Designing Names: Requisite Identity Labour for Migrants’ Be(long)ing in Ontario

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Faculty of Information
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Abstract

This dissertation responds to the question of why people who immigrate to Ontario, Canada frequently choose to use their personal names in altered forms. Between May and December 2010, I engaged in semi-structured interviews with twenty-three people who, while living in Ontario, experienced name challenges ranging from persistent, repetitive misspellings and mispronunciations of their original names to cases of significant name alterations on residency documents, and even to situations of exclusion and discrimination. Drawing on critical perspectives from literature on identity and performativity, science and technology studies, race and immigration, affect, and onomastics (the study of names), I establish that name challenges are a form of “identity labour” required of many people who immigrate to Ontario. I also describe how individuals’ identity labour changes over time. In response to name challenges, and the need to balance between their sometimes-simultaneous audiences, participants design their names for life in Ontario—by deciding which audiences to privilege, they choose where they want to belong, and how their names should be.
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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my later sister-in-law Penny Anne Thompson who, on September 14th of 2007, was struck and killed by a car while she was cycling near her home. This tragic accident occurred at the beginning of my doctoral work, and since that day, I’ve missed Penny and I’ve thought frequently of her intelligence, her strength, her optimistic spirit, and her enthusiasm for life. Imagining what Penny’s accomplishments would be today, if she could still be with us, is sad but inspiring. I know that Penny would have been very proud of my efforts.
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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

1.1 Changing names, changing outcomes

We are in an era where the relevance of names is gaining attention. Over the past year, we’ve heard American Indians protest the name of a National Football League team because the term “Redskins” is a derogatory slur against indigenous nations. We’ve read about North American university and college lecturers asking their students not to call them “Professor” in order to increase awareness of the precarity and low pay of lecturer positions. And we’ve seen a debate about which name to use, even amongst Wikipedia editors, as an American soldier turned whistleblower, Bradley Manning, became a trans woman: Chelsea Manning. More and more, names are understood as contested sites—it’s clear that changing names, or titles, changes our outcomes.

As well as these politicized, news-making examples of the significance of names, advances in the science of big data have made personal names a focus of quantitative research. Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner’s *Freakonomics* (2005) probes how names determine life outcomes, and Adam Alter’s *Drunk Tank Pink* (2013) also examines the effects of names on personal success by focusing on how we understand and categorize others, based on their names. Alter refers to the watershed American résumé audit by Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan (2004) that found that résumés with “Black names” on résumés receive far fewer calls for interviews than those with “White names”. Recent Canadian résumé audits yield similar findings, but by contrasting names that suggest belonging to dominant settler culture versus names that could imply more recent immigration (i.e., Eid, 2012; Oreopoulos and Dechief, 2011).

The number of these studies, and their significant findings, makes it difficult to argue against the relevance of naming. Certainly these studies provide evidence that names affect individuals’ potential opportunities, that names have consequences for life outcomes. But what does this information mean to an individual? Should someone who immigrates to Canada simply accept the fate that their name has determined? Of course not—each of us tries to change the course of our lives as best benefits us, in the day-to-day as well as over the longer-term.
In this dissertation, I offer perspectives from individuals who have experienced name challenges and I present insights as to what they have done in the face of potential and real name discrimination. I examine numerous name-related problems: mispronunciations; misspellings, both in-person and on identity cards; truncations of names; removal of diacritical marks; assumptions of religion and ethnicity; derogatory comments; name discrimination—as well as varied reactions to these ongoing name challenges. Through analysis of interview data, I describe these kinds of experiences, and efforts to avoid them, as aspects of “identity labour” that shifts over time, depending on employment, geographic location, relevance of diaspora, and other factors. I’ve organized the dissertation to demonstrate the shifts over time that most participants experience as part of their identity labour, which often moves through these stages:

1. Upon arrival in Canada, people are uncertain about how their names will be taken up and used. Given Canada’s diversity, and the number of situations in which one uses their name, varied situations demand different name uses, thus different audiences are recognized. In certain circumstances and with particular audiences, such as at work or in school, repetitive name challenges become unsurprising but enervating

2. As people become fluent in the local culture, they choose to take action to
   a. explain their name by spelling it and/or providing context to make it memorable, and/or
   b. transform their name, officially or casually, to a version that meets fewer challenges

3. And then people who have migrated continue on, armed with a set of explanations or an altered name, finding ways and places to belong. Until, potentially, new situations arise, and a new name-action is needed, or until one feels differently about their audiences and the status quo, which are also always in flux.

After introducing this study’s theoretical (i.e., constructionist and critical) and methodological approaches (qualitative interviews, with analysis influenced by critical theory-methods), I describe the strategies undertaken to collect interviews, analyze data and describe findings.

An analysis of the interview data is initiated by recognizing participants’ three audience types—Institutional, Quotidian and Traditional audiences are described and contrasted in terms of the
discourses and beliefs that relate to names, how these discourses influence individual members of the audiences, and how interdependently with the audience members, engaging in discourses about their beliefs and working with objects, infrastructure, even customs, these audiences communicate particular messages to participants about their names. These interdependent components of each audience are theorized in terms of John Law’s model of the three emissaries of the Portuguese caravels’ documents, devices and drilled people (1986a).

The name-action arc initiates as participants experience name challenges within quotidian, institutional and sometimes traditional audiences. Name challenges vary by type and repetitiveness: chronic mispronunciations and misspellings within quotidian audiences can be insignificant but wearing, yet a single name alteration made by an institutional audience on an important identity card can cause years of misidentification. Power imbalances make it difficult for participants to correct these name challenge scenarios in the moment, and even afterward.

Yet over time, participants respond to name challenges with significant agency and insight. As bicultural Ontarians, participants are aware of the ways that their names are understood and could more easily be validated by each audience, so many participants design a device—a name—to assist their navigation of the social milieus of Ontario. A striking aspect of the name alterations analyzed in this study is that none of these redesigned names are intended to sever the participants from their original cultures, but rather these alterations tend to be minor name adjustments that work to ease day-to-day interactions and demonstrate a balance between audiences. How each participant accomplishes this balance, and the number of attempts required, is as distinct as the participants’ names.

In the past, immigration-related name changes tended to have an obvious anglicizing objective, or at least that effect, but these contemporary name shifts are subtler. People are eking out new identity positions that are bicultural, at least. These names are easy for Anglophones to pronounce, yet maintain meaningful ties to family and cultural traditions, and are also seen as legal and acceptable by provincial and federal government institutions.

The final discussion chapter considers participants’ affective feelings in relation to their names and their cultural identities within Ontario. Several participants see their name choices as demonstrating their cultural identity—ideally, participants’ names communicate how they would like to be perceived by their traditional and quotidian audiences. Even though name-related
policies have not been updated to directly ease the identity labour of people who have immigrated, Ontario’s increasingly diverse and plural “namescape” is an expression of the ways that demographic shifts are expanding our cultural lexicon via names and naming practices.

Ontario’s future is increasingly diverse, and so too is our namescape. Although most landmarks have already been christened with names of early settlers and leaders, as well as First Nations’ words, the shared lexicon of personal names grows more plural and multilingual each day and, potentially, this leads to more varied and nuanced readings and validations. In this way, all residents of Ontario can expand our use and understandings of names.

1.2 Context

My interest in this topic almost certainly began with my own name. I grew up in a small community in Canada’s Northwest where, quite literally, everyone knew my name. By virtue of the limited population of our community, my family’s last name was recognized and pronounced by fellow residents just as my family pronounces it, and (of course) I knew how they pronounced all of their names, too. When I moved to a not-so-near city for university, a city with about a million residents where no one knew my family, or me, it became normal to correct the pronunciation of my last name for those who read it differently than my family knew it. This continues. As I write my dissertation, I am living in Montreal, where my name has newer connotations. To many here, my name means that I speak French, and although my ancestors who passed my name on to me were francophone, I surprise my fellow Quebeckers with my lack of fluency. I explain where I am from and become an outsider; yet seconds earlier, before I spoke, I belonged.

1.2.1 Why names?

Names are significant components of language because of how much we ask them to do: we assume, perhaps naively, that names convey a lot of significant information. Consider how an interaction without names has less gravity than one where names are exchanged. Names are frequently the first piece of information we learn about an individual, even before in-person introductions. At times, a name is all we ever know of someone, as in seeing a name on a list, in an email, in a news article, even on Facebook. Many people who move to Ontario from other countries find that the use of their names—when they introduce themselves to build social
networks, complete bureaucratic settlement processes, find work, or attend school—creates a significant rub between cultures. Someone who immigrates understands quickly how a name is used here in Ontario. If they find that introductions are challenging, they figure out how these challenges can be eased.

Names that are known to their readers or hearers, because of shared language and culture, are not only familiar, but can also communicate gender, age, religious, regional, and class distinctions, and even a sense of uniqueness. There are aesthetic values, such as a name’s onomatopoeic effect or how its letters set together create a visual impression. However, a name from another language may communicate none of these distinctions to someone hearing or reading it for the first time: the information that one gleans may be only that this name is foreign and its pronunciation is unclear. To the foreign eye, any visual or aural effect is muddy, curious, or even frustrating: Where is this name from? What does it mean? Who might it belong to? Why is it so long? Each of these types of reading, or profiling, whether significant information can be gleaned or not, can affect understandings of who the name-bearer is.

1.2.2 What is the status quo?

This is a study of how residents of Ontario use names to maintain and disrupt the status quo. Put simply, what the ‘status quo’ is depends on where we are and whom we interact with. In some urban centers, or particular neighbourhoods, we can see, hear, and feel Canada’s linguistic and ethnic diversity (i.e., Montreal’s Parc Extension, Toronto’s downtown). In other regions, like the one where I grew up, or in the cities that some participants describe, heterogeneity is limited. How each status quo is fostered depends on combinations of tradition, policies, and even infrastructure (e.g. borders and gates, but also information systems such as forms and databases).

---

1 My own last name and physical appearance serve as one example of how names communicate. Dechief (pronounced de-CHEF), the family name I inherited from my father, has Walloon (today, a region of Belgium) roots and is unusual in Canada. In Belgium, the name Dechief is not common, but it is not considered as curious as it is here. There, because of Dutch influence, names beginning with the letters ‘de’ are common as it is a prefix meaning ‘the’. The ‘chief’ portion of my surname is thought to be linked to the occupation of goat herding as an adaptation of chèvre.

But in Canada, perhaps because my surname includes the word ‘chief’ many people ask me if my family name is a First Nations name. By coincidence, on my mother’s side, I do have ancestors who are Métis so I am linked to the Métis Nation, though not by name. My brother and I share this ancestry and the same family name, but we have different physical appearances. Though we are both considered ‘white,’ I am dark-haired with dark eyes while he is blond-haired and blue-eyed. There is probably a link between the differences in our physical appearances and the fact that no one has ever asked him if our last name is of First Nations origin. My brother is less likely to be ‘othered’ because his appearance is closer to the constructed prototype of Canada’s dominant culture.
Some alterations to the status quo are brought about by practicalities: when a population grows in number or kind, new bureaucratic means are adopted. The tensions created as Canada’s population becomes increasingly diverse occasionally become newsworthy, even sensationalized as with Hérouxville, Quebec’s town charter. However, a project such as this examines a quieter, quotidian mode of belonging, of fitting in and standing out. It is through the everyday situations in which we each participate, in activities such as meeting people socially or working together, that this range of subtle to overt negotiations of power exists: differences and rights are asserted, objectified, acknowledged, or denied.

1.2.3 Whose status quo?

Throughout my dissertation, I position myself as a member of Canada’s dominant anglophone culture, which is how I generally see myself, at least when I am aware of the advantages of this location. In Canada’s English-speaking communities I blend well, and in Canada’s West, I am quite at home. The majority of the data I’ve prepared and am working from represents the actions and insights of people who, for the most part, don’t categorize themselves in the same way, although some do. Through this study I have grown more aware that belonging means finding a balanced position amongst key audiences. For many, belonging may not mean being part of a culture that dominates even as it becomes a minority. As I’ve worked on this project, many people who classify themselves as I do, as a member of dominant culture, have asked me, “Why would anyone who has immigrated to Canada want to change their name?” And in part, my dissertation is a response to this question. But it’s a response that demands a repositioning of the question: the act of a name change is a choice made by an individual, but what compels a name change for someone who has immigrated is ubiquitous, though sometimes obvious and

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2 The “Hérouxville Town Charter” (Municipalité Hérouxville, 2010) has been criticized for including details such as these:

About Gender Equality: “However, we consider that killing women in public beatings, or burning them alive are not part of our standards of life.”

About Holidays and Festivities: “We listen to music, we drink alcoholic beverages in public or private places, we dance and at the end of every year we decorate a tree with balls and tinsel and some lights. This is normally called ‘Christmas Decorations’ or also ‘Christmas Tree’ letting us rejoice in the notion of our national heritage and not necessarily a religious holiday.”

3 This means that as I convey what the participants of this study shared with me, I am aware of doing so with my own lens, as someone who has not immigrated. Also, as I position myself as a member of dominant anglophone culture, I know that I do not represent the multifarious views held within social grouping. How could I ever? I apologize in advance for the mistakes in representation and over-generalizations that I am likely to make.
other times opaque, and can be fostered or eviscerated by the whole broad range of us who live here. That initial question could be repositioned in these ways: How does contemporary Canadian society encourage name shifts for people who immigrate? What actions do we as members of this society take—in a quotidian fashion—that challenge other peoples’ use of their own original names? And in the longer term, what does this mean for “our” society?

As I have been writing, Quebec has been through two elections where the issue of insiders and outsiders, of protecting the status quo, were illuminated. In both of these elections, Quebec’s identity was made an election issue by Parti Quebecois (PQ) leader Pauline Marois, as she argued for maintaining some symbols of religion (i.e., the Catholic crucifix) that are part of Quebec’s established cultural heritage, while banning other religious symbols (such as the Sikh kirpan and the Muslim hijab). Names became part of this debate in August 2012: Djemila Benhabib, a PQ candidate, voiced her disagreement with Marois, by arguing for consistency with use of religious symbols. In response, during a radio call-in show, the city of Saguenay’s mayor, Jean Tremblay, condemned Benhabib’s statement with this comment:

“What’s outraging me this morning is to see us, the soft French Canadians, being dictated to about how to behave, how to respect our culture, by a person who’s come here from Algeria, and we can’t even pronounce her name.”

Radio host Paul Arcand acknowledged Tremblay’s comments as racist and xenophobic and also told him how to pronounce Benhabib, but Mr. Tremblay continued, “They’re making our culture and religion disappear everywhere. You don’t realize that” (Séguin & Clark, in The Globe and Mail, August 16, 2012).

Tremblay’s concern with not knowing how to pronounce Benhabib’s name can be understood in more or less sympathetic ways. We could feel for him, as one of Quebec’s dominant culture of “soft French Canadians,” for not being able to pronounce Benhabib. But perhaps he means that someone whose name isn’t recognized, isn’t even pronounceable by him, should not be able to comment on directions forward for Quebec society, even as a potential elected representative. What is interesting here is how a name is called upon to determine who may comment on the maintenance of Quebec’s culture. So much depends on a surname! As well, Tremblay’s division
between “us, the soft French Canadians” and “they” who are “making our culture and religion disappear” demonstrates an insider/outsider demarcation.

In this study, I ask how time figures into belonging. Is one who has immigrated always an immigrant, or can immigrating be seen as a verb, an action one takes, that we needn’t always define or be defined by? After how many years in a country can our suggestions be considered relevant? And shouldn’t this depend more on the quality of one’s suggestions than one’s surname? Especially given that our names are so easy to change?

Another situation of a name determining someone’s insider/outsider status is that of Joel Debellefeuille who, in the summer of 2009, as a black man driving a new BMW, was repeatedly pulled over by the Longueil, Quebec police. The fourth time this happened (within ten days), a frustrated Debellefeuille refused to produce his identification, for which he was charged. Debellefeuille went to court to contest what he considered to be racial-profiling. What came to light, at the Quebec Supreme Court-ordered retrial, is that the officer who pulled Debellefeuille over the fourth time found Debellefeuille’s seemingly “Quebecois name” on the car’s registration to be incongruent with his being black. Apparently, if the car had been registered to someone with a “black-sounding name,” Debellefeuille would not have been pulled over. So, this was not only a case of racial-profiling, but also a case of name stereotyping. And although Debellefeuille’s name puts him on the inside of Quebec society, the incongruity, for some, is that his racialized appearance would position him on the outside. Members of dominant culture, perhaps all of us, expect the attributes of name and appearance to match our understanding of who belongs and who is considered an outsider.

This insider/outsider division exists despite, or perhaps even because of the numbers of people who move to Canada annually as permanent residents. Between 1990 and 2010, nearly five million people moved to Canada as permanent residents (CIC, 2012), and the 2006 census tells us that one in five residents of Canada has migrated to live here (CIC, 2008). Toronto, Canada’s most ethnically diverse city, is now home to more than 2.5 million people who have immigrated, comprising 46% of the city’s population (National Household Survey, 2013). Additionally, almost 6.3 million people who live in Canada, almost 20% of the national population, identifies as being a “visible minority,” meaning that in terms of racialization, language, and possibly name, nearly one in five people may at times be differentiated from people who are seen to
belong more easily in Canada’s dominant, traditionally white, culture (National Household Survey, 2013).4 Although these numbers mean that Canada is increasingly culturally diverse, and measured quantitatively, less than half of the population of Toronto are white with English-sounding names, demographic diversity is not the same as cultural representation (Mahtani, 2002b). During the processes of settling in Canada, a number of people from these racialized groups will have found it necessary to change their names for a variety of reasons including discrimination. Recent immigration studies demonstrate that residents of Canada who are considered “visible minorities” face discrimination in terms of housing opportunities (Teixeira, 2006) and employment (Ornstein, 2006; Schellenberg & Hou, 2005; Hiebert, 2003).

1.2.4 Consequences of names

A résumé audit undertaken by Quebec’s Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse and headed by Paul Eid (2012), found that having an African, Arab, or Latin-American origin name in Quebec means that you are 60% less likely to be called for a job interview than if your name is of “Quebecois-origin.” Quebec, with its generations of language and cultural protection, a kind of French oasis on a continent of English, may seem an extreme case. But elsewhere in Canada, where English tends to dominate, officially or not, names continue to matter. In an earlier résumé audit, Phil Oreopoulos and I (2011) found that employers in Canada’s three largest cities (Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver) are almost 40% more likely to call back a job applicant with an English-sounding name than someone with a name that sounds Chinese, Indian or Greek, though the other components of the résumé are identical. These are direct economic consequences of not being on the inside.

The kind of name discrimination illustrated by these studies occurs even as federal legislation supports individual’s rights to exercise our varied cultures and identify ourselves with names from languages other than English and French. Canada’s Multiculturalism Act (1988) states that “persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion or to use their own language,”

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4 Dominant culture in Canada is defined here as predominantly white, of European origin, practicing Christian religions and, in provinces other than Quebec, speaking English. The dominant culture in Quebec is also white, but French-speaking and traditionally Roman Catholic. Until the point-system of immigration was introduced in 1967, new residents to Canada generally emigrated from countries with similar dominant cultural attributes (e.g., the United Kingdom, the United States).
yet for many migrants to Canada, this statement of rights does not translate into maintaining the use of their original names even though personal names are key derivations of many cultures.

1.2.5 Changing names or changing the status quo?

What is perhaps most remarkable about personal names in Canada is that even though we read them as holding some definition of their bearer, they are so malleable! Interpretations of a name seem obvious, even fixed; yet it is their potential malleability that is the reason they are the focus of this study. In Canada, formal name change processes vary from province to province, and have changed over time, but as I write this in 2014, a legal name change is an available option: residents of every province or territory can pay up to $200 (Newfoundland and the Yukon charge just $50), and following legal verification and advertisement, within a timeline ranging from two weeks (for Nova Scotia) to three months, a legal name change can be achieved. Most provinces include general guidelines about the choice of a new name. These are the restrictions in Alberta:

The new name:

- must contain a first and last name;
- must use the English alphabet; and
- cannot contain numbers, non-letter characters and/or profanity, but may contain the following punctuation marks: period (.), hyphen (-), apostrophe (’).

A name can also be refused if it:

- causes confusion;
- embarrasses a person;
- defrauds or misleads the public; or
- is offensive on any other grounds.

Noteworthy differences between provinces include these: Since 1981 Quebec has not allowed women to legally change their surname to match their husband’s surname upon marriage. As well, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia require fingerprints for a legal name change application.

Significantly, not every nation allows for this sort of identity alteration. Many countries (including Portugal, Iceland, and until recently, France) have guidelines (as lists of names) that newborn children must be named from. Other nations simply don’t allow for formal name
alterations (e.g. Japan, the Netherlands). Tajikstan demonstrates another extreme: Gavhar Sharofzoda, head of the Tajikistan Language and Terminology Committee recently asserted that citizens whose surnames end in “-ov” or “-ev” are not patriots and, “Getting rid of Russian endings in surnames is a national duty of every citizen of Tajikistan” (Global Voices, 2014). Critics describe this personal name change campaign in the context of the same government’s earlier renaming of streets and villages: it is as “another attempt to rewrite history and build a myth that since the ancient period, the territory of contemporary Tajikistan has been settled by ethnic Tajiks and there were no other ethnic groups here” (Sodiqov, 2012). Although this is certainly not the only case of nationally enforced naming laws, it is the most recent.5

Within Canada, however, few identity markers (perhaps only dress?) are as open to alteration as names. Almost everyone I’ve spoken to about my dissertation recollects that they or someone they know has an altered last name due to events that took place as that family entered Canada. Yet, we tend to presume a fixity of names that is illusory. That names can be changed—and how they are changed—especially when explained by this study’s participants, describes an aspect of becoming part of mainstream Canadian society: that is, how tensions between cultures felt during initial interactions in Canada can be diminished with a name shift, or even just an effective introduction. Having an option to shift one’s name is an example of the kind of agency available within Canadian society, but that the option exists also means that integration, in this way, is encouraged.

An exact number of people who have chosen or experienced name shifts related to migration to Canada has not been tabulated, but based on the types of shifts in legal names apparent from provincial gazettes, it is not a small number.6 An examination of the past decade’s published named changes in Ontario reveals that people with last names of British origins are a minor portion of those who perform legal name changes. In these lists of “Previous” and “New” names there are many examples of anglicizations and shortened names, the easiest ways to make a name fit in.

5 Nazi-era Germany’s Nuremberg Laws (beginning in 1935) include one naming law: everyone of Jewish descent had a prescribed “Jewish name” added as a middle name. These were “Sarah” for women and “Israel” for men.

6 Examples of name changes that have been published in the Ontario Gazette can be found at http://www.ontario.ca/en/ontgazette/gazlat/index.htm.
In the chapters that follow, based largely on the experiences of this study’s participants’ name challenges and shifts, I describe how—via names—this line of insider and outsider is fostered, altered, circumvented and challenged, as well as how it may be changing over time. In a country whose own identity is perennially in question, it may be unsurprising that many residents’ names are also shifting. It is our everyday activities with names that will alter or maintain this status quo.
Chapter 2

2 Conceptual Framework

“It seems to me,” Foucault expounds, “that the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them.” (Rabinow 1984, p. 6)

This chapter introduces the study in terms of its key questions, contexts and methods, and describes the academic realms I draw from and contribute to.

2.1 Research questions

As qualitative academic work in Canada has not focused directly on contemporary migrants’ experiences with their names, this study began with an exploratory yet critical lens.

How do formal and informal uses of personal names that originate from languages other than English influence people who have immigrated (and second generation Canadians’) in terms of their experiences of settlement and identity within Ontario?

a) How do individuals shape the use of (their own and others’) personal names during and for social interactions?

b) How do name-related legislation, policy, and state-regulated data processes mediate experiences of settlement and identity?
To operationalize these research questions, I unpack and situate key terms within academic literature. As “name” is the keyword of the study, I begin by describing how this study is implicated in onomastics, the field of name studies.

2.2 Onomastics

This research focuses on personal name use, and as such contributes to the field of onomastics, or name studies. Onomastics is an interdisciplinary field that studies a broad range of names: place names, brand names, nicknames, names of literary characters, and more. Geographers, sociologists, linguists and scholars from other fields contribute. In many onomastic studies (of brands, place names, babies names, etc.) types of names are examined over time, based on key variables, and explanations for particular shifts that occur.

Anthroponomy is the stream of onomastics that focuses on personal names, and to narrow further, I have attached “critical” to describe the type of study that I and other contemporary scholars are undertaking. We are evolving the field of “critical anthroponomy”. Relevant recent Canadian studies include André Lapierre’s (2014) historical study of assimilative changes that Quebecois surnames have undergone as their name bearers have moved to Western Canada or the Eastern United States. As well, Donna Lillian (2009) has undertaken a comparative study of women’s surname changes at marriage, and Karen Pennesi’s (2014) study of name pronunciation procedures at a Canadian university’s convocation ceremony exemplify a critical anthroponomy approach.

My study also draws on the approach and theory of other onomastic work. Many name studies, perhaps influenced by linguistics, very closely examine name variations. My own close description of participants’ name shifts in Chapter 6 is influenced by this approach, yet to a linguist who does onomastic work, my analysis will likely appear limited. As well, in my analysis, I extend terms used by people who study toponyms or place names. The first set of terms are “endonym” and “exonym” which are used to differentiate between a place name in its place versus what it is called in another place (e.g. Deutschland is an endonym and Germany is an exonym). In Canada, with growing diasporas, enough people are familiar with endonyms in the language of their original or ancestral country that these are the names that come to be used and meaningful in Canada. Drawing on this distinction, we can think of original personal names
as endonyms while anglicized versions serve as exonyms. As this study suggests, people are choosing to maintain their personal names, or endonyms, sometimes with minor adjustments.

Another term drawn from toponomastics is “namescape”—it is not commonly used, but works as a portmanteau linking the word “landscape” to its toponymic identifiers (Norris 1999, Roberts 1993, Zelinsky 1993). Roberts suggests that we “decipher our namescape in order to discover the power struggle that lies behind the names. … Because the name carried by a place affects how we perceive it and how we perceive ourselves, names contribute subtly and forcefully to our relationship with our planet” (p. 160). Taking this critical mindset to examine personal names, I transfer this idea of “namescape” to discourse, to the personal names that we hear, see, learn, recognize and come to use through our daily interactions. As Roberts argues, the existence of names on our landscapes shapes a society; governments concerning themselves with these names, of places as well as of people, is a sure sign of the power that names have to shift our thinking and our ways of seeing and understanding where we are and who we are here with.

2.3 Critical race and immigration

In 2004, economists Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan, published a name-focused field experiment that used résumés to demonstrate racial discrimination in the labour markets of Boston and Chicago. This watershed quantitative study has since been used as a model by researchers from varied fields and different locations to demonstrate systemic discrimination based on names. Bertrand and Mullainathan find that names are very significant indicators of the likelihood of receiving a call back for a job interview. “White-sounding” names like Emily and Brendan are 50% more likely to receive call-backs than “Black-sounding” names such as Lakisha and Jamal. The researchers also varied the quality of the résumés to find that it had limited effect for “Black-sounding” names. Although the call-back ratio is remarkably consistent across fields, one

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7 Faller, Nathan and White (2013) investigate access to democracy via online interactions with over 7,000 election officials in the United States. They find that emails sent from Latino aliases are significantly less likely to receive any response and generally receive responses of a lower quality than “non-Latino white aliases” (p. 1). As well, Milkman, Akinola and Chugh (2014) examine bias in American universities by emailing requests for brief meetings with professors as if from potential graduate school students with names pointing to varied ethnicity and gender to find that faculty ignored requests from women and minorities at a higher rate than requests from Caucasian males, particularly in higher-paying disciplines and private institutions.
regional difference is that in racially mixed neighbourhoods in Chicago, people with “Black-sounding” names fared better than elsewhere.

The 2011 study that Phil Oreopoulos and I undertook had similar results; we contrasted the most common recent immigration-origin names (i.e. names common in China and India), with those of longer settled populations (i.e. originating in Greece and England) to find that whatever adjustments were made to résumés and whatever the field of employment, in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, English-named résumés were almost 40% more likely to be called back than other names. Paul Eid’s (2012) résumé audit, executed in Quebec and in French, also measured the personal names of populations that are generally longer settled against those that have immigrated more recently, and this study returned more extreme results: the names that could be read as having recently immigrated were 60% less likely to be called back.

A key focus of these studies is on the “-sounding” component; whether English, French, Black or White is used as the prefix, biased and unfounded assumptions about the language skills and social worth of the name-bearer are being made. These assumptions seem particularly devastating for “second generation” Canadians and people who moved to Canada as young children; these are people whose families have immigrated, but who themselves are very much Canadian and who may not even speak the language that their names are drawn from.

Eid’s (2007) earlier work examined this “second generation” with qualitative interviews focussed on identity building undertaken by Arab youth in Montreal. Eid describes the motivations of ethnic identity performativity by racialized youth: “as opposed to most ‘ethnic Whites’, racialized minorities are very limited in their abilities to choose when and where to advertise their ethnic differences…. While white North Americans of European descent can celebrate ‘individualistic symbolic ethnic identities,’ racialized groups are faced with a ‘socially enforced and imposed racial identity’” (Eid 2007, pp. 172-3 is here quoting Waters 1996, p. 449). Names, as this dissertation will detail, are one of the ways that racialized youth can and do choose to display ethnic differences, even in the face of these clear findings of name-focussed discrimination.

Eid’s focus on youth is significant, as the life circumstances of participants in this dissertation demonstrate that one’s age, career goals, and settlement timelines matter. M.S. Mwarigha (2002) describes three stages of settlement experienced by people who immigrate. The first stage
involves initial arrival, and meeting basic survival needs; the second stage involves cultural immersion, language-learning, potentially studying, making improvements to living arrangements, finding suitable employment or becoming an entrepreneur; the final, long-term stage is defined by contending with systemic barriers and other challenges that hinder equal participation in social, cultural, economic, and political life in Canada. The dissertation’s Name-Action Arc reflects experiences participants related to me and follows this same series of settlement stages; Chapters 4 through 7 are organized to reflect these stages. Chapter 4 introduces participants’ audiences and describes their varying overlap and dynamism—these audiences shift over time in accordance with participants’ shifting life circumstances. Chapter 5 begins the name-action arc and describes participants’ initial interactions in Canada, many of which challenge participants’ use of their original names. Next, in Chapter 6, participants react to these challenges with explanations, name shifts, or both. Finally, in Chapter 7, participants continue on, with names established as feels most comfortable, sometimes increasing their feelings of belonging, and in other cases decreasing it.

As individuals move through this name action-arc and these stages of settlement (with individual variation), broader segments of society, including diaspora and dominant culture are also in flux, affecting how participants choose to identify and how their chosen identities are validated and legitimized. Karen Brodkin (1998) describes one such movement in her book *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America*. Drawing on critical and economic theory, Brodkin investigates why her Jewish parents and their generational cohort do not see themselves as white, but she and her Jewish peers do classify themselves and other Jews as white. What occurred is that both diaspora and broader dominant cultures shifted between the 1950s and the 1970s: Brodkin looks closely at dominant culture’s racial assignments and individuals’ identity formations to argue that much of the impulse toward racial categorization is motivated by demands for a labour force determined by ethnicity. Individuals are able to choose distinctive identities, but these are still within the gaze and validation of the current dominant culture (Meringolo, 2000).

