodies were often perceived in a way that made them feel uncomfortable or upset. Throughout every interview, Asian stereotypes were brought up. In some conversations, stereotypes were shrugged off or briefly mentioned whereas in others it carried deeper effects. These experiences were integral to their racialized embodiment as it meant they were perceived in a discriminatory way and sometimes this was internalized. This discrimination runs the risk of making one believe that they really might be inferior, invisible or only academically smart. When we talked about race and how we identify ourselves, all of my participants expressed a concern with “not making assumptions or stereotypes based on the way you look” as a racialized person. Many participants spoke about being annoyed when people assume his/her racial/ethnic background
and ask why is it someone’s first question: “what’s your background?” Although they all admitted that they often do the same when they meet a new person out of sheer curiosity, they all agreed that it was important for others to correctly know their race/ethnicity rather than assume based on a stereotypical image. Bannerji notes that this question is never innocent, operating as a “colour hierarchy,” creating and dividing two groups of non-whites- Black and colour-- an “offensive way of creating social subjects and political agents. It falls back, even if unconsciously, on the hegemonic common sense of social culture and politics of slavery and apartheid... Shades of negative differences, of being considered mulatto, quadroons and octoroons (ideologies and social relations of plantation societies) lie behind this formulation” (Bannerji, 2000, p.544)

Moreover, this quest for knowledge or accurate information, about someone’s racial background speaks to the ways the body becomes the site through which people come to know; the domain of power/knowledge. Foucault highlights the role of the body in society, “one needs to study what kind of body the current society needs” (p.58) he claims that bodies are made to fit within a social structure. The body operates through micro-techniques of power which constitute individuals within fields of domination and control: “These techniques of power are productive-- they operate on the body to transform it, divide it, invest it with certain capacities and train it to perform certain functions” (Diprose, 1994; Foucault, 1979, p.25). It is the body which is the site for self-formation: an individual ethos is constituted via work on the body. In this case, the repetition of assumed characteristics perpetuate what constitutes the proper, Asian body a.k.a. a stereotype. The individual subject (racialized, stereotyped) is produced through this operation of power in two senses: he or she is subjected to the actions of others (where the body is the object of disciplinary power) as he or she is the subject of inquiry and judged accordingly to their proximity to being typically Asian (Diprose, 1994, p.22).
Academic excellence: “The Asian six pack”

I learned from my participants that the “Asian six pack” was a common term for the kinds of high school courses Asian students usually take and are expected to take: three Maths (Calculus, Advanced Functions and Data Management) and three Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics). Many expressed that in the eyes of their families, taking these courses ensured the path to academic excellence. Asian students often receive the stereotype that they are very successful in school, achieving academic success. As illustrated in my literature review, although studies show that Asian students usually have higher grade point averages and complete more years of school than other ethnic groups, these are linked to the demands of acculturation and an ideology of overcoming minority obstacles (Li, 2001). Therefore, the apparent “success” of many Asian students cannot be separated from the historical and institutional inequalities faced by communities like the Chinese in Canada as they endured much racism and discrimination in places like the educational sphere (Li, 2001; Li, 1998; Sugiman, 1992).

Many of my participants felt the pressure to fit this model and Ann expressed that she was tired of constantly being perceived in this way. While one participant in our focus group interview, Christina half-heartedly joked about the Asian six pack, we all giggled, relating with that clever saying. However for Ann, these kinds of stereotypes have always followed her in school:

I find it really typical when people say to me ‘oh because you’re Chinese you’re good at math’ things like that... I find it difficult getting through undergrad when people say that. And they say things like ‘why do you wanna do math? Aren’t Asians good at math? Why do you need to pursue a career in math?’ that kind of thing...

Ann expressed not only frustration but exhaustion with being stereotyped in this way. Often people would equate being Chinese meant being good in math and this expectation made schooling difficult for her. To embody Chinese operates in a stereotypical discourse that
constitutes racialized subjectivity, whereby Ann falls in this category of being good at math.

John feels the same way as Ann as throughout schooling he felt the pressure to succeed in these subjects while his real interest was in history and the social sciences. At the same time, he believed that he did not conform to the stereotype of academic excellence. He explains that his race and family history are what drove his interest in the social sciences:

Yeah I’m Hakka. I wanted to figure out how my parents ended up in India... what’s going on. So that drove my kind of like my intellectual seeking, seeking intellectual knowledge. But at the same time it didn’t play that much of a role because in grade 9 grade 10 I was terrible at school, I was barely passing courses. I think there was no interest for me. I think that Asian 6 pack was kind of, in terms of culture and race, my mom and parents were definitely pushing for the 3 maths and 3 Sciences. Like “what are you gonna do if you don’t have those maths and sciences?” but again, I’m one of those Chinese people that don’t fit into that stereotype. ‘cus I like, I was terrible at math, I almost failed math and sciences like multiple, multiple times. Yeah, um, that made me wanna go into politics and history.. and yeah.. yes and no it kind of played a role? I guess its kinda weird, it played a role for me in high school to like switch into politics and history to find out my cultural heritage. But it also played a role in that parents I guess stereotypically, like Chinese people, East Asian, South Asian, even like Pacific Islanders that place a high value in being doctors, lawyers, engineers. I think personally I don’t think that its a cultural or race thing, it’s just all of the immigrants that moved here have taken that what is-- taken society’s view on what is a proper job.

For John, embodying race was a rejection of those regulatory techniques that discipline what a successful Asian student should be. He explains that being Hakka Chinese initially sparked his interest in history rather than math or sciences. He was interested in the history of migration as his family moved from China to India. He felt pressure from his parents to take maths or sciences and not doing as well in those courses made him feel that he did not fit the typical model of Asian or Chinese. Moreover, he explains that there was a belief that taking those subjects meant that he would get a “proper job” as a doctor, lawyer or engineer.2 His bodily response to stereotypes is still shaped by race: the act of resisting the dominant discourse continues to reveal the power of that discourse. Tom agrees that being Asian meant that people

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2 I further explain this Asian immigrant mentality of pursuing these jobs in Chapter 6.
assumed “you gotta be good at Math. You have to be good in the Sciences.” He explains that even his career choice was driven by the expectation to succeed in the “hard subjects,” as his parents wanted him to go into engineering. But he says “I didn’t even have any idea why I went into it. Cause it seemed like the thing to do.” Ann, John, Tom responded to being rendered as “academically excellent Chinese students” by either embodying this stereotype or rejecting it. Either way, the power of this discourse shaped their choices in school, their career and how they experienced schooling.

*Academic non-excellence: Filipina/o youth drop outs*

On the other hand, I highlighted in my literature review chapter, many students of Filipina/o background experience different challenges in school as they often do not achieve this academic excellence. Studies done by the Philippine Women Centre (PWC) illustrate statistics of Filipino/a youth in Montreal and Vancouver have one of the highest high school drop out rates amongst all students (the highest in Montreal). Together with PWC, Geraldine Pratt (2003) attributes migration as one of the main factors for Filipino/a Canadian youth. Pratt (2003) looks particularly at the struggles of Filipina/o Canadian youth through their articulations of identification and belonging as diasporic and transnational subjects. These struggles are familiar to Brian who overcame them and did well in school. However, despite his achievements, Brian shares in our focus group interview how being a Filipina/o student in the Canadian educational system meant he was often judged as “not smart” or being a drop out as well. This is what it meant to embody race as Filipina/o and Brian responded by rejecting this stereotype and worked against it:

Brian: ...And the teachers were just like extremely racist, and you would hear comments such as “Filipino’s are stupid”, “they’re all dropping out” and um, you know... Filipino’s in Vancouver at least, they have statistics, they have one of the highest drop out rates at the moment.

Sheena: Even in Montreal
Brian: Yeah in Montreal. Here in Toronto probably but we don’t have statistics yet.. but yeah basically um, hearing teachers say those things... explicitly.. (laughs) at one point, because like me, um, like my marks were pretty good. I went into York with a 90 average and um,... stupid racist teachers! (everyone laughs) yeah I went back to my high school and I told my French teacher that I got into teachers college and she said “oh that’s surprising”. And I’m like... I didn’t really know because like she was like my role model at that time.

Qara: Throw something at her (everyone laughs)

Brian: I’m like okay... she’s like “yeah I’m happy for you” and then she started talking about youth drop outs...

Sheena: Why did she start talking about that? What does that have to do with you telling her--

Brian: I dunno why. She just started talking about that. ‘Cus most of the students in our class are Filipinos, in her class and they just don’t attend her class. And she started talking about that. And she started asking me, you know, um, why? Why are there drop outs? How come Filipino students are doing badly in school now a days? I didn’t know what to say! Hello?! I was like how old? 19? When I got into concurrent program? And she said maybe its a cultural thing.

Unlike other Asian groups, Filipina/o students receive the stereotype as being high school drop outs or being “stupid.” During our focus group interview, Brian shared his frustration with the racism he felt as a Filipino student in his schooling experiences. Brian worked hard to reject embodying this stereotype as stupid, lazy and dropping out of high school. This racist discourse was so powerful that it motivated what kind of student Brian was and his career path. This experience was integral to Brian’s racialized embodiment: he knew he had to work very hard to achieve academic success yet to his teacher, he was still categorized as not capable or smart because he was Filipina/o. This stereotypical discourse regulated his work ethic to succeed but he could not escape the negativities associated with being a Filipina/o student.

Moreover, everyone in our focus group was horrified and joked about “throwing something at her” but the research on the experiences of many Filipina/o high school drop outs are very real and systemic. The Philippine Women Centres across Canada have done extensive research in the various issues that youth face in schools and how these are affected by migration, socioeconomic marginalization and institutionalized racism. Researchers like George Dei (1995)
also explore the ways racialized youth in Canada are “pushed out” rather than “drop out” of schools by the system through various social factors like socioeconomic marginalization.

Similar to Brian, Christina’s narrative portrays how the body responds to this kind of oppression by rejecting it and becoming someone who excels and needs to work extra hard in order to deal with these stereotypes. Christina shares that in her teaching practicum, a Filipina student had to work harder than everyone else in order to be “one of the smartest girls in the class”:

During my practicum, this most recent practicum, there was only one Filipina in one of my classes, and it was an IB class and it turns out she was one of the smartest girls in the class. And um, it was interesting the dynamic between her and her classmates because I could see that she didn’t really fit in to any of the groups and I didn’t really understand why because I just didn’t ... so I do think that this girl, the fact that she’s the smartest in the class and she tries to identify herself in some way, I think it is significant that she is the only Filipina in the class and she tries to be on top of it so her classmates can’t single her out in any way except for being “special” in a good way...

Christina noticed that during teaching in her practicum experience, a Filipina student was academically successful and like Brian, felt that she needed to be the exception to the stereotype and prove herself to others. Furthermore, Christina expresses that her colleague felt that proving her academic capabilities was her only way to be accepted amongst her peers and to escape any discrimination.

The stories shared by Brian and Christina are my efforts to include these experiences within the little research done on Filipina/os in schools. This gap in literature specifically on Filipina/o high school drop outs meant that I had to rely on the work of the community organization Philippine Women Centre. Their narratives show how the stereotype of Asian academic excellence does not hold for many youth in the Filipina/o community as they face different challenges in migration, settlement, socioeconomic marginalization and systemic racism.
South Asian youth violence

For Qara, being South Asian often meant that she needed to explore the negative affiliations with the violence in the South Asian youth community. Qara explains that violence among South Asian youth has been increasingly prevalent in Toronto but its roots are difficult to specify. In Qara’s example, she does not talk about being personally stereotyped but rather how an entire ethnic group is perceived through the challenges they face which is youth violence:

In terms of certain cultural groups getting stereotyped a certain way, the one thing that one of us are noticing now in the Indian and South Asian community is there’s a lot of violence that’s going on. The stabbings that you hear about, the hot house parties in Brampton, the shootings. They’re brown kids. And we’ve thought about -- maybe there is something wrong in the culture? Maybe there is some cultural thing going on but we can’t pin point what it is. And I was in a meeting, right after I met with you actually, and it was South Asian teachers networks... really developing resources trying to figure out what exactly is going on and why people are leaning towards the violent aspect of things. It’s going to be a long battle. I mean, kids get into drugs really really quickly and so...

For Qara, she works to combat this issue and understands that it is an issue of race; these instances of violence are racialized and affects an entire community of racialized bodies. These violent occurrences speak to the body’s response to oppression or what she locates within the culture as there is “something wrong” although she expresses how difficult it is to pin point. She explains that there is a prevalence of violent actions like stabbings, shootings and drugs; these are explicit violations towards one’s body and towards the bodies of others. There is a deep disconnect with the body and as a result, intense hostility manifests. These experiences are integral towards their subject formation as South Asian youth as they take on and internalize the identity as a violent community. This has very dangerous effects because as it perpetuates this stereotypical racist discourse towards South Asian youth while failing to address the crucial role of systemic inequalities, further deepening systemic discrimination.

What needs to be understood is that this bodily violence is inscribed by discourse, heavily entrenched within histories and processes of racialization and power. Although there is
research done on domestic violence, family, husband-wife relations, Desai et al (2000) explain that there is little work done in the area of South Asian youth and their experiences especially pertaining to violence. To fill this gap in literature, Sabra Desai and Sangeeta Subramanian conducted research for The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) and The South Asian Women’s Centre (SAWC) (2000) in Toronto, to directly address issues in South Asian youth experiences in Toronto. The study found that in their experiences, South Asian youth highlighted the dominance of feeling marginalized over other challenges particularly ethno-linguistic, ethno-religious or national origin. Experiences of racism and discrimination based on their skin colour was most powerfully expressed: “within the context of school, it seems as if much of the youths’ time is spent in coming up with strategies to deal and cope with teasing, harassment, name-calling and systemic discrimination within the educational system, which fosters Euro/Anglo-centric cultural supremacy (Desai et al, 2000, p. 68). Desai et al (2000) note despite the ideology of equality in Canada, these responses can only persist “through an entrenched and rooted ideology of language superiority and cultural supremacy in a radicalized society (p.66).

The provincial government of Ontario released “The Roots of Youth Violence” report in 2008 putting forth recommendations for the government to focus its resources towards disadvantaged communities that face racism, poverty and lack of decent housing. In the efforts to understand the ways youth live with alienation, low esteem, feel oppressed and hopelessness, the report aimed to address these issues and put forth viable and positive resources to impede the growth of the roots of violence for youth. However, Desai et al’s study (2000) with CASSA and SAWC illustrate that despite the literature on needs and settlement services in Toronto, “mainstream agencies are failing South Asians” because they lack the appropriate cultural sensitivity to address systemic racism and language barriers. They explain that many South
Asians “do not access these mainstream services because they are very aware that they do not understand South Asian culture and this is further exacerbated by the prevalence of racist stereotypes” (p.14). They explain that many of these studies focus on employment, language and family issues but do not address gaps in for example, access to information and service, harassment and racism and liaison with school boards to name a few (p.14). These inadequacies and shortages in existing services persist because of lack of funding although the rate of demands for settlement services increases (15). Desai et al (2000) name Wadhwani (1999) as one of the few studies that look at South Asian youth in Canada. Prompted by the increase in suicide amongst youth, Wadhwani (1999) looks specifically at South Asian youth suicide revealing 30% of her participants in her study had considered suicide: 50% thought that “family pressure” were the number one reason in thinking about suicide as an option, 60% named school as a main stress, 80% were females and 60% said they were “always depressed” (p.11).