In a Canadian context, Minelle Mahtani (2002, 2004) also investigates this tension between individuals’ identity choices and dominant society’s gaze as she interviews biracial women who live in Toronto about their feelings towards the term “mixed-race”. Although twenty years ago, biracial Canadians were uncommon, Statistics Canada predicts that in less than two decades,
63% of Torontonians will belong to racialized minorities, and, of course, it is unlikely that the term “racialized minorities” will still be in use (Hune-Brown, 2013). As Canada’s social demographics shift, so too do identity challenges and options for individuals.

Focussing on the influence of institutional policy and action, Mahtani (2012) more recently critiqued the federal government’s decision to illustrate people on Canadian currency (in this case, the $100 bill) as only white. The Bank of Canada’s avoidance of any racial identity is seen as an “alarming move in an age of supposed multiculturalism for a country of immigrants” (Mahtani 2012). The work of other critical race and immigration scholars (e.g., Thobani 2007, Ng 1993, Browne 2005, Razack 1999, Jiwani 1993) contributes a much-needed analysis of the many kinds of institutionalized racism that occur in Canada.

2.4 Affect

The field of affect is less represented in the research questions than the other fields discussed here. When I designed this study, I didn’t intend to include analysis from the field of affect, yet as I was listening to participants’ discussing their name challenges and choices, it was clear that significant feelings are involved. Participants often describe their names in terms that relate to their bodies. Additionally, the shared feeling of be(long)ing, of being socially in-between and not quite belonging, demands contextualization from the field of affect.

Drawing on Ann Cvetkovich’s (2012) Depression: A Public Feeling, I position participants’ physical experiences of the name challenges they face as shared, and an outcome of current social configurations: not quite belonging is a public feeling, one that evolves out of systemic discrimination and perennial social othering. Following Raymond Williams’ (1977) theory of structures of feeling, I describe the feelings of people who have migrated to Canada as growing in number and depth such that the traditional audiences (i.e., diaspora) have become a significant demographic. People who have immigrated, or their next generation, comprise a significant portion of Ontario’s population, so that recognizing people with a shared cultural background, or even sharing a similar migration experience, has become as important, or even more so, than trying to fit in with a dominant, traditionally anglophone culture. These feelings are described as producing a structural change to Ontario, via language, particularly our namescape, which is a significant component of our cultural lexicon.
Another author whose work prioritizes feeling is Jay Lemke (2008), as he asks about the role of desire and fear in identity performance; he also questions how these feelings and performances change over time. While other theoretical investigations examine the structures at work in upholding certain kinds of informational infrastructures or social customs, affect literature looks at how emotions motivate our actions and contribute to certain types of identity choices. Cvetkovich describes affect as “noticing and describing the places where it feels like there is something else happening, and passing on strategies for survival” (p. 6). And like Cvetkovich’s aim for her own project, mine too is “to find new ways of articulating the relation between the macro and the micro and new forms of description that are more texturized, more localized, and also less predictably foregone in their conclusions about our dire situation” (p. 12). Although I don’t delve deeply here, certainly the significant and intriguing literature on affect could make for an entire dissertation focused on immigration challenges. In my project, affect is incorporated as a way of giving due significance to participants’ feelings about their names and identities within Canada.

2.5 Identity and Performativity

From the outset, as is clear from my research questions, I planned to examine the roles of immigration and name change on individuals’ identities. I saw this as a kind of multiple component chicken-or-egg problem, one that asks if immigrating provokes a name change and identity shifts ensue, or does immigrating shift identity in ways that prompt name changes? And even though I looked at a significant swath of literature that fit within this academic realm (e.g., Richard Jenkins, Judith Butler, Erving Goffman, Jay Lemke), my answer is neither and both: many factors are at work in identity construction.

Linking back to affect and identity, Jenkins (2008) considers the “self” in this way: “Selves are located within bodies, and that embodiment is one of the sources of the unity of selfhood. A sense of self is created in the course of the early verbal and non-verbal dialogue—a complex interaction of separation from and identification with—between the child and significant others” (p. 60). The roles of validation and legitimization by others are also described by Goffman (1959) with his description of the “presentation of the self” and “impression management” and by Clarke’s (1994) differentiation between “projected personae” and “imposed personae”; the latter of which is more structured, created by others, and difficult to change.
In their work on identity construction, Foucault (in Rabinow, 1984) and Butler (1990) both use the metaphor of inscription, but their perspectives differ in that Foucault imagines a body existing before being inscribed by cultural means, while Butler suggests that “the constitution of the body rests in its inscription; the body becomes the text which is written upon it and from which it is indistinguishable” (Brush 1998, p. 23). Balsamo (1992) describes people “using their bodies as a vehicle for staging cultural identities” (p. 226). And Brush suggests that over time the “‘natural’ body becomes obscured by discourse… inscribed, engraved, written over, until it is little more than a palimpsest, over which other texts have been written, erasing, obscuring the origin” (1998, p. 25).

Judith Butler’s (1990, 1993, 1997) work on performativity is drawn on throughout the dissertation. Butler (1993) critiques Saul Kripke’s (1972) description of names as rigid designators, and next questions the validity of Žižek’s (1989) view on names as an aspect of ideology. Butler’s (1997) rereading of Althusser’s (1971) theory of interpellation through the lens of performativity is beneficial in thinking of the implications of mispronunciation and more deliberate othering, as well as participants’ reactions to name mis-hailings. And finally, Butler and Spivak’s (2007) conversation on nationalism and belonging is poignant in terms understanding how belonging happens, even without official recognition or approval.

Madan Sarup (1996) describes identity as “the story we tell ourselves and … that others tell of us,” and points to the necessity and significance of boundaries in relation to belonging: “Identity is a construction, a consequence of a process of interaction between people, institutions and practices that, because the range of human behaviour is so wide, groups maintain boundaries to limit the type of behaviour within a defined cultural territory” (p. 3). How these boundaries play out in terms of notions of norms and othering is discussed in detail throughout the dissertation, particularly in Chapter 5.

Sarup sees identity as a multi-dimensional space in which boundaries (e.g., labels, names) are tested in spoken words, in films, in policies, in visual articulations, as pieces “from the innumerable centres of culture, ideological state apparatus and practices; parents, family, schools, the workplace, the media, the political parties, the state” all blend and crash in the space.

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8 Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar (1986) also use the term ‘inscription’ in relation to tools that create representations of otherwise unrepresented activities, events, communication, etc.
Names are among the words that are spoken and written in different tones and contexts: they comprise the namescape. While Sarup’s description of identity in terms of boundaries and language is of benefit to this project, he does not describe identity construction in more concrete terms of power: all seems equally agentive, cohesive, and coherent.

2.6 Power

Power is a difficult system to describe, largely because we are all always in the midst of it—with our mixed sets of privileges, perspectives, motivations and distractions. We rarely discuss power overtly, perhaps because it isn’t becoming to acknowledge our individual hierarchical positions. As such, it seems a strange subheading to include here, yet it is also significant to describe the ways I understand power at work in this dissertation.

In general terms, Foucault’s (1988) description of power within his theory of subjectification fits very well with this study. Power is a capillary system that “reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourse, learning processes and everyday lives” (1988, p. 39). There is no point in looking for an origin (i.e., from the state), but rather “the effects of power, the points of power that are manifest in relations” (Heckman, p. 123). Foucault’s only direction for moving outside of these circumstance is the “promot[ion] of new forms of subjectivities” (1983, p. 216). He leaves limited direction for how these subjectivities will look, and what shape they might take. Perhaps he intended to leave the application of this theory to future studies that continue to draw on his work.

In this study, power is embedded in the research questions in three places.

- In the first question, I am asking about the power of names: How do names work? How do name shifts change identities?

- In the first sub-question, I ask about the power (i.e., agency) of individuals during social interactions, both the participants and the people they interact with, to use names, and to motivate others to use names differently.

- In the second sub-question, I am asking about the (structural) power of institutions over individuals, especially those who have immigrated, in terms of their name use.
In terms of the first question, the power of names, I look to Foucault’s theory of “normalization” (Rabinow, 1984). It seems that in Ontario, some names are more powerful than others. Familiar and established “Canadian” names pass in many circumstances as “normal”, as hitting a sweet spot in terms of social acceptability. Foucault describes this in terms of “normalization … a system of finely graduated and measureable intervals in which individuals can be distributed around a norm—a norm which both organizes and is a result of this controlled distribution” (Rabinow 1984, p. 20).

In terms of the question of social interactions, Butler (1997) describes a name as “wield[ing] a linguistic power of constitution in ways that are indifferent to the one who bears the name” (p. 31). Our systems of reading names take little account of whom the person who bears this name is; the name stands in and is read in ways that may not be at all correct, or intended. Yet, armed with this knowledge, for participants, it is still possible to toy with the reading of a name, and to force different interpretations.

van Dijk (2003), describing the methods of Critical Discourse Analysis, states that power is exercised by controlling “the structures of text and talk” (p. 357) through actions such as asking questions that require particular kinds of responses (e.g. roll call), insisting on particular conventions (e.g. formal greetings, using nicknames), and providing a particular lexicon of terms (e.g. classifications of ethnicities).

In terms of institutional power, Bosmajian describes “the ability to name” as an important power “related directly to the power to define others—individuals, races, sexes, ethnic groups” (1974, p. 5). As well, “the act of naming [or enforcing naming standards] implies that the naming group has a measure of control” (Nuessel 1992, p. 3). Scott describes the earliest naming systems as brought about as tools for governments of those times to make their population a “legible people” (Scott, p. 65). The implications of institutional insistence on particular name formats, such as length, are substantial as “institutional practices leave traces that echo in the social world long after their institutional architecture disintegrates” (Garcelon 2001, p. 83).

### 2.7 Science and Technology Studies

That my dissertation evolved to draw so much on literature from the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) was unanticipated. STS literature has resonated with me throughout
graduate school, yet I underestimated the significance of this body of literature in terms of providing a lexicon and models for undertaking subtle analyses of practical issues, and for examining the power inherent in name challenges and reactions to these challenges.

In general, there are two shared attributes of STS scholarship, or at least of the authors whom I’ve read (i.e., Bowker and Star, Law, Balsamo) that I have relied on most directly. The first is the Foucauldian influence on these authors’ view of power—a recognition of power’s workings and ubiquity, a desire to better understand and share knowledge of its interplays, and the analysis of the interdependence and engagement of technology with other social attributes, as potentially shifting roles of dominance. The second shared attribute is their straightforward and sometimes personal style of writing—writing that, in contrast to traditional writing within the fields of science and technology, remains active, establishes the author as a subject, and defines their position.

During doctoral coursework, several close readings of Bowker and Star’s *Sorting Things Out: Classification and its Consequences* (1999) had me viewing the book’s chapters—which closely examine the classificatory “nature” of information infrastructure in a variety of practical and often socially unjust settings—as models for my dissertation research. Besides my drawing on Bowker and Star’s concepts of audience (in “demands-audiences-contingencies”) and categorical work (p. 309), their imaginative metaphor of “textures” of classification systems (p. 284) influenced my thinking about “dimensions” of names. Perhaps the most compelling aspect of Bowker and Star’s work is their effort to dig up and expose classifications systems and infrastructure that is inherently supportive and generally unseen. My goal in writing this dissertation has been to reveal some of the significant influences of our day-to-day interactions on names, especially in terms of maintaining categories such as “immigrant” and “Canadian”, and along with this our (generally unintended) othering remarks and questions about names.

*Designing Culture: The Technological Imagination at Work* by Ann Balsamo (2011) was also immediately intriguing. I had begun to think of participants as cultural designers in terms of the name choices they were making—that so many were maintaining original names or in some cases adjusting the spelling of their names—and when searching that term, a review for Balsamo’s book appeared (Thornham, 2012). As I read the review, each of Balsamo’s “lessons” in cultural design resonated so strongly with my research that I decided to compare the lessons
established by Balsamo with the situations experienced by participants, to what is a striking consonance. Because of my efforts in Chapter 6 to trouble and tease out the potential for a name to be understood as an object, even a technology, it was great to be able to include Balsamo’s comparable lessons in Chapter 7.

My use of STS literature within a study that focuses on cultural phenomena—othering, discrimination, and reactions to these—is undertaken because it provides the best fit for understanding the interplays of power, and the agency and creativity exhibited by people who shift their names, but this decision illustrates the effectiveness of STS in bringing greater understanding to social challenges other than those focused on technology.

John Law describes taking on the lens of STS as having “sociotechnical vision”, or a “concern with overlaps, with how it is that different things are brought together, with how it is that differences and similarities are constructed” and maintained (1991, p. 17). This is very much the gaze that I employ in this dissertation. STS offers the ability to understand the heterogeneity of power structures; that is, how the social and technical are intertwined. In the following chapters that contextualize and demonstrate the challenges of which names are made to be the source, I hold up names as a technology. How does a name work? How are they designed? What kinds work best for which purposes?

Law’s model of three interdependent emissaries of “documents, devices and drilled people” at work in the Portuguese caravels’ race toward India was recommended to me at a committee meeting and has proven to be an essential framework for detailing the levels of activities involved in challenging name encounters, one aspect of what Law terms “social control” (1986a). Whereas thinking about how a dominant culture maintains itself is a nebulous, even daunting, task, viewing social interactions with the a focus on interdependent agents allows for paths in—it becomes possible to analyze the feelings, scenarios, and decisions that are common to the study’s participants. Law describes this “network of passive agents (both human and non-human)” used during the Portuguese expansion of the late 1400s “as the obvious raw materials for the actors who seeks to control others at a distance” (1986b, p. 257). By choosing to structure my dissertation with Law’s three agents, I am acknowledging the power inherent in naming, and the desire of federal and provincial levels of government to maintain control of this power.
Although there is no master plan to socially engineer all migrants’ names to be made more Canadian, these agents do function together, often quite invisibly. Policies are built from discourses of social beliefs, forms are completed through computers, and people—standing behind counters, using these tools, doing their jobs, educated with these social beliefs, and sometimes very kindly and helpfully, ease a name into a particular form without too much violence. These interdependent systems, beliefs and tools are the way that our population, in terms of our names, are regulated remotely. This social control is not understood as just top-down or from the bureaucracy onto the citizenry—rather, its agents are more apparent as the dissertation proceeds: we are able to see participants as agents who are finding ways to take control.

2.8 Theoretical perspective

This project begins from a social constructionist’s perspective\(^9\) (Hacking, 1999), one that positions our views and understandings of entities as constructed, rather than their being based on the existence of a “true” reality that we seek to understand. Through this lens, our experiences are due, in part, to interactions and challenges with the entities that we, and generations before us, have structured. These entities range from ideas that have become normalized over time, to tangible objects that reflect or challenge these ideas. These “constructions” are also described as discourses, beliefs, values, social warrants, stereotypes, and when formally agreed upon by a governing body, they are more precisely, and concretely articulated as policies, laws, standards, regulations, with their own forms, identification cards, and other regulatory devices.

This dissertation is not a project of unmasking or refuting one particular social construction, as much as it is one of asking what it means to have a name that belongs in Canada, and why do we think a name does or does not belong? Perhaps I am actually after asking after an (absent) construction: how do we build a Canadian name? To create one, we need to consider all of the elements that do or do not contribute to names being “Canadian.” And that’s what this dissertation aims toward: it looks at many of the different challenges people have encountered

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\(^9\) Hacking describes the social constructionist perspective as “various sociological, historical, and philosophical projects that aim at displaying or analyzing actual, historically situated, social interactions or causal routes that led to, or were involved in, the coming into being or establishing of some present entity or fact” (1999, p. 48).
during day-to-day name use and it asks why their names met resistance, and then how people have worked around those challenges.

The work of this dissertation is to examine the socially constructed categories that are used to make sense of personal names, especially those names that have been more recently inserted into Canadian culture. Further, it examines the process of designing an altered name for use in Canada: what motivates these shifts, what outcomes do they have, and what does this mean for individuals who have altered their names, as well as for the broader Canadian society who too will come to know and use these names? I am drawing from several approaches to aid in the digging out and holding up of these constructions. A variety of perspectives and tools are required for this task. Next, the three theory-method approaches that most influence the methodological design and strategies of this dissertation are described.

2.9 Methods for studying power as applied to personal names

2.9.1 Institutional Ethnography

The choice to focus this study on participants’ perspectives of name conflicts in particular is encouraged by both Institutional Ethnography and Standpoint Theory. Institutional Ethnography (IE), developed by Dorothy E. Smith through the 1980s, is an approach for seeing and explaining how we are ruled and how we participate in our own ruling (Smith 2005, p. 11). According to the tenets of Institutional Ethnography, putting the everyday name-conflicts experienced by this considerable demographic of Ontario in the spotlight, means looking at “how these particular things happen as they do” and working to “make problematic what is ordinarily taken for granted” (Campbell and Gregor 2004, pp. 46-7). Institutional Ethnography (IE) recommends that the researcher must learn to “think, hear and talk about the setting as various participants know it,” and next, examine how the setting is organized or “ruled” (Campbell and Gregor, p. 50). “Ruling” is defined as the “socially-organized exercise of power that shapes people’s actions and their lives” (Campbell and Gregor, p. 32). The starting point of an IE study is a “problematic” that “is there, being lived by someone, in the everyday world” (Campbell and Gregor 2004, p. 46). Here the problematic is name challenges experienced by people who have immigrated to Ontario.
Not unlike Law’s three functionaries model, Smith sees the interdependent levels through which social control or “ruling” occurs, but Smith’s focus is “texts”. In IE, texts are activated: they “are people’s doings” (Smith 2005, p. 170). Texts are defined as material forms that enable replication via paper, film, and digitalization (Smith 2005, p. 228). This materiality is key because it allows IE researchers to see how texts can be present in our everyday world as well as connecting us with translocal social relations (Smith 2005, p. 228). It is through these connections, Smith suggests, that texts are used to coordinate peoples’ activities in various locations thus producing the stability and replicability relied upon for institutions to remain stable and continuous, and for names in Ontario to retain their traditional, English-sounding dimensions.

2.9.2 Standpoint Theory

Standpoint Theory, “a feminist critical theory about relations between the production of knowledge and practices of power” (Harding 2004, p. 1) resembles Institutional Ethnography in that each offers a theory and method, as well as a political strategy. Standpoint theory also urges the valuation of the less-known view: “those who are subject to structures of domination that systematically marginalize and oppress them may in fact, be epistemically privileged in some crucial respects” (Wylie 2004, p. 339). Patricia Hill Collins provides an example to demonstrate: working as domestic help, “Afro-American women have long been privy to some of the most intimate secrets of white society” (2004, p. 103). Though they remain outsiders, these women have “seen white elites, both actual and aspiring, from perspectives largely obscured from their Black spouses and from these groups themselves” (p. 103). Further, like the Afro-American domestics that Hill describes, those who are just outside of a dominant social location, generally know exactly how to perform in that mode, but the reverse is not true. People who have migrated to Ontario generally become bicultural, able to interact as an insider in original communities, as well as within their quotidian audiences. Participants’ name shift choices demonstrate balancing between these audiences, based their views that see and understands more than many who comprise Ontario’s dominant culture.

2.9.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis “has been adopted and developed by social constructionists” who understand reality as socially constructed, and see language as “shap[ing] the categories and constructs we
use” (Barker, 2003). And in particular, the tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis\(^\text{10}\) (CDA) are taken as a guide for the project’s research strategies. Researchers Norman Fairclough (2003, 1993), Teun A. van Dijk (1993), and Ruth Wodak (2009, with Michael Meyer) are the most commonly cited developers and definers of CDA (Wooffitt, 2005). Followed stringently, CDA methods are a very effective system for examining the role of language in the production of power and dominance. However, interviews are not commonly used as an object of analysis for CDA as they do not provide natural language interactions, but rather descriptions of past events and experiences. In this study, CDA’s focus on social problems and power relations offers a means for examining how speech and text can be such significant forces in quotidian social interactions, as well as how these situations are influenced by historical and institutionalized practices. Power is seen to lie behind (i.e. historically) as well as in language as exchanges take place in the moment. Fairclough describes how a dominant class evolves an accepted manner of speaking, and accent, over time; power in language takes place in the present, through the constraints of quotidian interactions: who asks the questions, what limits are there on types of responses, etc. (Wooffitt, pp. 140-1). CDA aims to identify “the ways in which discourse (re)produces inequalities, and dominance in the broader web of discourse, texts, contexts, non-discursive practices and wider social structures” (Wooffitt, p. 144). van Dijk\(^\text{11}\) describes examinations of access to and control of discourse as key to CDA; both context and structure of text and talk are significant. How these aspects of interaction influence some participants’ name challenges are analyzed within a CDA framework in Chapter 5.

Fairclough (1993) describes language’s social actions as both shaping and constitutive: depending on who is using language and how, it can be seen as having either structuralist or pragmatic effects. Language, understood here as a name, is “simultaneously constitutive of (i) social identities, (ii) social relations and (iii) systems of knowledge and belief” (Fairclough, p. 134). Besides thinking of language as names, a CDA approach is also engaged in this dissertation to consider contextualizing and persuasive conversations about names.

van Dijk (1993) focuses on “the role of discourse in the (re)production and challenge of dominance” (p. 249). Dominance is “enacted and reproduced by subtle, routine, everyday forms

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\(^{10}\) CDA is drawn on as a guiding rationale: its methods are not adhered to because the data generated from my study is that of interviews, not native-setting conversations, or other kinds of texts commonly used in discourse analyses.

\(^{11}\) van Dijk’s focus on the elite as controllers of discourses is not shared by either Fairclough or Wodak, nor is it focus the goal of this dissertation; still, many of van Dijk’s tenets are beneficial to this study.
of text and talk that appear ‘natural’ and quite ‘acceptable’” (van Dijk 1993, p. 254) such as those at work in common activities of social practices pertaining to name use: introductions, roll call, résumé selection, identity card production. In the chapters that follow, we see language and name choices as both challenging and reproducing the dominant culture: language is the material of structures that challenge participants’ use of their original names, but how participants choose to use their names shows active efforts to shift expectations and stretch which names are known and how they are used. In these ways, language influences the ways that participants are known and seen.
### Change of Name Act

**Loi sur le changement de nom**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following changes of name were granted during the period from April 26, 2010 to May 02, 2010 under the authority of the *Change of Name Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.7 and the following Regulation RRO 1990, Reg 68. The listing below shows the previous name followed by the new name.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREVIOUS NAME</th>
<th>NEW NAME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABDUL RAZZAK, ALLA.</td>
<td>HILFI, ALLAL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABDUL RAZZAK, ZADE, ALI.</td>
<td>HILFI, ZADE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABDULLAHI, MOHAMED.</td>
<td>ADEN, MOHAMED.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABDIRAHMAN.</td>
<td>ABDIRAHMAN.</td>
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<td>ABOWAT, HUMAIRAH.</td>
<td>ABOWATH, HUMAIRAH.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABU KUWAII, GHASSAN.</td>
<td>KWAIK, SAM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZOHAIL.</td>
<td>AHMED, MANAL.AFAF.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHMED, AFFAF.</td>
<td>MOHBAT ALI, ALISHAH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALISHAH, ALISHAH.</td>
<td>CORSTON, WILLIAM.GEORGE.</td>
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<td>ALLAN, WILLIE GEORGE.</td>
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<td>AMIRTHALINGAM.</td>
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<td>ASUNCION, CONSUELO.</td>
<td>FREGILLANA, CONSUELO.</td>
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<td>FREGILLANA.</td>
<td>MERCADO.</td>
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<td>BANI MAHD GOLSAFED, MIR.</td>
<td>BANI MAHD,</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALEH.MORI.</td>
<td>MORI.</td>
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<td>BARROS, MARIA.DE.FATIMA.E</td>
<td>BARROS, MARIA.DE.FÁTIMA.</td>
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<td>LENTERIO.</td>
<td>ELÉUTERIO.</td>
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<td>MICHAEL.</td>
<td>BODHI.</td>
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<td>BERARDINI, RAIMONDO.</td>
<td>BERARDINI, JOHN.</td>
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<td>GIOVANNI.</td>
<td>RAYMOND.</td>
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<td>BHOGAN, GURBAKSH.KAUR.</td>
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<td>BHOGAN, JASWANT.SINGH.</td>
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<td>BIRDI, GURCHAN.SINGH.</td>
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<td>BOYNTON, GEORGE.LAWRIE.</td>
<td>BOYNTON, LAWRIE.</td>
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<td>MCGILLIVRAY.</td>
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<td>BUSHEY, DIANEA.DELORES..</td>
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<td>CHEN, LEI.</td>
<td>CHEN, DANIEL.</td>
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<td>CHEN, SHENG.</td>
<td>CHEN, BILL.K.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHUNG, CHIUMFE.</td>
<td>CHUNG, CHRISTIE.CHU.MEE.</td>
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Figure 1: Sample Legal Name Changes made in Ontario in 2010

Source: Ontario Provincial Gazette
3 Research Methodology: A Qualitative Approach

My chosen approach to researching the topic of how people who immigrate use their names in Ontario is qualitative. In part, this is because my efforts to examine related quantitative data were thwarted by limited access to data. But mostly this is because when I did review sets of Ontarians’ formal name changes in terms of “Previous” and “New” names, the question of “Why?” hung so loudly in the air. I wanted to know why people chose these particular shifts as their formal name changes, why not something other, and why did they change their names at all? A story lies behind each name change, and I wanted to hear as many of these stories as possible.

The majority of studies involving personal names use quantitative methods, and most involve evaluating sets of names against hypotheses (Gerhards and Hans 2009, Boullón 2008, Hussar 2008, Hagåsen 2008, Broom et al. 1955). A few studies do choose a qualitative approach: Scassa’s (1996) study of case law pertaining to names and Shariff’s (2008) reader response approach are examples of qualitative studies considering the personal name choices of people who have immigrated. But expanding my research focus beyond “a study of names” and rather toward a critical exploration of language choices made during institutionalized and quotidian social practices, means that there are many more qualitative models to consider (i.e. Mahtani 2004, Brodkin 1998, Bertrand and Sendhil 2004, Lipsitz 1998).

The design of my study focuses largely on qualitative interviews (Spradley 1979, Wolcott 2005, Creswell 1998) and to a lesser extent, the analysis of related government documents. The interviews were designed, conducted, analyzed and described with an approach based on critical perspectives including standpoint theory (Hartsock 1983, Hekman 1997, Harding 2004, Wylie 2004, Collins 2004), institutional ethnography (Smith 2005, Campbell and Gregor 2004), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2003, van Dijk 1993, Wodak and Meyer 2009), and science and technology studies (John Law 1986a, Bowker and Star 2000, Balsamo 2011).

3.1 Beginning to Generate Data

In terms of planning interviews, Spradley’s (1979) interview guidelines were most helpful: he suggests learning from people rather than studying people in order to better understand the
“complex meaning systems” that constitute cultures (p. 5). His own studies focus on the experiences and perspectives of individuals with whom he shares a geographical location, but who are living in a significantly different culture than Spradley’s own—this inspired me to work to better understand events experienced by people with whom I share a quotidian environment. We move through similar spaces and attend to similar errands, but our experiences may vary substantially. According to Spradley, commonalities and differences are inferred by a researcher’s attentiveness to her participants: by “listening carefully to what they say, by observing their behavior, and by studying artifacts and their use” (p. 9). Spradley describes life in North America as a shared, yet heterogeneous society which necessitates that people employ different cultural rules as they move from one scene to another (p. 12) and he argues for the necessity of learning as much as possible of your informants’ ‘language’ (not necessarily other than English, but how key terms are used) to reduce the distortion of the cultural realities the researcher is learning about (p. 20). Spradley’s focus on attentiveness to individuals’ lexicons as means of expressing perspectives proved quite valuable when undertaking interviews.

3.2 Pilot Interviews

In the summer of 2008 I conducted four one-to-one informal pilot interviews with Montreal-based friends and acquaintances who had immigrated and had experienced name challenges. Participants in these pilot interviews were students, or parents of students, from France, India, Germany and Mexico.

The pilot interviews clarified several components of the study’s design. First, the pilot participants’ ranges of experience with name challenges, including mispronunciation and names altered on official identity documents, varied significantly based on the provinces in which they lived. It was evident that I would need to limit the study to one province. Next, I found that each participant had strong, politicized feelings about the ways they had been treated because of their names. (In fact, this was less the case in the later, formal interviews.) As well, the individuating particularities of each person’s name, name challenges, and name choices were also notable. I became concerned that it would be difficult to make generalizations based on interviews. Finally, following the completion of pilot interviews, I considered narrowing the recruitment of participants to those of a particular culture or ethnicity in order to tell a more detailed story of the particular challenges of having names with shared characteristics. After due consideration, I
determined that it was more important to consider the breadth of concerns shared by residents of Ontario who had emigrated from a variety of countries.

3.3 Official Interviews

Following the pilot interviews, and after obtaining approval from ethics, I established a set of interview questions and set about recruiting participants for this study.

3.3.1 Interview format

For these conversational, semi-structured interviews, the following five questions were provided to the participants in advance, and there was “some ‘give and take’ between the researcher and interviewee as adjustments [were] made” (Kirby, Greaves and Reid 2006, p. 134).

IQ.1. The story of the name. How was your name chosen when you were born? What does your name mean in the country(ies) that you have lived in previously? How has migration to Canada created challenges for using your name as you were used to? Describe any turning points, and how you came to have your current name.

IQ.2. An episode of name-related difficulty. Please tell me about a time that you were in a difficult situation because of your name. Describe the setting, who was involved, and how the situation was resolved. How you felt at that time, and how what you’ve thought about it since, is also welcomed.

IQ.3. Relationship of name to identity. How does your name relate to how you see yourself, and how others see you? Describe any differences between your previous and current name, and between your experiences in Canada and in any other countries you have lived in. Do you consider your name to be a Canadian name?

IQ.4. Name documentation experiences. Please describe your experiences of completing forms and getting identification cards in Canada. What was the process of applying for one of these cards or documents, including your decision to apply, how you attained the form, if you received any help with your application, and if the outcome of the application was satisfactory. If you have formally changed your name, please describe how you learned about this option and how you went about applying.
IQ.5. Pseudonym-making process. If you’d prefer that your real name wasn’t used in this study, let’s create a suitable pseudonym that accurately represents the particularities or your name, and how you’ve changed it. Please tell me why each name component that you choose is a suitable representation for your name, including how it might identify your gender, class, culture, birth order, birth circumstances or any other significant attributes.

The format of the interview worked quite well and had few shifts over time. The first question (the story of the name) allowed the participant to speak at length with a response that they had generally considered in advance. During participants’ responses, I took a few notes for follow-up questions and we spent a while discussing these related topics. Frequently the first question led into the second and third one and the interviews flowed smoothly, as conversations. While the first three questions generally generated a lot of discussion, the last two were fruitful where applicable, but in many cases participants had no issues with their identification cards, and in the cases where the participants were prepared to use their real names in the study, they were not interested in working on a pseudonym together.

3.4 Recruitment challenges

After completing my initial interview with a participant I’d met months earlier on a conference panel, I carefully wrote out field notes and several entries in my “dissertation diary.” But then, my recruitment efforts seemed ineffective. There came a pause in interviews that stretched on, and by early August 2010, it became apparent that it might be challenging to find the types of participants I was looking for. Worry set in that my project might fail because of a lack of participants. Between these bouts of worry, I did keep in touch with umbrella organizations working in immigration and settlement, with individual settlement and multicultural neighbourhood organizations, and with several personal contacts who had mentioned that they or someone they knew was willing to be interviewed. A few friends explained their efforts to help me:

Dear Diane,

I am writing to say that, unfortunately, my efforts to get a Bulgarian into your group of interviewees was not fruitful. My friend [[found out that]] [[is currently in Bulgaria and that apparently he doesn't like to talk too]]
much about his name. ■ also suggested another Bulgarian - a woman she had met through her work - who had changed her family name for reasons unknown, but that person also declined participation in a study like yours because she too does not like to discuss the subject.

As ■ observed, the conclusion from this large sample of two people is that the Bulgarians take issue with their experience of name change and self-select out of surveys on this topic :) At this point I can't think of anyone else who might be a good candidate for your study, but I know that you will get a good group of people.

Hugs!

I appreciated these efforts, but the project’s future seemed dire. I became concerned that, as indicated in the email above, many people were not interested in talking about their name changes. I completed another interview in August, but a month spent in Toronto to complete several interviews, instead became focused on sending out research advertisements with fine-tuned, personalized requests to a long list of contacts.

And then I noticed that CERIS (previously an acronym for Ontario’s Centre of Research on Immigration and Settlement) was doing something it hadn’t done before—they were sending out calls for participation in student research studies. I quickly requested that my own call for participants be sent off. How lucky that was, as this proved to be the most fruitful of my leads. People responded directly, or sent the call on to other people who eventually replied. In the first 24 hours after the call went out, I received 15 responses; those responses lead to meetings with 12 participants.

Some responses were simple, but provocative:

Dear Diane,

I am ready to volunteer for your research.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

(■ ■ ■ ■ ■)

Others were ready to schedule interviews:
To: diane.dechief@utoronto.ca

Subject: FW: Participants are welcome

Hi Diane, I am interested in this interview. But it is not convenient for me to go to DT. Is it possible for your student to come to Fairview Malls where I live some day after 6:00pm?

thx

And some were very descriptive:

Hi Diane,

I'm not sure, but I think that my situation is one that applies for your study. Working where I do, I totally understand and support the need of participants for research.

My parents and I are immigrants and we had name change issues right from school registration in 1974. In Portugal we were not required to take our parent's last names, so my dad in honour of my grandparents, gave us their last name - Figueiredo. When we started school he registered us and they would not let us be registered with our original last name and we had to change it to Prancho, which was his last name. They also called me Martha all throughout elementary school. I remember my dad stating that I was Marta and the spelling and they proceeded to include an h. I don't know what happened, but in high school I ended up on the roster with the name of Marta and being that this is my real name, took it back gladly and have been recognized by that ever since.

In a way I'm glad the first name changed happened, I'm a proud Prancho and there are so few of us that I've actually chosen to keep my maiden name through marriage. The 2nd name change, well I was young and didn't know any better, and Martha was easier for others to say, but I'm so glad that it got changed back to my given name of Marta. Now, however, I do feel like I'm dealing with 2 identities - Marta C Prancho as a Canadian Citizen and a Marta C Figueiredo as a Portuguese Citizen since having my name legally changed in Portugal is a huge process. My brother has gone through it and I'm not sure I'm going to quite yet.

Hope this helps some.

Marta
After that period of worry, I worked hard to interview everyone who was a match for the study. Unfortunately, four people who were initially interested and responded to my early emails stopped replying before we could meet. On the plus side, two more interviews were coordinated with social contacts, and two “snowball sample” participants came through participants I had met through CERIS. In all, I interviewed 23 people from May to December 2010; this was accomplished during eight trips (from Montreal) to Toronto, one to Ottawa, and one to Hamilton and Kitchener-Waterloo. Participants self-identified as having

- experienced significant name challenges,
- contemplated a name change,
- made formal or informal changes to their names, or
- resisted changing their names.

3.5 Interview adventures

The interviews were exciting and fun to take part in. After email correspondence, including my sending the interview questions in advance, I met the participants at mutually agreed upon locations. In three cases we had met previously. As well, one participant and I made our arrangements to meet by telephone, so we had spoken before we met. The email exchanges I had with potential participants were very fruitful. From these, I was able to see if the potential participant’s email address was the same as the name they signed off with, and I often received a brief (or extensive) description of their name challenge, so I was able to categorize or have a sense of the type of name challenges we would discuss. Via these email exchanges we, as a potential participant and a researcher, were also able to achieve some level of comfort before meeting in-person. I wrote thoughtful, individualized emails to let each participant know how grateful I was for their interest in the project—this communications helped build trust. Before we began our interviews, one quarter of the participants asked me about my opinions on immigration and name changes; I consider these to be prudent questions and my responses may have also helped to build trust and rapport.

The interviews took place in a variety of locations: participants’ offices or boardrooms (6), a faculty conference room (6), Tim Horton’s or other restaurants (4), public seating on Ontario university campuses (3), participant’s homes (2), at my office in Montreal (1), and over Skype.
Our conversations generally lasted between 45 minutes and 75 minutes, though one stretched on for almost two hours! As each interview began, we discussed the participant’s rights during and after the interview, and we completed and signed ethics forms. If the participant wasn’t sure how they would like to use their name in the study (e.g. anonymously, with a pseudonym for first or last name, or with own name), we left that until the interview was complete, so the participant knew what the interview consisted of. I recorded each interview with a digital recording device.

Because I was living in Montreal while undertaking fieldwork in Ontario, the majority of the interviews happened in a series of short, intense trips to Toronto. I met as many as three participants in a single day. Looking at my field journal from this period, I see that scheduling was a major consideration. Not only was my grid calendar busy, and differently coloured, with many alterations, but I also had several days described by the hour, with long “to do” lists in the margins. This made for great opportunities to consider participants’ responses and circumstances in contrast to one another, but left little time for transcribing between interviews, or for making detailed field notes. It also meant that several participants were very generous about meeting with little notice.

The notes I made following each interview tended to be brief: generally two hand-written pages per participant. I referred to theorists (i.e., Jenkins, Foucault, Goffman, Butler, Sarup) and approaches (i.e. discourse analysis, standpoint theory) that occurred to me during the interviews, and I made suggestions to myself for data presentation (e.g., timelines, world maps).

As well, I handwrote notes about how significant or minor I though the participants challenges were, about whether they’d mentioned racism, or referred to their own speech as accented, and what was novel or compellingly phrased as each participant articulated their experiences. I also made notes on my own performance as a researcher. When I felt that I’d done well at pushing the conversation in particular directions, I noted it, and at one point (November 10, 2010) made this note:

I think the engagement between myself and the participants is usually pretty strong. I am interested in the entire conversation, and they are willing to share, to express without flinching or judgment. Though, with some of the younger participants, I have occasionally wondered if they are trying to please me with their answers. There also seems to be a bit
of “trying out” at the beginning of the interview, for people to tell me their name situation, and then to check with me if I think it is a significant thing…. 

Possibilities seem endless. I keep asking myself, what is the story I am trying to tell?

Besides this rare self-congratulatory moment, my field notes also demonstrate some of the stresses I experienced, not just because of meeting so many people in a short timeframe, but about being in spaces that were unfamiliar to me. Besides frequently getting lost and sometimes feeling out of place, there were also challenges with actually locating participants: often participants’ names did not convey a gender or particular ethnicity to me. Consider this scenario recorded in my field notes:

I’ve arrived seven minutes late to meet a potential participant for my dissertation research project. I’m standing outside of an unfamiliar building, on an unfamiliar campus and there are several people populating the area where we’re set to meet.

The potential participant and I have exchanged email, but I have no sense of their appearance based on ethnicity, age or gender. Their name is not a common English-sounding name, but it’s not obvious to me from what ethnicity it might originate.

Not seeing anyone looking at me as if I might be the one they’re meeting, I check my phone for updates: nothing. As I’m the researcher, and I’ve arrived late, I begin to make some effort to locate the possible participant. I approach a heavy-set man, who is possibly of Indian heritage, and in his late twenties.

“Hi, are you Jag*?” I begin.

“Nope, sorry” he says, shaking his head.

I step back, a little embarrassed, “Thanks, and sorry.”

Still on task, I move toward two young Asian women standing a couple of metres away. They look toward me just as my phone starts to vibrate.

I turn and answer the phone, “Hello?”
A friendly female voice with an accent much like my own asks, “Is this Diane?”

I’m relieved, “Yes.”

She continues, “Oh, ok. Sorry, I’m just running late at the library. Can I meet you in 5 minutes?”

“No problem. I’ll be where we planned. I’m wearing a red coat.”

As I hang up, I’m aware that I still haven’t heard this participant say her name, nor have I said it to her. But now I know that she’s en route, and that I’ve given her the information required to locate me. Phew.

At the end of each interview, as was pre-arranged, I gave each participant an honorarium, a $20 bill in an envelope. However, in two cases where participants refused to be paid, I made online donations in the participant’s name to a charity of their choosing. In one case, I purchased the participant’s dinner when she refused the honorarium. Everyone I spoke with seemed interested in telling me about their name challenges, and glad that someone was interested in researching this topic.

3.6 Transcribing and preliminary coding

Each time I worked with the interviews as data, I got to know them differently; processing the interviews from recorded to typed formats meant coming to understand the interviews in new ways. As I transcribed, I was aware of the dialogue that each participant and I had created: our pauses, and responses, where I pushed (and didn’t push) for further information, as well as noise in the interview environment. For example, two interviews recorded in the lobby at OISE also contain nearby conversations and the periodic passing of subway cars. As well, some participants spoke so quietly I had to listen repeatedly through fan noises to make out some words. As I transcribed, I was reminded of the heat and the lack of air circulation in the rooms where the interviews took place. Hopefully, these distractions don’t find their way into later chapters, but they certainly shaped the transcription process. It occurred in this order:

- Transcribing and coding order
- Recording interview
- Moving file to passworded computers
Transcribing

Pasting typed text and sound files into Transana (open source software) and linking text to audiorecording

Undertaking initial coding in Transana

Printing out the interviews and placing them in a binder with field notes and other collected data.

By March of 2011, the interview transcriptions were complete. Transcribing took many hours per interview, dependent, in particular, on the quality of the recording. The transcripts were created in Microsoft Word using a foot pedal and Express Scribe. The result is over 300-pages of single-spaced transcriptions. As I was transcribing I was also creating a description of the people I had interviewed: which country they had emigrated from, if and how they had shifted their names, their age, employment focus, and other distinctions. To begin coding, I moved the transcribed interviews into Transana, open source software for coding interviews.

3.6.1 Preliminary Coding

Transferring the files into Transana involved linking transcripts to digitized audio recordings via time stamps as I coded them. I chose codes based on a variety of themes suggested by methods literature (i.e., Creswell 1998, Wolcott 1994, Spradley 1979): chronological order of individual migrants’ name stories, searching for ‘pattern regularities’ (Wolcott 1994), comparisons made between participants, taxonomies of terms used, analysis via research questions (Spradley 1979, p. 152-3). A combination of my broad research questions, the nature of the conversations, and my limited experience with coding such a large set of data led to unruly and overlapping codes and dimensions. In April 2011, these were the (alphabetized) codes I had created:

- **Bad words for identity**: FOB Pronounced “Fahb” and acronym for Fresh off the boat. “FOBulous” for someone displaying distinct “homecountry” traits. One of the phrases that participants are shy to bring up. Whitewashed.
- **Boundary Object**: multiple audiences translation
- **Challenges**: 2 names accent already known by another name Documentation errors known by two names Long name Not knowing English order of names Other people remembering name People asking about name Phone punctuation Using name in English Unique/common unprofessional
- **Changes**: Add English name Anglicize no accents Pronunciation Shortened Stop using English Name Unique Use a different component
- **Keeping name** nicknames Pronunciation Note how participant pronounces names. Makes clear how the name should be pronounced. As well as how other people say it. responding to name
- **Classification** categorizing
- **Emotions** comfortable, fine control Degrading Dislike Expectations not met Frustrated hate Irrelevance missing name proud Sad special try to keep it uncomfortable Weird
EVENTS being given a name Birth Changing name Employment goal reached Graduation Immigration marriage
IDENTITY doesn't represent don't like the name immigration identity in general in process self description of ethnicity two identities
Information seeking didn't know how direction from parents other migrants shared without seeking
INSTITUTIONS awareness of potential name challenges credit fraud effective forms effort, work, labour recognition
Interview Questions Q1 Story of Q2 Name-related Q3 Name/identity Q4 Name documentation experiences Q5 Pseudonym making Process
Motivators Agents: Boss boyfriend Parent Parents' friend Participant as Agent Teacher
Events: being given a name Driver's License First day of school/Unfamiliar teacher Immigration move to Ontario Social Pressure University
Name Construction Birth Different from in Ontario Participants express differences in how I (the interviewer) or other "locals" understand names Hereditary name patterns
Kinds of Names Location-based naming Marriage Name Change in other countries Number of Names Order of names Origins/ Meanings Opinions Should people change their names?
Performance adapt to environment ceremony conversation piece introduction Pronounce it well icebreaker
RQs shape name use socially a) How do individuals shape the use of (their own and others') personal names during social interactions? b) shape names institutionally b) How do name-related legislation, policy, and state-regulated data processes mediate experiences of settlement and identity? rq1 integrative self fashioning 1. How is a name change (formal or otherwise) a tool of identity-shaping (a means of integrative self-fashioning) in contemporary Canadian society?
Spaces City Country court house Facebook School the neighbourhood Workplace
Striking "Bad" words/Non PC words Phrases or terms that participants are shy to bring up. Also insults, put-downs they've experienced. Interesting... novel verb use So well put!!! When participant says something that just feels correct, or eloquent, or better phrased than when I'd thought the same thing.
Time Age Decade Distant Past Year

3.7 Coding

Discouraged by my first efforts at coding while transferring the files into coding software, I began again, this time with a more “open” approach, building themes from the dataset. Initially, as I coded the first five interviews, I tagged phrases and sentences with keywords, and descriptive and theoretical terms, as they occurred to me. After coding five interviews, I did see some trends, but making sense of their varying significance became challenging. To lessen the degree of chaos, I worked to group these terms and I looked for trends within the coded sets of interview quotes.

As I continued coding I tried to reuse the same labels, although I also added some as I went; I found that trying to limit my code lexicon to a reasonable size was difficult. With some sets of data, I realized that I was just reorganizing the interviews without seeing stories develop. With others, the stories seemed progressively rich and compelling. I could see that the emerging trends
were overlapping, but sometimes it became difficult to understand how I could describe as many aspects of the research as the data suggested were present and compelling.

I initiated another coding pass looking for responses to the broad research questions and knowing that findings in these three groups (i.e., identity, institutional activities, participants’ name changes) would need to be further refined. Next, I organized quotes from these three categories into a findings document divided into research questions with better-defined subsections (e.g. performative events, kinds of name changes, institutional contexts). My initial findings documents consisted of nearly one hundred pages of interview excerpts organized by Research Questions re-written in the following ways. I was attempting to operationalize the Research Questions by seeing how the interview data complicated or responded to each key term and question.

- Name Shift motivators (e.g., types of “triggers” such as mispronunciations)
- Types of name shifts (e.g. shortening, English names)
- State mediated shifts
- Relationship of name to identity

But this output did not yet incorporate much of the theory that I was continuing to read. Discussions with my committee encouraged me to revisit frameworks about identity and power, and working between those, and this long document of organized interview excerpts, I began seeing ways of connecting and telling the stories that were most pertinent. Drawing on what Kirby, Greaves and Reid (2006) describe as “hurricane thinking” I spent a significant period mapping out data to concepts and eventually selected what seemed to be the most essential and necessary aspects of the maps, the “eye of the hurricane” (p. 235). In my case, I did find multiple “eyes” and selected them as the key components of this dissertation.

3.8 Writing Decisions

3.8.1 Structure

Deciding how best to structure the discussion chapters as a set, and then each chapter individually, also proved challenging. Writing my ideas into the checklist blocks of text that dissertation-writing guides recommend made the dissertation’s story and action arc less distinct. Eventually, I began using the theories that I was drawing on most to outline and structure the
contents of the discussion chapters. This is a very literal interpretation of the notion of “theory as a scaffold” or “a framework” to demonstrate findings, but organizing the chapters based on theory was effective in terms of creating a way for both myself and hopefully(!) my readers to understand the motivation and scope of the analysis. Writing about structure in *The New Yorker*, non-fiction author John McPhee (2013) reflects, “structure has preoccupied me in every project I have undertaken” and suggests that “a compelling structure in non-fiction can have an attracting effect analogous to a storyline in fiction” (McPhee, p. 46-8). John McPhee’s description of structure describes very well my writing experience: once I determined the shape each discussion chapter would take and how each chapter fit together, I was able to focus on producing a precise analysis. In ways that unfolded as I wrote, I found that fitting the interview data to the structure was very productive. As you read the dissertation’s discussion chapters, you can judge the effectiveness of this structure for readers.

That is not to say that the writing was not without challenges. Parsing my way through some dense theory was one challenge, but other challenges involved determining how best to write about particular aspects of the study. In part, I include these deliberations because decisions like these are considerations in the field of discourse analysis.\(^\text{12}\)

### 3.8.2 Writing about other people

Having established, as part of this study, how important names and labels are to the participants, it was very important to me to name and describe participants as is comfortable for them. Other writers have faced similar dilemmas and I consulted existing guidelines. The United States’ National Association of Social Workers Press (NASW Press) suggests that writers

> Seek and use the preference of the people you write about. Ask people you are working with how they prefer to be described and use the terms they give you. Be sensitive to real preferences and do not adopt descriptions that may have been imposed on people.

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\(^\text{12}\) An example of how important writing decisions are, at least within discourse analysis, is a three-way debate about the significance of the trend of nominalization (in simple terms, writing verbs or actions into nouns or things which removes the actor/action). Michael Billig, Norman Fairclough, and Teun Van Dijk are the representatives of this debate in *Discourse and Society* 19(6) (2008).
Be as specific as possible. Whenever possible, use specific racial or ethnic identities instead of collecting different groups under a general heading.

Describe people in the positive. For example, do not use the terms nonwhite or nonparticipant.

Avoid using terms that label people. When adjectives that describe a person's condition or status are used as nouns, they become labels that often connote a derogatory intent.

Avoid both “minority” and “nonwhite”. Many people who are described this way view the terms as pejorative and discriminatory.

As well, the Ontario Trillium Foundation prefaces its 2010 report on diversity with an explanation of the authors’ word choices.

As the Ontario Human Rights Commission notes,—there are inherent challenges in finding ways in which to best describe people. Terminology is fluid and what is considered most appropriate evolves over time. As well, people within a group may disagree on preference and use different terms themselves.

Our goal has been to choose appropriate and preferable terms to describe people collectively, to be clear and precise in our language, and to use language that allows for comparisons while avoiding artificial societal constructs that may stratify groups of people.

With consideration and thoughtful discussion, we have used our best effort to choose the following words for these reports:

Immigrants: When we use the word immigrant we are referring to all people who have immigrated to Canada including people who have resided in Canada for many years as well as those who
arrived more recently. We use the terms recent immigrant or newcomer interchangeably when speaking only about those who arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006, the most recent period for which we have information.

Visible minority: Visible minority is a term used by Statistics Canada for the Census. It is also commonly used and generally recognized by the public. Because of the broader recognition of this term, it is the one, after thoughtful deliberation, that we chose to use in this report. We recognize that it is not the ideal term: in many Ontario centres, the —visible minority population has become or is close to becoming the majority population group and can no longer accurately be described as the minority. The term is also quickly falling from preference for many people and institutions as an outdated term deemed by some to be offensive or inaccurate. And finally, it is increasingly being replaced by the phrase—racialized groups (particularly in academic and research circles). So while there is no one agreed-upon term that both accurately and respectfully describes this diverse group of people, we have chosen "visible minority" for these reports, as the most widely recognized, commonly accepted term. (p.6)

During interviews for this study, at least two participants told me that they did not like to be described as immigrants. Keeping this in mind, I examined the interview transcripts to find that this term was rarely used by participants (except Tony, who does use it) to describe themselves or anyone else. For these reasons, I have chosen to write the phrase “people who have migrated” instead of the label “immigrant” throughout the dissertation: I use the verbs “immigrate” and “migrate” interchangeably and with frequency. “Minority” is another term that I have chosen not to use descriptively, particularly because, as is pointed out in the previous excerpt, mathematically the ratios of majority and minority demonstrate, especially in Toronto, that such a distinction is no longer valid.
This stated, I did not ask the participants if they mind being referred to as “participants” in the study. Perhaps “interviewees” would be more comfortable for some, especially in potential cases where my analysis does not mesh with their experiences and they wish to distance themselves from my perspective. In terms of writing choices, there are other terms that I don’t feel entirely comfortable using, but I didn’t find terms that fit better; these include “dominant culture” and “English-sounding names”. Hopefully, as a society, we will continue to discuss these topics, and with further precision and refinement. In this way, we may evolve a lexicon of words that we are all more comfortable using and when I look back on these pages, I will remind myself that these terms were the best we had in 2014.

3.8.3 Writing about myself

Besides my concerns with writing about other people, I found it necessary to make several decisions about how I should position myself, and my perspectives, within the dissertation. Like Spradley, I consider myself similar to a member of the participants’ quotidian audience in that I do spend time in and have lived in Ontario, and I am a Canadian citizen who resides in Canada. I potentially understand or share participants’ institutional audience; however, I have no knowledge of what it is like to experience these quotidian and institutional audiences as the participants’ in the study do, nor do I know anything of the participants’ traditional audiences. Although I was personally introduced to three participants, in all cases, I engaged in these interviews as someone who is generally unknown to the participant. In some ways my lack of commonalities may have been helpful, but it may have also limited the kinds of information that participants were comfortable sharing with me. In contrast to my own experiences as a researcher-outsider, Minelle Mahtani (2002a) describes her fieldwork experiences of interviewing women in Toronto who are of “mixed-race”, qualities which are also her own. The women she interviewed were likely more comfortable speaking with Mahtani about their experiences, but Mahtani writes that “peppered through many interviews was the phrase ‘You know what I mean, Minelle’, accompanied by a knowing glance or smile” (p. 473). Because of feeling that they had shared experiences with Mahtani, participants may not have articulated some of their experiences or feelings, even though they likely felt more comfortable during the interview processes.

From my position as researcher-outsider, I found myself in the difficult situation of wishing to appropriately represent the participants’ views, but also needing to assert my own view as a
researcher who was privy to a total of 23 interviews. This dilemma is described by Pike (1954) in terms of the difference between presenting the participants’ own (emic) views as well as the researchers’ external (etic) view. The most difficult challenge of this type that I experienced was while describing participants’ name “changes.” Several participants said that they did not change their names, but from my view, minor shifts were made, especially in the cases of choosing not to use a component, or using an abbreviation. Our perspectives are in agreement that these were not formal name changes, and that original names were not irreparably altered. But to me, a name use decision was made to use an altered version of the original name. In determining how to describe these alterations, I began using the term “name shift” and to talk about how a name is “used” rather than “changed”. Nearly all of the participants have in the past or continue to use their names in a “shifted” way, but only three have (formally) “changed” their names.

Another decision was to name myself, as Diane, in the interviews. Although it is uncommon for an interviewer to be named in academic (i.e., social science) writing, for these conversations about names, it seems important that both the participant’s name and my name begin our quotes in the dialogue: in this way readers are made aware of each pairing of myself with another person, sitting together and discussing these name issues, in a lively conversation.

Along with this decision to name myself, I have also chosen to be self-reflexive throughout the dissertation. I situate myself as a monolingual anglophone who feels that she belongs in dominant culture: I include the gaffs I make when asking interview questions, and perhaps most significantly, I experience participants’ names in much the way that the people who are described in the name challenge chapter (Chapter 5) do, by mispronouncing, or asking “othering” questions their about names.

Besides my use of the singular subject “I”, I also use the plural subject “we”, but in doing so I am, at least in some cases, suggesting that my audience is someone like me, perhaps another mostly-monolingual Anglophone. In these instances, I don’t want to alienate anyone who doesn’t have the same background as me, (i.e. participants), but I do want to articulate my own position, and take responsibility for my own ignorance or lack of perspective. As well, I thought that rather than stand back as an amoral researcher pretending that my academic knowledge of names prevents me from making name gaffs, my descriptions of my own challenges with speaking or
writing names that are unfamiliar to me might work to engage people with similar experiences. And in our current name-rich culture, I imagine that this is a broad audience.

3.9 Data from sources other than interviews

3.9.1 Historical Policy Documents from the Archives of Ontario

In mid-April 2011, I visited the Ontario Archives to examine what has been archived in relation to the Name Change Act (initiated in 1939). Once there I found a small but intriguing archive built from materials collected between 1957 and 1990. I reviewed and analyzed over 200 pages comprising formal memos sent between relevant offices, hand-written notes made for individuals involved in determining the Act’s changes, and versions of bills as they were being read. As well, correspondence from citizens (or their representatives) made specific cases for concerns with the Name Change Act. Relevant features of these shifts to the Name Change Act are detailed in Chapter 7.

I also made several requests to the manager of Ontario’s Name Change Program to see previous versions of the Application for Name Change form and accompanying information guide, but was told by the manager that she cannot offer any assistance. Detailing actual shifts to the Application for Name Change forms over recent decades would be of great value. Of particular interest to me are the changes to the program that were made following September 11, 2001: between the final months of 2001 and until 2004, the number of formal (non-marital) name changes processed plummeted. In a response email, Shelly Dolph, Name Change Program Manager, explained that shift in this way: “During 2003 and 2004 our office made changes to our operating system and implemented updated security measures for all of our processes. This impacted the processing of name change applications during those years.”

3.9.2 Data from the Office of the Registrar General of Ontario

Based on my agreement with the Office of the Registrar General of Ontario (ORG), I did receive monthly data sets of Previous and New Names, as published by the Ontario Gazette, for the years 1990 to 2010. I expected to receive significantly more detailed information including reasons for changing a name, gender and municipality. Instead, I received only aggregated and anonymized

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13 In January 2011, I applied through the provincial Freedom of Information Act to view these files, and they were made available to me by late March 2011.
counts of name changes that differentiated between the two types of name changes available in Ontario:

1) Name Election or Resumption due to relationship status, either conjugal or marital—these usually involve the last name only

2) Formal name changes, for Adults or Children – these involves first names and/or last names and are the name change type that is more directly linked to immigration.

3.10 Overview of Interview Data

3.10.1 Participant Interviews

Between May and December of 2010, I completed interviews with twenty-three people who had immigrated to Canada or who are second-generation Canadians. Each of these participants responded to my request to interview people who had either changed their name or experienced name challenges.

A demographic overview of the participants describes the twenty-three participants in terms of gender, age, countries of origin, year of arrival in Canada, reason for migration, and migration status in Canada:

- Twelve participants are women; eleven are men.
- The average age of the participants at the time of the interviews is 36, but clusters of age groups exist: five participants are in their late teens or early 20s, fifteen are between 30 and 43, and 3 are in their 60s and 70s.
- The participants represent fifteen birth countries: Cameroon, Canada (2), China (5), Colombia (2), Croatia, Egypt (2), England, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Japan, Palestine, Portugal (2), and Vietnam.
- Two participants were born in Canada and twenty-one migrated to Canada. Of the participants who migrated to Canada, their arrivals are distributed over the previous five decades. Seven participants arrived in Canada between 1958 and 1989, seven more moved to Canada between 1990 and 1999, and the most recently arrived seven participants made Canada their home between 2002 and 2009.
• Education levels are high amongst the participants: several (4) participants were undergraduate students at the time of our interviews; a number had completed their education and were in established careers; two had retired. Of the professionally employed participants, seven hold undergraduate degrees, five have master’s degrees and one participant was a master’s student. Five participants have doctorates and one participant was in the final stages of her dissertation. One reason for the participants’ high levels of education is because my most successful call for participants was shared over an Ontario University network of immigration researchers, CERIS. However, people who identify as visible minorities or who have immigrated to Ontario do tend to be highly educated: 61% of working-age people who have immigrated to Ontario have a university degree; this is double the proportion of degrees held by working age Ontarians as a whole (Ontario Trillium Foundation 2010, p. 26).

• The participants who were not born in Canada immigrated in varying circumstances: two came to Canada as refugees, nine moved as children with their families, five came independently as graduate or undergraduate students, and five arrived to work as permanent residents. In 2010, at the time of the interviews, eighteen participants had Canadian citizenship, two were permanent residents, and one was an international student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name (indicates pseudonym)</th>
<th>Country of Birth/Origin</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Name shift</th>
<th>Resident Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jehad</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30s-40s</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hanaa</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Reversion</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Christine* Elisa* Knipfel*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Shifted (spelling)</td>
<td>Permanent Resident</td>
</tr>
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<td>China</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Reversion</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>China</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Int'l Student</td>
</tr>
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<td>30s</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lina* Kato*</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Permanent Resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Greece/Romania</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Victor</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Jaspreeta*</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Shifted (shortened)</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Canada</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Born in Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
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<td>40s</td>
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</table>

* Starred names indicate pseudonyms
Of twenty-three participants, only three made legal name changes. Two participants resisted changing their names in any way. Four participants used alternate forms of their names, but have reverted to their original names. The remaining fourteen participants continue to informally use an altered or alternate form of their name (i.e., English name, or another original name).

Notably, this study focuses on first names (or given names) for two reasons: although nearly one-third of the name changes or challenges undertaken related to last names (or surnames), all of the participants who altered their names, made alterations to their first names. As well, some participants requested that I refer to them only by their first name in the dissertation, to increase their anonymity. The participants whose names are starred “*” are identified with pseudonyms that we decided on together during the interview, or afterward, via email. It was difficult to create pseudonyms that precisely demonstrate the name change alterations that participants undertook, and because the participants’ anonymity is a research priority, and a condition of its existence, several compelling name-related stories cannot be shared.

The only gender-related difference that I found during the study, in terms of how men and women strategize and enact name use is that of the study’s participants, women were more cautious in terms of the use of their real names, and they tended to choose pseudonyms (7 of 12) or to use first names only (5 of 12). In contrast, only two of the eleven male participants chose to use a pseudonym, and four have allowed me to use their full names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Name Shift</th>
<th>Resident Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Siveta* (Cvijeta*)</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Shifted (spelling)</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingh-Lingh* Chu*</td>
<td>Vietnam/China</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronit Rasimov*</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Reversion</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagdeep*</td>
<td>England/India</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Shifted (shortened)</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de E’Teme* Mbanga* Ekwe*</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marika</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Legal Change</td>
<td>Born in Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jorge</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Shifted</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold* (Li* Rang*) Lu*</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Shifted (English)</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minyang*</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Legal Change</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfie</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Legal Change</td>
<td>Canadian Citizen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overview of participants' countries of origin, age, gender, name shift and resident status
One significant finding that comes from analysis of these varied types of name alterations is that unofficial shifts to names are far more common than are legal or formal name changes. For each of the legal name changes made in Ontario, it can be inferred that many more ad hoc or unofficial changes are also made. Above is an overview of the name alterations described in the discussion chapters, particularly Chapter 6.

Another significant finding about the types of name shifts made by participants is that people are generally not changing their names substantively, but rather the shifts involve fine-tuning, tweaking or pruning. The majority of the name shifts do not make the participants’ names seem more “English”, white, or common in dominant culture; rather through these shifts names become more pronounceable by people who speak English, but visually they retain their original shape.

The participants’ range of national origins demonstrates that name challenges do not depend on particular cultural origins (i.e., shape, sound, and size) of individuals’ names. Rather, challenges to participants’ names occur because they are not of English-language origin, which has its own particular dimensions.