Literature on domestic violence tend to focus on women and husband-wife relations, predicated on the notion that South Asian culture requires assimilation and acculturation into modern society for gender equality. However, the problem lies in locating gender oppression of South Asian women in Canada as simply within South Asian culture. This is simplistic and reductionist, as it reduces South Asian culture, ignores gender differences and difference among South Asian culture but fails to identify how gender inequalities and oppression are created and maintained by historical factors like racism, classism and cultural imperialism especially in an advanced capitalist society like Canada (p.16).

There is little scholarly research done in the areas of South Asian youth violence as this issue is mainly being addressed in grassroots organizations and in public new media. Many of these studies and reports reveal the dominant and increased forms of violence amongst South Asian women, families and youth. Much work needs to analyze the experiences of South Asian
youth violence, what policies and programs are addressing issues of immigration, settlement and education and not simply blame lack of cultural assimilation in Canada. There needs to be persistent analyses into experiences of violence, the structures of policies and programs, where their gaps are and examine their role in maintaining racial stereotypes and various forms of discrimination for South Asian youth. As Qara explains “it is a long battle” but it is a pressing issue that affects the lives and bodies of racialized youth.

Shy, timid Asian girl

Ann: And now that I think back, I think it’s pretty ridiculous that the teacher would do such a thing, like turning a blind eye or... but she would even join in and make fun of me with the other kids. But back then I was just like “oh that’s the way it is, I’m Asian, and I’m one of the only 2 or 3 Asian people in the class.” I just put up with it, suck it up and forget about it the next day. When I think back I think, why couldn’t I do something about it?!

Recounting a racist experience in elementary school, Ann’s frustration at her powerlessness expresses the racial and gendered construction of another common Asian stereotype. Later in our interview, Ann explains that during undergrad, she was one of the two Asian girls in her class and the professor would often... Address questions and concerns specifically to the more superior members of the class. Like the people who he would think it better at math, who would speak up and answer his questions, that kind of thing. And I find that a lot of the times I would just sit in the back and just be in the background because of that.

Asians have often been marked and represented as “Oriental, as exotic, subservient, mysterious, deviant or threatening” while women are particularly seen as either evil and hyper sexualized or subordinate and timid (Ty, 2004, p.4). While there are many layers that form these stereotypical perceptions, they point to the inseparability of race, gender and sex in the North American imaginary in the constructions of (O)ther bodies. To embody race as an Asian female is to always operate within this nexus of race, gender and sex, never escaping that one is always at
least subservient, sexualized, deviant or inferior. These representations and perceptions are a result of the historical position of Asians in North America through exclusionary laws that have translated into popular discourse. Outlining the history of invisibility of Asians in North America, Eleanor Ty (2004) explains that through “exclusionary acts that barred the entry to Asians and legislation that prevented their votes, required them to register with the government and created special rules for their businesses, all functioned to keep the Asian in North America in his or her place” (p.19). She explains that this disciplinary mode to keep order was not through force of confinement like the Japanese in WWII, but through fear and the threat of further alienation and loss of privileges. She reminds that like Foucault’s madman (1965) who internalized madness, “Asians internalized the sense of inferiority and otherness, accepting work for substantially lower wages, doing jobs that white people shunned, believing that they were second-class citizens” (p.20).

What Ann calls as being “shy,” her lack of participation in class is a result of a sense of powerlessness perpetuated by the teachers who took advantage of their position of power and her assumed subordinate status. This played a crucial role in the formation of her subjectivity as she internalized this treatment: as one of the few Asian girls in her class, Ann was often ignored and assumed not as smart as her peers thus she did not feel motivated to participate. She would lack the confidence to speak up in classes because she internalized her racist treatment and became subservient by believing she did not have anything valuable to contribute. Often objectified as “evil seductresses, ‘dragon ladies,’ geishas or frail lotus blossoms” (Lee, 1997, p.11), Asian women are caught within this racist and sexist binary, offered little possibility for other identification or resistance.

Offered “nothing else” but being evil seductresses or “frail lotus blossoms,” Leslie Bow (2002) examines notions of betrayal that are tied to the relationship with the state as Asian
American women’s literature reveals the rhetoric of allegiance and negotiation of multiple affiliations, regulating fidelity and community belonging (p.11). Through Elaine Kim, Bow (2—2) explains that the:

Objectifications of Asian Americans as permanent political outsiders has been tightly plaited with our objectification as sexual deviants: Asian men have been coded as having no sexuality, while Asian women have nothing else” (E. Kim, 1990: 69). Signifying “nothing else” but body provides the context for conflation of body parts that functions as a synecdoche of Asian female identity...Their portrayal as having “nothing else” but sexuality defined their relationship to the American state: the conditions under which Asian women were granted permission to immigrate, first as prostitutes, then as picture brides, war brides and now mail-order brides, reflects the centrality of sexuality as a determinant of inclusion (p.39).

This is particular to the Canadian context as well as research indicates the large numbers of Filipina women involved in sex trade and mail order bride industry particularly on the West coast (PWC; Pratt, 2004). Thus Ann stereotyped as the “Asian girl” in her classes is an accurate depiction of the position of Asian subjects in relationship to larger institutions like the state or the school; her frustration points to the similar racialized and gendered formation of the Asian body formed through historical racist and sexist relationships within an institutional framework. These institutionalized discourses had very bodily effects for Ann as she internalized the racism and sexism in her classes. She became withdrawn from class discussions and often felt that she was inferior to others.

Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed why a study of Asian bodies matter in education through highlighting stereotypes that are particular to Asian students. In addressing these stereotypes, I have explained that analyzing Asian bodies in education speaks to the discursive and bodily effects of how bodies are read and treated. Discursively, we can understand the discourses of inequality in the educational system that position minority subjects in perpetual minority and marginal status. At the bodily level, we see how the body responds to these experiences of
oppression such as internalizing or rejecting them. I examined the emergence of stereotypes through highlighting their historical and geo-political contexts and how these speak to the structural inequalities of the current educational system. The contemporary stereotypes such as the Asian six pack, builds upon the perceptions and racism that many Asians endured in the past by continuing it, revealing that it is still present today. It is crucial to understand how these stereotypical discourses operate because they affect the structure of the educational system and who we become in this system.
CHAPTER 5: SUBJECT FORMATION

“The evidence of experience then becomes evidence for the fact of difference, rather than a way of exploring how difference is established, how it operates, how and in what ways it constitutes subjects who see and act in the world” (Joan Scott, 1991, p.777)

“You can never deny that gay students face homophobia in school. We cannot deny that poor students coming from economic marginalized backgrounds have like the lowest chance of graduating from high school. We cannot deny that women, female students face sexism and like... like violent forms of violence. You have to identify them otherwise you can’t counter them. We can never dismantle and break those forms of oppression.” (Brian, May 2010)

In “The Evidence of Experience” (1991), Joan Scott challenges how accounts for lived experience are regarded with certainty and often uncontested. Experience becomes fact yet fails to properly account for the existence of different experiences. Lather seems to shift our attention away from the privileging and evidence of experience however, this created a tension between the stories shared by my participants which were filled with resonating conviction and narratives of lived battle wounds within oppressive systems. How am I to reconcile this tension? If, as Brian stated, “you can never deny” these experiences, what do these experiences mean for us if we cannot trust the full evidence of experience? Does experience have a role to play in who we are today? If so, what is the relationship between experience and subject formation?

For these questions I again turn to the body as the site through which we can understand subject formation through the ways “subjects are constituted through experience” (Scott, 1991, p.779). In the previous chapter, I discussed racialized embodiment as a means of negotiating processes of racialization and how the body responds to that by internalizing and conforming or rejecting racialization. In this chapter, I have extended embodiment to focus on what kind of subject is formed through the embodiment of experiences, paying close attention to the “historical processes that, through discourse, position subjects and produce their experiences” (Scott, 1991, p.779). I will focus on the discourses that shape the bodily experiences of my
participants. In Foucault’s (1971) “Nietzsche, Genealogy and History” the body is central within his discussion of genealogy. Two aspects that characterize genealogy, Herkunft (descent) and Entstehung (emergence) emphasize and provide a history to racialized embodiment as well as in the formation of the subject. Descent focuses on the body and history which is

Manifested bodily, ‘... descent attached itself to the body. It inscribes itself to the nervous system, in temperament, in the digestive apparatus; it appears in faulty respiration, in improper diets, in the debilitated and prostrate bodies of those whose ancestors committed errors.’ As Foucault says ‘The body-- and everything that touches it: diet, climate, and soil--is the domain of Herkunft. The body manifests the stigmata of past experience and also gives rise to desires, failings and errors (MacLaren, 2002, p.85).

Because “descent, then, is history articulated through the body, and through particular bodies” this implies a systematic way of inscribing discourse on the body (Butler, 1993, p.29). We can see how subjects embody racialization through discourses that are integral to that racialization but also how descent articulates subject formation. Foucault’s genealogical method provides a means for exploring how these experiences throughout years of education and schooling are inscribed upon bodies, particularly Asian bodies, “.... [matter] founded through a set of violations, ones which are unwittingly repeated in the contemporary invocation” (Butler, 1993, p.29). These “violations” enacted through modes of techniques of power in the contemporary invocation work in creating a particular body through the subjection of violence and discrimination and extricating difference. Thus in this chapter, I describe Ann and Qara’s experiences of racism and discrimination as systemic and connected to regulatory techniques of power. These techniques form the racialized subject such as Qara’s “alien-ated body” and Ann’s difference located in an “auditory economy.”

While descent portrays the formation of the racialized subject through systems of power and regulation, I analyze emergence as a means to describe how the body responds to who it becomes. Emergence is the site of contestation or struggle on the body,
Effective history (genealogy) recognizes the influence of history on the body: “the body is molded by a great many distinct regimes; it is broken down by the rhythms of work, rest and holidays; it is poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws; it constructs resistances”... Bodily resistance may result from the struggle or contestation of the various regimes that constitute it (McLaren, 2002, p.85).

Emergence lends itself to my ideas of racialized embodiment through my depiction of bodily responses to regimes of oppression. For subject formation, emergence means we analyze how the body responds to who they are whether it be one’s struggle or resistance to that. I look at John’s and Michelle’s examples of hybrid, mixed and/or diasporic subjects. I analyze their bodies as sites of contestation in two ways: one, as it is inscribed with regimes and histories of migration, their bodies defy typical racialized readings as Asian; and two, I highlight the resistance and struggle that arise from these contestations. Drawing upon Lisa Lowe’s (1991), Ien Ang’s (2001) and Suki Ali (2003) work, I think through the various regimes that are historical, cultural and migratory, that constitute John’s and Michelle’s racialized bodies, produced as sites of contestation and complexity. Furthermore, I highlight the emergence of discrimination, racism and exclusion that arose from their experiences.

The second half of this chapter uses both descent and emergence to analyze discourses of inclusion like multiculturalism and equity at OISE/UT and how they also constitute to racialized subject formation. As descent, I look at how these discourses systemically enshrine power relations which regulate and constitute the production of excluded racialized subjects. As emergence, I look at how the body portrays the struggles and resistances to these discourses. I look at how these discourses are lived at the level of the body and what kind of subject is formed from these embodied experiences.

In this chapter I aim to discuss how the racialized subject is formed through their experiences and the discourses that constitute those experiences. By bravely sharing their
narratives, my participants have provided insight into how experiences of oppression such as discrimination, racism and exclusion have significantly contributed to who they are.

**K-12 schooling experiences**

*Ann’s story- “Auditory economy”*

I used to get made fun of by the teacher. The teacher would laugh along with the students that made fun of me... And it happened more than once. And I remember some of the examples, ‘cus these are really vivid memories for me. Like one of the questions that the teacher asked at the end of the school year was “how do you feel about finishing grade 6 and going into grade 7?” And I remember raising my hand and saying “there’s going to be more strict teachers” but I couldn’t say “strict” so I think I said “straight,” like my pronunciation came out wrong. And the whole class was like, they were laughing. And the teacher was saying like “oh what do you think like, I’m crooked?!” Like she actually said that! And the class laughed some more.

An “auditory economy” borrows and extends Sara Ahmed’s (2000) notion of a “visual economy” where the subject is recognized as different from and by others based on how they appear and also, the subject comes into being through that process of differentiation. An auditory economy then, is that differentiation based on how the subject sounds. Foucault’s descent depicts the significance of all things on the body such as past events which become a part of the body and gives rise to present “desires, failings, errors;” these are integral to who one becomes (MacLaren, 2002, p.85). Listening to Ann’s story allows us to closely examine the specific, yet subtle way systemic oppression was enacted on her body, consequently constituted her self as a racialized body. Her story is a deeply powerful and upsetting moment from her elementary school experience of explicit racism by her classmates and teacher where she remembers being ostracized and laughed at for her Chinese accent. This recognition of different bodies, Ahmed (2000) argues:

[Recognition of others] is central to the constitution of the subject. The very act through which the subject differentiates between others is the moment that the subject comes to inhabit or dwell in the world. The subject is not, then, simply differentiated from the (its) other, but comes into being by learning how to differentiate between others. This recognition operates as a visual economy: it involves ways of seeing the difference
between familiar and strange others as they are (re)presented to the subject. As a mode of subject constitution, recognition involves differentiating between others on the basis of how they “appear” (p.24).

Ann’s differentiation operated within a system of discrimination and racism whereby her appearance as a foreign Other demarcated not only the physical appearance of Otherness but her voice and speech as well. In that moment, Ann is differentiated from her classmates and also comes into being through the recognition of her difference. In a double move, the class recognizes her bodily difference and then reflexively, Ann learns that her body is different. In those instances, marked as not familiar but a foreigner, an Other and a “stranger,” the racialization of Ann is produced and reiterated. Racialization through institutionalization, immigration and citizenship is also taken up in Lisa Lowe’s essay Immigration, Citizenship, Racialization (1991). Even as citizens (vs. “alien noncitizens” the binary that Asian Americans are situated in), they are put in a “differential relationship to the political and cultural institutions of the nation-state. The racialization of Asian Americans in relation to the state locates Asian American culture as a site for the emergence of another kind of political subject, one who has historically “alien-ated” relation to the category of citizenship” (Lowe, 1991, p.12). Similarly, even as a student in her class, Ann is put in a differential relationship to the institution that is her school where her Asian Canadian culture is “alien-ated” from the category of belonging her school.

Moreover, using Foucault’s descent allows us to understand how the integral experiences are, such as Ann’s, in the constitution of racialization. Using descent in Foucault’s genealogy “…sets out to study the beginning--numberless beginnings, whose faint traces and hints of colour are readily seen by a historical eye. The analysis of descent permits the dissociation of Me, its recognition and displacement as an empty synthesis, in liberating a profusion of lost events” (Foucault, 1971, p.374). I argue that the retrieval of these events can explain how
subjects came to be. For Ann, these events are almost “lost” as she shared a very personal story that she has not told anyone before. Such a story is just one instance of dissociation from herself as she self reflexively recognized her difference and displacement from her peers because of that very difference. Not only within her body but separate from it, she recognizes her racialized body and voice and distinguishes her body and voice from others. The “historical eye” is able to trace the articulation of that experience on her body permitting a “liberation” of that event. Ann thinks that her teachers failed to “pick up signals” nor be “sensitive to how [she] felt.”

Seemingly “faint traces and hints of colour,” descent depicts how important these instances are in constituting the formation of the subject rather than discounting the ways they are significant to that very formation.