The participants’ ages also indicate the broad range of individuals who are affected by name challenges. No matter how or at what age one arrives in Canada, and even if for people born in Canada, differences in culture and language can make for challenging interactions related to names.

Stage of life makes a difference, as well. During interviews, it was common for participants who are in the youngest age group, or who have arrived in Canada in the past decade and are in the middle age group, to describe their circumstances at the time of the interviews as being in flux. Several anticipate that they may make formal name changes in the future. Participants who are longer established in Ontario (which is the case for all members of the oldest age group and many in the middle age group) describe their name alterations or their refusal to make alterations as having taken place in the past, and that how they use their names is unlikely to change at this stage in their lives.
3.11 Introduction to Participants

Participant 1: Jehad [pronounced jiHAD)] immigrated to Canada from Palestine and worked at a popular café in Toronto shortly after his migration. He completed a Bachelor’s degree at an Ontario university, has served as Executive Director of the Canadian Arab Federation and as the Executive Director of a multi service neighbourhood non-profit organization. He self-identifies as Arab-Canadian and he has not changed his name.

Participant 2: Hanaa (pronounced as HANah) emigrated from Egypt and completed a law degree and two graduate degrees at Ontario universities. Now retired, Hanaa’s career was with the Ontario provincial government. Hanaa’s name reversion was to add a second ‘a’ to the end of her name which made her name more obviously Arabic. She self-identifies as Canadian-Arab.

Participant 3: Christina* moved from Germany to Ontario in 2002. She completed a graduate degree in Ontario and now works for the provincial government. She maintains permanent resident status and self-identifies as European. Christine* has informally changed that ‘e’ to an ‘a’ in order to maintain the pronunciation of her name.

Participant 4: Chang is an undergraduate engineering student who emigrated from China with his parents in 2008. Initially he used the English name, Tim, but he has reverted to his original name. He describes himself as Chinese.

Participant 5: Zhi Li (pronounced as “JZHee”) is an international undergraduate student who grew up in China. In Canada he also uses the English name Leo because his original name is often mispronounced, misspelled and generally misunderstood. He self-describes as Chinese.

Participant 6: Tony and his family emigrated from Portugal in 1971; since then he completed his education in Toronto and became a teacher. He has used different components of his name at different periods in his life, and he frequently corrects mispronunciations of his last name. He identifies as both Portuguese-Canadian and Luso-Canadian.

Participant 7: Lina* came to Canada as an international student in 2003, and has since completed master’s and doctorate degrees. At the time of our interview, Lina* was a Permanent Resident in Canada. She uses an alternate version of her name because of how she is officially documented in Japan. She identifies as Japanese.
Participant 8: Evelyn arrived in Canada as a refugee in 1970. She was born in Greece and named Evanghelia, but as a child, she experienced forced migration into Bulgaria. She then grew up in Romania using the name Vanghelita. She completed a graduate degree in Canada and works for the Province of Ontario. Her self-identification depends on her current geography, but she does consider herself Canadian.

Participant 9: Victor emigrated from Colombia as a Permanent Resident in 2003. He lived in Montreal for three years, and then moved to Toronto. He has varied the use of components of his name, and how he pronounces them—first for Francophones in Quebec, and then for Anglophones in Ontario. He self-identifies as Latin-Canadian.

Participant 10: Jaspreeta* emigrated from India with her parents in 1990, and at the time of the interview, was a graduate student in Toronto. She has informally varied the use of her name and made one attempt to change it formally. She describes herself as Indo-Canadian.

Participant 11: Jose Abilio was born in Canada, grew up in a Portuguese community in Toronto, and became a junior high school teacher. Which of his two first names he uses depends on whether his activities are professional or social. He identifies as Portuguese-Canadian.

Participant 12: Tian-Yuan Zhao* emigrated from China with his parents in 1997 and at the time of our interview, was an undergraduate student in Toronto. Since elementary school, he has just gone by the first component of his name, Tian, because the second component, Yuan, was generally mispronounced. He insists on a Chinese pronunciation of his family name and he describes himself as Chinese-Canadian.

Participant 13: Marta immigrated to Canada from Portugal with her family when she was six years old. Immigration processes altered her last name, and her first name was anglicized during elementary school. But during high school, her first name was reverted to the original. Marta works at an Ontario university and self-describes as Luso-Canadian.

Participant 14: Siveta* (pronounced SiVEETah) emigrated from Croatia in 1997. While studying and working in Ontario, she encountered many challenges with mispronunciations of her original name, Cvijeta*, so she changed it unofficially in 2002. She identifies as Croatian. At the time of
our interview, she worked in the immigration and settlement field, and maintained the use of her informally altered name for quotidian interactions.

Participant 15: In 1979, Lingh-Lingh* Chu* (pronounced Ling-Ling) was born in a refugee camp in Malaysia. She moved to Canada with her parents the following year. Her two younger siblings were born in Canada and have common English names. Although Lingh-Lingh* hasn’t changed her name, she has experienced many challenges because of it. She self-identifies as Chinese within Canada, but as Canadian when outside of Canada.

Participant 16: Ronit (pronounced RoNEET) is an Israeli-born Canadian with Russian parents. She and her family immigrated to Canada in 1989, and she completed her education, including a graduate degree, in Ontario. Ronit informally used the name Ronnie throughout her mid-twenties but has since reverted to her original name.

Participant 17: With her family, Jagdeep* emigrated from London to Canada when she was one-year old. At the time of our interview, she was completing a doctoral dissertation in Toronto. She has used an abbreviated version of her name since high school. Her self-identity depends on her geographic location, but she describes herself South Asian and Punjabi-Sikh.

Participant 18: In 1992, while in his mid-twenties, de E”Teme* Mbanga* Ekwe* arrived in Canada from Cameroon as a refugee. He completed graduate studies in Canada and is now a professor at an Ontario university. His name continues to be met with confusion. While our discussion of self-identities was fruitful, the only identifier he would commit to was “passionate.”

Participant 19: Marika Morris was christened Marika Morris Kyriakidis when she was born in Canada in the late 1960s. Her Quebecoise mother’s maiden name was Morris, and her Greek father’s surname was Kyriakidis. At the age of eighteen, Marika initiated a formal name change, adding a middle name, moving Morris to her surname, and removing Kyriakidis. She identifies as Canadian.

Participant 20: Jorge (pronounced HORhay) emigrated from Colombia in 2008, but found that while living in Montreal, many Francophones had difficulty pronouncing the two “h” sounds in his name. Jorge started encouraging people to pronounce his name as George, even though he
maintains the original spelling. He identifies as Latin-American. At the time of our interview, Jorge was applying for work.

Participant 21: Harold* emigrated from China to Canada in 2002. He completed a graduate degree at an Ontario university and, when we spoke, was working two jobs in the Greater Toronto Area. He began using an English name in Canada because he experienced many challenges when he used his original name. He self-identifies as Canadian-Chinese.

Participant 22: In 1999, when she was ten years old, Minyang* (pronounced as Min Young) immigrated to Canada from China with her parents. At the time of our interview, she was a third-year undergraduate student. Her first name was altered informally to an English name while she was growing up in Canada, and she has made a formal name change that reverted to her Chinese name. Minyang* identifies as between Canadian and Chinese-Canadian.

Participant 23: Alfie was born in Egypt and immigrated to Canada in 1968, two years after receiving his doctorate from an American university. Upon emigration, he found that his name was difficult for North Americans to pronounce. In 1998, Alfie formally changed his name by adding two English-sounding components that are relevant to him as they are part of his family’s names in Egypt. He is Professor Emeritus at an Ontario university. He self-identifies as Canadian.

Note: an asterisk (*) denotes that a pseudonym (created in tandem with the participant) is in use.
Chapter 4

4 Designation of Audiences

During the interviews it became apparent that participants are not performing or shifting their names just to fit in with an English-speaking crowd. Motivations around name-use are more complex. For some participants, several different names are used, each in different circumstances; as well, shifts in names depend on location and life-transitions. A variety of demands must be considered. Through coding and analysis, I came to understand that generally participants are balancing their name use strategies between three kinds of audiences, each with its own particular demands and restraints. This chapter responds to the research questions by describing the divergent audiences that participants perceive and establishing these audiences within existing theories related to identity and power.

Based on participants’ descriptions of the contexts in which they experience name challenges, I determined that their audiences can be understood as these three overlapping types: Quotidian, Institutional, and Traditional.

- The Quotidian category describes the everyday goings on and name use of participants in their school, work and potentially home environments, as they interact with other Canadians of varied backgrounds, in what is often a quick, informal manner.

- The Institutional realm includes less common, more official—and often weightier—interactions between bureaucrats and participants, where databases, documents and identity cards tend to be a focus.

- The Traditional audience comprises family members, diaspora, and cultural knowledge from participants’ heritages; depending on participants’ home, employment and educational circumstances, this traditional audience can play a more or less significant role. For people who have migrated to Canada, and hold birth certificates, passports, and other identification documents from their original countries, this audience also has its own institutional audience components.
These particular categories do not exist in tangible or especially tidy ways. They are defined here as a means of ordering and making sense of the types of tensions described by participants, but certain categories are much more relevant to some participants than to others: how participants strike dynamic balances amongst each cannot be assumed, and is ultimately as unique to each individual as their names.

The three audience categories evolved from my analysis of participant interviews, but are influenced by existing theoretical models. Jenkins (2008) offers three distinct orders through which identities are established and performed as individual, interaction, and institutional (p. 39). At the level of the individual, he points to Margaret Mead’s pragmatic understanding of the embodied self: quite aside from theories of identity, both individual and collective, it is important to acknowledge that we exist as physical selves, experiencing physical sensations that are separate from any theory of why this may be (Jenkins 2004, p. 19). The interaction level is that which draws most on Goffman (i.e., impression management) and Bourdieu (i.e., habitus), and considers the ways that we are identified by and identify with others. The institutional level considers the norms of human interactions in terms of identification at a broad level, as a recognized “way that things are done” (pp. 22-23). Jenkins’ analysis of the levels of identity is

* The diagrams in Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12 were created by Steve Patrick Adams.
illuminating and—especially his link between categorization and identity—has contributed substantially to my understanding of identity.

For theoretical clarity, and because I was aware of this theoretical model while coding the interview data, it is appropriate to explain how I see the fit of these audience categories in relation to Jenkins’ framework. I see the focus of this study as falling squarely within Jenkins’ interaction order: stressful name-related interactions create tension for individuals and it is because they do not happen within a vacuum that the interaction order is most fitting. Participants may alter their names in ways that cause them to be seen differently, and to potentially see themselves differently, particularly in terms of a fit within Canada and/or a heritage country. The focus of this study is very much one of how—in relation to their names—within a Canadian context, the participants see and are seen, how they present themselves and how they are presented. I position all three audiences on the level of interaction because, as Jenkins writes,

…what people think about us is no less significant than what we think about ourselves. It is not enough to assert an identity. That identity must also be validated (or not) by those with whom we have dealings. *Identity is never unilateral.* (2004, p.19)

In terms of identity construction and its pertinence to names, it is an audience’s reaction to a name that allows each participant to see how, via their name, they are received, and then to respond by explanation, clearer enunciation, an English name, contemplation of a name shift, or any other action or inaction. An individual can ask to be called by any name, but if no one ever calls you by that name, is that really your identity? The audience’s role in providing validation is part of what separates people into kinds of audiences—if a new acquaintance has only a limited recognition or understanding of a participant’s name, they are likely to become part of the participant’s quotidian audience. From the participants’ experiences, each of these audiences is likely to prefer to call the same individual by different names. How is the participant to decide which audience to value most? Which is prioritized in terms of name use?

Jenkin’s description of the institutional level of interaction has led me to establish the "institution" as one of the three audiences. While Jenkins describes the norms of human interaction, including categorization and group identification (2004, p. 43), broadly put as the
institutional level, I situate some of these norms of interaction (e.g., introductions, nicknaming) within the quotidian audience, and others (e.g. naming significance and traditions) in the traditional realm. In contrast to Jenkins’ generalized description of institutional interactions, the institutional audience established here is quite specific; it focuses on the juncture of the state’s (provincial and federal levels of governance) and other organizations’ infrastructures that manage participants’ names—with databases, attendance lists, and identification documents. Participants’ interactions with an institutional audience are fewer, but ubiquitous and consequential in terms of life chances, and participants express a continuous recognition of the significance of these interactions.

Each of these audiences comprises particular qualities, structures, and people—indeed, there is a great, messy mix of things involved in what is termed here as audience. Audience stands in for Bowker and Star’s (1999) compound noun, “demands-audiences-contingencies”, a term broad enough to capture the varied pulls experienced by participants (p. 309). Bowker and Star use this amalgamation “demands-audiences-contingencies” to discuss “categorical work”: the tasks required to fit things, people, and information into established categories even though they might not quite match (p. 309). For the purposes of this study, “audiences” is used to describe the several loose social groupings of the people—including their beliefs, and their tools—with whom participants interact and use their names.

To better analyze and make sense of the kinds of interactions participants have with these audiences, Law’s (1986a) description of three “classes of emissaries”—which are “documents, devices and drilled people” (p. 235)—provides a structure for examining the components of each of these “demands-audiences-contingencies” (Bowker and Star 1999, p. 309). Law originally introduced this framework to analyze the effectiveness of the ships that sailed from Portugal to India in the 1400s. He describes the “network of passive agents (both human and non-human)” as “the obvious raw materials for the actors who seeks to control others at a distance” (1986b, p. 257). In the Portuguese case, what we now understand to be the standard components sent out as a fleet of ships—trained navigators, with compasses and maps and an understanding of tides—when put together for the first time, functioned extremely effectively. So effectively, in fact, that Portugal was able to gain a foothold in terms of trade and eventually became not only the first, but also the longest-lasting European colonizer.
Law has applied this same lens to other situations in order to examine how other arrangements of “passive agents” have come to be established and then lead to increased power (1986b)—the application of Law’s lens also behooves the current study. Through the chapters that follow, Law’s framework of “three emissaries” or a “network of passive agents for social control” works as an anchoring perspective: it is a lens through which we will come to understand how each of these audiences functions so effectively as to require that participants use a particular sort of name when interacting. Law suggests that the role of a researcher is to uncover the methods “by which actors and collectivities articulate conceptions of the natural and social words and attempt to impose those on others, and the extent to which such attempts are met with success” (1986b, p. 3). This dissertation explores how these kinds of impositions made by a dominant set of people onto other people occurs through the interactions of these three levels of passive agents (called functionaries throughout the dissertation) within three audiences (i.e. Quotidian, Institutional, Traditional). This exploration makes some modifications to the terms used by Law. Rather than “documents” we will be examining the “discourses” or cultural beliefs and traditions at work in each of these audiences; “drilled people” may be apt when we describe the human agents who comprise the institutional audience, but in most cases “stewards” is a better fit; and finally, the term “devices” will continue to be used to discuss the non-human, generally tangible agents that are key to each audiences’ functioning. These three functionaries can be identified within every audience.

### 4.1 Functionaries within Each Audience

Recounting particular interactions with an institutional audience, participants describe a number of name challenges: requisite name component length limits on forms which are based on an English three name component standard (i.e., a discourse); identity cards (i.e., devices) processed with varied versions of personal names, and each version determined with opaque rule and reason; and when attempting to rectify these identity card issues, interactions occur with frequently unhelpful front-line staff (i.e., stewards, but perhaps also “drilled people”). Name encounters such as these demonstrate very clearly, and uncomfortably, how functionaries work together within the institutional audience to control the name options available to people who migrate to Canada.
The quotidian audience offers communicative devices such as workplace telephones and email correspondence, databases, identity cards, and attendance sheets for roll call; routinized discourses govern the practices of how we are typically introduced in workplaces (by first and last name), and called upon in classrooms (as indicated on the attendance sheet), as well as the commonality of nicknames; finally, quotidian audience stewards are the colleagues, teachers and managers whose training includes a deep imbuing in the social norms of their/our workplaces, and whose interactions pertaining to names may result in correct or incorrect pronunciations, further questions about names, or even a new nickname.

![Diagram of audiences]

**Figure 3: Functionaries within the Quotidian Audience**

In the traditional audience, devices include original birth certificates, significant cultural texts that describe origins and traditions related to names and naming, transnational communication systems (e.g., internet, Facebook), and even the transportation systems that move participants and audience members to the same locations. Cultural discourses guide traditions pertaining to names and naming: women changing their names upon marriage, the use of generational names so all first cousins share a name component, being given a name for the time of day or day of the week on which you are born. Representatives of the traditional audience’s stewards are family members, and diaspora who understand the significance of participants’ original names and depending on their views, encourage or discourage name shifts.

These brief overviews of audiences provide examples of how functionaries interact within each audience, but they also differentiate between the three key audiences and make apparent the pulls of each. Maintaining a balance between these audiences is doubtlessly challenging and has its
own effects, not only on name use, but also on identity. While names are key identifiers and are certainly significant in terms of how one sees oneself and is seen by others, the focus of this study is the ways that name challenges and name shifts—active or passive—are seen as significant to fitting in to social groups and more broadly, fitting in to Canadian society. Because identity construction is in part how one sees oneself, but also how one is seen and identified, constructed “types” exist as potential individual identities, as do collective identities, for us to fit into or to react against. Balancing one’s identity within these three varied audiences means that there is a multiplication of possible ways of being seen, and of seeing oneself: the number of distinctions, and the granularity of identifiers increases. But our identities can also be validated in myriad ways. It should be noted that this understanding of identity as context-dependent is not seen as a deficit on the part of the participants, nor particular to people who have migrated. Indeed, Jenkins’ work is generalizable to all members of society; and Lipsitz, too, reports from his ethnographic work on white identity within predominantly black American neighbourhoods that the “meanings attached to white racial identity are not fixed, but context-dependent” (1998, p.149).

Before describing participants’ interactions with each audience type it is important to underline the overlap of audiences. The quotidian audience exists in the here and now, the day-to-day of participants’ lives, whether this means at school, in a workplace, at a workshop or lesson, or while practicing a religion. In Ontario, quotidian interactions generally take place with near-proximity to the participant’s home, and they represent the participant’s current day-to-day life in Canada. This is the audience that will likely mispronounce a participant’s name. This is the audience that may ask a participant if they have an English name. This audience may even proffer a short nickname that is not of the participant’s choosing. Name-related interactions with the quotidian audience are not necessarily weighty or meaningful, as they happen regularly, but they are dynamic: in general, it is when these actions are repeated that there may be some kind of identity impact. There are times when this quotidian audience is overlain with the institutional audience. Generally, the institutional audience is engaged when official forms are being completed, when identity documentation is requested and produced, when a participant applies for citizenship, or when they change their name formally. Institutional interactions are less frequent and more meaningful: institutional name-interactions could limit entry into a country, dictate how a participant is identified on their Permanent Resident Card, and even determine
what a participant will be called in a school or workplace. Traditional audiences may also overlay the quotidian audience. This happens when family and/or diaspora form a major part of a participant’s day-to-day life, as is the case for some of the participants who immigrated more recently (i.e. Tian, Chang, Minyang*). More generally, traditional audiences are the ones that understand the nuances of a given name and pronounce it in its traditional manner. They often remind participants to be proud of their original names and of the heritage and culture from which they originate. Traditional audiences may also encourage participants to shorten their names, just as some of quotidian audience members have done, which contributes to another mode of naming that is common to some diaspora (e.g. the common use of English names by people who emigrate from China, or abbreviating or using abbreviation as is common amongst people who emigrate from India).

Having established these three audiences in terms of their theoretical underpinnings and relationships to one another, I next describe these three audiences in more detail by drawing on participants’ experiences with each audience, and how each audience type separately contributes to name shifts and identity construction.

### 4.2 Quotidian Audience

The most immediate category of these multiple audiences is that of quotidian environments (i.e., work or school) where social belonging, effectiveness, and success are intertwined with and key to current, or future, economic security. A quotidian audience is generally engaged during quick, face-to-face, phone or email interactions. These interactions are key to making connections within broad social networks, and often involve a name exchange that may lead to future interaction. In these circumstances, names are often mutually relied upon to individuate, distinguish, and make us memorable. As examples, one participant, Jagdeep*, introduces herself by linking her name to the Jaguar car; other participants often spell out their names (e.g. Siveta*, Chang) for clarification. On the flipside of participants efforts to present a name effectively, studies describe the “reservoirs of semantic knowledge” that are initiated as people hear or read names: Etaugh, Bridges, Cummings-Hill, and Cohen (1999) describe judgments based on women’s marital name changes; and Kasof (1993) focuses on names as indicators of race, ethnicity, class, intelligence and age—each contributing to initial impressions. Names are
significant in these encounters: in some cases they serve either as a roadblock or a passkey, and they usually contribute to our making sense of a new acquaintance.

The résumé audits by Eid (2012) and Oreopoulos and Dechief (2011) demonstrate the significance of names in Canadian work environments: these indicate that it is challenging to join the majority of these business organizations if your name suggests that you may have migrated to Canada recently, even when your résumé clearly demonstrates that you have not. For this quotidian category, a name that fits best is one that is easily pronounced and spelled. Names can be distinct, but most participants prefer that their names are of an appropriate (i.e., short) length and a phonetic English spelling to easily meet the needs of quick, professional interactions, both in-person and over the telephone. Another recent study introduces the “name-pronunciation effect” as produced when “easy-to-pronounce names (and their bearers) are judged more positively than difficult-to-pronounce names” (Laham, Koval & Alter 2012, p. 752). Based on five studies over four continents, Laham et al. argue that the fluency with which we process their names has a significant impact on how we evaluate others (p. 755).

As supports the “name-pronunciation effect,” mispronunciation is the most common challenge described by participants. Accustomed to a certain pronunciation, and people’s ease with their names, participants describe the differences between their quotidian and traditional audiences. Tian feels that his name is easy to pronounce, and he presciently supports Laham et al.’s study.

Tian: Surprisingly, not a lot of people ask [about my name]. I think it's due to the fact that the pronunciation is not so difficult. I think psychologically, if it's easier for you to pronounce, you don't think about the foreign nature of it, whereas… Of course, they're definitely not going to say, “This kid has a European name, or a Western name.” They'll definitely know that it's not that. But I guess they don't question it because they don't need to right away. If I introduce myself and say my name is Yu Shia, then they'd be like, “What? Yu Shia, what does that mean?” Like, right away they'd say that.

As theorized by Laham et al., Tian thinks the pronunciability of his name makes it easier for him to present himself to his quotidian audience. Although his being Chinese is recognized, it does
not become a focus of conversation because his name passes. In contrast, for Siveta, having her name misunderstood and mispronounced during quotidian interactions caused her to feel alienated by her quotidian audience, as well as farther-removed from her traditional audience.

Siveta*: When I moved here it was really tough. I had difficulties all over the place. It was really, really hard for me, no matter how hard I tried to explain. My English wasn't that good. It was frustrating. I was trying to explain to people what my name was when my roots were still in the old country… I loved my family and my friends and I was trying to build a new life. And your name is your identity… So people were twisting it all over. And it's never deliberate… It's just different and a different way people pronounce it.

Next, Victor describes the exact mispronunciations made by his quotidian audiences in comparison to his traditional one, and how he chose to use a different first name component in order to avoid mispronunciations.

Victor: In terms of pronunciation… the ‘a’ and the ‘u’ in Raúl (pronounced RahOOL) are more like an ‘o,’ so it became ‘Role.’ So, to me it sounds so strange. I started telling people to call me Victor. But even though I used the stress on the first part [as VEEKtor], in my first job, they called me Victor [VicTOR]. So that was a change in pronunciation. That was all in Quebec, and I spent three-and-a-half years in Quebec. And then I moved to Toronto, and there were other issues with the name. This time, in English, Victor sounds more like in Spanish. But, Raúl was again mispronounced. Raul, [Rall] they say, like Paul: Paul, Raul. The same spelling, so again it became Victor.

As participants came to understand the pronunciation challenges their names presented, several chose to use a different component of their name, to shorten it, or to Anglicize it. Others describe the situations that transpired from their names not meeting their quotidian audiences’ expectations, and their own feelings about not meeting these expectations.
Lingh-Lingh*: On the phone when I say “Hi, it's Lingh” or when I introduce myself and say my name is Lingh, I get “Lynn” a lot because people are going to associate it with something familiar. One time I was in a meeting for a research project that I'm working on with this group and I introduced myself as Lingh Chou, I just shortened it instead of Lingh-Lingh, but they couldn't differentiate that it was two names. Then one woman, for the whole meeting kept calling me “Linkchu” as a whole name.

***

Alfie: [My name] was making introductions difficult and sometimes embarrassing to the person introducing me. I thought I should spare people this agony. For some reason the Western ear needs to have a long syllable and a short syllable. I got all sorts of permutations and combinations of my name and they all didn't sound like me [laughing]. I asked myself, “What are we doing here? This is not even my name, the way people are pronouncing it.”

Both Lingh-Lingh and Alfie experienced mispronunciations and misunderstandings of their names that caused them to be called by names that do not represent them. While pronunciation challenges are common when using words from another language, the message received by the participants about their names has implications for their identity and their feelings of belonging in Ontario. Participants feel that they stand out because their names are being mispronounced, and they are being misrepresented by the names that they are being called.

Harold*: As a new immigrant, when I tried to connect with other people [it was very hard], because for Western people it is very hard to pronounce Chinese names. I think my Chinese name [Feng* Lim* Fu*] is very hard for people to remember or to call.

Diane: *Did anyone ever say it's too hard?*

Harold*: Yeah, yeah, they did.
When a name is challenging to a quotidian audience, it alters the connection that could be made during introductions, plus it affects participants’ feelings of identity and belonging. If you aren’t being called by your name, you aren’t being recognized. Your identity is not validated.

Chang describes the challenge of reverting back to his Chinese name in an Ontario context:

Chang: At first I was kind of scared. I don't know what will happen, because people might not understand what my name is. People might laugh at my name because it is not an English sounding name. But, I went back to Chang and I feel that people have no trouble remembering it. They have no trouble pronouncing it, but at first when I introduce it there is always a bit of trouble. I say my name is Chang and they'll say Ching, Chung, Jing, Shun, or whatever. When I say “Chang” and spell it “C-H-A-N-G”. They say, “Oh, okay….” So that has been the transition to a legitimate English name for my Chinese name.

Although the quotidian audience’s initial response seems to be to ask Chang how his name differs from other, perhaps more familiar, Chinese-sounding names, Chang’s effort to make his name clear and memorable has led to his feeling that his name works and is easily pronounced by this audience. Jaspreeta* describes how mispronunciations of her name, teamed with additional comments about the unusualness of her name led to her wanting to change it:

Jaspreeta*: Nobody told me to change it… it’s just people, how they can't pronounce it. Usually I get, “Oh, that's a really nice name.” And sometimes people are blunt and they'll be like “That's a weird name.” Or, “That's a really different name.” It's more so I wanted to [change it] because of the insecurity that it creates, of not fitting in almost, because you have such a different name. That's what pushed me to change it. So yeah, I guess that is a kind of social pressure. Maybe not directly, with people telling me, but indirectly, them not being able to pronounce it, little things like that.
Besides the name pronunciation effect, (Laham et al., 2012) other factors are at work in terms of name challenges affecting identity construction in the quotidian realm. During introductions, as Jaspreeta* describes above, comments and assumptions about names for the purposes of establishing who someone is have an effect on identity construction. After spending years experiencing mispronunciations, misspellings, and comments that involved stereotypes, Marika eventually changed her surname from her father’s Greek surname, “Kyriakidis” to her mother’s surname “Morris”:

When I was growing up in Montreal people would ask me, once they heard my name, “Is your father a taxi driver or does he own a restaurant?” You know, because that's what they thought of Greek men doing. And I would say, “No, he's a psychiatrist.” But it's one of those stereotypes that just dog you.

As well, Hanaa experienced challenges with using her name while interviewing for an articling position at Toronto law firms. In the first case, the partner who was interviewing her assumed that she was Jewish rather than Arabic:

He said, "So, you’re Hana Levy and you trained in Israel? And you're coming here to train in our office?"

[My last name] is too much of a thing to think about, so Levy is easier. Hana Levy makes sense, you know... I'm coming from Israel to train in his office.

I said. "Uh oh, oh, wait. Let's backtrack."

He was a sweetheart, you know. But I think the discipline has lots of Jewish people in it, and he was Jewish, and assumed that Hana is also a Jewish name.

I said, “My name is Hanaa [Han-EH], and I'm Egyptian origin and I've never been to Israel. And yes, I'm here to train in your office.”
Influenced by this and other interview experiences where her name had prompted people to suggest that, 1) she belonged because of the ethnicity of her seemingly Jewish name, or in one less kind exchange, 2) that she didn’t belong because of the Arab ethnicity of her name, Hanaa decided that spelling her name as Hana made it too international:

So I said, “Well, maybe Hana is too much non-committal. It could be anything! It could be Jewish, it could be Japanese, it could be...
So maybe it's important to identify that this really is an Arabic-origin name. If nothing else, to help whoever wants an Arabic-speaking lawyer to know that I am Arabic.”

And then Hana began formally began spelling her name as Hanaa, with two ‘a’s and pronounced as [Han-EH].

Tony, too, finds questions and stereotypes related to his name difficult; they contribute to his overall feeling of “being an immigrant”:

Tony: It's strange. It's like I've never come to grips with this thing. I guess this is part of the dilemma of being an immigrant. This whole thing about anglicizing my first name to Anthony, but then caring about my last name being pronounced in a Portuguese way. But then why am I accepting Tony? Tony is not a Portuguese name either, and if I want to be that patriotic about my name I would say Antonio. And I don't. So, I think for that reason I feel a little uprooted, I suppose, about my name. I'm not feeling satisfied with it. And furthermore, it’s a name that creates a lot of stereotypes and most of the stereotypes are about being Italian, right? So the assumption is that when you are called Tony, you’re Italian. I have people ask me with an Italian accent, “Hey Tony, do you want pizza?” Stupid things like that. It bugs me sometimes. It’s the product of being an immigrant.

As described in the situations experienced by Hana and Tony, introductions and explanations of names can cause significant name use challenges. A few participants describe these introductions
as “ice-breakers” or ways to engage in meaningful small talk (i.e., Jehad, Lina*), but most participants described these types of encounters as reasons to consider shifting their names.

The quotidian audience’s interactions generally take place in a face-to-face manner, so of Law’s functionaries the stewards, in concert with their devices and discourses, have a significant role: the quotidian audience understand names as usually having three components that draw from a set of common and phonetically simple names, while other names tend to be mispronounced, questioned, and potentially stereotyped. How these agents of the quotidian audience function together results in the actions described above: when faced with the challenge of pronouncing a new name, some people may demonstrate their curiosity by asking the name-bearer for an explanation, but as described by the participants, these questions are not always respectfully phrased. Quotidian audiences may also respond to an unfamiliar name with an assumption or a joke about the name’s origin; in this way, audiences may be trying to fit this new name in with their limited familiarity or knowledge of this name or similar ones. Another common action is to assume the name is a familiar one, or to use an unfamiliar name in a familiar way. Lingh-Lingh’s experiences in her workplace illustrate these tactics: people assume she is named Lynn, or in one case, they use her first and last name components as one two-syllable name. Other participants with two first-name components expressed frustration with the quotidian audience’s stewards who use just one of their first-name components (e.g., Minyang*, Harold*, Tian-Yuan).

Through these actions, the quotidian audience lets participants know that their names don’t quite fit, or aren’t yet familiar. The names offered as similar, but more common versions of participants names, (e.g. Lynn for Lingh) are examples of norms being expressed to participants. Stereotyping jokes alert participants to how their names are viewed by their quotidian audiences, and in that way, what it is about these names that the quotidian audience finds lacking (e.g. for Chang, that his name sounds similar to other one-syllable Chinese names; for Tony, that his name is a familiar Italian name).

Devices are less a focus in this section, however in terms of mediating devices, many participants mentioned the stress of introducing themselves and spelling their names over the phone, and that email introductions are commonly met with in-person mispronunciations. The most relevant discourses to the quotidian audience are cultural productions that introduce names and their pronunciations. As our information and entertainment sources (e.g., film, television,
magazine, radio, art exhibits) continue to introduce us to people with common, easily pronounced names, we are unlikely to become familiar with new names. As well, as many publicly recognized people have chosen “professional names” that are easier to pronounce and more likely to support their ascension to fame, we are less likely to learn more challenging names passively, through news and entertainment media.

4.3 Institutional Audience

Prior to Canada’s becoming established as a nation, surnames originated in the institutional realms of other societies. For this reason, the institutional audience requires some historical contextualization. The first official multiple component names are thought to originate either in Ancient Rome, beginning in the 6th century B.C. where a system of *tria nomina* (three name components) were used within households to indicate each person’s civil status and rights of inheritance (Kuttner 2003, p. 510), or in China in 4th century B.C. as bestowed upon families during the Qin dynasty (Scott 1998, p. 65).

These instances initiate the long history of different states’ efforts to know and describe their residents through census strategies, including standardized naming practices. By the 14th century, the majority of Europe had permanent patronyms; in nearly every nation-state, a patriarchal system identified and produced generations of people with the same surnames (Scott, p. 65). Data-collection systems of this era allowed officials to identify, by individual name, nearly all of the states’ residents for the first time; when successful, these projects created a “legible people” (Scott, p. 65).

One striking example of an assignment of surnames took place on November 21, 1849, during the Spanish colonization of the Philippines, when the Spanish government ordered Filipinos to identify themselves with Hispanic surnames (Scott, p. 69). The astonishing aspect of this story is that surnames were assigned based on an alphabetized list of Spanish surnames. Each community received a page or more (to apply Law’s framework, consider each page as a device based on the discourses or traditions of Spanish names), depending on the village’s size, and once each family was identified, entire towns bore surnames beginning with the same letter of the alphabet (Scott, p. 69). To ensure that the Spanish surnames were taken up, “teachers [stewards in Law’s framework] were ordered to forbid their students to address or even know each other by any name other than the inscribed family name” (Scott, p. 70). While this is an extreme example, the
continuing implications of these projects should be considered: “institutional practices leave traces that echo in the social world long after their institutional architecture disintegrates” (Garcelon 2001, p. 83). Whether or not Filipinos can map themselves by name back to where their families lived in 1849 is unclear, but Spanish surnames do remain the most common type of Filipino surnames used today.

Canada’s own naming standards are drawn from the norms of France (in Quebec) and England (in Ontario and most other provinces), the nations who originally colonized what is current day Canada. Following the American revolution of 1776-1783, the British Crown invited loyal colonists to settle land that is today Canada, and the settler’s names were recorded in the first and last name component system that is today familiar to most English-speaking Canadians (Kuttner, p. 512). Kuttner states that there is little written evidence of the First Nations’ naming practices prior to colonization, but through and during contact with settlers and official institutions, people of the First Nations came to be identified with first and last name components, as well (p. 513). Recent descriptions of Inuit naming and identification systems offer a glimpse into the challenges that early colonizers would have experienced with identifying individuals and comprehending their names. Federal and provincial government representatives’ confusion over Inuit naming systems resulted first in fingerprinting, and then in 1940, with the assignment of an “E-number” to each Inuk. Until 1970, E-numbers functioned as the main identification system when an Inuk interacted with federal representatives. “Project Surname,” which began in 1968, “requested that all Inuit select and register family names, which, along with their given names, would receive standardized spellings” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2006, p. 39). Inuit naming systems are genderless, babies are often named for those who have just died, and because communication was traditionally oral, standardized name spellings were not available (p. 37).

After tracing the evolution of our current surname structure over centuries, Kuttner suggests that Canada’s current law—which requires people to be identified by at least two components, a forename and a hereditary surname—could be considered a violation of the collective rights of minorities found in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988) (2003, p. 515). This is a significant consideration: the character of Canadian naming practices is such that it is necessary for some individuals to modify their names in order to adhere to provincial naming laws. These current naming policies may be an example
of Garcelon’s suggestion that “all modern states are to a significant extent marked by a history of internal colonialism” (2001, p. 84).

In these examples of dominant groups establishing and enforcing naming norms for other groups, identification practices are the means through which these subjective practices are enacted. These practices are ways that “individual identity [is] inscribed, codified, verified and documented by official institutions in the modern world, especially the state” (Caplan and Torpey 2001, p. 3). While Law describes “long-distance” control as existing between continents, the application of Law’s model to Ontario shows these same three functionaries keeping remote social control over Canada’s largest and most culturally diverse provincial demographic by organizing and reproducing names in the same dimensions as used by our colonizer, England. Indeed, of the three audiences described in this section, the most rigid is the institutional audience as its’ three functionaries work together to reify and maintain traditional standards of name use and length.

Within the institutional audience, discourses about names and identity—broadly, policies, standards, regulations—contribute to the training of stewards and the creation of relevant devices. The devices used within this audience include software and hardware systems, networks, databases, phones, call-holding systems, and other infrastructure that maintain bureaucratic spaces where personal information collection and processing occurs. The more tangible of these devices includes counters, cordons for line-ups, ticket taking systems to maintain order in waiting rooms. The stewards in most of the examples that follow are people who work in bureaucratic capacities for the federal (e.g. at Citizenship and Immigration Canada) or the (Ontario) provincial government.

One challenge issued by institutional audiences to participants is fitting their names into forms. (Several participants (i.e., Marika, Victor, Mbanga*, and Lingh-Lingh*) described their experiences with this challenge in the following chapter.) The application for Canada’s Permanent Resident Card requires that first names are no more than fifteen characters in total, and that last names do not exceed twenty (attached or hyphenated) characters. The institutional

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14 Defined as “the political incorporation of culturally distinct groups by the [dominant] core” (Hechter 1975, p. 32).
audience also requires that names are consistent across different information infrastructures; the name used on one identification card should match the name on any database.

There is also the question of which name to use, and how this particular audience should be responded to. Jose’s case exemplifies the issue of different names for different audiences: he’s used Jose since he was an undergraduate, but Abilio is the name he’s always used with his family, and within the Portuguese community he grew in.

Jose Abilio: When I went for my driving test that’s when I realized that I have to actually put the name that's on my birth certificate and passport. I can't be just Abilio. So from then on I was always just very aware of any type of documentation with the government that Jose was actually there, because it was just so comfortable just being called Abilio.

While Jose commonly uses one name or the other, both appear on his official identification, which is used for his institutional audience, but not without challenges:

_Diane: Has it caused any problems, having the two names?_

Jose Abilio: Actually I did have an issue last year after I graduated from Teacher's College. I had to apply to Ontario Teacher's College for certification process so initially I had to put down all the information so “Jose Abilio” and then Preto. I think my SIN card only has Jose so I submitted that as a piece of identification and they had an issue with that so I had to provide additional identification that showed Abilio as well. Then there was another issue… On my application I didn't put the hyphen in the middle—which was ridiculous—but I had to put the hyphen. So, I have a really long name with the hyphen and that was the first time I had an issue with not including Abilio or just to prove Abilio was a part of my name.
This issue of authenticity, of how to ensure that one’s name is officially correct for use in Canada, was mentioned by many of the participants. In Evelyn’s case, she arrived in Ontario as a refugee in 1970 with the name Evanghelia, but with no official documents.

Evelyn: My papers, like at U of T, use Evelyn. For my driver's license, I asked them to put Evelyn, too. I sign Evelyn every time so the signature shows Evelyn. This is not official. I want to make it official but they ask for too many papers, which I don't have, and if I don't have [the papers] I can't send anything. So I don't know what's going to happen for the rest of my life.

Leo, who uses this English name in informal circumstances but his original name, Zhi Li, officially, struggles with how to introduce himself in formal job-seeking circumstances, as he uses his official name on his résumé, even though it is usually pronounced incorrectly.

Leo: Because I am a co-op student, I am looking for an internship job. And when you talk to the people in those companies, you always have to introduce yourself first and that’s really a challenge for me to say that my name is Zhi [pronounced Jzhee]. But I cannot just say that my name is Leo, because my résumé and other things show that my name is Zhi Li. But if I said that my name is Zhi Li, they would ask, “Oh, I’m sorry, what’s your name?” or “I’m sorry, pardon?” So it’s really hard for me to introduce myself in some official places and that is the problem. Sometimes I’m with friends, or some people where we’re playing and it’s okay to be Leo. But when you have to hand in some official documents, and you have to introduce yourself, it’s a dilemma.

The use of different names for different audiences is a common practice, but one with pitfalls when it runs in opposition to the individuating and fixing goals of the institutional audience’s functionaries. There are also cases when the institutional audience alters names so profoundly that a name shift, or at least significant time spent remedying name issues, is required by participants. In Harold*’s case, he has adopted an English name because of mispronunciations and errors on his official documents:
Harold*: In my Chinese name, Fu* [surname], Feng* Lim* there are three [components], and [Western people] always think of the last [component] as a middle name, but it is not a middle name. The latter two [components] are together as my first name; they are not a first and middle name. Even now, the bank always uses just my first name, just Feng*. So I'm not very comfortable with that. Because, if that's my name, why is it changed here? So I'd rather… I just want to use Harold*. That is much easier…

Using the name Harold* seems easier because, indeed, as he's already put significant effort into getting his identification cards corrected:

_Diane: And are your cards now correct?_

Harold*: Yeah. But I had to go back again and again. And I waited a long time each time. It takes probably an hour each time. Every time I apply for the official documents, there is a mistake and I have to go back through to get it fixed, so it's very, very frustrating!

_Diane: Do you usually phone to get things fixed?_

Harold*: Yeah, I have to phone, because in most cases they don't have any email help available for us to use. I have to wait a long, long time.

Victor and Christina* describe similar challenges: they each received their Permanent Resident cards with portions of their names missing. Their calls to explain their concern and dissatisfaction were not met with success. After enduring the truncation of his name due to permanent resident card length limits, Victor’s phone call for help was fruitless: “They said, ‘No, this is how the system works. Bye.’”

Christina*: I told them, “You omitted my middle name.” And then I found out later they omit that because they don't have any space on their Permanent Card. So what can I do? There is nothing I can do. But to me, but I don't think that's adequate to not think of a person's name. To me that was very peculiar because that is my
name. It is on my birth certificate; it's on my passport. I don't know how they can just decide to drop my middle name. But that's the decision that was made.

Some longer-settled participants have seen form lengths increase over time, and several forms do include a space for unofficial names, or preferred name, which demonstrates increased elasticity by institutional audiences over time. However, many other examples demonstrate how stringent Citizenship and Immigration Canada’s policies are in terms of enforcing name limits. All three levels of functionaries are at work to ensure that names remain in the format allowed by CIC’s databases and forms. Policies do recognize that name challenges exist for people who migrate to Canada, but yet they are not flexible enough to allow people who are selected for immigration to Canada to maintain their original names. This audience’s actions don’t just offer a stereotype, or an ideal to which participants may conform; rather, the institutional audience has the power to reshape this key identifier in an automatic, unfeeling manner.

The institutional audience is particularly effective at removing components or truncating participants’ names when they do not fit, but advance communication about how names will appear on identification cards (i.e. sharing this institution’s gaze) would be beneficial for people who are migrating; this would allow them to make choices based on limited options. Utilizing one page of Citizenship and Immigration Canada’s website to demonstrate to potential migrants how their current name will appear on official documents before forms are submitted would save significant effort to repair one’s documented identity after identity cards are received. These identity documentation errors send a strong message to migrants as to their lack of fit or belonging within Canada. According to participants, finding out how your adopted nation’s documentation system invalidates your original name is an appalling surprise.

In Ontario today, the long colonial history of institutions creating and managing their constituents via names continues. Migrants’ efforts to have their names recognized in their original form are often in vain—the institutional audience’s combination of discourses, devices and stewards proves very effective at maintaining a standard three-component structure, and limiting the length of each component. The application of these structures is powerful: initially, it educates as to what the norms are; next, it modifies and integrates migrants’ names into the English-based norm; and continuously, it resonates as a reminder that this set of names is the
official Canadian identity that you will use and be summoned by, when interacting with the institutional audience.

4.4 Traditional\textsuperscript{15} Audience

Participants describe the relevance of their heritage culture in a variety of ways. These include, a) the desire to maintain their names as part of preserving cultural “roots,” b) how it feels to see their names written in their original language, and c) real or assumed pressure received from diaspora and family members to maintain or change their original names.

There was a time when migrating to another country meant that an emigrant rarely saw the friends and family left behind, but for most of Canada’s recent migrants, this is no longer the case. In our mobile, transnational society, it is increasingly routine to remain in regular touch with people in nearly any location by using technology-assisted modes (i.e. devices) including frequent travel, phone calls, texts, face-to-face real time online conversations, online chatting, and digital social networks including Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and more. These technologies have increased the presence and influence of the stewards included in this audience: the traditional audience’s shared discourses or “training” is a cultural knowledge and understanding of naming systems, and the continued use and significance of a culture’s naming tradition. Besides original names, naming traditions, and shared knowledge related to original names, other common ways of talking about countries of origin, such as references to “roots” are examples of the discourses that sustain the traditional audience.

4.4.1 “Roots” as Discourses

One of the ways that participants expressed the challenge of maintaining traditions related to real or assumed ethnicity is with the discourse of “roots.”

Tian: “I feel like I don't have a root right now. My heart isn't here, but yet it can't be there, then I don't have a root. It feels like I am in limbo. It can't be there, because I'm not there, and you might say

\textsuperscript{15} Because my own “Traditional Audience” is based in generations-old rural-living Western Canada, which has its own particularities, but resembles in many ways the quotidian experiences that the participants and I share more closely, I felt that participants explained their interactions within their own traditional audiences to me in more detail than in other sections. At times I feel uncomfortable writing this section, as it may be rife with exoticization and misrepresentation of which I am unaware.
well, there's a lot of ways to get back in touch with your own culture here, too. But it's not as authentic. And it's hard. …”

As well, Marta describes the importance of her children’s names being linked to their heritage as, “I need them to be able to follow their roots.” And with the same term, she describes the efforts that her father undertook to make sure that the children growing up his community had a working understanding of their original language and customs: “He never wanted us to forget our Portuguese roots.” Civeta*, too, refers to having her roots “in the old country.” And Jagdeep* calls on the term to suggest that knowledge of the cultural significance of one’s name can help people want to maintain it: “If a child knew the roots of their name, where it's taken from, and what it actually meant they might be more inclined to keep it.”

4.4.2 Naming Traditions as Discourses

In Canada, this concept of “roots” is a common way of describing our individual links to heritages in other countries. While participants used the term to explain their feelings about their names to me, they may also have deeper understandings of the cultural significance of names that could not be so easily explained. Interviews with the participants confirmed what academic literature argues: the significance and detail communicated through names varies across cultures (Laliena 2002, Obeng 2002, Nuessel 1992), which can make it difficult for people from some cultures to understand what is being communicated by names in other cultures. As examples, we can look to the (still broad) categories of Arabic and African naming traditions. Laliena describes Arabic personal naming systems as complex and based on two models: one recognizes genealogy, and the other the “onomastic elements of relationship” including “geographical origins, indication of occupation, tribal bonds, and personal or affective relationships” (2002, p. 123). The combination of these systems conveys significant information: the long chain of names is preceded by a name noting a paternal or filial tie (the kunya), and ends with a name that suggests a geographical or tribal bond (a nisba). This naming practice is meant to emphasize family relationships over individual identity (2002, p. 126). For clarity one example of a name with these parts is illustrated in Table 2.
Table 2: An example of a four-component Arabic name (with information from Laliena, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Abu l-Hasan</th>
<th>‘Ali</th>
<th>ibn Sa’id ibn Balla</th>
<th>al-Saraqusti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>component</td>
<td>kunya</td>
<td>ism</td>
<td>Nasab</td>
<td>nisba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>significance</td>
<td>paternal or filial relationship</td>
<td>proper name</td>
<td>genealogy</td>
<td>geographic or tribal indicator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arabic naming systems communicate much more about an individual’s geography and social network than names are expected to in Canada. And African naming systems may provide even more information and contribute more to the dynamism of the culture than do Arabic names. They are described by Obeng as “constitut[ing] an encyclopedic reference grammar and ethnography of the nation-state; personal names listen, mute and talk” (2002, p. iv). Many Africans have four names, and based on socio-cultural circumstances surrounding their birth and socio-economic and political status as they grow, some have up to ten names. Each one of these names is thought to provide a piece of an individual’s identity, or “overall being and construct” (2002, p. 4). Table 3 provides a reference to possible types of African names.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTOR</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TYPE</td>
<td>DESCRIPITOR</td>
<td>EXAMPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-Names</td>
<td>Personal names based on the name of the day (e.g., Monday,Tuesday) on which an individual is born, common in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. is Akan)</td>
<td>(F) Friday: Afia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By-names based on Day-names</td>
<td>Each day name denotes a characteristic, and nicknames based on these characteristics are common. Children born on Fridays are thought to be wanderers.</td>
<td>(M) Friday: Kofi Wanderers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypocristic names</td>
<td>Pet names or names of endearment that may show diminutiveness or smallness (e.g. is Hausa)</td>
<td>(F) Friday: Kyinmaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth-circumstances names</td>
<td>Personal names that describe the place of birth and the overall context of the birth situation</td>
<td>(M) Friday: Kyin Wanderers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth-order names</td>
<td>Indicates the position of a child in her family (e.g. is Yoruba)</td>
<td>A girl born in a foggy time:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survival names</td>
<td>Names given to children so that they survive childhood diseases. Survival names are thus death-prevention names and are given to children of couples who may have previously suffered from infant mortality.</td>
<td>Namiwifueli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper, genealogic, or soul names</td>
<td>A name from a father, mother or other person considered important in the lives of the parents</td>
<td>Second child after twins: Alaba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbial names</td>
<td>Personal names that make an indirect commentary or reaction about socio-cultural deeds in a society at the time of birth of the name bearer. Proverbial names criticize, admonish, praise, or explain a course of action taken by a member or members of the community and are used as a strategic alternative to confrontational discourse (e.g. is Igbo).</td>
<td>The future is supreme: Iruka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious anthroponyms</td>
<td>Personal names that describe the political, including military achievements, of a person or group of persons. They may refer to places of political significance in the lives of a people or to the name of an important political personage (e.g. is Shona).</td>
<td>Do not speak ill of others: Ekwutosi (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political anthroponyms</td>
<td>Personal names that relate to religions like Christianity, Islam, African Traditional Religion, and the like. African religious anthroponyms may be fashioned after the names of gods, deities, spirits, and objects of supernatural significance in the lives of Africans.</td>
<td>How hot my bullet is: Mdumburu Kupisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Be happy, we shall rule: Tichatonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A child’s conception is made possible by the river god, so his shrine name is Apaam.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Types of names used by nations of Africa   Source: (Obeng 2002, pp. vii-155)
In many African societies, children do not inherit their father’s last name but have names built on the series of relevant contexts described above. In some of these societies, a child may receive at least five names at birth: a day-name, an appellation of the day-name, a hypocristic form of the day-name, a positional name, and a place of birth name (2002, p. 9). These various types of names are context-driven and depend on the intimacy of the relationship between the addressee and the addresser. Day-names are the most intimate form of address, more so than genealogical or soul names. Among equals, hypocristic names establish, reinforce, and consolidate social relationships; friendliness, intimacy, similarity, solidarity and the idea of belonging to the same social group are expressed. When non-hypocristic forms are used among equals, exclusion rather than inclusion is conveyed. Using hypocristic forms requires that members of a particular social network, age group, or socioeconomic status, are aware of the norms that guide the appropriate sociolinguistic behavior so as to fit into name bearer’s network (Obeng 2002, p. 128).

Proverbial names are given to make indirect commentary on activities taking place at the time when the name bearer is born. The name giver criticizes, admonishes, praises, or explains a course of action in a permanent way, by making a child’s name out of phrases from these stories. This is another type of name that carries a lot of information for an insider, but to an outsider the significance is lost. Obeng provides these examples of proverbial names:

In Bukusu society (Kenya), if out of naivety a person wrongly assumes that his neighbour likes him but later realizes that the neighbour hates him, he may name his child Manyandio ‘I wish I knew.’

If someone was expecting help from relatives but never got it, as a strategic alternative to silence or to verbal confrontation, she might name her child Wetekhela ‘She cooked by herself,’ that is, ‘she had no help.’ (2002, p. 49)

The use of proverbial names demonstrates the indirect and opaque qualities of African naming traditions, which Obeng suggests may be due to the restrictions placed on free speech. Name-givers need to have an alternate explanation in case powerful elders or superiors question them. This type of indirectness is creative and strategic, and its users can disclaim any negative intent (2002, p. 49).
Because the context within which African names are created plays such an important role in their interpretation, detaching names from their contexts distorts their significance, or even subjects these names, and their name-bearers, to multiple interpretations and misinterpretations (2002, p. 148). The ways that naming practices vary from country to country make individuals’ names essential to a “sense of national belonging”; thus, naming practices represent “a powerful factor of national integration” (Noiriel 2001, p. 47). Names are more deeply rooted in some cultures than is easily understood by many longer-settled North Americans.

Further, it appears that in North American culture, names communicate much less than in many other cultures. This may be because names are based on other nation’s languages, and were inherited on land that is no longer linked to these name’s origins—all a non-traditional audience can read from a name may be which language it is derived from. Because of the diversity of name origins that exist in Canada, and the number of name changes that have been made, none of us, not even professional onomasts, can describe the full significance and meanings captured in the many names that exist in Ontario. This kind of analysis is feasible with names in more homogenous cultures—it is to this type of social group that the designation “traditional audience” refers.

4.4.3 Original Names as Discourses

As one example of a cultural difference related to names, Tian describes the introductions and name exchanges that occur when he meets other people from China. Because many Chinese characters have the same sound, only by reading someone’s name, or by having the characters named during conversation, are the layers of meaning based on selected characters communicated.

*Diane: Do people ask what the characters are in your name?*

Tian: I think that one of the first topics discussed between Chinese people who haven't met is their names. We would say what it means and where it came from. I found myself introducing, or talking with a bunch of Chinese people here and we kind of just right away begin talking about where we're from in China and what our names mean or meant.
I was also told that during introductions between people from China it is not uncommon to take the other person’s hand and, using your finger, to draw the symbol of your name into your new acquaintance’s palm. A comparable activity that is common in Ontario is to ask how a name is spelled, especially if there are known varieties: “Is that Sarah with an ‘h’?”, “How many ‘l’s in Alison?” “Is your name spelled Steven or Stephen?” The meaning of these different spellings may indicate national differences, or just parental preferences, but it does not have the significance of establishing the series of picturesque symbols that together create an image, as is the case for someone whose name originates in Chinese characters.

Following this research on culturally-specific naming practices, it is clear that immigration to Canada, with its requisite identification practices, means a significant change for someone with context-sensitive names. Because Ontario’s dominant naming practices have no day-names, proverbial names or hypocristic forms, what happens to these original names? What are the implications for a newcomer’s identity, when his names have played such a role previously? One participant, who was raised in Cameroon and arrived in Canada as a refugee in his late teens, describes how his name’s components fit neither Canadian norms, nor the norms with which he was raised.

Mbanga*: It’s very complex, because look at my name (de E’Teme* Mbanga* Ekwe*). As you can see, there is no first and last name, so let’s say [pointing] this (Ekwe*) is the last name. You have to fit in last name/first name structure so this part (de E’Teme*) is my first name, right, and Mbanga* is my last name officially. But in reality, it is contrary. This part (de E’Teme*) is just where I’m coming from, so it should normally be my last name.

… When it comes to [the official documentation], they certainly don’t know how to write it. Look at this university identification. See how it is capitalized and always reversed positions. It is quite interesting because I never, never, never write my name like this. These are just assumptions. It’s capitalized, just an assumption. [Looking at name and writing it.] This is the real way.
Diane: I’ll make a note that you have five certificates above your desk and each is different.

Beginning with transliteration into the Roman alphabet, names tend to shift in significance to the participants. Once shaped into the standard components, potentially mispronounced, shortened, or anglicized, names exist quite separately from their origins. I asked participants about their original names in an effort to understand their continuing cultural significance.

Diane: When you see your name in Hebrew does it mean anything different to you than when you see it in English?
Ronit: Absolutely. That's a good question. I have a key chain from Israel with the word. There's definitely a little tug on the heart there. I left when I was five, so yes, they call me Israeli but I'm very Canadian. I'm very proud to be Canadian. I'm very patriotic but there is a little tug on the heart when I see my name in Hebrew. It's special; it's different. It makes me a little bit different to everyone else around me.

Diane: When you see the ways that your name is represented, does one feel more like who you really are?
Harold*: These two. [Points to original name in Chinese characters and his English name: Harold* Fu.]

And Siveta* describes how the multiple name mispronunciations she experienced made her feel disconnected from her mother and heritage (i.e. roots), which led her to unofficially change the spelling of her name.

Siveta*: What else is closer to you than a mother, but your name? Every time my name is pronounced wrong, it just is not me. So that was an issue. Not only were people unable to pronounce it, but everything got lost: that special connection to my mother who doesn't live in Canada. She is still over there, and this is not how she wanted other people to pronounce my name, so that identity was lost, the connection [to her].
Having established that, in terms of the traditional audiences’ functionaries, the devices are those that aid local and transnational communication, and the discourses materially illustrate participants’ original names as well as the cultural naming traditions that exist behind names, the next functionary of focus is that of stewards: participants’ families and diaspora.

4.4.4 Parents as Stewards

Participants describe their parents as either being for or against a name change for their children, sometimes in contrast to the participants’ desires. Siveta* explained that her father was fine with her name change, “because [my parents] don't call me Siveta*, they call me by my original name. [To him] it's like an actress having a professional name.” Harold*’s parents, like Siveta*’s, live in the country where he was born (China), but are not supportive of him officially changing his name.

Harold*: Actually, I am also thinking that sometime I will change my official name to Harold* Fu. But probably not very immediately.

Diane: How come not yet? What are you considering?

Harold*: Just that my parents have already told me: “That's your Chinese name and you should use that.” Also, because I didn't marry yet, they've suggested to me that if I have kids, they should also have Chinese names. It lets the kids know that they are from China.

Diane: What do you think about that?

Harold*: Um, I guess I'd like to listen to other parties, too. Parents are just a reference, right? Even my last name is not easy to pronounce.

With his parents—potentially key members of Harold*’s traditional audience—located in China, Harold* is able to consider his other audiences, equally or to a greater degree. But for Jagdeep*, at the time when she gave more weight to her quotidian audience and shortened her name, she was living with her parents in Canada, and they were unsupportive:
Jagdeep*: Sometimes someone will call and ask for Jag*. “Well, there's no one here by that name.” Initially I didn't tell them I was struggling with [my name] and that I just go by Jag* now.

In contrast to Jagdeep*’s parents, many of the participants whose parents live in Canada are supportive of the participants’ name shifts. Jaspreeta*’s parents are sympathetic to her changing her name: they too have experienced name challenges in Ontario and have also shortened their names for everyday use.

_Diane: Would it have upset your parents if you’d changed your name?_  
Jaspreeta*: Actually, no. They were very encouraging. They've known the struggles I've had since I've grown up with it. I've complained about it a lot. My parents, they encouraged me for that reason: they wanted me to be successful. And they knew I didn't like it. They were a little bit upset, obviously; they chose that name for me, but actually, it's good.

_Diane: Do your parents use different versions of their names, too?_  
Jaspreeta*: Yes. My Dad shortens his names to initials so it's a lot easier to pronounce. My Mom uses shortened forms of her name, as well. We all kind of did.

And Chang actually experiences pressure from his parents to change his name because they want to ensure that he attains a job, even if it means anglicizing both his first and last names.

_Chang: My parents want me to change my name. They were always wanting me to change my name. They had to find jobs [in Canada], so they know how difficult it is. They don't want me to have anything aside from my actual work experience to keep me from finding a job. They try to make it as easy as possible, so they want to change my name altogether, English first name, English last name. I'm probably not going to do that. If I came to a point that I have to change my name I would probably change my first name and keep my last name._
The participants’ parents, exemplars of the steward functionary within a traditional audience, are drilled by the discourses of their own traditional, quotidian and institutional audiences, and if the participants’ parents also live in live in Ontario, their audiences may resemble those of the participants. Nearly all of the participants’ parents who also reside in Ontario seem to understand the value of having a name that fits in Ontario’s culture, even though they are part of the traditional audience. Thinking of diaspora beyond the participants’ parents, there is a range of perceived and real expectations that participants experience in terms of their names, and how they want to position themselves at different moments, sometimes closer to their traditional audience, and sometimes fitting more easily with their quotidian audiences. These tensions will be further examined in the following chapters.

4.5 Balancing between audiences that are dynamic and simultaneous

The attitudes of participants’ parents demonstrate that traditional audience is an audience that is in flux, as is the institutional audience, with each new policy adopted and practice altered. So too is the quotidian audience, as Ontario’s diversity increases, and as participants shift from school to careers, for example. Besides the dynamism of each of these audiences, there are circumstances when all of these audiences must be considered at once. Victor’s debate about how he should write his name on Facebook illustrates his consideration of these different audiences, and which he decides to privilege.

Diane: So how do you feel about being Victor Blandon?
Victor: It's weird sometimes, especially for a thing like Facebook. When I moved to Toronto I opened my Facebook account. I opened it as Raul Blandon and most of my Facebook friends are in Colombia, and some Colombian friends are around the world. They know me more as Raul, so that created for me a… how do I put it? I decided [more recently] to put for myself Victor Raul Blandon, so it applies to everyone. I'm not sure how people will see me. Colombian friends who used to know me as Raul only, they probably think it's weird that I use Victor Raul, the two names now, in my Facebook accounts and documents. So that is
something that creates some kind of identity issues. It's always me, but it's how will I present myself to the world? So when I changed my Facebook account, I had that thought. Who's going to read this? It's here and it's there.

By having an awareness of the norms of each of these three audiences, Victor is able to adapt his name, and likely other parts of his identity, to interact with each audience. He has patiently ensured that his official name documents are identical and appropriately identify him. He maintains strong ties with his friends and family in Colombia, and by including “Raul” in his Facebook name, he is still identifiable to them, and to broader diaspora. And he has ensured that his quotidian audience, other residents of Toronto, some whose trust and business he hopes to earn, see his name as pronounceable and easy to understand.

4.6 Conclusion

Through immigration, how Victor identifies himself has changed. As is reflected in his name, we can understand this shift as plural and based on the demands of each of his audiences’ functionaries:

Identities develop and change, they are at least multi-faceted if not in fact plural. Their consistency and continuity are our constructions, mandated by our cultural notions of the kinds of selves that are normal and abnormal in our community. … We may be able to code-shift our identity performances because we have substantial competence in more than one culture and its identity repertoire, or we may just inherit or have acquired portions of each total package (Lemke 2008, p. 19).