Locating her experience within the educational system at large, Ann thinks that, “some teachers don’t recognize” or “are aware” of how students can feel. She experienced explicit forms of racism and has not forgotten about this as she says these experiences were “vivid memories,” etched upon her memory and body. A comparable study in the U.S., Bic Ngo’s (2006) article discusses prevalent experiences of South East and South Asian with racism in schools. Studies cited in Ngo’s article portray how some students are negatively perceived by teachers and staff because of their clothing, speech or musical interests. M.A. Gibson’s (1988) study showed overt and covert forms of racism as part of Southeast Asian students’ educational experiences as many were verbally abused, called racist slurs and even physically abused. I contend that these are all experiences inflicted on and through the body. Asian students are experiencing these based on the presence of their race on their skin, clothes and accent (voice). Although these experiences may have occurred in one’s past and are seemingly isolated, descent depicts the importance of these systemic experiences in the formation of one’s racialization.
**Feeling like an alien**

In another example, Foucault’s descent allows us to trace these seemingly disparate and minute moments and locate them within larger discourses that constitute the embodied experiences of racialized subjects. Using an analysis of Foucault’s descent, Permits the discovery... of the myriad events through which--thanks to which, against which--they were formed...to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations-- or conversely, the complete reversals--the errors...it is to discover that truth or being lies not at the root of what we know and what we are but the exteriority of accidents‖ (Foucault, 1971, p.374).

Descent portrays how events are not accidents but are always operating within a system that gives rise to these events. To identify the minute deviations is to “seek [events] in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history-- in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts...” (Foucault, 1971, p.369). Seemingly without history, descent emphasizes that although my participants’ experiences may not be isolated events, many times they are feelings that are slight, subtle and dispersed; they are very much connected to a system. What we see in Ann and Qara’s stories is that in this system, the subjects that are formed are constituted by regulatory techniques of power. To discover Ann’s being as a racialized other lies in the fact that she experienced racism by people in positions of power, who exerted that power on her and made her feel an undesirable difference. Like Ann, Qara shared what education and schooling was like for her as a South Asian student in Toronto yet what she shared was a subtle negative aura and sentiment about high school life.

Qara felt that the overall environment of her school and the absence of a discourse on race actually proliferated another discourse of alien bodies. Using descent permits an analysis of the centrality of this experience in the constitution of her racialization as alien. My analysis “follows the complex course of descent” in its systemic formation of an alien discourse. This
discourse is systemic because its proliferation worked to construct alien bodies in relation to bodies who belong in the school space. This is not an accident because it enabled an entire group of South Asians to feel the power of this discourse. Although the school’s student population was racially mixed with South Asians being one of the dominant ethnic groups, Qara still felt like that they were situated as “alien” by the teachers and the school environment overall. Qara’s observations points to the lack of discourse on race in her school and its effects which produced another discourse of alien ascribed to the South Asian bodies in the school. The majority status of that racialized group is deemed irrelevant as the power of this alien discourse proliferates the creation and mobilization of a racist and discriminatory environment that figures South Asians as alien and Othered bodies.

Foucault’s descent shows how the construction of Qara and others as “aliens” or “strange bodies” (as described by Ahmed, 2000) lies in the “exteriority of accidents” because it is connected to the systematic construction of the school as the domain and home of the white body: “To account for strange bodies is to account for the historical determination of his white body as the body which becomes home: the body that comes to matter through the reduction of other bodies to matter out of place (=strange bodies)” (Ahmed, 2000, p.52). A focus on descent traces how Qara’s body systematically became alien or strange “‘out of place’ and ‘the unassimilable’ within the home of the white masculine subject... ‘A fear of difference is projected onto the objects and spaces comprising the home or locality which can be polluted by the presence of non-conforming people, activities or artefacts’ (Sibley 1995)” (Ahmed, 2000: 53). Working within the system of the state, Sunera Thobani’s (2007) explains that white masculine subject is the exaltation of the Canadian national subject which in turn establishes and justifies the foreign Other. Historically, we can see in Lisa Lowe’s (1991) Immigrant Acts the ways Asians have been racially marked as “foreign” and “outside” the national polity
highlighting the “formations of the racialization of Asian Americans: the Chinese as alien noncitizen, the American citizen of Japanese descent as racial enemy, and the American citizen of Filipino descent as simultaneously immigrant and colonized national” (Lowe, 1991, p.8). Systematically constructed through legal terms as “aliens ineligible to citizenship,” laws such as the Alien Land Laws of 1913, 1920 and 1923 prohibited Asian immigrants from owning land and other forms of property (Lowe, 1991: 13). These laws informed legislation in Canada towards Asian groups. Similar to the treatment of the Chinese in Canada in the 1923 Immigration Act, South Asians were also denied franchise and defined as “alien residents” subject to deportation (Thobani, 2007, p.293n75). Moreover, like the figure of the Indian in Canada which has “remained an enduring mark against which national identity is delineated” (Thobani, 2007, p.14), the figure of the non-European (the non-western) immigrant has played a vital role in the experiences of national subjects (Thobani, 2007, p.15). While Lowe and Thobani provide background into the sociopolitical constitution of the national subject and its Other, my examples of the lived stories by my participants are not to be conflated with the legislated violence and intensity of historical racism experienced by many Asian people in Canada. However, I do believe that tracing this history provides insight into the formation of the racialized subject/student in Canada and has direct implications in their lives and bodily experiences.

The proliferation of this discourse of alien-ness systematically constituted the formation of Qara’s racialization in her school and her response to racialization. Qara felt compelled to

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3 Recent works on Filipinos as foreigners are taken up in works such as Anglo N. Ancheta in Gutierrez et al (2006), Roland Sintos Coloma (Abject Beings, in press a) and Yuko Bessho (2010) who explores an international case study, of a deportation case of a Filipino family in Japan.
4 For more on Asians in Canada, see Racial Oppression in Canada, Bolaria and Li (1985)
5 Asian and Black migrants in the pre-Confederation period, “were reviled and cast in the figure of the inassimilable and degenerate stranger” (Thobani, 90). Thobani lists the legal exclusions applied to Asian and Black migrants, legislations like the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, the Exclusion Act of 1923, the Continuous Passage Requirement of 1908, various head taxes and the institutionalization of race in the 1910 Immigration Act.
lead and create cultural events such as the “South Asian heritage month” for other South Asians in her school because she wanted to talk about their lives and experiences. Understanding the rituals and issues of her culture were important in how she lived as a South Asian body in her school.\(^6\) This points to a failure in the educational system which had the effect of systemically creating alien-ated bodies. None of these South Asian experiences were in the curriculum but extra curricular “except for my world religions class. Like well you’re studying world religions, it’s [my religion] gonna be one of them that you’re gonna study.” The stranger then becomes “fetishized as the origin of the difference” even if welcomed in spaces such as curriculum (Thobani, 2007, p.145). Furthermore, the representation of Qara’s religion, she felt functioned to further the divide between what she calls “an ‘us’ vs. ‘them’” environment thereby othering Qara and other South Asian students. Again, this is a systemic way of what Kevin Kumashiro calls “educating about the Other” and only poses two kinds of harmful, partial knowledges: incomplete knowledge and biased knowledge (Kumashiro, 2001, p.18). These perpetuate stereotypes and myths and can present dominant narratives as “the” experience of the Other. As highlighted in Chapter 4, stereotypes about being Asian was also prevalent in my discussions with my participants as they expressed how their bodies were always marked in ways that assumed homogeneity with all other Asian bodies. Moreover, as Britzman heeds pedagogies of inclusion “offer only the stingy subject positions of the tolerant normal and the tolerated subaltern. Put differently, the subject positions of “us” and “them” become recycled as empathy” (Britzman, 1998: 87) thereby furthering the binary opposition of us/them in “more elaborate and normalizing terms” (Britzman, 1998, p.88).

\(^6\) This theme of seeking community I elaborate and explore in the next chapter. I also examine how Qara’s mobilization of South Asian events work as a care of the self.
Foucault’s descent portrays how the formation of the subject as an alien body is systematic as Qara’s story portrays a discursive distinction between who is a stranger and who is not. Qara explained that she often felt like this “outsider inside,”

To be alien in a particular nation, is to hesitate at a different border: the alien here is the one who does not belong in a nation space, and who is already defined as such by the Law. The alien is hence only a category within a given community of citizens or subjects: as the outsider inside, the alien takes on a spatial function, establishing relations of proximity and distance within the home(land). Aliens allow the demarcation of spaces of belonging: by coming too close to home, they establish the very necessity of policing the borders of knowable and inhabitable terrains (Ahmed, 2000, p.3).

As Qara explains, she did not feel like she belonged and high school was a difficult space to “feel welcomed.” This alienation was systemic as, spatially, Qara and other South Asian bodies occupied spaces within the homeland (school) yet do not fully belong as their differentiated bodily presence always already demarcates strangeness. Policing the borders of home (school) was not as explicit but ignoring race and culture for the large population of South Asians implicitly signifies what is (and who is) “knowable and inhabitable” terrain (Ahmed, 2000, p.3).

John doesn’t speak Chinese

Emergence is always produced in a particular state of forces...the manner of the struggle that these forces wage against each other or against adverse circumstances, and the attempt to avoid degenerations and regain strength by dividing these forces against themselves (Foucault, 1971, p. 376).

Foucault’s genealogy acknowledges the effect of history on the body and I have analyzed that this constitutes the subject. Emergence recognizes the body’s struggle and emergence comes out of that struggle. It means that we analyze how the body responds to who they are such as one’s resistance to that. In this section and the next, I use emergence as a way to understand how the racialized body is a site of contestation and struggle: firstly, through looking at the multiple and hybrid regimes that constitute the body, it resists an ordinary reading; secondly, I look at the emergence of discrimination and racism that is produced from one’s
ethnic and racialized hybridity. My first example looks at John’s story as a Hakka Chinese student and his struggle in not being ordinary, he faced discrimination because he could not speak Cantonese, the language of the majority of his Chinese friends. John’s story explains that his family migrated from India to China and how that migration constituted a different understanding of his body. As it encapsulated another language and another history it defied a simplified reading. He shares:

Towards the middle of my elementary school life, it played a huge factor in integrating with different friends and what not. The funny thing is, around grade 3, I think it was ’95 when a lot of Chinese immigrants started to come into the area. Again, my parents are from India, and they’re different or a smaller minority than the Cantonese and I don’t speak Cantonese... So yeah, I’m not saying I didn’t make friends with them, I did... If they start speaking Cantonese they have a common thing there and they don’t mean to hurt you by doing that. But I remember during that period grade 3 or 4, um, there was a lot of my Chinese friends, they’d converse in Cantonese and sometimes as a joke. Not at me or my expense but you know, making a joke that can only be made in that language. So that kind of made me feel excluded at times which is kind of funny ‘cus they’re minorities too. So I always kind of re-think that oppressor thing and who it is... so yeah.

Emergence comes out of a history of forces using the body as the site where this contestation manifests. On one level, this history can be traced through the regimes that constitute John’s hybridity such as the Chinese diaspora and history of migration as Hakka Chinese. Hakkas have migrated to various countries around the world, notably India, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia and recently, Canada, the US and Australia. Sow-Theng Leong (1997) describes the migration of the Hakka Chinese people which can be distinguished by three areas: the area that was to become the Hakka homeland; the history of the southern migration of the Han Chinese people; and the timing of the emergence of a distinct Hakka dialect (p.32). Leong traces Hakka migration in sixteenth century China to their economic struggles and homeland displacement as they straddled between various regions and regional economies. At this time in China, four major basins of the Yangzi drainage supported a marcoregional economy for different Chinese groups which “...dominated the lowland core of a macroregional or subregional economic
system. By contrast, the Hakka heartland had no particular economic integrity and lacked even one city at the regional-city level in the economic hierarchy” (Leong, 1997, p.3).

Hakka can be described as an ethnic group and can refer to a dialect. Leong defines ethnicity as “essentially a form of interaction between cultural groups operating within common social contexts” (20). He distinguishes between groups speaking the Hakka, Yue (Cantonese), Min (Hokkien) or other “dialects” of Chinese” (p.20). The Hakka dialect “plays a crucial role as a subethnic marker, it is also important in Hakka mythology, supposedly backing up a claim to northern Chinese origins” (Leong, 1997, p.32).

On another level, John’s body is the site of contestation as it resists the way it is read as strictly Chinese. By not knowing how to speak Cantonese, the language of the majority of Chinese people, his body defies an absolute identification as Chinese. Ien Ang (2001) talks about the double bind that Chinese migrants find themselves in: they are often “too Chinese” or “not Chinese enough.” This feeling of not being “Chinese enough” made him feel like there is a sort of Chinese identity that he needed to ascribe to: “this identity becomes confined to essentialist and absolute notions of ‘Chineseness,’ the source of which can only originate from ‘China,’ to which the ethnicized ‘Chinese’ subject must adhere to acquire the stamp of ‘authenticity’” (Ang, 2001, p.30). He explains that although this is something that many diasporic communities encounter, what is particular to the Chinese diaspora is “the extraordinarily strong originary pull of the ‘homeland’ as a result of the prominent place of ‘China’ in the Western imagination” (Ang, 2001, p.32). Thus this ethnic identification as Chinese, Ang notes are often “externally instigated, articulating and confirming a position of subordination in relation to Western hegemony” (p.32). Although external and connected to the Western imaginary, it is also important to analyze Asian (Chinese) identification through internal relationships as it plays out between Asian communities.
In terms of subject formation, emergence uses the body to portray struggle and then forms a subject through that very articulation. While John’s body defied a simplified reading as Chinese, he also felt the emergence of discrimination from his Chinese friends and this produced his racialized subjectivity. On this level, we can understand emergence as revealing an internal “state of forces,” dominations that enable racism and discrimination and subsequently involved in the formation of the racialized subject. Ang thinks it is important to problematize the term “Chinese” in order to locate it within an understanding of globalization through the processes of hybridization (Ang, 2001, p.87). Often without an analysis of hybridization, the articulation of an Asian American identity, fixes this identity and suppresses differences—of national origin, generation, gender, sexuality, class—“it risks particular dangers: not only does it underestimate the differences and hybridities among Asians, but it may also inadvertently support the racist discourse that constructs Asians as a homogeneous group, that implies Asians are “all alike” and conform to “types” moreover, by essentializing Asian American identity reproduces dominance on nondominant groups in the same ways that Asians and other groups are marginalized by dominant culture: to the degree that the discourse generalizes Asian American identity as male, women are rendered invisible; or to the extent that Chinese are presumed to be exemplary of all Asians, the importance of other Asian groups is ignored (Lowe, 1991, p.71).

Emergence traces “the hazardous play of dominations” that can be internal to one’s own ethnic and racialized group (Foucault, 1971, p.376). In this sense, we can see how the domination of Asian groups over other Asian groups can become involved in forming their racialization. John’s experiences were part of forming who he was and how he felt as a racialized subject. He expressed that he felt excluded and oppressed because he could not speak Cantonese. Preceding John’s narrative, another participant in our focus group, Brian talked about his experiences of racism and the importance of identifying hegemonic structures and people. John feels that perhaps with racism, there is a lot more going on beneath the surface and countering hegemony or oppression is not as simple. John’s story and others like it portray how racialized experiences cannot be “encapsulated by neither Black/White nor dominant/subordinate binaries of racism”
(Ngo, 2006, p.61) but operates and exists at various complexities. Moreover, Lisa Lowe’s 
(1991) work explains the importance of a deeper analysis of the relationships and identifications 
that proliferate amongst Asian groups and individuals. Lowe illustrates as Asian Americans, 
how we are extremely different and diverse across our Asian cultures. Lowe stresses this 
diversity through Asian American heterogeneity, hybridity and multiplicity in order to portray 
and disrupt hegemonic relationships between “dominant” and “minority” positions. We see this 
in John’s story where he illustrates the complexity of discrimination and racism between racially 
similar bodies like his amongst his Chinese friends and how these experiences constituted who 
he was and how he felt as a racialized subject.

*Of mixed race*

Like John, Michelle’s racialized subjectivity is constituted by contestory regimes like 
hybridization and diaspora. Her experience provides insight into Foucault’s emergence because 
we can trace how histories of migration and diaspora were articulated on her body and the 
struggles she faced in embodying this racialization. Although Michelle could not make it to our 
focus group discussion, Michelle still spoke of the way she is perceived by others in my 
individual interview with her. Rather than being stereotyped, she explains that as her appearance 
as mixed race, half German and half Egyptian, meant that often people did not know where to 
place her or placed her as either White or Arabic:

> For me, I identify equally from both cultures. I think the way others perceive me is likely more with the Egyptian side because my last name is Arabic and I look more Egyptian than I do German. So I think that’s kind of a common perception with mixed race individuals is kind of, the public generally chooses one and kind of identifies you with that without taking the time to find out.

Emergence enables an understanding of both the struggles articulated on her mixed race body 
and the struggles she faces as a mixed race subject. The emergence of Michelle’s mixed race or 
hybridity points to patterns of migration and diaspora inscribed on her body which shift absolute
identifications with one race or culture. Lisa Lowe (2005) explains that “hybridity” refers “to the formation of cultural objects and practices that are produced by the histories of uneven and unsynthetic power relations...Hybridity in this sense does not suggest the assimilation of Asian or immigrant practices to dominant forms but instead marks the history of survival within relationships of unequal power and domination” (p.67). Lowe illustrates the relations of power involved in processes of migration and diaspora as well as the tension that Michelle and people that meet her encounter when identifying with either her German or Egyptian ethnicity.

As these histories and patterns of hybridity and migration produce the mixed race subject, emergence also permits an understanding into the struggles Michelle faces as this subject. She goes on to express the impact of her race and ethnicity with notions of belonging:

"In my high school I never felt like I fit, it was always awkward for me. To be honest, I tried not to really think about it much but you can’t really help it when people... it’s inevitable when people ask “oh what are you?” when you really don’t know how to answer. Like a lot of the times I find that I’ll say “oh I’m part German” just to try to fit in with the people who are German cus there aren’t any Egyptians in my school so I was like, “Well can I do here?”"

It was difficult for her because she always found herself negotiating between two identifications, neither fitting fully with the Germans nor the nonexistent Egyptian students in her school. Suki Ali (2003) explains that as a mixed race person “where do you come from?” was an extremely common question and passing meant that she, like Michelle, could pass as white or become an “honorary white” (p.13). She explains that she realized at times she been able to “pass” as white but not as a conscious desire to join the privileged (white) group. Rather, Ali and Michelle were negotiating identities attributed by others to multiple positions. Through Sara Ahmed, Ali explains that:

"The difference between the black subject who passes as white and the white subject who passes as white is not then an essential difference that exists before passing. Rather, it is a structural difference that demonstrates that passing involves the reopening or restaging..."
of a fractured history of identifications that constitutes the limits to a given subject’s mobility. (Ahmed, 2000, p.127, author’s emphasis)

Michelle’s mobility in passing to fit in refigures what Ali emphasizes as often “embedded in encounters that [she] cannot and/or do not acknowledge as existent” (p.13). These are structural as Michelle tried to “not to think about it much” but she is often judged despite her efforts. Perceptions as either white or coloured are structured, as Bannerji (2000) reminds us, these questions of “where are you from?” are never innocent and operate within a colour hierarchy.

**Discourses of inclusion and the body**

The first half of this chapter used Foucault’s notions of descent and emergence to look at experiences in K-12 and how these formed my participants as racialized subjects. It seeks to emphasize that subjects are constituted by their experiences. The second half of this chapter uses descent to portray how discourses like multiculturalism and equity are articulated on the body and emergence, through how the body comes out of those articulations. I move towards an analysis of how these discourses are lived at the bodily level, shaping the racialized subject.

**Multiculturalism**

John: He’s like [my teacher] ‘this is the most multicultural school I’ve been in but the most racist!’ and we were like ‘Sir, there’s no racism!’ And I started to realize that’s what he meant. Like it’s kind of implicit but explicitly it’s not like we’re going after each other making jokes but culturally, you go down to the cafe, it’s like Filipino crew beside the Chinese-- even like Asia-wise... Filipinos they’ll talk with the Chinese or like Asia-wise, they’ll interact and mesh but then there’s the Italians and maybe the Blacks here... so it was really segregated but at the same time it’s not like we showed each other like, disrespect. It was just, I dunno why...

John’s observation illustrates how the discourse of multiculturalism imbues power relations and how is lived at the bodily level. Descent shows us how systems of power attach itself and become inscribed upon the body. Within Canada, I read multiculturalism as a system of power in a “multi-ethnic, multi-national state with its history of racialized class formation and political ideology, discovering multiculturalism as a way of both hiding and enshrining power
relations, providing a naturalized political language even to the rest of Canadian society” (Bannerji, 2000, p.545). This kind of “naturalized political language” is evident in statements like “your natural attraction to your own cultural group” which John uses to describe perhaps why groups are racially divided amongst each other. Naturalizing the division conceals the power relations between groups and discrimination felt by one group onto another. It perpetuates not only exclusion of other groups but racism between them. Framed by descent, my analysis of multiculturalism depicts how the racialized subject is formed through exclusion:

Multiculturalism as an official discourse hence involves narratives of partial assimilation or incorporation (through which ‘we’ of the nation can appear different) as well as narratives of partial expulsion (through which the ‘we’ of the nation defines the limits of what it ‘can be’). Both the narratives of incorporation and expulsion involve differentiating between others, which produces simultaneously, two figures of the ‘the stranger’ including the one who can be taken in (the other who appears as a stranger) and the one who might yet be expelled (the other who is a stranger). (Ahmed, 2000, p.106)

To use descent reveals a depiction of the systemic way subjects are formed through power and discourse. Ahmed notes that multiculturalism forms the racialized subject that are two figures of the stranger. The creation of these two figures define the limits of inclusion or assimilation insomuch as they portray what is beneficial to the state. To use emergence portrays the struggle that arise from this discourse. This struggle only creates two pedagogical strategies: provisions of information and technique for attitudinal change (Britzman, 1995). It reduces the Other as remedies towards racism, homophobia, sexism etc., perpetuates these fears as abject and subjects the Other as subaltern while never examining the production of normalcy and how this functions in education. In doing so, projects and discourses of inclusion are beneficial for the state (and education) as they “produce new forms of exclusivity if the only subject positions offered are the tolerant normal and the tolerate subaltern” (Britzman, 1995, p.160). They let in desirable others while keeping undesirable others out. This discourse of tolerance is evident when Qara expresses how it was okay for students to mix with other groups:
See, I dunno if I was fortunate enough to go to a high school that didn’t have a lot of racism. We had a lot of multicultural...like how you said multicultural school and I started thinking back how our cafe was like and it wasn’t like that. Like all of the races were kinda mixed together. Like you have some of the black kids with the other kids and some of the brown kids were mixed a bit more but you’d still see a random white kid hang out with a black kid and that was okay... And like, um, a couple white guys hang out with the brown guys and that was totally okay. It was never something like “oh you don’t belong” or “why is that one with that one?”

Unlike John, Qara notes that division was not so apparent because she sees some black or brown kids mixed with other groups so she does not think that there was a lot of racism in her school. However, I argue that racialized bodies are deemed as the tolerant subaltern as multiculturalism (re)produces binaries between in/exclusion and self/Other. Multiculturalism, as a discourse of tolerance “establishes marks of its power and engraves memories on things and even within bodies. It makes itself accountable for debts and gives rise to the universe of rules, which is by no means designed to temper violence but rather to satisfy it” (Foucault, 1971, p.377). As Ahmed notes, multiculturalism produces narratives of partial assimilation (random white/black kids “mixing” and that was okay) and partial expulsion (division between groups defines the limits of who temporarily belongs) thereby differentiating and (re)producing racialized bodies as the stranger. Through genealogy as emergence, we can see how law (of multiculturalism)

...Is the calculated pleasure of relentlessness. It is the promised blood, which permits the perpetual instigation of new dominations and the staging of meticulously repeated scenes of violence. The desire for peace, the serenity of compromise and the tacit acceptance of the law... are but its result and its perversion... where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination” (Foucault, 1971, p.378).

In the high school cafeteria, we see how the result and the very perversion of the law (multiculturalism) is the perpetual establishment of new forms of domination through the division and racism between racialized groups. Through the “compromise” and “tacit acceptance” of the law/multiculturalism we see how it “satisfies” violence through (re)inscribing the self/Other binary furthering the boundaries and perpetuating racism between
racialized and nonracialized groups. The law/multiculturalism in its relentless production of new domination, does not address who lives within and on either side of the boundaries but satisfies the violence that propagates the existence of these boundaries.

*Race and equity policies and programs at OISE/UT*

Like my example of the high school cafeteria, I explore the discursive space of teacher education at OISE/UT to examine policies that center on discourses of race and equity and their effects on the formation of Asian teacher candidates. I aim to explore the (dis)connection between what the policies say and how they are lived at the level of bodily experiences. Genealogy’s descent allows the articulation of these experiences onto the body, understanding them as operating within this teacher education space. It constructs discourses of race and the racialized subject in a particular way while emergence portrays the body’s response through struggles/resistance.

As a policy at OISE/UT Initial Teacher Education program, the discourse of equity in terms of race, gender, sexuality, class and dis/ability underlie the mission of admitting, retaining and graduating teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds. In an article “The teachers Ontario needs” Broad et al (in press) examine the importance of diversity and equity minded teachers in Ontario schools. They specifically locate their assessment of the application and step by step admissions process at OISE/UT for the 2009/2010 school year, tracing the history of how this process has changed and been revised over recent years. Below is the introduction to the application for potential teacher candidates which stresses OISE’s commitment to equity:
OISE’s Equity Policy and Admissions Commitments

OISE is strongly committed to social justice in everything it does. This means that we are committed to the just treatment of each individual member of our community and the communities we serve. It also means that we are especially vigilant to ensure that differences are not treated in ways that produce direct or indirect forms of discrimination. Our commitment to social justice also means that those with whom we work and live who experience individual or systemic discrimination, for whatever reason, are provided with the means to overcome social and physical disadvantages, to the best of our ability. Profile responses that are contrary to OISE’s equity policy will be judged insufficient.

In the Consecutive Bachelor of Education program, OISE is committed to:
- admitting teacher candidates with the potential of becoming excellent teachers and educational leaders;
- admitting a diverse group of teacher candidates that reflects the diverse student body in Toronto and Ontario schools; and,
- admitting teacher candidates who show an openness and commitment to working towards equity in diverse classrooms and schools.

Descent reveals how power operates on the body through a system but in OISE’s Equity Policy, we see that OISE is working towards dismantling systemic power relations in its commitment to social justice. This policy works towards the removal of discrimination based on differences and a commitment to helping candidates overcome disadvantages that may be systemic or individual. The recent revisions and changes on the policy are efforts towards more equitable practices and addressing barriers that applicants may face in being an eligible candidate. For example, Broad et al (in press) explain that the removal of the requirement of 300 hours of experience in an Ontario classroom has been one of the most significant changes to the applications process so as to not discriminate against applicants who are not familiar with Ontario schools and broaden the definition of acceptable teaching experiences (p.18). Thus, a commitment to people with diverse backgrounds means applicants who are racialized, have different sexual orientations or abilities or low socioeconomic status have a fair and even better chance of being admitted to the program.
What OISE works to accomplish comes out of a state of contestory forces, resisting dominant power relations and using emergence allows us to see how the body responds to these forces. By looking at the experiences of my participants in OISE’s ITE program, I trace the emergence of their bodily struggle. Their experiences as a racialized subject continue in ITE where my participants noticed their bodies were still marked as other and the bodies of the overall system were predominately white. When I asked about the racial makeup of their classes all of my participants also exclaimed that the majority of their classmates were also white or could pass as white. Ann and Christina expressed that “I’m like one of the only three Asian girls in my class or in my program,” and Qara said, “I know only 1 other South Asian in my program.” Like all of my participants, Tom expressed surprise at this racial makeup of their classmates for 2 reasons. The first reason was it seemed they expected the diverse ethnic population of Toronto to be represented at OISE. They thought that since OISE/UT was in Toronto, it followed that many people from Toronto would attend OISE as teacher candidates thus they would most likely be of colour as well. Michelle, who is not from Toronto but from Hamilton explained that she chose OISE because growing up in her town, there was hardly any students of colour that she could identify with so attending OISE and living in Toronto was an opportunity for her to feel connected with other persons of colour. The second reason my participants were surprised at seeing a lack of students of colour was that the OISE application had a big focus on equity and diversity. Most of the participants really appreciated this focus on the application and felt comfortable drawing upon their experiences working with different communities for social justice issues. The application also explicitly asks the applicants to “provide information on their race, ability, sexual orientation and parents’ education.” Broad and her colleagues (in press) explain:

If applicants have otherwise equal qualifications, we might select first those who will increase the of the teaching force’s representation of Ontario’s diversity. More recently,
however, on the advice of the University’s lawyers, when choosing among applicants we have considered only information available from the central TEAS (Francophone, First Nations, and previous teacher training outside of Canada). We believe, however, that there is a strong case for using additional demographic information and hope to return to doing so. In the meantime, the demographic data continue to help us evaluate, after the admissions decisions are made, whether we are meeting our commitments.

With these efforts and policies, teacher candidates expected there to be more people of colour (or Asian) in their classes.

Moreover, my participants expressed that they were surprised at the discrimination they still faced while in their program. Another concern that came out of the interviews with our participants was what was their experiences as a teacher candidate of colour in the program and specifically if they were of Asian heritage. One response was the discomfort of being mistaken for another Asian student. Ann explains how a teacher would not be able to identify her from another Asian girl in her class:

I find that it’s very, I’m like...one of the three Asian girls in the class, so being a visible minority, I would say, I would definitely say...like my class is full of white people. One of the things that disturbed me in the beginning was my instructor, being Caucasian as well, he couldn’t differentiate me and this other Asian girl and he would keep mixing us...mixing up our names, and that’s very typical- teachers mixing up names of different Asian people. I dunno it just happens a lot and I find that a little difficult to get used to...I want to tell them to their face but I can’t really say... (laughs) so yeah...

Her experience is clearly gendered and raced as these impact the treatment Ann received by her instructor. By not being able to differentiate between two Asian girls in his class, Ann’s male instructor contributed to and continued the racism Ann found “typical” of teachers who furthered her experiences as a racialized subject in school. This made her upset as she notes it was difficult getting used to this. She felt like correcting this teacher or speaking up but felt unable to speak up. Ann’s desire to challenge this instructor is followed by her laughter, realizing that “[she] can’t really say [anything].” I connect Ann’s laughter with her sense of powerlessness to challenge or act on her concerns as she explains education in her experience
“is really dominated by white ideologies.” She did not think her contributions in class discussions would be of any value. This came up throughout the rest of my interview with Ann: feeling shy in her classes and her reluctance to verbally participate in class as she did not feel confident in speaking up. As she explained the racism and discrimination she experienced throughout her K-12 school years, the feeling of being disempowered was prevalent and affected the formation of herself as an Asian teacher candidate.