Chapter 4 has described participants’ interactions as taking place with varied audience types (i.e., quotidian, institutional, and traditional), and each operating at levels of functionaries. The study’s research questions ask how different uses of personal names come to be, and how these influence participants’ experiences of settlement and identity within Ontario. Here, it becomes clearer that participants must consider many different and dynamic demands-audiences-contingencies, and then determine their best strategies for dealing with each or all of these, either
in the moment or over the long-term. Certainly, these repeated considerations and adjustments have consequences for how participants see themselves and the people with whom they interact. Besides participants becoming accustomed to having their names misread and mispronounced, they are also habituated to quickly making sense of the people whom they meet, and then determining how best to interact. To another Arabic speaker, for example, a participant may offer the original pronunciation of their name, or a longer or more official version of their name, that may contain far more information about the participant than can be understood by the quotidian or institutional audience. This aspect of the participants’ experience and perspective is discussed in the next chapter, which focuses on the name challenges experienced by participants.
Chapter 5

5 Naming Challenges

5.1 Introduction: the name-action arc

This chapter is the first of three that together describe the name-action arc experienced by participants as the trajectory of their identity labour. During interviews, participants informed me of a series of modes related to their names, a kind of slow-motion trajectory of seeing how their names create challenges within or between audiences; next, taking action to ease these conflicts; and then, potentially, feeling a sense of belonging by being identified in a particular way. The first mode captures how participants see and experience kinds of challenges, issues, and discomforts related to their names; the second mode is reactive—performative or transformative efforts are made to intentionally do something about these name challenges; the final mode is the enduring outcome of living in Ontario and being named in this chosen way. For some participants, being identified in a particular way doesn’t work—so, the arc becomes cyclical, and is initiated again, beginning with a new conflict, or with the same conflict and a different action taken. For others, the action arc continues indefinitely, in the lasting mode of being identified in a particular way.

Figure 4: Participants’ Name-Action Arc, the trajectory of identity labour
Each of these modes is described in one of the three following chapters. This current chapter—focused on naming challenges—considers the perspectives of the participants, and their audiences, as crucial for understanding the structures of these conflicts, as well as being key to their mitigation. In some cases, name challenges are triggers that lead participants to shift their names, or to present them differently, or even to become more steadfast about not changing their names. These and other name actions are described in Chapter 6: (Re)Actions. Chapter 7: Be(long)ing, the last mode of the name-action arc, describes ongoing implications: what do these name conflicts mean to participants in terms of being and belonging in Canada? And what do they mean more broadly, for Canadian society?

5.1.1 Designating “Identity Labour”

Balancing between three audiences and moving through the stages of name actions described above requires significant effort and energy. Many of the interactions involved in these situations are stressful, frustrating, and even emotionally painful. Worse still, much of this emotional expenditure to people who have immigrated is not apparent to members of dominant culture. Throughout this dissertation, the kinds name-related activities that participants undertake—the name challenges encountered, the name actions engaged, and the persistent feelings associated with names—are grouped together and designated as “identity labour.”

I establish the term “identity labour” here to describe the mix of activities and emotions experienced by participants; identity labour links together existing, related terms including identity work, migrant labour, affective labour, and emotional labour. The term “identity work” is used within the field of organizational behaviour to describe the ways that workplace identities influence individuals’ self-perceptions and actions (Watson 2008, p. 140). In a recent presentation, Jelena Zikic (2014) described the kinds of identity work undertaken by people who have immigrated to Canada in order to best suit their work environments. Zikic suggests that people engage in “defending, revising and possibly even altering their identities” as they seek employment commensurate with their skills and experience (p. 6). As well, Watson’s use of the term “identity work” aligns with the ways that this study’s participants are influenced by how they are seen and by how their names are understood (detailed in Chapter 7). The focus of “identity work” on organizational culture and professional identities makes the use of an alternate term necessary.
Identity labour should also be considered in relation to the term “migrant labour”. Over the past century, Canada has depended on migrants’ skills and willingness to work. Because working in Canada has greater financial advantages than working in many other countries, many people move here, permanently or temporarily, to take on jobs that are not popular amongst people who were born in Canada—these jobs may require extra hours, less security, and potentially even less pay. We can see this labour division in terms of who tends to work in less-valued fields including janitorial service, fast food service, esthetic service, and child and elder care. Canada relies on “the constant stream of inexpensive, exploitable labour” for economic growth (Roberts 2014, p. 58). While there is an economic argument to be made for this division of labour, other expectations may accompany this arrangement. Because people who have immigrated are seen as motivated to work regardless of the challenges, the concern of having a name mispronounced or misspelled may be dismissed as relatively minor. It could be thought that if members of dominant culture can pay a segment of people less and ask them to do undesirable work, we may also expect these same people to use names that are easy for us to say. It should be noted that many people who have immigrated are employed in top-level positions in Canada; and, as is exemplified by the description of this study’s participants, people who have immigrated are generally better-educated than people who were born in Canada (Ontario Trillium Foundation 2010). For those reasons, a potential generalized bias against people who have immigrated—that may or may not result from Canada’s dependence on migrant labour—is examined in this dissertation. Whatever the sources of this bias, it should be recognized as unfounded and discriminatory.

Identity labour also draws on the term “affective labour.” Affective labour is a commonly discussed aspect of service work; it is the “invisible labour” undertaken by workers with the intention of making customers feel a particular way (usually comfortable and positive) during their interactions with a corporation. Examples are seen in the interactions of flight attendants on commercial airlines and servers in restaurants (Hardt and Negri, 2004). People who do affective labour are expected to manage the emotional states of customers, and as such, these workers must often hide or ignore their real feelings (e.g. potentially boredom or disdain) during such interactions (Betancourt, 2010). Participants in this study can be seen as engaging in affective labour in that the discord of their names with names that have been established as the norm is their own challenge to cope with. Participants must figure out a way of making their names
manageable and comfortable for the people with whom they interact. More generally, people who immigrate are expected to make their way into dominant culture without creating discord. The feelings and the challenges of undertaking this integrative process may often be hidden as people who immigrate interact with members of their quotidian and institutional audiences in order to successfully fit in. In this way, immigrating requires affective labour. It is important that the identity labour of people who have immigrated is seen and acknowledged, and that policies and interactions are shifted to reduce this labour.

The field of affective labour overlaps somewhat with that of emotional labour. In contrast to affective labourers focusing on the emotional states of those they serve, the focus of emotional labourers may be more broad, but still they are still required to display particular emotions. Emotional labour is defined as “the awareness of emotional expressions required of a job and the strategies used to express those emotions” (Matteson and Miller, 2012, drawing from Hochschild 1983 and Morris & Feldman, 1996). According to Matteson and Miller, what is most labourious is the cognitive dissonance of being required to express emotions that are not naturally felt (p. 176). Although research on emotional labour is focused on workplaces, there are again parallels to the experiences of people who have immigrated when interacting with their three audiences. Each audience has its own “display rules” which must be learned and performed through both “surface” and “deep” acting (Matteson and Miller, p. 177). “Surface” acting undertaken by the participants in this study includes the exhausting work of explaining their names and cultural backgrounds. If this feels tiring, or unnecessary, or like the last thing participants would like to be talking about, then emotional dissonance is likely. Emotional dissonance, exhaustion, and depersonalization occur when a person perceives that their emotional expressions are violating their sense of self (Matteson and Miller, p. 177). “Deep” acting, however, occurs when the participant makes an effort to adjust events or conceptions prior to the expression of an emotion (Matteson and Miller, p. 178). The kinds of purposeful introductory scripts or name transformations described in this chapter are examples of deep acting, as is responding in kind with questions about the audience member’s name and cultural background, or other manoeuvres that may create more egalitarian exchanges. Deep acting, although still labourious, is contrasted with surface acting as it is thought that deep acting may produce feelings of personal accomplishment and role identification (Matteson and Miller, p. 179). Findings from the field of emotional labour suggest that situations requiring surface acting should be minimized (p. 179).
As such, consideration should be given to how to decrease the identity labour of people who immigrate. How can name challenges occurring at each level of functionary be reduced?

Bringing together components of emotional labour, affective labour, migrant labour, and identity work, the term “identity labour” befits the name-related experiences and emotions described by participants. In Chapter 4, the participants’ situations of balancing within three audiences were described as the context for the kinds of identity labour which are detailed in the next three chapters. This current chapter focuses on interview responses where participants were asked to share name-related challenges in a broad sense, as well as those related to tangible forms of their names, such as identity cards. These are the interview questions that prompted participants:

**An episode of name-related difficulty.** Please tell me about a time that you were in a difficult situation because of your name. Describe the setting, who was involved, and how the situation was resolved. How you felt at that time, and how what you’ve thought about it since, is also welcomed.

**Name documentation experiences.** Please describe your experiences of completing forms and getting identification cards in Canada. What was the process of applying for one of these cards or documents, including your decision to apply, how you attained the form, if you received any help with your application, and if the outcome of the application was satisfactory. If you have formally changed your name, please describe how you learned about this option and how you went about applying.

During the interviews, each participant described various kinds of name conflicts: feeling that mispronunciations, misspellings, and other kinds of name confusion get in the way of meeting new people in quotidian environments, having identity documents represent their names inappropriately, being embarrassed about standing out when their name was the only one mispronounced by a new teacher, or feeling that people’s questions about their names are inappropriate and disrespectful. One of the objectives of this dissertation is to provide the participants’ view of what it is like to experience such name conflicts. It is, in part, a response to the question, “Why would anyone want to change their name?!”—a question asked most often by people who have not experienced challenges related to their own names. In working to respond to this question, I’ve come to understand how much conflicts related to names are
actually based on audiences’ perspectives—and, as the question asking why anyone would want to change their name illustrates—the limits of our perspectives play a significant role.

5.1.2 Asserting identity and receiving validation with three audiences

In Chapter 4, as participants acknowledge their quotidian, traditional and institutional audiences, they are also describing conflicts related to their names. Each of these audiences poses distinct challenges that are generally caused by limits of each audience’s perspective, and further, conflicts arise from working either to satisfy just one audience, or even multiple audiences.’ The claim that “Identity is never unilateral,” that identity cannot just be asserted, but must also be validated (Jenkins 2004, p. 19), is salient: if, as audience members, our perspectives are such that we can’t “see”—as in recognize and pronounce—the name an individual has chosen for himself, then how can we validate his identity?

For example, Harold* feels pressure from his parents, part of his traditional audience who remain in China, to maintain his Chinese names, but he finds that using an English name, instead of his two original first names, is much easier in his workplace. This is because his quotidian audience, his co-workers and his managers, don’t recognize that his two first names coexist equally and that they can, and should, be used together like a single first-name component. Harold* adds that his two original first names don’t sound nice to most English-speakers.16

In other participants’ experiences, a name conflict may arise in one audience, but affect the others, even though the conflict is based on only one kind of audience’s limit or lack of perspective. For example, when Lina* arrived in Canada as an international student, her passport did not represent her as she was accustomed to being identified in Japan:

Lina*: When I was born, my Mom was the one who named me. What she had in mind was Lina*; this was her intention. But she didn't know that the Japanese government didn't allow the usage of the letter “L” for legal papers like passports. Their argument is that the letter “L” is too English. I think “R” sounds English but the Japanese government thinks “R” is less English, so that's the story.

16 Having heard Harold’s* non-pseudonym, original name from him, in-person, I concur that each component has an English homonym that connotes an unpleasant meaning, especially when his three names are used together.
I became Rina* on official documents, but went by Lina* unofficially. The reason my Mom wanted to name me Lina* is because she wanted me to be successful internationally, outside of Japan.

Having her name documented in one way, but used in another, led to conflict between Lina*’s institutional and quotidian audiences, though it is the limit of (an institutional component of) her traditional audience that initiated this situation. Interestingly, her mother foresaw that Lina* would deal with broader audiences and for this reason chose to name her in a way that wouldn’t hinder her future international interactions. Challenges that arise and can be dealt with in the same category are generally the least complex. For example, as with Lingh-Lingh*’s example (in the previous chapter), when a name is mispronounced during formal workplace introductions (to a quotidian audience), the response can be to correct that mispronunciation during the same and future functions. The views of quotidian audience members tend to be the quickest to correct, as they are not so deeply entrenched; local systems/tactics/strategies provide solutions. An institutional issue such as misidentification is a more deeply entrenched problem, one that is more likely to lead to conflicts with other audiences, but it can generally be remedied by using standardized infrastructural tools, such as forms and formal complaints. The challenges faced by Harold*, Victor, and Christina* (in the previous chapter), as they worked to correct the institutional audience’s capture, or view, of their names demonstrates that such an undertaking is not a simple task. Institutional audiences do not see participants’ names in the same ways as do participants, and often the means to remedy an institution’s myopic views are formal and form-based. Institutionalized guidelines benefit many tasks and objectives, but they can also perform as blinders.

With the inter- and intra-audience differences in perspectives outlined, the focus of this chapter shifts to name-related conflicts that generally take place with quotidian and institutional audiences. The tension of balancing an identity between all three audiences remains a consideration, as does the need for identity to be validated. In the previous chapter, participants’ perspectives of having three name-related audiences were described, with structural detail provided in terms of John Law’s functionaries (1986a, p. 235). In the current chapter, these three functionaries, rather than the audiences, provide the organization of the chapter. Complementary
literature is drawn on to analyze the conflicts at each of these structural levels, and finally to describe their interdependent nature.

Figure 5: The current focus is name challenges, the first mode of the identity labour trajectory

5.1.3 Structure, agency and perspective

This chapter’s focus on the structures of name-related conflicts raises the question of how these challenges are seen in terms of structure and agency; how are we to understand their interplay? The structures described in this chapter are not presented as insurmountable, although some are rigid, and slow to shift. Name conflicts are considered as constructed through persistent systematic patterns that support the current status quo—hegemony that privileges white individuals who speak English as their first language and who have names that are from the same familiar, pronounceable pool. These systems are ones that the dominant culture’s “ancestors actively created” and that “we persistently recreate” (Hays 1994, p. 61). Because Ontario’s culture was established generations ago by English settlers and their progeny, our current systems are shaped by, and in many ways maintain, that culture’s values. Although, as is demonstrated in this chapter, quotidian and institutional audience structures constrain the participants in terms of their names, these structures do, in more general terms, also enable: in general, such structures “lend us our sense of self and the tools for creative and transformative action, thereby making human freedom possible” (Hays 1994, p. 61, noting Durkheim, Giddens and Weintraub). However, these structures’ enabling qualities are the least painful for Ontario residents who, by name and language, are the people the structures were designed for and by. For
residents whose names don’t fit in, senses of self and related transformative actions are often contemplated because of uncomfortable interactions, painful feelings of difference, and challenges to connect with other people. It is this difference in perspective of existing structures—the discomfort experienced by some Ontarians versus the ease experienced by others—that allows these structures to be maintained: if everyone experienced them in equally painful ways, they would hopefully be hastily modified.

Those of us without immigration experience, without a traditional audience outside of English-speaking Canada, may travel with ease in other countries, but unless we make an immersive move to another country with a significantly different language and ways of life, we will never be bicultural. We won’t understand the constant rub of having a name that doesn’t quite fit, nor will we be made to feel “other” in terms of our culture. Indeed, by proceeding with our regular day-to-day modes of interaction, we are more likely to cause rather than experience the kinds of name-related othering and discrimination that are described in the following sections.

While the next chapter considers the transformative action of name change, this current chapter describes and analyzes common name conflicts by examining their structures. Drawing on the tenets of Institutional Ethnography and Standpoint Theory keeps this concept of perspective, of view, at the forefront of this chapter. The focus is on what is seen, but also on what remains unseen: understanding the limitations of our vision maybe as significant as our efforts to see more broadly. It is perhaps no coincidence then, that the premise of John Law’s framework of three functionaries—illustrated by the Portuguese sea vessels’ route to India in the 1400s—is a form of remote control, with a focus on how to navigate with an acknowledged limited view (1986a, pp. 234-5). The analytical perspective of this chapter looks closely at the challenges participants have described in order to better understand the participants’ experiences, and to understand the kinds of structures that undergird name challenges.

Participants are often strangers to these structures, and frequently their introduction occurs through a name-related conflict, or an “infrastructural breakdown” (Star and Rohleder 1996). Initial encounters are often as abrupt and uncomfortable as running into any unforeseen object. But then, as participants become more acquainted with name-conflict structures, they determine if and how they will respond to these structures. Participants’ views of name conflicts are illuminating. Living with an awareness of multiple audiences’ demands (and a knowledge of
how these demands are structured) means that participants see revealing points of comparison between these audiences, and as well, they must respond to a multiplicity of perspectives and undergirding structures.

In the mode of determining how best to use their names in Ontario, participants look and listen for cues to determine how their audiences see them—each name conflict that participants experience offers a clue. These conflicts guide understandings of which name choices are available: what is normal, what enhances introductions, what feels right? Participants choose to be identified with names that reflect how they see themselves, and how they’d like to be seen by each of these audiences. For some participants, it makes sense to work to change quotidian social structures (e.g. Hanaa uses a version of her name that is less common, and more difficult to spell and categorize), while for others it does not (e.g. Harold* chooses an English name, Victor uses the components of his name that are easiest for English-speakers to pronounce). Participants choose how they would like to appear to each of their audiences: where on the range of conformist to challenging are they most comfortable? The outcomes of these choices vary because “the capacity of agents to affect social structures varies with the accessibility, power, and durability of the structure in question,” (Hays 1994, p. 62). Presently, an analysis of name conflicts with quotidian or institutional audiences, and between these and traditional audiences, reveals the structures that exist, and why and how they may shift.

This chapter is organized so that Law’s functionaries are again established and extended to examine the interdependence of the three components that cause name challenges for the participants: “All participate in holding everything together” (Law 2004, p. 92). The discussion moves from broad to particular, as the analysis of conflicts begins with discourses (i.e., binary and normative discourses), continues to stewards (i.e., audiences and hierarchies), and concludes with devices (i.e., infrastructure). Discourses underlie how devices are constructed, and how individuals come to believe and interact as we do. But over time, devices and stewards contribute to shifting one another as well as discourses. Indeed, all three functionaries are interdependent and sustain one another.

5.2 Discourses structure society

Critical theorists speak of discourse as a “broad conglomeration of linguistic and nonlinguistic social practices and ideological assumptions that together construct”—what is constructed is a
particular outcome such as a “discourse of power” or a “discourse of racism” (Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton 2003, p. 1). Guided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this section explains participants’ experiences of name conflicts in terms of “the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society” (Fairclough 2003, p. 353). The discourses discussed in this section are related in that they are constructions of social organization that are used to group together and to exclude. These discourses are organized to demonstrate an increase of granularity, beginning with the concept of “the norm”, moving on to binary discourses that other, and then finally to further classifications of differences between Ontarians.

5.2.1 Norms: “If anyone has a name that's outside the norm, then they've encountered problems” (Jagdeep*)

Living with an awareness of their multiple audiences means that participants understand and respond to a multiplicity of perspectives, including what is normal or common within each audience. With this knowledge, participants choose to be identified by names that reflect how they see themselves, and how they’d like to be seen by each of these audiences. To choose how best to self-represent, participants are looking and listening for cues that determine how these audiences see them. Sometimes these messages arrive all too loudly and clearly; other times they exist as curiosity that eventually leads to awkward questions about names. In Jaspreeta*'s case, a significant event occurred annually:

Jaspreeta*: I've always struggled with [my name] because I grew up in Waterloo and back then it was not very multicultural. It's more multicultural right now.

[Growing up], I would be the one person of colour in the room with the one ethnic name and, you know, every September, with every new teacher, as they would approach my last name's first letter, I would know…

I would automatically put my hand up right before they were going to call it, like, "Hey, it's going to be hard to pronounce! It's just me." I would put my hand up right away. I knew they were going to butcher it. So yeah, that happened all of my life.
For Lingh-Lingh*, being called on by the teacher was one semi-official uncomfortable moment, but teasing by peers had an impact, too.

Lingh-Lingh*: I grew up in Oakville, which is predominately white, Caucasian people, especially at the time I was there. It's probably more diverse now but when I was there it was me and maybe one other Asian guy in my grade. His name was Kevin, so he didn't have the same problem I did. People would make fun of me. I remember my sister had a friend and he made up a little song about my name and he would sing it often. It was just being different and I was already different so it just highlighted it more. Also, this is something that still comes up today with the idea of being in school, when the teacher calls your name, it was always an awkward moment for me because I knew they would say my name wrong. And so that still happens today, into adulthood.

Several participants echoed this situation of being racialized, and then further “othered” by a teacher mispronouncing their names. A teacher’s demonstration of a student’s name as unfamiliar may embolden other students to notice or comment on their peer’s name, as was Lingh-Lingh*’s experience. The type of hierarchical power held by the teacher in this situation is discussed in the next section. Here, it is sufficient to note that these name-related situations played out in ways that caused most of the participants to feel positioned as unusual or irregular in some way. Jagdeep* had similar experiences to the other participants, and here she makes sense of it in terms of “the norm.”

Jagdeep*: [In school] our [South Asian] names would be the problem and trying to pronounce them would be the issue. ....

If anyone has a name that's outside the norm, then they've encountered problems with how it's taken up, how it's pronounced. And then feeling embarrassed and taking the onus because someone else pronounced it wrong.
They [the teachers] should look embarrassed, right? But it's us who feel embarrassed about it.

Jagdeep*'s articulation of her own and other South Asians' name conflicts as caused by having “names outside the norm” pinpoints a discourse that undergirds many of the issues that other participants describe. For Foucault “normalization” is “a system of finely gradated and measureable intervals in which individuals can be distributed around a norm—a norm which both organizes and is a result of this controlled distribution” (Rabinow 1984, p. 20). However, the particular effectiveness and power of the norm is that “there are no fixed pivot points from which to make judgments, to impose will” (Rabinow, p. 20). All of the participants have at some stage experienced what Jagdeep*, Lingh-Lingh*, and Jaspreeta* felt in these examples, that their names are not the norm in the communities where they grew up. Within Ontario, as with other regions in Canada,—and anywhere, quite likely—some names are much more typical, common and expected, while others fall outside of the set of names that are loosely understood as normal: “normal” names are those that appear in every classroom, that are known because they are often used for characters on television shows, and/or that are heard and seen in news media. In Ontario, names that appear as English, and are easily pronounced by English-speakers, are closer to this imagined norm, and from there, many variances exist. For example, some names may not seem English-based, but are still highly pronounceable, like Hana. The implications of the discourse of the norm, are well described by Lemke in this way: “Normality is always a mystification of normativity, a social lie that succeeds in part by introducing simplistic, low-dimensional category grids for pigeon-holing us, and in part by sanctioning any too public display of mismatched qualities” (2008, p. 20).

The belief that any type of person, ethnicity or name exists as the norm or the standard in Ontario is one that is established, but remains inaccurate: this understanding grows out of a desire to be normal, to belong. Normativity is a powerful discourse, and a whole range of social locations and subcultures have arisen from it. These begin with binary divisions, and continue to myriad other categories.
5.2.2 Binary divisions: “Apparently an Anglicized name is a sign of membership” (Alfie)

Although it is the construction of the norm that initiates discourses that divide between binary options, it is basic binary divisions that seem to have the greatest implications in terms of othering and discrimination based on names. Names are used as indicators of ethnicity to position members of Ontario society on either side of these binary divisions: “dominant” / “minority”; residency: “immigrant” / “Canadian”; and race: “white” / “ethnic” or “neutral” / “racialized.”

Many participants describe feelings of being outsiders in their Canadian communities, and how their names are used as an initial means to differentiate them. Marika, who was born in Canada, recalls assumptions that were made about her aptitudes because of her Greek surname:

Marika: When I was eighteen and I started volunteering writing at the student newspaper at Carleton and one of the first questions I got from somebody was “Can you write in English?”

And I'm Anglophone [emphasized]. My parents are not Anglophones, but when I was born in Quebec, they thought it would be best [for me to be educated in English]. At that time there was a lot of discrimination against Francophones. You basically needed English if you wanted to get a good job. They raised me in English and I went to school [in English]. And I won the English prize in my high school, so to be asked, “Can you write in English?”

Like Marika, Ronit appears to be a member of dominant culture in terms of being white and English-speaking. But both of these participants’ names standout as unusual, so their names become the basis for judging their positions as either insider or outsider.

Ronit: People say, “That's an interesting name.” That's how it starts. They don't want to come right out and say, “What the hell is that?” So I get a lot of, “That's interesting” or “That's really pretty”
or “What is that?” So they try. I usually say that it's an Israeli name or a Hebrew name, depending on who it is.

It's not that I was angry with people. It's not their fault that they never heard this name. There are many names I can't pronounce and I can appreciate that, but definitely growing up in an English-speaking country with a non-English name, it draws attention to you whether or not you want it, and it sometimes for the sake of expediency, you just change the name.

Jagdeep* wasn't born in Canada, but she moved here when she was very young and she speaks in the way that Marika, Ronit and I do—in an accent practiced by Canadian native English speakers, with regional differences across the country. However, because Jagdeep* is racialized, she is singled out for questions about her origins.

Diane: Do people ask you about your name or your ethnicity, your background, because of your name?

Jagdeep*: Sometimes and I’m always cautious of that because it's trying to….. insider/outsider of whether you actually belong to the Canadian mosaic so when someone questions—if it's a friend who wants to know because they are genuinely interested in knowing a little bit more about me.

But if it's someone, like in the subway or something, they are trying to pinpoint who you are, whether you belong and the legitimacy of you, then I am giving one-word answers.

They feel the need to attack even more and start with things like, “Where were you born?”

I say “England.”

And they'll say, “Well you don't have a British accent. Where were your parents born?”
And so I have to go through this long explanation about when they immigrated, etc. And I don't feel like I have to justify where I am and who I am.

Likewise, although Evelyn’s name is English-sounding, people note her accent and ask about her cultural origins.

Evelyn: As soon as I open my mouth people are curious [about where I am from]. I don't want to answer anymore. I feel it's not important to them anymore [once] you satisfy their curiosity.

I start to not answer any more. There is no reason. …

Then they drop you like, “I have no interest in you.”

People still do that because I have an accent. It bothers me more and more.

Evelyn describes how her accent can be seized upon as an indicator of difference, in a similar manner to names. Perhaps it is in part that there is a discrepancy between how she speaks and her name sounding “too English,” even to Evelyn’s own ears.

In terms of making quick, superficial sense of another person’s identity, names can serve as “rigid designators” for determining the categories of a name of its bearer may fit into: a designator that, in the case of surnames, can last for generations (Kripke 1980, p. 104). A personal name is considered to be rigid because the named individual is designated with that same name “in all possible worlds” which the individual may occupy, and the name “never designates anything else” (Kripke 1980, p. 104). Indeed findings from the résumé audits by Oreopoulos and Dechief (2011) and Eid (2012) demonstrate that names are read as rigid designators by recruiters: résumés with names appearing to be of origins other than British signal potential communication challenges to recruiters, are subconsciously classified as “risky hires”, and then moved into a less-desirable category. Applicants’ education and language skills are considered less than the apparent origins of their name, because of a name’s seeming rigidity, or reliability, as an indicator of belonging.
One of the participants, Alfie, with the perspective of a long-settled Canadian who changed his own name more than thirty years ago, says that, “a name is an obstacle or a help, and you choose.” He understands names as a communication tool that will aid or hinder in terms of classification.

Alfie: This is an important topic for immigrants because a lot of them come with these very, very difficult names and somehow they get attached to the name at a tremendous personal price. For some reason, they don't realize their name is a label and what does it matter what label you go with? But somehow they feel this tremendous thing, like if they changed their name the world is going to come down or that they’re leaving something significant. You are who you are, regardless of what you are called…. A name is a communication tool. And to be deprived of this important tool is an impediment. It does not advance you at all.

Alfie: We're all human beings and when someone does not sound like they belong to us, we tend to sort of treat them differently, and apparently an Anglicized name is a sign of membership so to speak, or a symbol of membership.

Diane: It's interesting that you could change your name to a more Anglo-Saxon sounding name, but it still has roots in your Egyptian origins.

Alfie: It was critical for me, and the same thing with my son. My son has a name which is Anglo-Saxon, Italian and Egyptian at the same time. He doesn't have any foreign-sounding names and that's working out very well for him, too. So, the identity part is so critical. You don't want to sound like someone you're not.

Although all of the participants are aware that, and how, their names tend to be classified, some expressed the benefits of having a name that positioned them on the “inside” as English. Chang, however, describes his mixed feelings about potentially changing his name to appear more English, and how that might be seen as in conflict with his physical appearance.
Diane: Why are [your parents] encouraging you to have English first and last names? And why does that not work for you?

Chang: I just felt that the stereotype, if I have two English names I'm supposed to be a Canadian. If I have an Asian appearance and I have both English names, that is not common. Not a lot of people have that, so I feel like I would stand out. That's not something I want to show. They'll know that I have changed my name and changing a name in Chinese culture, it's a bit...

If you change your first name, that's fine, but if you change your last name, the family name, that's kind of not...

People will think differently of you about how you see your family. It's kind of an attitude of respect. They've kept this name since your grandparents and your ancestors. If you change your last name it's not really respecting your family. Also, I felt like if I have an English name that took away my identity as a Chinese person. I'm not comfortable with that. My parents are more practical, thinking about what's better for me for getting a job, so they think an English name is fine.

When Marta’s name was anglicized on her first day of school in Canada, it allowed her to better fit into her new context.

Diane: Did “Martha” [her name used in elementary school] sound foreign or English to you?

Marta: It sounded English, which was cool. It didn't traumatize me, like I felt out of place. It made me blend in. ... I kind of liked it, I guess. Because I fit in, right? I'm Martha now. But then people had the assumption that Martha would speak English and I didn't for the first six months I was here.

The desire to blend but to maintain their original names, in some capacity, is a tension expressed by many of the participants. As Minyang* describes it,
Minyang*: “It's hard sometimes because you are an immigrant and sometimes there is discrimination. People think you come from a different country. It's a feeling you get like you are an outsider; and people want to do whatever to fit in.

At the time of our interview, Jorge was considering using the name “George” during casual interactions and for his résumé because the employment applications he had made with his original names had not been successful.

Jorge: George Blandon is… if I use George Blandon it could be an American name that could be better for many things here, for discrimination… I have received phone calls from American people for [job] interviews and they say, “I want to speak to George.” And on my résumé my name is like that, Jorge, and they ask for George. I don't know if it is easy for them or if they pronounce it like that. … I haven't [written my name differently on a résumé] because it is a problem. After the résumé [stage], I am Latin American. The difference is at the beginning. Yes, not after, it's passing the first step. It could be helpful, but I don't feel good doing that. I think doing that is difficult because it could [cause] another problem. Okay, I pass… I'm called for an interview. Then, this could be a question: “Why did you change your name?” I prefer people hire me for my skills but not by my name. That's what happens here. That's the big problem. I'm thinking of changing it, but not officially.

Jorge, who immigrated to Canada as an adult through the Skilled Worker program, cares less about fitting in socially, and more about gaining access to employment commensurate with his considerable management experience. He needs to fit in enough to get a job, and he sees that the incongruity of having an altered name may be understood as something that further others him.

Besides the use of personal names as “rigid designators” that determine insider and outsider status, another kind of categorization that distinguishes between residents of Canada is the census. It is based on generalized categories of cultural and ethnic origins. Some of the official
terms for these categories have shifted over time, but because these terms are considered official, they are used in research findings and news reports based on the census, so people come to be identified by, and sometimes even identify with these terms—their taken up and used in common parlance.