On the other hand, Christina expressed that in her classes of predominately white students and teachers, she felt like a “token Asian”:

Something that has made me uncomfortable in terms of my classes, something that always comes up is this “tokenism” policy that people believe that UofT has. And I think that, even OISE even said, they’re committed to a racially, or diverse population in the students and their staff... I think because of that, a lot of my peers, (I guess I’m insecure) whether or not if my peers see me as someone who has been accepted into OISE as a token, token Asian or token minority, but um, I’m not, I.. I think sometimes it bothers me but I don’t really dwell on it because I think my credentials stand on their own whether or not race is accounted for.

As I previously mentioned, the OISE application makes an effort to admit people who identify as visible minorities or of colour. Christina believes that this does not do enough but it also makes her feel like others perceive her as not holding equivalent credentials that qualify her to be admitted into OISE. Christina feels insecure about being singled out as the only and token Asian. Implicit in this is, that the lack of bodies or persons of colour has a negative effect and their presence is the only way that these participants could feel part of and comfortable in their classes.

Conclusion

This chapter explores some of the major themes that came from the experiences of my participants. Two features of Foucault’s genealogy informed my analysis, descent and emergence. These worked to help me understand how history is articulated on and through bodies and how the body can become a site for resistance. These embodied experiences all
worked to constitute racialization as students and teacher candidates. In the next chapter, I explore how the formation of a racialized teacher candidate works to care for oneself and others in schooling.
One of my last questions I posed to my participants in our focus group interview was “what does teaching and pedagogy mean for you as an Asian teacher candidate?” There was an unexpected long pause and then someone asked me to repeat my question. I explained that I heard a lot of different reasons for wanting to teach and through their experiences in education, people had various motivations for entering the field. I wanted to know the role of race in their views of teaching and pedagogy. In other words, as Asian teacher candidates, I wanted to know what kind of teacher they wanted to be.

In this chapter, I link their sense of self with their responsibility as Asian teachers. I look at ethics of the self and ask how is teaching a practice of the self? I am interested in examining how teaching is an ethics of self that involves both self transformation and a practice of freedom. In the previous chapters I looked at the formation of the Asian student through the discourses that constitute their racialized subjectivity. Genealogy worked to trace how those histories are inscribed upon the body through discourse and power. In Foucault’s later works, he became interested in the role of power in the one’s ethics. He explains that the necessity of power lies in occurring with as little domination as possible. Thus for teachers and pedagogy, Foucault believes ethics is a “rational technique of government” involving both “practices of the self and of freedom” (Rabinow, 1997, p.299). Thus I show that teaching can be thought of as an ethics of the self, “on the self by which one attempts to develop and transform oneself to attain to a certain mode of being” (Rabinow, 1997, p. 282).

The first section focuses on the attainment of a certain mode of being through self transformation. Foucault called this a “cultivation of the self” and I seek to examine the kind of self that is produced. Listening to my participants, I highlight 4 types of selves that are produced: firstly, “the hard working immigrant” as self transformation, which explores a
particular immigrant mentality of working hard to achieve success in school; secondly, an “Asian teacher role model”; thirdly, a “community seeking self” as they discuss teaching as a means for connecting with their families and community; fourthly, a “consciousness raising self” to create community with other racialized bodies and as a form of resistance to hegemonic ideologies.

Furthermore as I consider the various ethics and positions Asian teachers have, I connect them with larger policy questions of the importance of diversifying teaching personnel and highlight what teachers of colour and Asian Canadian teachers bring to the school system. These four figures move my discussion towards addressing the systemic inequalities that persist for many Asian Canadian students as well as the historical struggles that many Asian immigrants face which contribute to the production of these four figures. These four figures permit scholars, educators and policy-makers to challenge debates around representation and diversity in the teaching personnel because they show us that the role of teachers have very strong social and political implications that move beyond representation and towards structural and systemic transformation.

Moreover, I argue that teaching as an ethics of the self is a practice of freedom involving not simply understanding the ways historical conditions and experiences constitute us as racialized subjects but in changing those conditions as a larger structural transformation in education. I analyze how my participants understand themselves as racialized teacher candidates and how this implicates a relationship with students. I look at how the ethics in teaching becomes a method of survival in order to make the educational system livable for themselves and then for their students. As mentioned in my analytical framework, Foucault’s care of the self is an ethics towards how the subject lives their life as it implicates a relationship with others; as one cares for the self they care for others. In this respect, this chapter takes on an
ethics towards teaching and education in the perspectives of my participants as Asian subjects in teacher education.

There is little literature on Foucault’s ethics of the self in the space of education (if any) and to fill this gap, I work to grapple with ideas around teaching as an ethics of the self and locate these concerns within larger teaching and educational policies. By framing my analysis in this way I enter these important policy issues by shedding light on the different roles Asian teachers play and challenge these roles by connecting them with the discursive ways these subjectivities are formed.

*Cultivation of the self*

After examining the embodied experiences of my participants in education, through ethics of the self I aim to explore what kind of self (teacher candidate) is produced through these experiences and ask how is it produced? In asking these questions I connect the self with the role one plays with others and for whom their role benefits. Foucault describes an “art of existence” in the cultivation of the self:

The precept according to which one must give attention to oneself was in any case an imperative that circulated among a number of different doctrines. It also took the form of an attitude, a mode of behaviour; it became instilled in ways of living; it evolved into procedures, practices and formulas that people reflected on, developed, perfected and taught. It thus came to constitute a social practice, giving rise to relationships between individuals, to exchanges and communications and at times even to institutions. And it gave rise, finally to a certain mode of knowledge and to the elaboration of a science (Foucault, 1986, p.44).

The ethic of the self lies in the creation of a particular self, an ethical self. Involved in this ethical formation are one’s relationships with others. However, the first step in this process is working on the self through various practices and behaviours. As described in my analytical framework, ethics of the self involves relationship with others insofar as one’s care of the self precedes that relationship; in order to care for others you must care for yourself. I extend Foucault’s ethics towards teaching and push for challenging the ways we care for our selves and
others in order to create transformation in the educational system. By highlighting the following 4 figures, I emphasize the role of Asian teachers in Canadian schools as a political activity, rooted in histories and stories of migration, struggle and community; Asian teachers in Canada brings forth new and important ways in their contributions in education.

**Hard working immigrant**

The first aspect of ethics of the self involves self transformation, to attain a certain mode of being. The first mode of being or self that I examine is the figure of the hard working immigrant. I argue that my participants’ ethics towards teaching on one level is a way of achieving this mode of being. This achievement is perceived as synonymous with their level of success in school or socioeconomic status. My participants shared the similar perspective of working hard in school to be successful and the influence of family and their family’s culture. In all of my interviews they mentioned a particular Asian mentality or immigrant mentality when it came to attaining success in Canada. Tom, Ann and other participants equate this mentality with their family values which are tied to cultural history, as Ann shares:

Hong Kong being colonized, my grandparents had to work really hard to send their kids overseas to study. So now that’s what my parents are doing for me. Like we moved here from Hong Kong so we can have a better quality of education so my grandparents and my parents have always been imposing ideas that education is so important. So to get somewhere to move up the ladder of, the socioeconomic ladder, to have social mobility in general, you have to study and work hard and that has always been imposed onto my family, like me and my brother. It’s all about studying. It doesn’t matter what you do but you have to get somewhere to make a decent living. You know, that whole mentality.

Ann explains how her family has influenced her and her brother to work hard in school. She traces a brief history of her family and how their struggles in Hong Kong motivated them ensure their children has good quality education. To overcome these historical struggles, Ann has always strived to “move up the socioeconomic ladder” and attain a level of success in school
and “make a decent living.” Similarly, Christina also shares how her family as Filipina/os in Canada regarded education as extremely important:

I’m sure you know, one of the major, um, I guess, it’s part of the Filipino morale, to send your kids to school. And I think that has really affected me as a kid because my parents came from, well I was born in the Philippines too but umm, even growing up, they came from families where, you know, if it means sending your kids... vs. buying them stuff they’d rather send their kids to school. If it meant sending your kids to school over not eating, they’d send their kids to school. So I guess that focus and that priority has still translated to me and my brothers so I think that being Filipino and that cultural impetus to go to school has really, has really directly influenced on where I am today.

She calls this “cultural impetus” that is part of the “Filipino morale” which places education as top priority in one’s family. Like Ann and Tom, Christina’s concern with doing well in school is the practice towards attaining self transformation through levels of educational/socioeconomic success. John notes that immigrants that move to Canada place a large importance on “what society thinks is a proper job” and because of this, he explains that many immigrants or children of immigrants feel pressured to succeed or work hard in school.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that this figure is perceived by my participants as an “immigrant” rather than one’s “self”. I think this speaks to the importance of highlighting historical processes of racialization and the challenges that many Asian immigrants face upon migration and settlement in Canada and in Canadian schools. As an immigrant, this figure makes the connection with teaching as a political activity that sheds light on these issues that impact other racialized and Asian students. These larger governmental and institutional policies affect students from these communities and through positioning one’s self as an immigrant, Asian teachers have a better understanding of students’ experiences and can work to change and overcome challenging experiences.

Asian role model

The figure as the hard working immigrant is connected to being a teacher who is also a role model for their students. Both figures posit race as central in their experiences and a
determinant in who they become as teachers. This next prominent figure highlights the influence of Asian teachers as role models in their experiences and the effect of an Asian role model teacher. I discuss the representation of Asian teachers as role models figures for students but also the limits of this representation as a means to challenge traditional ideas around diversity in teaching personnel.

Asian teachers can help Asian students feel more comfortable in school. Many of my participants explained that they often found themselves seeking the presence of someone of their similar racial background. For example, Christina felt that she often spoke and interacted more with a Filipino girl in her class because she felt more comfortable with her. Although she does not do this purposely, she thinks that it is just whom she is drawn to. With teachers, the presence of an Asian body in that position of authority is necessary because participants expressed the desire to have shared histories as Asian people. Christina exclaims that is important to her because she wants to identify with “someone who might share the same history as me in some ways that they and I are alike. Especially in places like OISE, where I don’t see very many people that have that background. Um, it’s something that comforts me to know that there’s other people that are following the same path, that have maybe similar shared history as me.” She wants to know if she shares and can connect with another person and it is easier to do this with another Filipino.

Throughout their schooling experiences, all of my participants talked about the lack of Asian teachers and their concern with this lack of representation. Qara talks about the importance of teachers to represent the community and population in the school. Representation is important because she feels that it makes,

Students feel more welcomed in their school. Like, just from that one South Asian teacher in high school I knew that she would understand things. And I wouldn’t have to explain everything like, um, like they would just know there’s a holiday coming up or
they would know why I would have henna or whatever. You don’t walk in feeling like an alien kind of thing.”

In this case, the teacher influences both a larger body of students and the body of one student. Qara is “touched” by the presence of this teacher who understands her, gives her a feeling of comfort and who already knows, for instance why Qara might look different because of a religious or cultural occasion. Also, the presence of a South Asian teacher is also able to touch a larger body of South Asian students and Qara feels that enabled her and others to feel connected and comfortable in her school.

Similarly, Christina talks about the way she felt seeing a teacher who she thought was Filipina,

And so, there was this supply teacher that came one day that was close to my age and I thought she was Filipina. And so I said “are you Filipina?” and I was really excited about it and she said “No I’m not.” And then I felt really uncomfortable and I think I realized that I sometimes really miss, seeing people that I share a common history with. Um, what’s interesting is that I didn’t realize that until I saw this supply teacher come in.

Christina is surprised at the level of comfort she felt when she thought the teacher was like her, a Filipina. When the teacher told her she was not Filipina, Christina was disappointed and “really uncomfortable” in which she learned at that moment, she yearned to be in the presence of a Filipina, someone she “shares a common history with.”

The presence of Asian teachers can change and challenge traditional positions of power. During their teacher education program at OISE, participants spoke about what they thought about the racial makeup of faculty, staff and administration at OISE, all of my participants exclaimed that the vast majority were identifiable as white or at least pass as white. Many of my participants explained that they were not surprised at this racial makeup because they were accustomed to seeing white teachers throughout their experiences in the educational system. This speaks to much of the literature in Canada and the US on teachers of colour that
acknowledge the dominance of white educators and a lack of teachers of colour. One participant, Ann said that she was surprised to see that one of her instructors in her classes was Asian:

It’s kind of surprising to see a visible minority as an instructor or as a professor. When you see that, like I dunno, I personally, I noticed that with my friends as well, they would see them differently, as if they have to go pass that barrier to be at that level... So we kind of respect them more, of it’s kind of a cautious thing that I find, like “oh that Chinese guy, he’s a Ph D,” like you know... typical things that people would say I guess...

Like Christina, Ann’s reacts with surprise at seeing an Asian body in a position of authority. Ann explains that she is “cautious” when seeing an Asian teacher in her Initial Teacher Education program, uncertain because the teacher is not the normal body she encounters. Being Chinese, Ann also explains that she can relate to that “extra barrier” or challenge because the teacher is racialized, raising the level of respect for him. She feels more respect because she is aware of the experiences that other minority bodies must have faced. Many scholars have examined these barriers through the historical ways immigrant groups like the Chinese, Japanese, Filipina/o’s and South Asians have been socially excluded and exploited in Canada and the US.  

John and Tom agree, “never thinking twice about whether they were ethnic not. It was just kind of natural for me to see them as ‘oh this is the teacher.’” Like Ann, John and Tom’s bodies do not react with surprise at seeing a majority of white teachers/instructors because this is what he is accustomed to. John feels that Asian teachers produce special connections with students and connect at the bodily level. For John, their bodily presence allows students to:

Attach or respond or even engage teachers of ethnic backgrounds more quickly only because they feel like, I guess it’s bad to say, that they physically see more of a

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7 Lisa Lowe’s (1991) *Immigrant Acts* and Sunera Thobani’s (2007) *Exalted Subjects* provides an excellent analysis of the historical constitution of Asian people as subjects of marginality and exclusion through their contradictory inclusion in workplaces and markets yet excluded from citizenship and laws and distanced from national culture.
connection. But I feel like that’s how they respond, seeing someone of different ethnic background go through sort of the same stress as they do and teaching them, hey, things can get better, you can do better...and I feel like if you’re physically, I guess... it helps them see you of, I guess, a plausible role model or something that’s more realistic.

John feels that a physical connection with Asian teachers is necessary towards creating better connections and relationships with racialized students. Specifically, he feels that Asian students benefit from seeing Asian teachers because their presence allows them to connect at the level of the body. They have shared experiences as Asian bodies and these are experienced on and through the body. John remarks upon how physicality is an important way to feel connected with others. Moreover, John feels that seeing that body in a position of power allows him to model, connect and imagine his body in a position of power as well. He identifies with that position of power and he thinks it gives him and other Asian students inspiration or motivation in school.

All of these experiences shared by John, Christina, Tom and Qara express a structural concern that requires subverting hegemonic ideology. Qara explains that teachers of colour can benefit schools that have a predominately white student population because it “gives them something different to look at and experience for themselves as well. So it’s not just the same old things they’ve learned throughout their lives right?” Teachers of colour not only add something “different” or “diversify” but have the ability to transgress and subvert hegemonic ideology. Their bodily presence offers white students to experience and feel “something different” and perhaps learn new perspectives that they never were exposed to. Their bodily presence affects not only racialized students that can relate with them but also white students and thus, they are able to challenge and change hegemony in the educational system.
On the other hand, Ann does not entirely agree as she complicates the idea and body of role model teachers a bit more. She thinks that perhaps it is not enough to have Asian teachers in the school system because they still might represent the same dominant ideology:

In high school I only had two Chinese teachers and one of them was science and the other was art. I don’t find that I relate to them though... I dunno like even though that person fits your racial role model figure I find that there still isn’t a lot of room for you to relate to that teacher because of the curriculum, right? Like that teacher will just teach science the same way a white teacher.

Ann’s comment speaks to a theoretical and structural concern in the limitations of representation. The concern for more teachers of colour has the tendency to focus on the singularity of race as the central factor in determining and defining a teacher’s influence. Rezai-Rashti & Martino (2010) examine a more nuanced analysis and the need “for a disarticulation of discourses around role modeling from a politics of representation that is committed to addressing the reality of racial and structural inequalities” (p.43). The limitations of representation in Ann’s comments speaks to Hall’s (1992b) idea that “our racial differences do not constitute all of us, we are always different, negotiating different kinds of differences-- of gender, of sexuality, of class” (Hall, 1992b, p.30). To focus only on the representation of race ignores the different positions we occupy at different times and spaces as well as ignores our various points of privilege or marginality. McCarthy argues that we must “move beyond tendencies to treat “race” as stable, measurable deposit or category. Racial difference is therefore, to be understood as subject-position that can only be properly defined in “political terms”... that is, in terms of the effects of struggles over social and economic exploitation, political disenfranchisement and cultural and ideology oppression” (McCarthy, 1990, p.119). The dominance of this focus poses a danger in what McCarthy articulates as overlooking our “political terms” that have historically informed and determined the treatment of these differences.
Community seeker

For Brian, the decision to become a teacher and work hard in school was a different motivation. The challenges he and his family faced when migrating pushed him to work hard in school. He explains that his older brother did not finish school while all of his brothers were pushed back in their high school grade levels, as their education from the Philippines was not accredited. He says, “I just have to make it for my community and for my family”:

To me, um one of the factors to push me to go to teachers college was, the school that I went to was extremely racist. St. Pat’s right? We only had, we had a Filipino teacher in grade 9 and then she left. Half of the school’s population was mostly Filipino but during multicultural day we had no representation whatsoever. Like no one coordinated our booth or whatever. And the teachers were just like extremely racist, and you would hear comments such as “Filipinos are stupid”, “they’re all dropping out” and um, you know... Filipinos in Vancouver at least, they have statistics, they have one of the highest drop out rates at the moment....

Becoming a teacher as a care and ethics of the self for Brian was a way to care for himself throughout years of discriminatory education and in doing so, Brian is able to care for others (his community) or “make it for my community and for my family.” Foucault explains that, “care for others should not be put before the care of oneself. The care of the self is ethically prior in that relationship with oneself is ontologically prior” (Foucault, 1997, p.287). As Brian recalls his experiences of racism as a Filipino body and the systemic barriers in education he and his brothers faced, Brian expresses that that created a desire to improve himself and get good grades. “Making it” means fighting and working hard at dismantling those negative stereotypes of Filipina/o’s in school through attaining a level of economic and educational success. For Brian in order to “make it” for others, he expresses that he needs overcome his own barriers and “make it” for himself.

Brian’s reasons for working hard in school because of the challenges he and his family faced are linked to the way he identifies himself with a larger community. His body is the site where experiences of oppression are enacted as he explains it was important for him to
recognize that he is a part of a larger community of bodies. As illustrated in my previous chapter on Foucault’s genealogy, I learned that their subjectivity is tied to the conditions that brought them into being. Their experiences and motivations as a racialized student and as a racialized teacher candidate were in constant relation with others. In other words, their bodies as racialized subjects often sought to be part of a larger body of people and implied a connection and place within that community. Foucault’s ethics of the self,

Is ethical in itself, but it implies complex relationships with others insofar as this ethos of freedom is also a way of caring for others...it is also the art of governing. Ethos also implies a relationship with others, insofar as the care of the self enables one to occupy his rightful position in the city, the community...And care of the self also implies a relationship with the others insofar as proper care of the self requires listening to the lessons of a master. One needs a guide, a counselor, a friend, someone who will be truthful with you. Thus, the problem of relationships with others is present throughout the development of the care of the self (Rabinow, 1997, p.287).

This first aspect of ethics of the self, self transformation, is intricately linked and involves relationships with persons whom one can trust. Foucault mentions a guide, a counselor, a friend and my participants express the importance of family in their personal and career development. Qara explains to me: “the whole family plays a role in raising their kids in the family. It’s hard for me to say my parents raised me, I was raised by my family. Like my aunts, everybody was involved.” As Foucault explains that the care of the self is ethical in itself as it requires a relationship with others where one listens to those who can be truthful and want the best for you. In this case, Qara cannot separate her subjectivity and development as a teacher candidate from the care and advice of her family. She stresses that it was her entire family that played an important role in her life and not solely her parents or immediate family. This is the ethic and challenge in Foucault’s ethics of the self, working and understanding the implication of relationships.

Sunera Thobani’s (2007) explains how in the early twentieth century, South Asian immigrants in Canada faced many challenges in access to housing but it was belonging to a
community that made these challenges livable. South Asian immigrants experienced intense racism and xenophobia, socially excluding them from housing access which was a severe problem as many lived in tents and cooked on the pavements. Thobani explains how South Asians were forced to live in overcrowded conditions only receiving economic and “psychological” support from each other as their basis of survival. They provided community for each other so that, “from 1909 on, South Asians rarely applied for any sort of public relief. A thousand South Asians were out of work during the winter of 1909, but even hostile government observers were forced to admit they were well provided for (Buchignani and Indra, Continuous Journey, 34)” (Thobani, 2007, p.315). As stated in my previous chapter, while I am not equating Qara’s experiences with some of these historical conditions many South Asian immigrants faced, I do think that this history informs the lives of South Asian immigrant families today like Qara’s and is important in understanding the significance of familial relationships.

Moreover, to understand this history and locate one’s self within a community means that becoming a teacher is an important political activity. Qara acknowledges the role of her community in raising her and affecting her career decision. She emphasizes that everyone in her family like her aunts and uncles played a role in what kind of teacher she wants to be thus depicting that becoming a teacher implies locating one’s self within a community and working for the betterment of that community. In the same way, when Brian talks about “making it for his community” he is acknowledging the challenges many other Filipino/a’s in Canada faced historically and presently. In succeeding and eventually becoming a Filipino/a teacher Brian challenges representation and diversity in teaching by working to represent not just race but how his race (and racialized others) is intertwined with low socioeconomic status, gender and sex oppression and disability.
**Consciousness raiser**

In the previous chapter, I also explained how Qara talked about organizing South Asian events in her high school because of a lack of discourse on race which made her feel like an “alien.” I see Qara’s act of organizing and initiating events for fellow South Asian students in three ways: a way to recognize herself as a racialized body; an attempt at creating community with other racialized bodies; and a form of resistance. As illustrated, “subjects are constituted through their experiences” Qara’s realization of her racialization was produced in moments of alien-ation and division.\(^8\) Secondly, as ethics of the self involves caring for oneself and living in relationship with others, Qara’s organization of South Asian events allowed her to seek community with racially similar bodies. Thirdly, by building this community it is also a form of resistance from the hegemonic educational system. Connected to resistance, Margaret A. McLaren reads consciousness-raising through Foucault by arguing that consciousness-raising is a feminist practice of the self, “involving self transformation with the goal of social transformation” (McLaren, 2002, p.156). Often viewed as central to the women’s liberation movement in the US, feminists use it understand oppressive norms and conditions and to imagine a new way of life. She argues that,

> Indeed, its power lies in exposing oppressive, sexist social norms and the ways that they affect individual experience. It is this link between the normalizing practices of subjection and the process of individualization that Foucault makes explicit in his genealogical analyses. One of the ways we resist this normalization is through engaging in practices of freedom that explore new ways of self-constitution. Thus, self transformation can lead to social transformation as individuals create new nonnormalizing, noninstitutionalized ways of living with and relating to one another (McLaren, 2002, p.160).

Like consciousness-raising, Qara organizes South Asian events for other students as a means of understanding the cultural practices and normalizing structures of their culture. She explains that for “South Asian students who were celebrating things blindly ‘cus their parents might not have

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\(^8\) See previous chapter on “Feeling like an alien”
told them the exact story of why you do things. So it turned into blindly accepting things in the beginning to really understanding why things were the way they were.” By building this community of South Asian bodies, they were able to learn and raise consciousness about cultural traditions and as a practice of freedom, Qara was able to “explore new ways of self-constitution” instead of just accepting the existing curriculum and school system.

This figure of consciousness-raising extends how education traditionally addresses the purpose of teaching and of diversifying the teaching personnel in a challenging way. This figure seeks to analyze how the system works, the hegemonic ideologies that persist and for whom does this system work for. If a teacher identifies them selves as a consciousness-raiser then they are able to critique the system and work to change it. Moreover, if a racialized and/or Asian teacher who identifies them selves as a consciousness-raiser then they are able to have a deeper identification with issues like racism in schools and work with students who face similar challenges. In doing so, one raises others’ consciousness towards dominant ideologies that can be oppressive for students and teachers. This also enables an analysis into whether the educational system works for students who face discrimination based not only on race but gender, sex, class, disability and other markers of oppression.

*Teaching as a practice of freedom: Making the system livable*

Echoing notions of consciousness raising, Brian described the word “empowerment” as integral to his ethics and perspective on teaching. However, Brian extends notions of self transformation and describes teaching as a practice of freedom for those who face discrimination in schools. He explains that, “it’s empowerment. One word, teaching and pedagogy is really about empowerment, especially those who are really oppressed and marginalized... to change their conditions. To see themselves like in a different way, to succeed.” Foucault’s ethics of the self as a practice of freedom involves self determination and
new ways of self-constitution. This transformation can lead to social transformation as it analyzes current hegemonic systems. In this way, teaching is a practice of freedom as it is not simply “understanding the social and historical conditions that constitute us as subjects but at changing those conditions” (McLaren, 2002, p.160).

I argue that teaching as a practice of freedom meant my participants wanted to work to make the educational system livable for oppressed and marginalized students. All of my participants exclaim that they want to help students that feel oppressed because experiences like violence, racism and/or homophobia were enacted on and marginalized their bodies. Like previously mentioned, John expressed that many Asian students get “stereotyped” because of the way they look and he was concerned when certain bodies do not fit that stereotype. He and my other Asian teacher candidates want to be a teacher that help in including different and non-normative bodies in their school, to “feel more welcomed.” Foucault’s care of the self implicates one’s relationship with others. For Qara, becoming a South Asian teacher plays an important role and brings a deeper connection with South Asian students:

But just being South Asian and having students know that I can relate to things that they have gone through or experienced like domestic abuse in South Asian families is prevalent. Like really prevalent. So really knowing about that and having students believe that they can talk to teachers like myself or get input from somebody who knows a little but more than someone else. I feel would help them feel a little more welcome in their school. Even if it’s just an ear to listen to. I mean, it’s different--I know I’m not qualified to help out in situations like that but just to help, having them know, I know what you’re going through because I’ve seen it before or I’ve experienced it before just might give them a sense of peace or put them at ease a little bit...

Through her own experiences, she felt othered and alienated from other South Asians and she felt the South Asian events made high school “easier” and made her “feel more welcomed.” Qara used the phrase “feel more welcomed” a lot in our interview and was a primary reason for why she wants to be a teacher. Similarly, Michelle shares that she uses her experiences with being someone of mixed race, constantly feeling like a different body to teach students in her
practicum about people who are of mixed race. John thinks that he can share his stories of how his family came to Canada and thinks that student can relate to that immigration process, they’ll think “oh ok so this guy’s gone through, or his family, has gone through some struggle, some plight, there’s a lot of rich history there... this is a land of immigrants... so there’s always a story of some sort of struggle, something you’re always trying to, your families are trying to run away from and come here to try and establish a better life” he thinks that he can build a better connection and teach his lessons and students will actually listen, “be willing to listen”

Ann agrees and thinks that her experiences and going through racism make her more sensitive to students and able to better address these challenges. She says she knows not to bring it into her classroom so that students do not have to go through that and “picking up signals if you’re sensitive to how they feel. If they’re sitting in the back, I’m pretty sure they’re not having a good time.” At the same time, Ann is doubtful that her presence will offer much in education as she expresses “because this program is really dominated by white ideologies so I don’t see how my background can influence other people.” As discussed in the first chapter on the problematics of representation, Ann’s comments remark upon the dominance of hegemony and Eurocentrism that structure the educational system. As Qara, John, Tom and other Asian teacher candidates understood and negotiated the discrimination felt and inflicted on their bodies, these worked as making bearable similar experiences for other racialized bodies.

McLaren explains,

The politics of the body and the practices of the self do not begin and end with the individual. They are social, cultural and historical. Recognizing techniques of the self as political does not reduce politics to the personal or preclude collective action or structural change. Instead, it broadens the political arena to include social and cultural factors that have political implications (McLaren, 2002, p.145).
McLaren lists some of the techniques that Foucault discusses with aims at self transformation and as practices of freedom: self-writing, confession and truth-telling (parrhesia). I add teaching because my Asian teacher candidates shared the significance of teaching for them and the larger political implications of their educational experiences. At the level of the body, McLaren notes that care of the self is concerned with bodily practices as Foucault discusses diet, medicine, marriage and sexual relations. As mentioned, the bodily presence of teachers has significant effects and affects racialized bodies in different ways. In this section, I am interested in teaching as a practice freedom whereby my participants examine the significance and implications of their racialized bodies and what that means for their pedagogy.

My notion of “making the system livable” mostly captures the experiences of those who face marginalization and different discriminations in schools. It addresses how the system does not work for everyone and those who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, different abilities or sexualities may find unique difficulties in succeeding in school. Moreover, for those of us who may not experience these challenges or as teachers who occupy positions of power, “making the system livable” means that our privilege also plays a role in changing this system. Our privilege means that we are all implicated in this system and we need to work as a community to make the system equitable and livable for all. As teachers, scholars and policy-makers, to “make the system livable” pushes us to constantly ask for whom do we do our work for? And with whom do we do this work? It calls for a critical assessment of how we do our work in teaching, research or policy-making and whether or not this work benefits those who have limited access and those who are on the margins of the educational system.

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9 For more on Foucault’s practice of the self through self-writing, see The Use of Pleasure. For more on confession, see The History of Sexuality Vol. I For more on truth-telling (parrhesia), see Fearless Speech
Disavowal of race? Making sense of ethnicity and class

As I posed the question “what does teaching and pedagogy mean for you as a racialized teacher candidate?” I did not expect two of my participants to not identify themselves as racialized, especially after our hour long focus group discussion on the impact of race in education. My question was laden with the assumption that my participants did identify themselves as racialized teacher candidates. However, both John and Christina expressed that they did not see themselves as racialized teacher candidates (or racialized potential teachers). John explains that he is “afraid of identifying [him] self as a racialized teacher” because it might limit him from connecting with other students who are not Chinese or Asian: “I felt like I wanted to be there for students who were stereotyped or don’t fit the stereotype because growing up I didn’t fit the stereotype.” Race was something John rejected:

If my race is helping me connect better with a student, if that matters for that students, for me being Chinese, then I’ll be Chinese for you. Like sure, as long as you can trust me and as long as I can get you where you want, then sure I can be what you wanna be (laughs) yeah so, at the same time I just don’t want it to be blatantly or explicitly out there because I’m afraid it’ll limit me.

Michelle disagrees that it is not that simple because she feels that her race “is something I wake up everyday with. It’s not something I can turn off and on.” For her, the physical attributes constitute her appearance and identification as a racialized body and Michelle remarks that she cannot escape or change that.