5.2.3 Categorization: “I have to be multicultural, while you get to be whatever you want” (Saunders, 2013)

Beyond the binary divisions that participants describe in terms of their experiences of being othered, or their desire to “blend” or “get into” Canadian society, further particularizations of the norm occur as discourses and are formalized into documents and devices that categorize residents of Ontario through multicultural policy, immigration documents, and census data collection. James Scott describes how naming standards grew out of an early census projects, and similar endeavours in order to create a ‘legible people’ (1998, p. 65). But legible for whom and by whom, and what are the limits of this legibility?

One tension described by participants is the discomfort of being described with some of Canada’s official terms that define residents’ status in Canada. For example, several participants dislike the term “immigrant.” Christina* prefers to call herself a Permanent Resident although she’s lived in Canada for more than a decade—she feels that Permanent Resident connotes a more contemporary and transnational state than does immigrant. Evelyn also dislikes the term immigrant, as well as questions posed in order to categorize her origins. Having immigrated to Canada more than forty years, it is something Evelyn has done, a verb in the past tense: now she is Canadian.

Evelyn: I feel Canadian but society makes me feel not Canadian, somehow, indirectly. So maybe I'm not as Canadian as I should be.

Evelyn’s case illustrates one of the issues with the term “immigrant”—that it is used to contrast even long-settled residents who are Canadian in terms of citizenship and Canadians who were born in Canada. In this way, people who are born in Canada remain neutral, unnamed and normalized. The neutral status of the “normal Canadian” who is white and was born in Canada is described by many authors (Mahtani 2012, Thobani 2007, Bannerji 2000, Ng 1993) as a
constructed standard from which every other ethnicity, race, or mix, is seen as a departure. Judith Butler suggests that a term such as “immigrant” (she uses “women” in her example) “does not describe a preexisting constituency, but is, rather, part of the very production and formulation of that constituency, one that is perpetually renegotiated and rearticulated in relation to other signifiers within the political field” (1993, p. 195).

As an illustration of Butler’s argument, in 2012, there was an issue about the significance and really, the creation of the “neutral” white image in Canada, when the image of a female scientist illustrated on a prototype one hundred dollar bill drew many comments from focus group members because of her Asian features.17 The scientist’s image was modified to look more white, or as the Bank of Canada explained, “neutral.” Minelle Mahtani (2012) addressed this issue, noting that the Bank of Canada “has until now apparently and explicitly avoided any other depictions of ethnic groups on banknotes” and now “has to fabricate an ethnicity that does not even exist… It appears there is no problem to portray white ethnicity, but any other ‘ethnic’ would be crossing the line. Apparently, white is non-racial” (2012). Mahtani adds that this is an “alarming move in an age of supposed multiculturalism for a country of immigrants” and she points to the 2011 census for another official use of the “generic ‘White’ category at the top, followed by other prescribed racial categories” (2012).

This quiet merging of white ethnicities into the background, into invisibility, points to the dominance of this perspective. Consider interactions that you personally have taken part in: when someone is being asked about their ethnic origins, who is doing the asking and who is responding? Is there an equal exchange of information? It seems far less common for someone who is white to be asked about their ethnicity, even if they’ve just asked someone, “Where are you from?” This view of whiteness as outside of an ethnic categorization is so broadly-adopted that asking someone who is white about their ethnicity may elicit surprise and could be understood as a purposeful, political action.

While Ontario’s dominant class has over time erased any ethnically distinguishing characteristics in order to disappear into the infrastructure it has designed, this class’ gaze prescribes categories as a way of making other ethnicities more legible: easier to classify and count. And these

17 One commentator wryly suggested that we should just have animals on our currency: using an image that we can all get behind, like a moose, would avoid tension (Banwatt, 2012).
categories resonate. When I asked Jorge how he self-identifies in Canada, he responded this way: “Here, there is a frame that is a visible minority, that is specific: I’m Latin American.” He acknowledged that this term is particular to Canada (he has also lived in Mexico and Barbados), and seemed matter of fact in his articulation of it to me. Being a “visible minority”, and a Latin American, as he is officially identified here, distinguishes Jorge from the neutral majority. This distinction is reflected in many of his day-to-day interactions, particularly his efforts to find work.

Following Mahtani’s suggestion, a look at the 2011 National Household Survey (i.e., the “long” voluntary census form) provides further examples of the categories that define many of this study’s participants. In Figure 1, Question 19 asks people to describe themselves with the questioning, unspecified phrase, “Is this person:” and then the options of responses demonstrate considerable irregularities in terms of granularity (Statistics Canada, 2012).

19. Is this person:

Mark more than one or specify, if applicable.

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

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

Figure 6: Question 19 from Canada’s 2011 Census (voluntary long form) Source: Statistics Canada (2012)

The first response option, “White”, and the fourth, “Black”, reflect terms that are commonly used in casual conversation, and that have apparently become official terms for federal-level ethnicity categorization. The second, eighth and ninth response options “South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.); Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian, etc.); West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.),” are likely intended to articulate between varied
uses of the term “Asian” by breakdowns of national origins. Yet the category of “Chinese” which could include people who were born in Canada or who may have emigrated from a variety of national origins is seen as singular like “White”. “Arab” and “Latin American” are listed as two other major groupings, but these do not list any nations associated with these ethnicities. Nor does “White” which currently in Canada, could include people whose ancestors may have emigrated from Italy, Spain, Ukraine, Greece, Israel, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, South Africa, and really, almost limitless other nations. To some degree, the most particular categories and nations that are noted reflect the more closely examined top source countries of immigration (e.g. Korean, Filipino), which may explain the imprecision of these categories: some are perhaps intended to measure specific immigrant populations. Analyzing this portion of the census form reveals, to a limited degree, how members of dominant culture, who establish these categories, understand and wish to make Canada’s population legible.

Considering how these categories resonate—that they dictate how people are described, how they describe themselves, and what their name origins are assumed or imagined to be—the varied granularity of the categories is more concerning. Working with these imprecise terms, it seems less a surprise that it is so challenging for many Canadians to acknowledge and discuss racism and systemic discrimination. We are without clear models of how to understand key terms: are these categories based on ethnicities, cultures, or races? The jumble of categories designates fundamental attributes from the perspective of members of dominant culture: they show how a particular audience sees, and that is apparently in fuzzy, generalizing and imprecise terms.

The question on the census form is essentializing in the way that it is tied to the verb “to be”; yet these are attributes that depend on perspective and context. “Is this person White?” requires a no less nuanced response than do the questions “Is this person young?” or “Is this person smart?” In fairness, on the census form, these categories are teamed with other questions about languages spoken and religions practiced, so the responses, taken as a larger data set, may allow a more precise analysis of the population of Canada. However, the other categories may be similarly uneven in terms of granularity. Still, it is in a moment like completing a census form, particularly if you are not part of the dominant class who created it, that it becomes very apparent that “We are all forced to pretend that the world is far more like our culture imagines it than it really is,
and that we too are far more normalized than we really are” (Lemke 2008, p. 20). Census completion is another uncomfortable instance when “normal” and “other” are made particularly clear to people who are considered to be “other.”

In a 2013 article in *The Globe and Mail*, journalist Doug Saunders discusses the challenges of Canadian multiculturalism in terms of the ways that cultural policies aim to “manage and institutionalize diversity by putting people into ethnic and cultural boxes, defining individual needs and rights by virtue of the boxes into which people are put, and using the boxes to shape public policy” (Saunders here quotes Kenan Malik’s Milton K. Wong lecture, 2012). Saunders begins his article this way:

> “I think it’s a bit unfair that I have to be multicultural, while you get to be whatever you want to be.” That was said to me a few days ago, with an ironic smile and no trace of anger, by a young dark-skinned woman in a *hijab* who spoke with a more pronounced Canadian accent than mine. (2013)

This quote references categorizing practices at a binary level (i.e. multicultural/white), and that “being multicultural” means being pinned to this location, while being white means being free to locate others, without being fixed or categorized in the same limiting ways. To the woman quoted above, “multicultural” means everyone who is not white, which is likely a wry critique of how she understands the pervasive dominant white perspective. Her acuity is startling as she points to the differential power: in this culture, over time, a dominant white class has had the freedom to establish categories, design infrastructure, and to drill citizens in this way. Saunders, categorized by the young woman as not-multicultural, sees the unfairness: those who are longer settled, those who are seen as white, are not subjected to these boxes, and instead create, or use the given institutional terms to describe and determine other people’s boxes. Saunders argues for more “living with diversity” such as experiencing culturally-varied cuisine, coffee, and performance art in Canada’s major cities’ cores—the “multi”—and less focus on individuating “communities” or groupings based on more or less shared backgrounds—the “culturalism.” Of course, the latter, the cultural policy and the categories that structure it, cannot help but influence our interactions as we live with diversity. Malik describes how multicultural policies “have not responded to the needs of communities, but have helped create those communities by imposing
identities on people” (2012). Karen Brodkin’s critique supports Malik’s: “Part of the psychic damage done by whiteness is a worldview that has difficulty envisioning an organization of social life that does not rest upon systematic and institutionalized racial subordination” (2004, p. 186). Indeed, it is hard to imagine a society that is differently structured and functioning without these binary and classificatory systems—these are the structures that Canadians know, and have been drilled to use and even to extend.

In this section, we have seen these categorizing discourses and policies reflected in the name conflicts described by participants. The next two sections examine how these discourses are taken up and acted upon.

5.3 Stewards: “Teachers don't care about given names so they pick one” (Tony, a teacher)

Given that “our identities, who and what we are, how others see us, are greatly affected by the names we are called and the words with which we are labeled” (Bosmajian 1974, p. 5) it is important to analyze not just how discourses structure name-based conflicts, but also how context and hierarchy contribute. In terms of Law’s three functionaries, examining the roles and actions of stewards allows for a better understanding of how some name shifts occur. Several participants described classroom situations as sites of name conflict, and others described significant one-on-one conversations where name changes were suggested. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a means for examining both the “contexts” and “structured text and talk” that take place in these situations, particularly how they can be controlled “by members of more powerful social groups and institutions” (van Dijk 2003, p. 356). This analysis looks more closely at how othering and categorization discourses that undergird name conflicts are actually carried out.

People who are in positions of comparative power, such as teachers and bureaucrats have a particular authority in terms of giving or altering names (Nuessel, 1992). For Nuessel, “the act of naming implies that the naming group has a measure of control” (1992, p. 3). Bosmajian, too, describes “the ability to name” as an important power “related directly to the power to define others—individuals, races, sexes, ethnic groups” (1974, p. 5). How this naming/name altering power is enacted is described with the following examples, by analyzing the hierarchical contexts where name conflicts occur.
CDA defines “context” as “the mentally represented structures of those properties of the social situation that are relevant for the production or comprehension of discourse” (van Dijk, p.356). Context comprises “the overall definition of the situation, setting (i.e., time, place) ongoing actions (including discourses and discourse genres), participants in various communicative, social, or institutional roles, as well as their mental representations: goals, knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and ideologies”—to have power over context means controlling one or more of these elements (van Dijk, p. 356). Besides determining aspects of context, power is also exercised by controlling “the structures of text and talk” through actions such as asking questions that require particular kinds of responses (e.g. roll call), insisting on particular conventions (e.g. formal greetings, using nicknames), providing a particular lexicon of terms (e.g. classifications of ethnicities) (van Dijk, p. 357).

5.3.1 Stewards: Teachers at the front of classrooms

The most common context for name conflict is school: participants describe roll call as a site of discomfort and embarrassment. The situations unfold in front of a large group of peers as a teacher, who has substantial and continuing authority in this environment, misnames, mispronounces, or simply draws attention to the student and their name. In terms of audiences, the school is a quotidian environment, but one that uses official versions of names, drawn from institutional audiences. In these first three examples, name conflict occurs as this quotidian environment contrasts with the young students’ traditional audiences, particularly their parents, but also their broader communities, in how the teacher, representing the quotidian audience, sees and validates each student’s name. Marta experienced both an Anglicization and a reversion to her original name in this way:

Marta: [On the first day of school in Canada] they changed my Marta to Martha. My Dad really hated that. He didn't understand why you have to anglicize that because he thought it was pretty easy to say. But I kind of liked it…

So I was Martha all through elementary school. And then high school came and I got Marta back, which I loved. It is so much nicer, so original. I just found it…
In high school they just read the list, the attendance, and said, “Marta?”

One of my friends said, “Marta? Who's that? That's you, not Martha?” So I kind of liked that. And since then I've just been Marta. …

It doesn't bother me but just the fact that it was changed kind of bothers me slightly in the back of my mind. Like, “Why did you do that?”

Like Marta, Jose’s name shifted when he changed educational institutions:

Jose: My whole name is Jose Abilio Preto and I was named after both my grandfathers so it works well. I have Portuguese background and Spanish background so it's very common to have a double name. …

Here in Canada, double names are not as prevalent so, since I have two, people pick either one or the other. I grew up in a pretty much Portuguese neighbourhood [in Toronto] so when I started kindergarten, the teacher just initially started calling me Abilio.

For a while I thought Abilio was just my name and throughout school, right up till high school I was just Abilio, Abilio, Abilio.

Then I got into university. When they called the attendance, or for tutorials, they would say, “Jose?” because that was the first one of my names.

So I would just put up my hand as opposed to explaining the entire story. It’s like, “if you want to call me Jose, that's fine.”

So at that point I also became comfortable being called Jose. For school or work or whatever, it was fine.
Marta and Jose are the two participants who were least disturbed by the name shifts they experienced via the rather impersonal and dehumanizing selection of their names by teachers or school bureaucrats. It is impossible to know if these teachers were reading from a roll call that had already anglicized Marta’s name or selected either Jose or Abilio for Jose Abilio, or if the teachers made these decisions in the moment. Whatever the motivations, roll call is structured in such a way that the anticipated response from a student is brief, and positive (i.e., “Here” or “Present”), or not at all. For a student to succinctly insert even a brief explanation of how their name should be said is challenging, and painfully public, particularly if the student is unfamiliar with English, or with the custom of roll call. In contrast to Marta and Jose, Tony was more disturbed by the abbreviation of his name:

Tony: Teachers don't care about given names so they pick one.
Somewhere in kindergarten, probably, the teacher decided to call me Tony. I don't know why instead of José. At home my parents would call me both, and the abbreviated forms of both. Among the relatives, I was [called by] the two names. In school, I became Tony and it stuck. Ever since I was a young boy I became Tony.

Particularly for elementary school students, their teacher—as the only adult in the classroom and the person who will teach, grade and discipline the students for ten months at a time—is a significant authority figure. The next example demonstrates that even the actions of a substitute teacher, given authority in the classroom for one day, can have a significant impact. After years of feeling uncomfortable on the first day of school as her teachers tried to pronounce her name for the first time, Jagdeep* experienced a particularly jarring roll call:

Jagdeep*: I started abbreviating my name to “Jag”* when I was in high school because every time during roll call and attendance, throughout elementary school the teacher would struggle at my name and I’d just sort of say, “Here, don't try to pronounce it,”

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18 I recall correcting the pronunciation of my own surname in high school and university, and feeling like I had to get the timing and volume of my interception just right, and during the first roll call of a semester. Even then, I often felt that my interjection disrupted the teacher’s task, and was a rather curt mode of addressing a superior.

19 It is noteworthy that in these three initial examples, each of the participants is between 35 and 45 years of age, so these were their experiences decades prior (in Toronto or nearby); as an additional detail, each of these participants is of Portuguese or Portuguese/Spanish heritage.
because I knew they were going to butcher it and all the kids would start laughing. One time we had a substitute teacher and she called me “Jag-shit*”. It was so discouraging and embarrassing and she didn't feel apologetic for it. I think it was at that moment I thought, “Just call me Jag*,” because I couldn't deal with the fact they were butchering it.

In these cases, the discourses by which the teachers have been “drilled” are likely along the lines of easing a student’s, or their classmates’, experiences by shortening and anglicizing how the student uses their name in class. Particularly during the earlier time period of these three initial cases, it may have been considered best practice to select or adjust a student’s name to fit in, rather than appear other by being too long (two components) or less common.

In a classroom context, a teacher equipped with an attendance sheet as a device can have a tremendous effect on how a student will be thought of and called by their peers, potentially throughout elementary school and beyond. Even the very understandable actions of mispronouncing or mumbling a student’s name, or calling less on students whose names are unfamiliar and therefore less memorable, have implications for that student, and for the rest of the students. These actions could make the student feel othered, and may suggest to their peers that this student does not belong, or is less significant.20

In contrast to these first four examples from classrooms, another more recent development that can also be difficult is the situation where a “politically correct” teacher suggests or insists that a student use their original name rather than an English name. Zhi (or Leo), an international student who arrived in Toronto in 2009, finds that many classmates and teachers really cannot pronounce his original name, but still continue to try.

20 Currently, working as an adjunct professor, I am concerned with my own interactions with students in terms of names. For example, if I call on students by name during our first class, I am putting myself in the position of mispronouncing some of their names. Even if I apologize in advance, and proceed with the best of intentions, some students will be singled out as having a name that I struggle with, and perhaps that will give other students license to not learn that name or to think of the student as the one with the name the professor can’t say. Instead, if I ask students to introduce themselves, the other students and I will hear everyone’s names unmediated by me, for the first time at least. I’ve also observed that I am more likely to at least initially remember and call on students whose names are already familiar to me, and that I am confident that I can pronounce correctly.
Zhi: When I first came to the University of Toronto, and people asked me what my name was, I usually introduced myself as Leo.

But some people here would like to call you with your real name. They insist on doing that.

So they will try many, many times to pronounce it correctly, but they fail. I will say, “Ok, just call me by the first part of my name, Zhi, that’s okay.”

But some other people are ok with calling me by my English name, Leo. One of my project managers insisted on calling me by my real name for several weeks. She tried to pronounce it correctly, but it was always incorrect.

I couldn’t say, “You’re pronouncing my name wrong.” I cannot say that.

In this case, it seems that Zhi has encountered people who have been trained with an understanding of the issues described in the first set of examples, so they work very hard to pronounce a name that they apparently cannot. To Zhi, there is a conflict because people will not call him by the name he requests. Yet, his respect for authority makes it difficult for him to insist on being identified with the name he prefers. In this case, a more suitable action may be to call an individual by the name they ask to be called. This respects the individual’s decision to identify as they wish.

Chang describes a similar situation to Zhi’s, but with a more comfortable outcome. When Chang arrived in Canada he planned to use the English name Tim, but then his high school physics teacher suggested that he continue to use his original name:

One day during roll call, the teacher had just started calling names, and it was my turn.

He said “Chang?”

And I replied, “Here.”
After that the teacher said, “But, you are Tim.”

And I said, “No, my name is Chang, not Tim. That's just the name I use.”

Then the teacher said, “But if you were given the name Chang, you should go with Chang.”

I explained that many people have difficulty remembering my [original] name. He showed me the class list and I think there were two other people whose names aren't common English names. So he said it is not a big problem:

“If you speak English, you can communicate well. If you pronounce your name well, you can have your name. Or if people have trouble pronouncing it, but you teach them how to or you show them the way it's supposed to be, it'll be fine.”

And now I sort of see more people with their names shown in their original form. I've started feeling more comfortable with my name; it’s just my transition.

In this case, the teacher’s suggestion is one that Chang acted on, and now he now feels glad to have done so. Perhaps because his name is easier for English-speakers to pronounce, this suggestion worked well, but given the power differential of Chang having recently arrived in Canada, and being a student to whom a teacher made a strong suggestion, it seems it would have been difficult for Chang to refuse the suggestion. I asked Chang if this conversation took place in front of other students, but he said it was a small class and his classmates were working on physics problems in groups while Chang went to the front of the class to have a semi-private conversation with his teacher. Chang was able to observe the attendance sheet and understand the circumstances he was in, and then he made a decision. This example bears strong contrasts to the others where, in front of their classmates, a student is called upon in a particular (i.e. incorrect) way by their teacher, without opportunity for input or recourse.
Except for the substitute teacher Jagdeep* described, it seems that the majority of these name conflicts were cause by teachers doing their jobs in a manner that teachers have been doing similar tasks for decades—it is a system that works, but clearly it works to make some students feel uncomfortable, and for others to be named in new and unfamiliar ways. Roll call likely worked best when students in classrooms all had familiar names that a teacher could easily recognize and pronounce. Besides cultural diversity, current naming trends are toward unique and individualizing names (according to baby name specialist Laura Wattenberg), so the practice of roll call may be more challenging than ever. Why wouldn’t a teacher ask students to introduce themselves initially, and to pronounce their own name, correctly, the first time it is heard by their peers? This practice would indeed shift the authority of the classroom; there is something much more coordinated—drilled—about having students react with a quick response to whatever version of their name the teacher calls out. A classroom where students stand and introduce themselves one at a time, instead of using roll call, could become something more like a meeting of equals who are together forming a class.

Although the difference in social positioning between a teacher and a student is one of the most significant hierarchies experienced by young people in institutions, participants describe other meaningful hierarchical contexts in the following examples where, either one-to-one or in small groups, recommendations were made to participants that they should change their names.

5.3.2 (Well-Meaning) Stewards: mentors and family

In the previous chapter we saw that some participants’ parents opposed their name changes while other parents were encouraging. In the previous section, we saw teachers who are responsible for altering participants’ names, while other teachers suggested that students maintain their original names. In this chapter we see that besides parents and teachers, other significant people suggest name changes. In contrast to the classroom settings, and in terms of CDA, the following conversations take places in smaller groups or one-on-one, and in more casual settings, even in homes. The control of talk is based mostly on who is present, their relationships to one another, and their power differences. As well, the mode of rhetoric (i.e. in Minyang*'s case as a gift, Evelyn’s a re-christening, and Siveta*'s as a solution) is also significant.

In contrast to most of the conversations I had with participants about other people suggesting that they change their names, Alfie (who immigrated to Canada in 1968, changed his name a decade
later, and self-identifies as Canadian) offered this conversation that he had with a graduate student, where Alfie (the participant) suggested that his student consider changing his name.

Alfie: I had one graduate student from Sri Lanka and his name was something like 18 or 19 consonants. The name was an inch-and-a-half! And try to pronounce it!
I said, “Look, why are you inflicting this pain on other people and on yourself?”
He said, “No, no, no, this is our family name. It's been in the family for hundreds of years…”
And I said, “That's great, but how does this help you in Canada when you are applying for jobs and going for interviews or even when you're working? How are people going to call you? How are people going to introduce you?”
But, to each his own.

In this case, there are significant hierarchical differences: Alfie is a longer-settled Canadian, he is older than his student, and he is in a position of power, either as the student’s professor or supervisor, or potentially both. As well, Alfie has his own experience of immigration and making a formal name change, which he is happy with. In sharing his advice, Alfie was well intentioned; he thought this would help the student succeed in Canada. But whatever the hierarchical pressures Alfie applied, this student did not accept Alfie’s suggestion to change his name.

As an undergraduate student in Ontario, Jehad became active in student politics, and after an interview with the media, he was encouraged by a mentor to continue his efforts in this area, but with the advice that he should change his name.

Jehad: He was giving me feedback. He was an elderly person—very nice, very well-meaning—and I think he thought that I had something to offer.

He said, “You have what it takes, but you need to change your name. This is the barrier, and you need to remove the barrier.” He
was giving me a sort of trajectory to my life, and [noting] some of the roadblocks.

I said, “I appreciate that.” I did not doubt his intent, you know, but I wasn't necessarily happy...

As Jehad explained the scenario to me, it was clear that it was an honour that this man had sat down with him for a private conversation in order to encourage Jehad’s efforts. It is likely that the older, respected man controlled the content of the conversation because of his position of seniority, and that because of his position, he felt invested in, and perhaps even responsible for advising Jehad. Jehad felt disappointed that this suggestion to change his name was part of a conversation that was otherwise very positive. He said that he considered his mentor’s advice for less than a minute before rejecting it, but that the conversation remains with him as an uncomfortable one. In Jehad’s situation and the following one, the people who make name change suggestions share the participants’ original culture, but have been in Ontario longer and are seen as more knowledgeable guides.

Evelyn was born in Greece, with the name Evanghelia, but because of forced migration she grew up in Romania using the name Vanghelita. Upon her arrival in Canada in 1970, her husband’s cousins suggested the she use the name Evelyn.

I became Evelyn because in Canada the cousins said, “Nobody can pronounce this. The closest to the original name is Evelyn.”

It is not Evelyn, but they didn't know better.

In Evelyn’s case, because these were her husband’s cousins, and that there were an unstated number of them; it seems that she was outnumbered, as well as newly arrived, while the cousins were longer settled, numerous and well-meaning. In this situation Evelyn was an outsider to the family and the culture, and the cousins were able to help her fit, while exercising their power and knowledge in helping to rename her in Canada. In her mention of the cousins being wrong about the closest name in English, Evelyn conveys a sense that she felt compelled to trust their knowledge, but today, looking back, she sees its limits.
In both cases, the discourse that the “drilled people” followed is a well-meaning one: that it will be easier for the participants to succeed if they have English-sounding, or at least simplified names. Well-intended rhetoric is often the most persuasive, as it is packaged in an instructive, protective discourse that is difficult to rebut. As well, the shared culture between Jehad and his mentor, and between Evelyn and her new cousins, positions these name-influencers as part of the participants’ quotidian as well as traditional audiences: this makes their suggestions more informed and more difficult to resist.

In the next examples of one-to-one or small group conversations where name changes are suggested, three significantly different contexts with quotidian audiences are suggested—there is no shared ethnicity or traditional culture in these cases. Siveta* arrived in Canada on her own, as a student, and experienced a lot of stress related to her name. When she met her then-boyfriend, now-husband, he suggested that she change the spelling of her name so people could pronounce it more easily:

Siveta*: My husband was born here, and I met him when I was to Canada eight months.

Very soon after we met, he said, “Why don't you try to come up with a spelling that's easy for people when they see your name? You are not in Croatia anymore. It will make your life so much easier.”

Because English is his first language, he came up with this: Siveta* instead of Cvijeta.* Everybody knows what to say now. Ever since, I’ve worked with people in the US and covered different phone territories, and I never have any problems. With that name, Cvijeta,* there were constant issues.

Siveta* relates this story in a positive way, and is grateful for the consideration her husband gave to the current spelling of her name. Through a CDA lens, however, their differences in power are illuminated: her husband was born in Canada but Siveta* had recently migrated; their genders suggest differences in agency; and in terms of text and talk, their discussions were in English, which Siveta* has since mastered, but at the time she immigrated, she found communicating in
English to be difficult. Her boyfriend’s interpretation of her Croatian name into English meant that he was using his expertise in a cultural knowledge that she did not yet share. His helping her identify herself with more ease and clarity was well-intentioned and seemingly sensible, but it does seem that it may have been difficult for Siveta* to say no to her boyfriend’s suggestion.

Minyang*'s situation shares an element with Siveta*'s in the way that the person who suggested that she use a different name was also longer settled or Canadian born, and it would have been very difficult to refuse him.

Minyang*: My father had a very good friend at church; he's very religious and helped our family a lot. One of the things he did for us was giving us English names. I remember one day he came over and he had colored stones painted and he had names on them. For me, it said Deborah Sun*; the stone was blue with an oval shape. And that's how I got my English name. It sounded like a pretty name and I kind of liked it. It's English and I enjoyed it. That's what I used for a very long time.

Without engaging a CDA lens, an initial reading of Minyang’s* situation resembles Christian missionary outreach, with Deborah given as a biblical name. Applying a CDA lens, we can see power differentials based on Minyang*'s young age, Minyang*'s relationship to her namer existing through her father, and Minyang*'s limited English fluency. Because she was a ten year-old child at that time, it is unlikely that Minyang* would have had any recourse except through her parents, who were receiving the same type of name conversion. That these names had already been chosen for Minyang* and her family, and that stones had been inscribed and were part of the gift that was bestowed, would have made this act of naming particularly difficult for Minyang*'s family to refuse. In our discussion, Minyang* did not miss the irony of her new name, Deborah, being “written in stone.” Years later, having tried other names, but reverting to her original name, Minyang* tells this story:

Minyang*: I remember talking with a guy and I told him my name was Minyang*.
He said, “Do you have an English name?”
I said, “No.”
And he asked, “How about if I call you Sarah?”

I felt really insulted like, “Gee, I have a name. I don't need you to name me.”

Sensitized by the experiences she’s had with her names, Minyang* is quick to defend her now formalized name choice. And in contrast to Minyang*’s previous experience, this request to change her name came from someone who was not well-meaning and who was clearly not acting in Minyang*’s best interests.

Participants recount many situations where individuals suggested that the participants change their names. Because the possibility of a name change exists, and because many people who immigrate to Ontario do change their names, it may seem a simple thing to recommend this to someone else. Some of these suggestions took place in contexts where it would have been very difficult to refuse. In the first two examples, experienced by Alfie’s student, and Jehad, the person who is suggesting the name change is a professionally significant individual, but not someone relied upon for personal, and direct support, as in the other cases. In Minyang*’s situation in particular, it seems very unlikely that she would have been able to refuse the name Deborah.

To contextualize the situation of suggesting a name change, consider who generally creates names in North American society. When a child is born, parents and extended family members, usually more senior, such as grandparents choose a name. And in a less formal manner, established members of sports teams and clubs often determine nicknames for junior members to show their fit or rank in the group. People who choose or suggest a name are generally in a position of responsibility for, or leadership over, the person who is being named or nicknamed. This responsibility for someone else puts the name creator in a position of power, but with an investment in the person who is being named. If the relationship between the name giver and the name recipient isn’t a strong one, it is unlikely that a name will last, or that the recipient will accept the suggestion. In the face-to-face encounters described in this section, whether speaking on behalf of an institution or to someone in a personal relationship, it seems that the degree to which the name giver is relied upon and established in the participant’s life—the amount of
invested power they hold—is the greatest indicator of whether a name suggestion will be taken up. In hierarchical terms, name givers generally occupy more established and powerful positions, whether in terms of generations within a family, institutional authority, or length of time spent in Canada. It seems that in several of these cases, the act of suggesting that a participant change their name whether out of real concern or otherwise, is a way of not only of affirming one’s social position, but also of asserting, or even gaining power over the participant. The following and final grouping of “drilled people” considers name conflicts related to employment; several situations exist where stewards are not face-to-face with participants.

5.3.3 Stewards: strangers with institutional power

This last group of drilled people who contribute to name conflicts focuses on a quotidian and institutional audience in terms of participants’ employment seeking or advancement. During job application processes, one-on-one, in small groups, and both face-to-face and anonymously, participants’ original names are considered a liability in terms of their careers. Unlike the previous examples, the stewards in this section do not have an enduring relationship with the participants, and are not invested in their continued well-being. The discourses outlined in the first section: norms, binaries and categorizations are prevalent, and there is less concern with investing in participants and helping them to bridge these challenges by suggesting a new name that may ease some name-related conflicts. In fact, some of situations seem much more prohibitive than supportive.

Here, during a formal interview to article at a law firm, one of a panel of lawyers asked about Hanaa’s name and background:

Hanaa: He just looked at me and said, "So how come you made it that far with this name? Your background is...?" That was blatantly unwelcoming and exclusionary. I was very upset.