But John continues and believes that socioeconomic status plays a more significant role than race in education. He explains that white people generally attain more success or are in higher positions in society because “traditionally they’ve been there and I don’t think there’s been enough time for other cultures of immigrants to catch up.” He further explains that because only in the last 15-20 years there has been a “fundamental change where you see some ethnicities raise up and get higher positions so like Adrienne Clarkson....what I’m expressing
now I guess is just a result of the past and the past wasn’t very bright for most ethnic people here.” While John makes an important point about the significance of class and the challenges of socioeconomically marginalized groups, this overlooks the interlocking relationship of race and class and how racialized groups have been systematically streamed into marginal class positions in Canada. Many critical race theorists and Canadian scholars (Bannerji, Dei, Galabuzi, Miki and Thobani to name a few) have examined the historical moments, policies and legislations that have pushed racial and ethnic groups into certain classes through exploitation on the very basis of race, sex and gender. I have discussed some of these histories in my previous chapter as it is extremely important and necessary to further explore the histories of Filipina/o’s in Canada and the US, a relationship of conquest, occupation and exploitation; the Japanese Internment and calls for redress; Komagatu Maru; genocide of Indigenous peoples and residential schools; the Immigration Act to name a few. Furthermore, privileging prominent racial figures like Governor General Adrienne Clarkson perpetuates the popular discourse of the “immigrant success” story that Espiritu (2003) explains is “embedded in the language of liberal individualism, these ‘colour blind’ myths promote cultural beliefs in innate racial difference, preventing us from seeking structural explanations for social inequalities” (Espiritu, 2003, p.8).

Christina believes that race plays a small role in her educational experiences as it is not central because: “I don’t think my race or culture has affected my educational process because I was raised in Canada too. It might’ve been different if I had been raised in the Philippines. I was raised here. For the most part I think I come from the same perspective as my non Filipino peers.” What seems contradictory, at the same time Christina does admit that it is important to have teachers of colour in the schools as growing up, she only saw Filipina/o’s as caretakers and rarely saw Filipina/o teachers. She thinks this is discouraging for other Filipina/o students because they lack a role model figure and she feels that Filipina/o teachers can have a “shared
understanding of family values” with a Filipina/o student. However, Bannerji (2000) reminds us that:

We need to repeat that there is nothing natural or primordial about cultural identities--religious or otherwise--and their projection as political agencies. [...] We are encouraged to forget that people do not have a fixed political agency, and as subjects of complex and contradictory social relations can be summoned as subjects and agents in diverse ways. (Bannerji, 2000, p.6)

John and Christina’s disavowal their race as teacher candidates also speaks to a larger concern around the power and dominance of hegemony within multiculturalist discourse as they seem to align themselves more with ethnicity rather than race. As I described in chapter 5, Galabuzzi (2006) explains that often ambiguously, race and ethnicity are collapsed and used synonymously. Galabuzzi (2006) and Banneri (2000) illustrate that within multiculturalist discourse, recognizing ethnicity rather than race ignores historical processes of racialization, offering a false sense of political, social and economic power to marginalized groups. These processes of racialization exposes the social conditions of communities, relationships of power and positions of inclusion and exclusion.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored Foucault’s ethics of the self through the practice of teaching. Analyzing how teaching can be firstly understood as self transformation and then as a practice of freedom, ethics of the self involves governing and caring for oneself and then implicates a relationship with others. I looked at how teaching as an ethic of the self produces four figures: the hard working immigrant, the Asian role model, the community seeker and the consciousness raiser. These four figures underscore the political activity of teaching as we understand that having Asian and/or teachers of colour in the system means that we critically assess how the system works and for whom. It means that policy concerns around diversifying the teaching personnel must also address systemic inequalities that marginalized students and teachers face.
As a practice of freedom, I also highlighted the importance of “making the system livable” for students and teachers who might face various kinds of discrimination and oppression. I discussed the crucial role Asian teachers play in this as they might have experienced issues like racism and I also highlighted the crucial role all play in the transformation of education. Central to this chapter is the recognition of community and that we are all a part of a community. As teachers, scholars and policy-makers who occupy positions of privilege we are especially important in understanding the ethics behind teaching, for our selves and for others. We are all implicated in this system and to “make the system livable” pushes us to consistently ask for whom do we do our work for and with? My participants shared many meaningful experiences and insights into teaching and pedagogy and have a personal understanding of the challenges in education that many students and teachers face. According to my participant Brian: “For me, tackling those forms of oppression will transform the education system itself. You have to tackle those forms of oppression itself... as long as we identify those... we can never dismantle and break those forms of oppression.”
In this chapter I think through the limits of studying race and education. I think it is important to highlight the limits because it allows us to challenge the way we understand others and their experiences therefore creating better possibilities in education. Throughout my thesis I have focused on how subjects (students and teachers) embody race in education through the discourses that are involved in processes of racialization. I also assert their experiences as racialized subjects are constituted by these discourses and form who they become. To analyze race and the bodily experiences of racialized subjects in education also means that we analyze how race and racialization are intertwined and cannot be separated from class, gender, sexuality and ability. By studying the limits of the racialized body and education I simultaneously highlight the importance of the racialized body: we understand that the study of bodies is important, so how do we create a new space for different bodies?

The only way to do this is to not be limited by solely analyzing race but understanding that race is constituted by other factors as well. This has important implications in the educational system for: (1) scholars, policy-makers and educators that work to diversify the teaching personnel; and (2) those involved in creating curriculum and the educators that teach the curriculum.

I have raised three critiques throughout my thesis and in this chapter I analyze how these critiques speak to the limits of race and education and how these help in creating new possibilities for students. I discuss the limits of diversifying teaching personnel to include racialized teachers does not address the dominance and continuation of white ideology and practice in schools. Ann explains that the system is so powerful that she feels she cannot affect students in any way because she cannot change the hegemonic ideologies. Secondly, I discuss
how some of my participants disavowed their race because they felt it was important to address the socioeconomic challenges students may face. Highlighting class means that we can understand how poverty is racialized and always works in a system that privileges some groups over others. Lastly, I push for an intersectional analysis to reveal how race is intertwined with class, gender, sexuality and disability. These three critiques press for an assessment of the educational system and our role within it. They are concerned with evaluating how our work marginalizes, includes and excludes bodies and how can our work create possibilities and spaces for all and different bodies.

Limit-experience

According to Foucault, it is necessary to study limits because it pushes one to defy the limits of understanding the self. It is an ethics of the self as a means of self-actualization. S. Lyng (2005) explains that it is “a project of self-creation that enables individuals to explore and identify new possibilities of being and doing” (Gastaldo et al, 2006: 328). Limit-experience occurs when the subject is torn from itself enabling a transgression of barriers to create new understandings (Foucault, 1994). Foucault believed that the body must push boundaries as a means of self-creation by playing with the lines that separate for example, what is normal and deviant.

Analytically, to study limits is the only form of resistance because as it defies conventional readings it allows us to transgress boundaries in theory and practice. Lyng (2005) believes that, “playing with boundaries and transgressing them at times may be the sole remaining form of resistance available, one of the few independent human possibilities left in a disciplinary society where regulations and the reifications of normative behaviours is pervasive” (Gastaldo et al, 2006: 329). As an effective method, one must understand that the focus is not
about moving to the end, the outside or even to the furthest one can go. Rather, Gastaldo et al.
(2006) explain that Foucault’s limit-experience is a process and a method of “pushing the
limits.” For transgression to be effective, one must play with limits without overcoming them.

Therefore, to study the limits of race and education means that we push our
understanding of the bodies that are in the educational system but simultaneously work within
this system as well. It means that we push to understand how they are multiply constituted and
not just by race. In order to do this, Foucault believes that we cannot overcome our limits yet
still work to transgress them. This is important for scholars, educators and policy-makers
because this implies that we can most effectively do this by the work we do in the educational
system.

Moreover, for scholars, educators and policy-makers to study limits allows an
examination in the current educational policies and programs so that we can strive for their
improvement. To study limits is also an ethic of the self, a way of becoming. As we evaluate
how the educational system and our role in it we are able to push what we already know and
teach in order to work towards creating new possibilities in education.

Critiques: representation, disavowal and intersectionality

I have identified three critiques throughout my analysis of race and education and they
speak to the limits of focusing solely on race as a determinant in embodied experiences and the
larger structural concerns in education. The first area analyzes the limits of representation of
teachers of colour and Asian teachers. Ann, one of my participants, expressed that she does not
think her presence as an Asian teacher is useful for students nor will it change the educational
system because she believes that the system is “dominated by white ideologies.” To be an Asian
teacher is not enough to address nor change the difficult experiences students have like racism
or other forms of discrimination. Her comments speak to a larger institutional power that
governs the racialized bodies in this space. Ann identifies the power of the institution and the
hegemonic discourses they distribute. She feels that her effect as a racialized teacher is limited
by the powerful hegemonic ideologies in the system so that she “will probably teach history the
same way a white teacher will teach it.” She does not think there is room to make changes in her
lessons nor make an effect in them because the curriculum is already laden with dominant, white
ideology.

As limit-experience we can understand Ann’s frustration as a means for acknowledging
how we understand and work in the educational system. We need to critically examine how we
work, who and what we work for so as to not to “follow blindly” (in the words of Qara) but
really push and ask ourselves if and how is the system working? Teachers who are of colour or
not of colour cannot just be machines or robots in the system distributing information to
students. Michelle notes that, “our instructors need to talk about that more, like using the
students and learning from them too. And it’s not just us that are teaching them. It works both
ways.” If we are to understand teaching as a dialogic relationship between teacher and student
then we cannot allow the institution to permit our complicity to dominant ways of teaching.

Secondly, in my work I discussed a disavowal of race by some of my participants in my
focus group interview as a way to recognize the importance of other markers like class.
Christina and John believed that a major challenge many students face is socioeconomic
marginalization. Although they admitted that they were “afraid of identifying [them]selves as a
racialized teacher candidate” they highlighted the importance of identifying the role of
socioeconomic status when it came to relating with students. This is crucial in our learning of
race and racialization because we are able to understand how poverty is racialized. As I
illustrated in my discussions of racialization in Canada (alongside Himani Bannerji, Grace
Galabuzi, Roy Miki and Sunera Thobani) poverty is systemic and we see this most evidently in
the various policies, laws and programs that excluded and exploited South Asian, Chinese and Filipina/o migrants and residents alike. As limit-experience this means that we push the ways we understand our roles as Asian/racialized teachers to understand how we occupy various points of marginality and privilege in race, class, gender, sexuality and ability.

My third critique analyzes the need for an intersectional analysis that accounts for the ways race, gender, class, sexuality and ability play a role in our subject formation. This is not to discount the importance of my analysis of racialized experiences but works to highlight the uniqueness of racialized experiences as they are constituted by various other factors. Intersection acknowledges the necessary connectedness of race as it is intertwined with other experiences. Each racialized embodied experience is different because it negotiates other points of privilege and marginality that we may have. For teachers, scholars and policy-makers that highlight race, we must ask, if we are racialized what about our other privileges? How do we address them? We cannot forget that we all occupy different points at different times so that although we are Asian or racialized does not mean that we will have an understanding of poverty, homophobia, sexism or disability. This kind of analysis allows teachers, scholars and policy-makers to recognize the various communities we work for and with and assess whether we are addressing and truly changing their conditions.

Conclusion

In this analysis I use Foucault’s notion of limit-experience to push the way we think about the study of race and education. I argue that when we transgress the boundaries of our theories and practice we are able to create possibilities for new ones. Foucault explained that in pushing limits we must learn to play with them and not overcome them. Thus, as teachers, scholars and policy-makers this means that we are able to do this within the systems that we work in. Not only are we able but we must do this work within the educational system as it is
the ethic of self actualization: pushing the limits of our understanding is part of creating new ways of seeing, thinking and doing. Only then are we able to create possibilities in education for every body.
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Summary

I began this research with a vague idea about what I might find and the hopeful preparedness for uncertainty that would challenge these preconceptions. I worked to center my project around questions of race and embodiment in education, specifically asking: how do the embodied experiences of a racialized student inform the formation of the racialized teacher candidate? I used each of my data analysis chapters to answer this question.

In Chapter 4, I asked “why does the body matter in education?” I argued for a closer understanding of the embodied experiences of Asian students. To study why Asian students matter in education means to look at racialized embodiment as a means of negotiating processes of racialization and the body responding to that in particular ways. I described that the study of Asian bodies in education reveals how Asian students experience schooling at the bodily level as well as the inequalities in the educational system. The experiences my participants shared with me portrayed a concern with Asian stereotypes. My focus on looking at these stereotypes speak to the ways the body responds to discrimination and oppression and how this response shapes their subjectivity as a racialized body. For example, I looked at stereotypes of academic excellence for many Asian students and found that these are connected to their histories of overcoming oppression in Canada. To embody this stereotype means to either work within it and academically excel or to reject it and choose not to be “typical.” Either way, the subject is still shaped by racialization and the power of these discourses still regulate the formation of that subject. Often, my participants shared the negative effects of this stereotype, making schooling difficult as it devalued their unconventional interests or who they were if they were different.
In Chapter 5, I asked “what is the relationship between experience and subject formation?” With the help of Joan Scott (1991) and Foucault, I found that subjects are formed through their experiences and the body was an important site to trace the discourses that inscribe these experiences onto the body. Using Foucault’s notion of descent in genealogy, I looked at how discourse becomes systemically inscribed onto bodies through processes of racialization that form experiences of racism and discrimination. For example, we can understand how Qara felt like an “alien” in her high school or how Ann was ostracized for her Chinese accent, were processes of racialization that were systemic forms of discrimination, racism and exclusion. These experiences contributed to the production of Qara and Ann’s racialized subjectivity. Foucault’s notion of emergence examines how the body is a site of contestation and the emergence of discourses and experiences of struggle that manifest. I looked at John and Michelle, whose hybrid/mixed ethnicity created a different understanding of their bodies. I traced the emergence of this understanding through the various regimes that constituted their hybridity/mix such as migration and diaspora. Moreover, emergence reveals how these regimes and discourses are involved in the formation of the racialized subject through the emergence of experiences of racism and discrimination. The second half of this chapter looked at descent to examine how discourses of multiculturalism in schooling and policies of equity and inclusion in teacher preservice education “descend” or are articulated on the body and then emergence as the way the body “emerges” or comes out of these discourses. I showed how descent reveals the systemic way multiculturalism forms racialized subjects through exclusion as strangers (via Ahmed) or “tolerated others” (via Britzman). This was evident in my examples of the high school cafeteria and experiences of exclusion and Othering in OISE/UT’s ITE program. I used emergence to portray how the body experiences these discourses of inclusion and equity; my
participants shared that as the few Asian teacher candidates in their program, they felt they were marked as Other and tokenized, noticing their program had predominantly white bodies.

In Chapter 6, I asked “what does teaching mean for Asian Canadian educators in the K-12 school system?” to link my participants’ sense of self with their responsibility/ethics as Asian teacher candidates. I examined how teaching is an ethics of the self that involves both self transformation and a practice of freedom. By exploring four figures that are produced through their perspectives on ethics in education, I connected these with larger policy concerns with the importance of diversifying teaching personnel. These four figures shifted my discussion towards addressing the systemic inequalities that persist for many Asian Canadian students as well as the historical struggles that many Asian immigrants face which contribute to the production of these four figures. A tenant to ethics of the self is the relationship one has with others thus I looked at teaching as a practice of freedom through the notion of “making the system livable.” I found that an important aspect of teaching for my participants was self determination that lead to social and systemic transformation. In other words, teaching as a practice of freedom was a way to help students who felt oppressed and marginalized in the educational system. The last section of this chapter worked to make sense of the way some of my participants disavowed their race.

In my last chapter, I examined three critiques that emerged in my thesis and how these critiques allow scholars, educators and policy makers to assess their work in diversifying the teaching personnel and in creating curriculum. I explain that in doing so, we are able to create more and better possibilities for all bodies that navigate and negotiate the educational space. I used Foucault’s notion of “limit-experience” to push our understanding of race and education to analyze how bodies are multiply constituted, not solely by race. Although we explore our limits we must not overcome them and I believe that this implies our most effective work, as scholars, educators and policy-makers, is to work within the educational system to transform it. To do so
means that we can examine our current policies and programs so that we can strive for its improvement and push towards creating possibilities for all.

With these chapters and analyzing the limits of race and education I illustrated that the discourses that inscribe racist and discriminatory experiences are embodied and form Asian teacher candidates as racialized subjects in education; moreover, this formation means that their ethics are crucial in understanding their role in education and schooling and how their presence affects those students who also experience racism and discrimination. For scholars, educators and policy-makers, this means that we must constantly examine the inequalities in the system and question our roles and whom do we do this work for?

**Recommendations**

*For Initial Teacher Education*

The dominant discourse and a large body of literature discusses the disparity in teachers of colour and many cite the barriers within the educational system that prevent racialized groups from entering the profession. These are important areas of research and should continue to be questioned and assessed. Within my larger project with Dr. Coloma, we aim to look at these very issues at the level of administration and experiences of teacher candidates of colour. Because my project looked specifically at Asian teacher candidates, I think it is important to further evaluate the processes within teacher education (specifically in the Initial Teacher Education program at OISE/UT).

Within ITE itself there needs to be courses that address critical race theories and foster progressive learning and teaching strategies. My participant Michelle expressed a concern with the lack of readings by feminists of colour or progressive thought in her program. Race and how it functions in schools needs to be a focus and as a mandatory course in ITE. The voices of racialized teacher candidates needs to be heard more in their classes and not dominated by the
majority. Strategies for teaching in practicum settings need to incorporate creative ways of thinking in multiple perspectives in a critical and progressive way and creating classroom lessons that address differences of race, class, gender, sexuality and disability.

*For K-12 schooling*

The stories that my participants shared all highlighted experiences of discrimination, oppression and a lack of understanding of the importance of different bodies in education. K-12 schooling (elementary and high school) requires a focus on anti-oppressive education. Many researchers and educators like Kevin Kumashiro (2002) emphasize the necessity for education within schools that are critical in approaches to teaching, critical thinking and transformative learning. Kumashiro’s four approaches: educating for the Other, educating about the Other, education that is critical of privileging and Othering and education that changes students and societies, need to be applied in school curriculum and pedagogy. As in teacher education, classroom lesson plans need to address differences of race, class, gender, sexuality and disability.

Underlying these recommendations is the need for a radical and progressive transformation of the discourses that constitute the policies and programs in education. These recommendations focus on the ways racialized students embody their experiences in education. As explored in my research, these experiences are produced through the emergence of discourse and relationships of power. An anti-oppressive and progressive analysis of these will reveal how these discourses and relationships of power operate in the lives and bodies of students. Racialized students (and ones who live with homophobia, low socioeconomic status, gender oppression and disabilities) are present in schools across Canada and their presences cannot be ignored or simply “tolerated.” Education needs to be a place for “deconstructive revolts” (in the words of Deborah Britzman) where we can learn “dialogically” (in the words of my participant
Michelle) and think critically of ourselves and the world around us (in the words of my participant Christina).

In ITE and K-12 schooling, future projects and lines of inquiry needs to: one, pursue studies in Asian Canadian experiences; two, address the systemic inequalities that bar racialized groups from entering the teaching profession; and three, evaluate how the current curriculum excludes, marginalizes and continues experiences of racism and discrimination for students and teachers.

Methodological reflections

Throughout this research, I followed Patti Lather’s (1991) models of transgressive validity, using Lyotardian paralogy and Derridiean rigour to frame my work. From this methodology, I used three phases: self reflexive, empirical (focused on the data) and a reciprocal phase of questioning my readings of the data in its various stages. These both worked alongside my Foucaulian framework as they speak to his genealogical method and ethics of the self. Genealogy is concerned with the discursive production of the self thus throughout my empirical phase where I gathered and analyzed my data, I addressed the multiple and varied discourses that constituted racialized subjectivity. Ethics of the self is concerned with one’s ethics and the function of power in one’s relationship with others. This was incredibly useful and integral in thinking through my position as a researcher who writes, relates and represents the stories of my participants.

Both Derrdiean rigour and Lyotardian paralogy interrogate researcher positions of privilege, they made me think about where I am situated in the work and how to write myself into it in a way that is meaningful to me and deeply respectful of my participants’ shared stories. Moreover throughout these three phases in my research, I think one of the most important things I learned about myself was that my work and identity as a researcher, scholar and advocate was
situated exactly within these stories and experiences, not outside of them nor separate from them. As I listened to my participants, I came to understand that my own racialization and history of struggle in Canada was very much connected and similar to their stories. My identity and work was implicated in these narratives and I needed to constantly think through my own complicity in the various systems that constitute these experiences for others. I had to question with whom and for whom do I do this work? Thus because of that, my work as a scholar, researcher and advocate cannot forget its a responsibility towards my community and other communities that also struggle within Canada.

*For Foucault’s genealogy and ethics of the self*

Foucault’s “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” largely informed my analysis of his genealogy in my work. His genealogical method has been taken up in many ways and among many scholars. I wanted to contribute to this area of research and extend it to analyze the racialized body in education. I also explored Foucault’s ethics of the self. I hope my research opens up further exploration into Foucault’s ethics in relation to education and how teaching can be a practice of the self and of freedom. I highlighted how teaching can be a practice of the self whereby one learns the art of governing oneself and then thinking about the implications for relationships with others.

Using Foucaultian frameworks to analyze racialization, embodiment and education revealed an examination of the experiences of a racialized student in the educational system and how these constituted the racialized teacher candidate. Integral to Foucault’s frameworks are the body’s connection with institutions as an apparatus and site of power relations. These allowed me to analyze the tactics at play that are involved in the racialization of Asian bodies. Furthermore, Foucault’s ethics enabled me to address the important role Asian teachers play in connecting with students and in transforming the educational system. Examining these alongside
Foucault’s “limit-experience” I explained that we can understand teaching as a political activity involved in transforming and creating possibilities for all, whether it be diversifying the teaching personnel and/or addressing the inequalities in the system that marginalized students and teachers.

For Asian Canadian studies

I believe that my research has implications for Asian Canadian studies that push the significance of theorizing the embodied experiences of Asian subjects in education. I aimed to portray the experiences of Asian Canadian youth in education while at the same time press for more research in their experiences. This illustrates the disciplinary techniques that regulate the persistence of racism and discrimination for Asian Canadians in the educational system. Furthermore, I think my research also presses for a close examination into how Asian racialization is connected to other markers of oppression such as gender, class, sexuality and ability. My research works to highlight how our experiences as Asian subjects are embodied and how these affect the body and its responses. I argue for a more nuanced conceptualization of theorizing Asian Canadian studies. In doing so, I speak to and with scholars, researchers, educators and policy-makers interested in Asian Canadian studies, urging an examination of our roles, privileges, passions and/or complicity in our work as we work towards creating possibilities.
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APPENDIX A

Sample Interview Questions for Teacher Candidates of Colour

General Questions

How do you identify yourself in terms of your racial and ethnic backgrounds? Does this differ from how others identify you? What inspired you to become a teacher?

Before Coming to OISE/UT Initial Teacher Education Program

Why did you apply to OISE/UT for the B.Ed. program? Why did you accept OISE/UT? What did you think about the B.Ed. application and the process of completing it? What does it take to get admitted into the B.Ed. program at OISE/UT?

Experiences During the Initial Teacher Education program

How has your B.Ed. coursework helped you prepare to become a school teacher? How has your school practicum helped you prepare to become a school teacher? What are the connections between the OISE/UT courses and the school practicum? How have your courses and practicum addressed issues of race, ethnicity, and other forms of diversity? What do you think about the ways in which these issues have been addressed? How would you characterize the racial make-up of your B.Ed. classes? What do you think about that?

How would you describe the racial make-up of faculty, administrators, and staff at OISE? What do you think about that?

Are there particular issues and concerns that are important to you which are not addressed in the ITE program? Which ones? Why do you think these issues and concerns are not addressed? Which student services have you utilized at OISE and UT in general? How useful were these services?

Do you belong to any student, professional, and/or community groups? Which ones? How involved are you? What have been the benefits of being a part of these groups? What other formal and informal networks and support systems do you have as you go through the ITE program? In what ways have these networks and supports helped you? What does it take to graduate from the B.Ed. program at OISE/UT?

Race and Ethnicity

At the beginning of this interview, I asked you how you identified in terms of your racial and ethnic background/s. In what ways has your racial and ethnic background/s impacted your schooling, prior to coming to OISE? Especially being of Asian heritage [East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or West Asian]? Do issues of race and ethnicity matter in the preparation of teacher candidates? If so, why? You discussed earlier the racial make-up of your B.Ed. classes, of the OISE staff, and of the school staff. Why do you think there is a comparatively small number of teachers of colour? Do you believe that it is important to have more teachers of colour in the schools? Why?
What difference do you think you’ll be able to bring to the schools, especially as a teacher of colour? As someone of Asian heritage [East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or West Asian]?

Aspirations After Graduation

What are your professional and personal goals after you graduate from OISE/UT? How have your goals and expectations changed since you entered the program? Why? How and where do you see yourself 5 and 10 years from now?
APPENDIX B

Sample Focus Group Questions for Asian Teacher Candidates of Colour

Embodying race (gender, sexuality, class, dis/ability)

You mentioned before how you and others identify you. Often times people are not sure about your racial/ethnic background and their guesses are not exactly right. Do you think it’s important for people to know your racial/ethnic background? Why?
Is it important to you to understand and think about your racial/ethnic background?
Do you think it’s important for you to understand and think about your gender, sexuality, class or dis/ability?
Do you think it’s important for others to understand and think about your gender, sexuality, class or dis/ability?

Experiences in education

Throughout your schooling experience (from K-12) do you think your racial/ethnic background had an effect on your experiences such as making friends, integrating, communicating with classmates or the teacher, understanding the lessons?
On how you were taught?
What effect, if any, did your race have on your success (presumably success seeing as you’re at OISE now) in school? What about gender, sex, class etc?
What is unique about your experiences as a Filipino or Chinese descent
Where do you see any limits or problems in the educational system (from your experience)?
Specifically, did you find any absences or silences in the system? Do you wish other things were covered, taught or talked about?

What this means for you as a potential teacher or teacher candidate

What does teaching and pedagogy mean for you as a racialized, Asian teacher candidate?
Dear teacher candidate,

We are seeking your permission to interview you about your experiences as a racialized teacher candidate at OISE/UT and to share your stories and perspectives anonymously. Please find attached a letter outlining the purpose of the study. If you are interested in participating in the study, please let me know by January 25th, 2010 at the latest.

Please note this email and attachment are to be kept confidential.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sheena Resplandor
APPENDIX D

Request Letter of Participation for Teacher Candidates of Colour

Dear teacher candidate,

We are looking for 8-12 volunteers to participate in a research study on teacher diversity that we are conducting under the supervision of Dr. Roland Sintos Coloma. The project, called Preparing Dreamkeepers: Analysis of Institutional Initiatives and Student Experiences, will focus on the experiences of teacher candidates of colour in the OISE/UT Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program. The purpose of this study is to learn about the experiences, motivating factors, and future aspirations of visible minority teacher candidates. We are interested in talking with teacher candidates of colour from Dr. Coloma’s EDUC3508H School and Society classes this Winter term, who come from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

We are seeking your permission to interview you about your experiences as a racialized teacher candidate at OISE/UT and to share your stories and perspectives anonymously.

If you agree to participate in the study, Sheena will interview you for 30 to 45 minutes at a date, time, and location that is convenient for you. The interview will be recorded and transcribed, and you will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript for your feedback, clarification, and corrections. You also may be asked to be a part of a focus group interview that will discuss and elaborate on some of the issues that will emerge from the individual interviews.

The information from your interview may appear in various presentations and reports in OISE/UT, school boards, conferences, journal articles, and books. The results from this study may be published in print and electronically. The main benefit of your participation is for you to share your experiences and concerns, which can impact policies and programs about teacher diversity in the OISE/UT Initial Teacher Education program.

Since we want your honest viewpoints about being a racialized teacher candidate, we are taking the following steps to address concerns about privacy and to protect your anonymity:

(1) All the names of people and places that may identify you will be replaced with pseudonyms. You can modify these pseudonyms until you are satisfied about the degree of your anonymity in the interview transcript.

(2) We want to let you know that agreeing or refusing to participate in this research study will not affect your grade in Dr. Coloma’s EDUC3508H course or your status in the ITE program. Your participation is not a requirement for the EDUC3508H course or the ITE program.

(3) Dr. Coloma will not know which students will be participating in the study this term. Only after he has submitted the final grades for your class will he have access to the taped interviews, written transcripts, and other details about the research participants.
(4) The research team, which includes Dr. Coloma and 1 graduate researcher (Sheena Resplandor), will be the only individuals with access to the interview data (recordings and transcripts). We will keep the data safe in a password-protected area of restricted-access computers and locked filing cabinets.

(5) Any information that will personally identify will only be used to organize the research data and to contact you. This information will not be used in any public presentation or written report.

Most importantly, participation in this research project is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. To withdraw from the study, simply contact us by email, phone, or in person regarding your wish to discontinue your involvement, and any information that you shared with us will be destroyed. There will be no negative consequences attached to either declining to participate or withdrawing from participation in the study.

Participating in this study may afford you the benefit of voicing feelings and thoughts that you may not have had the opportunity to at OISE/UT. This may have a liberating and empowering effect on you. Conversely, sharing your past, present, and personal experiences may also bring up complex emotions that may be difficult to manage. You have the right to refrain from answering certain questions, to stop the interview at any time, and to delete confidential details from the interview transcript.

If you would like us to provide you with the interview questions ahead of time, we are most willing to do so. If you would like further information about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Toronto Office of Research Ethics at 416-946-3273 or ethics.review@utoronto.ca.

Thank you for considering this request to participate voluntarily in a research study on teacher candidates of colour at OISE/UT. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Sheena Resplandor
M.A. Student
Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning
sheena.resplandor@utoronto.ca
APPENDIX E

Participant Consent Form

(on OISE/UT letterhead)

By signing your name here, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the information provided in the Request Letter of Participation, and give your informed consent to participate in this study. The top half of this consent form will be returned to you for your records.

Participant

Print Full Name

_________________________________________

Signature

_________________________________________

Date

_________________________________________

Interviewer

______________________________

Date

_______________________

Please note: At no time will your identifying information (example: name, contact information, etc.) appear on your responses to this study. This is done to ensure that the information you provide remains anonymous. Should you wish to withdraw from the study, you can contact the researcher/interviewer by email, phone, or in person and simply say, “I no longer wish to participate in this study.”

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By signing your name here, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the information provided in the Request Letter of Participation, and give your informed consent to participate in this study. The top half of this consent form will be returned to you for your records.

Participant

Print Full Name

_________________________________________

Signature

_________________________________________

Date

_________________________________________

Interviewer

______________________________

Date

_______________________

Please note: At no time will your identifying information (example: name, contact information, etc.) appear on your responses to this study. This is done to ensure that the information you provide remains anonymous. Should you wish to withdraw from the study, you can contact the researcher/interviewer by email, phone, or in person and simply say, “I no longer wish to participate in this study.”