Besides the general positioning of the interviewer, as a senior member of the professional society that Hanaa was working to enter, and more immediately, as a committee member who would determine Hanaa’s fit with the firm, this question—from my view as an outsider to the law profession—seems strikingly inappropriate and othering. Although this lawyer did not directly suggest that Hanaa should change her name, his question led to Hanaa deciding to make her
name more patently Arabic, as well as filing a formal complaint with the Law Society of Upper Canada.

And Jorge received this advice from an employment counselor in Montreal:

Jorge: A person who works in [a government office] advised me to… I was taking a cultural [training] program, looking for a job. I told her about the problem.

She told me, “You can use George, no problem. If you say George all the time, people won't ask.”

That's true. Now, I use George Blandon. That sounds American, and then there is no problem with spelling.

Right now I use that, not in my papers. I haven't changed my papers, but for calling everybody, my name is George here, not Jorge.

Diane: Were you surprised when the person at [the employment office] said you should use George?

Jorge: No, it was good advice for me because I had many problems in the beginning. I knew French; I had a good level of French at that time, but it was difficult for me to spell a name. I was new here, and using the telephone is very difficult because it's in another language. Then they asked me to spell my name. For me, it was easy: it's George, that's all.

During the interview, when I asked Jorge if he was surprised by this suggestion, it was because I was surprised that someone who worked as a career coach would suggest to a client that they change their name, and then would even suggest a “good” name. Now, after further consideration, it seems that unless the organization Jorge visited had a policy against advising clients about how to use their names, it would easily fall into the realm of this professional’s work of helping people who have recently immigrated find employment. It is likely that her advice, and even her ‘translation’ of Jorge into George, is due to her knowledge and
interpretation of the culture. It seems that a name change is an easy solution to Jorge’s work situation, as he does have significant experience and, seemingly, a strong work ethic. With the employment coach’s knowledge of the industry in which Jorge is applying to work, she may be offering Jorge the most honest and practical advice available to him.

The following interview excerpts are from participants describing how they assume their names are treated in environments where a name stands for a person—a name is an essentializing identifier that conveys, however accurately, an individual’s fit with an organization. In the first situation, Alfie, at the time a professor at an Ontario university, felt that his academic publication record suffered because of his original name.

Alfie: I was amazed at the number of papers being turned down. We did good research, good writing, but for some reason the presence of a foreign name submitted to a journal… and the more prestigious the journal was, the higher the rejection rate. If I put the name of a colleague or even one of my graduate students with an Anglo-Saxon sounding name first, the paper went through, no problem. Amazingly, once I changed my name, I did not have a single publication turned down.

As they looked for work, both Jaspreeta* and Harold* were very concerned with how their original names might appear to potential employers and recruiters, and after experimenting with altering names on their résumés, had greater success with getting calls for interviews.

Jaspreeta*: There's also the issue with how it looks on a résumé. I don't know if you know that issue. I would send out résumés with a shorter form of my name or with something that sounded more American and I would get more responses that way, whereas my full, very ethnic name, when I would put that on there… When I look for jobs later on, I don't want to be rejected just because of that.

Likewise Harold*, who immigrated to Canada in 2002, describes his experience of name discrimination as he applied for jobs:
Harold*: At the beginning, when I came to Canada, I sent out a lot of résumés with no response. I had to review all of the details and ask what the reason is, and probably the name is important. I think that my Chinese name is not very pleasant. I also did some labour jobs at Tim Hortons and I think my Chinese name is very hard for people to remember or to call.

Diane: And when you put a different name on your résumé, did it make a difference?

Harold*: Yes, yes, yes.

Diane: So right away you got more calls?

Harold*: Yes, I got more calls for interviews so I felt better, much better.

These participants believe that their original names are direct professional hindrances; consequently, with altered names, they were able to achieve their professional goals. They believe that their names are read by recruiters and human resource professionals as indicators of ethnicity that provide (often inaccurate) information about applicants’ suitability to professional positions. In the résumé audit of job postings in Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto, name discrimination of the kind experienced by Jaspreeta* and Harold* was found to by statistically significant: combining all three cities, résumés with English-sounding names are 35 percent more likely to receive callbacks than résumés with Indian or Chinese names (Oreopoulos and Dechief 2011, p. 5). This résumé audit suggests that the cause of this name bias is “subconscious discrimination”: recruiters are reviewing résumés very quickly and are not always willing to take the time to call someone whose language skills are uncertain. To them, an English sounding name is a more certain indicator of ease of communication. Here’s how a recruiter who participated in that study describes why some recruiters may prefer applicants with English names:

Interviewee 9: A good recruiter will call everyone, because there may be times that people aren’t represented as you’d picture them from their résumé. ... When you’re calling someone with an English sounding name, you know what you’re getting into. You know that you can call Bob Smith, and you can talk to him as
quickly as you want to. It’s less work because you know that his English will be fine. It also indicates that he’s white looking. The brown guy who was born here is not less desirable in the workplace, but it takes something more to know for sure that he speaks English without an accent. We’d have to make a phone call and test the water. (Oreopoulos and Dechief 2011, p. 39-40)

The recruiter quoted here uses names as indicators of applicants’ English communication skills, as well as their appearance. Based on the perceived or explicit needs of the company, the recruiter determines the best potential hires for a position. Here, the recruiter is not invested in particular applicants, but rather their own performance, and relationships and validation within their company. The discourses of norms, insider/outside binaries, and categories are poignant in these work environments; names are too often taken as rigid designators “fixing and authorizing a particular past” (Bodenhorn and vom Bruck, p. 7) rather than more appropriately contextualizing a name with indicators of time spent in Canadian schools or workplaces. A more recent field experiment by Faller, Nathan and White (2013) investigates access to democracy rather than employment: the authors test email and online interactions with over 7,000 election officials in the United States to find that emails sent from Latino aliases are significantly less likely to receive any response and receive responses of a lower quality than “non-Latino white aliases” (p. 1). The study concludes by encouraging “policy changes aimed at reducing the impacts of such discrimination” (Faller, Nathan and White 2013, p. 26). Again, stewards in the everyday performance of their jobs categorize names in a biased manner. Acknowledging the existence of this bias and its potential implications allows for the creation of workarounds.

How participants are seen by stewards—members of their quotidian/institutional audiences—depends on the distance from which they are being evaluated. As well, the discourses described in the previous section do undergird name-related interactions. In the case of loved ones who are invested in the well-being of participants, name changes are suggested in order to assist the participants in crossing over from outsider to insider, or to be differently (more beneficially) categorized. The participants’ supporters translate what they see as dominant culture’s readings of the participants’ names, in order to suggest suitable changes. This may benefit participants, as it circumvents exclusionary discourses. For people without personal connections to the participants, names stand in for the participants, and may be used to categorize and potentially
exclude them. Although recruiters do not likely approach their jobs with a purposefully biased view, their efforts to complete their tasks quickly, and without risk means that they may contribute to discriminatory hiring practices. It’s beneficial to understand that although our perspectives are useful in many ways, they have limits, and these tend to be limits that we can’t simply vanquish with good intentions. Goldin and Rouse’s (2000) study “Orchestrating Impartiality: The Impact of "Blind" Auditions on Female Musicians” demonstrates how making orchestral auditions blind—so the appearance of the musician is unknown—leads to a higher ratio of female hires. By drawing on Goldin and Rouse’s study, the recommendation made by Oreopoulos and Dechief (2011) following the Canadian résumé audits, is to anonymize resumes before evaluating them so that names cannot be used as a hiring consideration.

In the final section of this chapter on name conflicts, we examine the “devices” or infrastructures that embody the discourses described in the first section, and simultaneously assist stewards in carrying out their work. In this current section, a variety of investments between stewards and participants have been explored, and the relevance of, or even reliance on, devices or infrastructure (i.e., roll call, résumés) has been noted. The interplay of these elements is significant: an audience’s steward best sustains a discourse when working with an appropriate and finely tuned device. Yet discourses can be understood and circumvented by a steward if the steward is personally invested in the participant.

5.4 Devices: Infrastructural conflict

This final section examines name conflicts that are products of infrastructural limitations. The “devices” that mediate names through their collection, processing, storage and printing may also alter names. These forms, databases, identity cards, student lists, and even name tags and publications, are inherited or designed for specific audiences, and often reinforce each audiences’ view. Also, as kinds of broadly defined technologies, infrastructures offer their own affordances and boundaries (Bowker and Star, 2000). As we speak of audiences’ sight, we can think of infrastructures as shaping views, perhaps as windows of particular shapes, and even shades to block the windows altogether. In order to understand the significance of infrastructure, recall Jenkins’ proposal that identity must be not just asserted but also validated through being seen and recognized (2004, p. 19). Here, the limited views of particular infrastructures intercede to shape and determine the kinds of identities that can be validated.
In terms of validation, it is interesting to consider that names that are easily recognized tend to be those that go unremarked. As Bowker and Star explain, “however imbricated in our lives, [classifications and standards] are ordinarily invisible” (2000, p. 3). A name that is recognized and known is used easily during day-to-day interactions, but one that is less common requires further attention in order to be validated, less common names persistently receive more focus. It is this kind of attention and judgment that is the basis of name conflicts: categories “become more visible, especially when they breakdown or become objects of contention” (Bowker and Star 2000, p. 3). Picture a person passing without hesitation, through a turnstile with an easily validated name; whereas, for the individual whose name is unfamiliar, the turnstile won’t budge: questions are posed and someone is called for assistance. In general, name-based conflicts distress those whose names are read as atypical, for whom the infrastructure does not allow an easy pass. Passive validation is the goal: ease of entry indicates belonging.

Institutions establish infrastructure, and reflect the historical and current interests of their decision makers. According to Institutional Ethnography’s lexicon, the interaction of Law’s three functionaries are “ruling and dominating” the actions of people in “local settings” (Campbell and Gregor 2004, p. 36). Institutional ruling can take place even in routine, text-mediated ways such as completing a form. Once an individual’s information is submitted to an organization via a form, the institution knows her only in this way. The content of each of the form’s fields becomes the organization’s record and this information, and the sorting and categorization that comprise its processing, dominates any further interactions with the individual who completed the form (Campbell and Gregor, p. 40). Dorothy Smith (2005) describes this information capture and transformation as occurring through three general processes. First, the local and particular is transformed into generalizable forms, which can be recognized and accounted for within an institution (Smith, p. 186). Next, institutional realities override individual perspectives. And finally, the actual is translated into the institutional, so it can be acted upon as fits the institution (Smith, p. 186). How these processes impact individuals depends on the particular individual and institution. However, this generic means of processing individual identifiers such as names into standard formats, like three separate components, may be useful to an institution but it also creates a disturbing distance and transformation of many individuals’ rich identifying and individualizing attributes.
Although I read about Institutional Ethnography and Bowker and Star’s work on classification much later, it first occurred to me that name documentation tools reinforced limited perspectives when I was working at a public college in Western Canada; there, I was responsible for the registration of students into English as a Foreign Language courses. The team I supervised asked potential students to complete our department’s form for collecting personal information. Frequently students let us know that form labels like “Last Name” “First Name” “Middle Name” made little intuitive sense: to people with Chinese names (two first name components and no middle names, plus last name goes first) or Latin American names (two first names, two last names) who were new to English-speaking Canada, these forms were guessing games. Besides the forms, as stewards or “drilled people” my colleagues and I anticipated that most members of a family would share a last name, but we soon realized that although many international families had commonalities in terms of names, patterns were not so obvious.

From a research perspective, infrastructure is the functinary where friction, sticky points, and edges of the kind mentioned above are most easily located and discussed. Exact problems can be articulated, and if a structure causing a name conflict cannot be altered, then names may be pruned, filed down, smoothed for easier future passage. Reactions to these points of friction are the focus of the next chapter.

5.4.1 Infrastructure: Errors and misdocumentation

For any audience, there are challenges involved in correctly documenting less common names. At a college where I once worked, our data entry challenges were numerous; students made name correction requests quite frequently. Misspellings are far more common with unfamiliar names: as one example, data enterers tend to see common names in less familiar ones, often creating misspellings. Styles of handwriting also vary, and even though the team I supervised was of a variety of national origins, we regularly struggled to correctly input individuals’ names as we interpreted them. All of the components of these situations—forms, referrals, employees’ backgrounds, data enterers’ skills, actual names of students—added layers of challenges as they comprised, contributed to, and challenged the college’s information infrastructure. I had many meetings with the people who managed the college’s student information database, and over time, significant changes were made to our devices—the forms and databases we used. As people whose names are frequently marred, this study’s participants also describe frustration
with ongoing mis-documentation of names and other name-use oversights in their own workplaces:

Mbanga*: In my own department—this is a university—my colleagues still don’t know how to write my name or to pronounce it so... It is funny that you called to me at this time because just recently I had to email everyone to please learn how to write my name because they still don’t know how to write my name... …

There have been many situations where my name is misspelled even in the website of the department. These are official communications, so you have situations like that when if that happens once, okay, [it’s an] honest mistake.

But when that is happening for official communications from the chair of the department or the committee meetings that you are part of [trails off] …

Currently, working as a teacher, Tony continues to have his last name, Mendes [pronounced “Mends”], misspelled as Mendez.

Tony: You know, just on Tuesday I was registering for the school board where I just became an employee and even though they had my name written down electronically, or not really electronically, but as someone had transcribed it, my name had the “z.”

So, I think the reaction of people is to write this name with a “z” and then of course when the list came out I was the only person who—on that whole sheet!—needed a name correction.

I had to spell it in front of everyone.

Obviously someone typed it incorrectly, but they had the correct version already. I guess it's a human tendency to write things the way they sound. It’s frustrating sometimes.
Hanaa has purposefully altered her name to be less common, and that she has knowingly done this may be part of why she has a sense of humour about the mis-documentation of her name.

Hanaa: I noticed that that name [Hanaa] was very unusual. I mean, nobody ever got it right the first time around... A lot of mistakes happened. I mean, a lot.

When I was in government, at my last job, the misspelling of it was so common, that in the Ministry directory it was misspelled and I wasn’t aware of that until someone called and said “Hanaa, where are you? I’m trying to send you and email and I can’t find you in the directory.”

And sure enough, it was a misspelling. So, it’s not a very common name. And you do have to keep spelling it, and emphasizing it. …

It’s not an easy name! But it’s mine! [Laughs].

After mispronunciation and misspelling, the mis-documentation of names is the most significant conflict that participants describe. Clement (2011) designates this type of name alteration as an “identity impairment”, as it leaves an individual with compromised and unreliable identity documentation (p. 91). Because identity cards are key resources in terms of access to healthcare, travel, and processing paycheques and insurance claims, conflicts related to mis-documented names have the potential for real, physical consequences. Besides the stress of regular dealings with documents that are incorrect, there is also the feeling of documents not being in sync with how you identify yourself. Minyang* articulates how it feels when identification cards are not as they should be.

Diane: Is it stressful or worrisome to have some documents in each name?

Minyang*: It bugs me. It's like this little imperfection that's on you—the thing about you that's not exactly the way you want it to be—but I'm in the process of changing that. I don't stress about it because now that I have my legal name change certificate, if it
really bugs me, I just have to go and change it. I'll just wait for each of my cards to expire and then I'll get a new one. For other things, like bills, library cards, signing for contests, student cards—anything that I can control—it's always Minyang*.

The three most common ways that the participants’ identity cards are mis-documented are described in the following sections.

5.4.2 Infrastructure: Challenging characters

As all of us know from incorrectly entering passwords on websites, infrastructure, and its ability to validate, is based on subtle components that are often considered irrelevant until they affect us. Participants’ descriptions of their name conflicts might focus on just a dash or an apostrophe, but these are still essential components of names. Because these conflicts arise on a day-to-day basis, participants are frequently made to feel as though, through these particularly challenging characters in their names, they literally do not fit in when they use their original names.

Jose Abilio: Then there was another issue… on my application: I didn't put the hyphen in the middle—which was ridiculous—but I had to put the hyphen. So, I have a really long name with the hyphen and that was the first time I had an issue with not including Abilio or just to prove Abilio was a part of my name.

Even when an individual provides the same information each time, each institution processes it differently. In some institutions, components are not captured, or they are captured but not included on printed identity cards.

Lingh-Lingh*: The other thing that complicates my name is that I have a dash between the two Linghs* which can be confusing because sometimes it gets left out and then on some government documentations you can't have a dash in your name. My passport does [have the dash], but my license doesn't and I think my Aeroplan card doesn't. So when I try to book my flight online, the names don't match. There are little things like that that come with
having that special character in my name, too. So all these little things…

One of the reasons that de E’Teme* Mbanga* Ekwe*’s name is often mis-documented is because it contains an apostrophe.

Mbanga*: Oh yes, my cards… I will show you some [cards] where I couldn’t have an apostrophe, so I have to put some hyphens. And with some other cards I couldn’t… I have to create different ways. So, yes. They make me laugh. …

Besides these examples, other participants (i.e., Victor, Siveta*) mentioned losing diacritical marks; these concerns involve characters (e.g., hyphens, accents, apostrophes) that are considered by quotidian and institutional audiences to be less essential than a letter, although to the participants’ traditional audiences, the loss of a diacritical mark may create a strange word that makes no sense, or could even result in another name altogether. These characters can be seen as very small things, but for the affected participants, they actually make a significant difference both in terms of their names appearing correctly, and for ensuring their identity documents match.

5.4.3 Infrastructure: Space Constraints

Although name lengths vary in Canada, the standard lengths that have been built into much of the infrastructure (i.e., databases, forms, identity cards) do not allow for names as long as those of many people who migrate to Canada. Marika experienced space constraints not only during institutional interactions, but also professionally, as a writer.

Marika: The other thing that made a difference, too, was when I started getting writing published, I used Marika Morris.

[That was partly because] the graphic designer at the paper was complaining [that my name had] too many letters—not saying that I should change it, just that it was a challenge to fit into a column.
So I just started using Marika Morris, though my official name was still Kyriakidis.

Lingh-Lingh* has not shortened or altered her name and she continues to deal with documentation conflicts.

Lingh-Lingh*: I've had times when I filled out forms and then the first name won't fit in the box because it's too long, so then I ask myself, “Do I drop the second part?” That is usually what I do, or sometimes I'll cheat and squeeze it in anyway.

Mbanga* and Marika report similar challenges, although they see that infrastructure is being changed to adapt to longer names.

Diane: Do you ever run out of space when you are using forms?
Mbanga*: Sometimes and especially for credit cards… I had to shorten [my name for] some… [Form lengths] are changing though.

Marika: And I see now on forms that the spaces seem to be a little longer than they used to be, but when I was filling out those forms, like applications for university, often my last name [Kyriakidis] wouldn't fit. I think another thing that's changed is now there are more people with hyphenated names, so I think there's more accommodation. I remember filling out forms where there was only space until the “d” and the “is” wouldn't fit and that sort of thing.

Besides individual name components consisting of more letters and longer lengths than is typical, the number of components in the participants’ names also cause conflict.
5.4.4 Infrastructure: Name components

In Ontario, and federally, the standard “Canadian name” reflects the values and standards of long ago founders. To an institution in Ontario, depending on its particular infrastructure, a name appears in three windows: in order of importance these are Last Name, First Name and Middle Name. The Last Name can also be called Family Name and is generally assumed to indicate patriarchal heredity. The First Name is the most commonly used. The Middle Name is a further individualizing identifier, though not everyone has one: sometimes an initial is used instead; sometimes there simply is no middle name. Middle Names are not generally used in day-to-day interactions in Ontario.

In contrast, consider the standard construction of Chinese (Han) names: the Family Name comes first, then two First Names follow, and there are no Middle Names. Tian stopped using the second component of his first name because it was used irregularly and was frequently mispronounced, which lead to confusion. And besides the mispronunciation and unpleasant English denotation of Harold*’s original Chinese name, he also felt frustrated by his audiences’ use of just one of his first name components, which led to his frequent use of an English name, Harold*. Minyang* had similar experiences, with her name sometimes appearing on cards without the second first name component:

Minyang*: After a while I start having small, tiny problems. Not a big deal, but annoying. Some people think Min* is my first name and Yang* is my middle name. Other people hear that and think Min* is my first name and Yang* is my last name, so there are confusions like that.

In terms of surnames, the most significant of name components in Canada, both Tony and Marta had their surnames shifted when they emigrated from Portugal, in 1971 and 1974 respectively. In Tony’s family’s case this decision may have been made in order to fit in to the common name standard.

Tony: I was born in Portugal and their names are both maternal and paternal so have four parts: mine is José António Peneda Mendes. So if you say that in English [naming terms] it's given
name, mother's name, given name, father's name. Once we got to Canada, we dropped the maternal part so we’d have three names.

It is clear from Marta’s story that there was an infrastructural conflict that made her surname shift mandatory. In Portugal, surnames are not always directly inherited, so both Marta and her brother had their grandmother’s surname rather than their father’s.

Marta: My Dad came here first and in order to call us over, he couldn't call us over by our birth names, my brother and myself. He had to add [his last name] to our last names in order for us to be included in the immigration ticket to come or they wouldn't have allowed us to be called his children. So we had to get the birth certificates and everything to prove we were his kids and we started to be named Prisco*—in Canadian eyes—right from the beginning. But in Portugal, we were always known as Ferreiro*.

I knew my name was not what it was when I went to school. My Dad registered us and he was registering our whole name and then with Prisco* on the end. They were telling him that it had to be the same as the immigration papers.

He was telling them and showing my birth certificate, and they said, “No, no, it has to be the same.” So that's when I knew I had to start going by a different name.

It was very hard to adjust. I wasn't traumatized by it but it was, “Oh, I'm this person; I'm not who I've been.”

I was six and Marta Ferreiro* is who I've always been and now I add to Prisco* to the end of it. That's how it came to be.

Although the policy that required Marta’s surname change no longer exists, a more recent issue arose when Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) required people emigrating from India to Canada to formally add another component to their name, in order to differentiate between individuals with identical names who were applying to become Permanent Residents in Canada.
(CBC 2007). The issue is one of homonymy, which is caused by many people having the same name. CIC’s infrastructure was challenged by the religious practice of taking a specific name as an indicator of the Sikh faith: “Kaur” for women and “Singh” for men.21

To process name length and number of name components, the infrastructure’s name component windows have specific dimensions, but they vary in unspecified ways from institution to institution, and from output to output. As one example, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) produces the Permanent Resident Card that is issued to people as they initially immigrate to Canada, and it has length limits of fifteen characters for a First Name and twenty for a Last Name (See Appendix A). A Middle Name and a second Last Name must be included as part of one of these two windows. Any parts of a name that exceed these length limits are automatically truncated when the limits are met. People are encouraged to truncate their own names at natural junctures, rather than have them automatically cleaved; yet automatic severing does occur.

Apply for corrections if there is a mistake on your card

If there is a mistake or something is missing on your PR card, you can apply for a reissued PR card. Please note that there is limited space for your name on a PR card:

- first name: 15 letters or less
- last name: 20 letters or less

If your name on your PR card is shortened to the first 15 or 20 letters, this is not a mistake and it cannot be changed.

Figure 7: Personal Name Guidelines for Permanent Resident Card (Source: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/pr-card/apply-how.asp)

Although CIC also processes citizenship cards, the same length limits do not apply; rather, the focus of this form is to collect all versions of an individual’s name (See Appendix B).

21 In 2007, Jaspal Singh received a letter from The Canadian High Commission in New Delhi, India stating “the names Kaur and Singh do not qualify for the purpose of immigration to Canada.” Because the Last Name component of Jaspal Singh’s name, which is taken by Sikh men (and likewise Kaur is taken by Sikh women), is very common in Canada, immigration officers made Jaspal Singh’s immigration to Canada dependent on changing his name. He was given six months to submit his passport with his name changed. Singh’s wife forwarded the letter to CBC and due to public outcry, this policy was curtailed.
Christina* and Victor, who both immigrated in the past fifteen years (in 2002 and 2003, respectively), experienced component-altering shifts to their names when they received their Permanent Resident Cards. When Christina*’s received her Permanent Resident Card, her middle name component had been entirely removed.

Christina*: And because they dropped it on my Permanent Resident card it affects other cards such as my driver's license, health card, and all the other cards. When I deal with ministries, with public places, they always see my name like that, so I never have the opportunity to add my middle name.

The final example of an infrastructural name conflict is that of the documentation of Victor’s name on his Permanent Resident Card, a case that seems particularly egregious. Victor begins his story in this way.

My original Colombian name is Victor Raúl Blandón Vanegas.
And it's a first and middle name and a first and a second last name.
That's normal in Colombia to have two last names. The first one is from the father and the second one is from the mother…

In Colombia I go by Raúlito Blandón Vanegas. When I came to Canada, when my wife and I first applied for immigration, we filled out papers, and there was space for two last names.

When I received my visa to come as a resident, the second last name, Vanegas, had disappeared. So it just said Blandon, Victor Raul.

But that was okay. What caused me a problem was when I received my Permanent Resident Card, which I received this way… [shows card] last name Blandon, and then Victor Raul Van.

So it read as Victor Raul Van Blandon.

![Figure 9: Victor Blandon's Permanent Resident Card](image)

The way that the infrastructure (or “device”) automatically altered Victor’s name on his Permanent Resident Card changed how the ethnicity of his name might be read, in terms of the categorizing discourses. To Victor, “It sounded like a European, a Dutch name.” So then Victor had an unproductive interaction with a steward:

I called the government representative and asked them. I said, “This is not my name.”
And they said, “No, this is how the system works. Bye.” The person was not explaining or listening to what the problem was and it carried the problem up.

I arrived in 2003, and this was fixed in 2008 when I applied for citizenship, which took more time because I had to make an extra step to get my name changed. I tried to be consistent with using my two last names when I came, as much as I could, but in this case, for the Permanent Resident Card, I had to work on that problem for a long time.

Unfortunately for Victor, the device that marred his surname is part of a network; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, as the gatekeeper of migration, has a powerful role in terms of identity infrastructure, and once his name was established in this way on his Permanent Resident Card, it could not be changed for quite some time. The “drilled people” at CIC advised Victor to wait and amend his name when he applied for citizenship. But Victor needed to use his PRC repeatedly before completing three years of residence in Canada so that he was able to apply for citizenship. As one example, he had to request to have his education and experience as an engineer validated so he could find suitable work in Canada.

With the card from the Engineers of Ontario, I had a problem. Because when I joined the professional engineers, … when I applied for the license, I still had my permanent resident card. So my name appears like this: Victor Raul Van Blandon. It was recognized [that I was an engineer], but I was Victor Raul Van Blandon.

And I tried to change and tried to convince them, but I had to wait until I got my citizenship. I sent my citizenship card to them, and only then did they change it.

Using this mis-documented but vital identity card for three years caused Victor understandable discomfort.
Victor: That particular card bothered me a lot. I didn't want to see it.

*Diane: Why did it bother you, because it looked like a mistake, or because it looked like a whole different name, or...?*


Those are all different versions of me, but Victor Raul Van Blandon… That's not me. That was something that I just couldn't accept.

Victor’s experiences with his Permanent Resident Card (PRC) illustrate each level of structuring elements as they contribute to what Derrida calls “originary violence” (Bodenhorn and vom Bruck 2006, p. 214). At the device or infrastructure level, Victor’s name was automatically truncated when he completed forms to become a Permanent Resident in Canada. When he attempted to have this situation rectified, “drilled people” let him know that this was an outcome that could not be altered. And again, institutional stewards at the professional board for the Engineers of Ontario replicated his marred name from the PRC because they had to follow protocol. At the level of discourse, we can see categorization at work in that Victor’s ethnic identity is likely read or categorized differently because of how his name appears on the PRC: rather than Colombian, he appears to be perhaps Dutch or Belgian. The marred version of his name makes Victor uncomfortable—he later exerted significant effort to have it corrected. That Victor’s original name cannot be represented in Canada as it existed before immigration is a blow. And that instead of its representation in any of the pruned and altered forms that Victor is comfortable with, this version persisted to identify him for five years. That it was necessary for Victor’s identity to be impaired for this duration is alienating; it sends a strong message that this institutional audience is unconcerned with how Victor feels about his identity in Canada.
5.5 Functionaries and responsibility

As I write this, in 2014, database technologies have been advanced to such a degree that technology is not what limits how people who migrate to Canada can be formally identified. In comparison to “old hierarchical databases”, infrastructure can currently “incorporate object-oriented views of data whereby different attributes can be selected and combined on the fly for different purposes” (Bowker and Star, p. 292). The technology exists to design infrastructure that represent people’s names with as many fields, characters, diacritical marks and nuances as exist, quite likely. But it is this level of infrastructure—the device functionary—that is often made responsible for documentation issues. Tangible, non-human components in these conflicts are most easily pointed to as the problem: the teacher finds fault with the attendance list, the service worker at CIC points the form or database, the recruiter has only the résumé to work from. As Smith explains, the conversion of information into institutional ways of using data is an act of ruling (2005, p. 32). The “medium of an information system is not just wires and plugs, bits and bytes, but also conventions of representation” (Bowker and Star 2000, p. 292), so it is during this period of moving data into an infrastructure that the tensions between the three audiences’ conventions is most palpable, but the data enterer is not the participant, with a perspective of each of their audiences. Rather, the data enterers, who working with their tools, “shape and squeeze out what can be known and collected” are trained by the key discourses of the institutional audience (Star 2010, p. 607). The effects of these tensions, and the data enterers’ efforts, are not apparent until a printed version of the participants’ identity is produced. And only then, as happened for Victor Blandon, it is possible to see how the institutional audience sees.

Although the infrastructure is not solely responsible—rather its designers, related policy makers, quotidian and institutional audience members more broadly, and the othering discourses that we foster and maintain, all function interdependently—the current infrastructure does contribute to limiting perspectives. Having already processed, compressed, and modified so many names with these systems means that significant, irreperable alterations have been made. There are also longer term effects—once a system is in place, it is difficult to alter or correct; in fact, older infrastructure often serves as a base upon which newer infrastructure is established (Star and Ruhleder, 1996). As long as we continue to use this infrastructure that strips away diacritical marks, shortens components, and forces names with components other than three into the English Canadian standards, then we don’t need to contend with, and we have far fewer
opportunities to come to understand, how names work in other countries, or how a traditional audience sees its members. Maintaining this infrastructure ensures that we will never see and interact with many names in their original forms, from even the countries with whom we share an alphabet. And what a shortsighted view we’re left with: besides its history and ease for some, what are the merits of our current strategies?

5.6 Conclusion

Chapter 5 has introduced the first stage of the name-action arc and has demonstrated the many kinds of identity challenges participants face. It is this chapter that delves most deeply into challenges related to name legislation, policy and data processes; here we see that the functionaries of the institutional audiences can create significant challenges for people who have immigrated in terms of settlement processes and their feelings about their identity within Canada. Indeed the name conflicts experienced by many of the participants (e.g., Alfie, Victor, Jagdeep*, Hanaa, Siveta, Mbanga*, Jehad, Christine*, Lina*, Zhi, Minyang*, and more) require significant emotional and time-intensive labour to remedy the “identity impairments” that have occurred (Clement, 2010). Identity labour is comprised of challenges that arise at all three levels of functionaries. Discourse challenges reflect the expectation that participants’ names will match existing norms; when they do not, participants are categorized as “immigrant” or “other”, rather than along an identity continuum that would better reflect their individual positions. Institutional categories, including those found on the national census, contribute to this kind of othering and also reflect how constructed and adhoc categories tend to be—taken as an example, national census questionnaires clearly reflect dominant culture’s views and goals. Stewards or “drilled people” enact the discourses common within their audiences during interactions with participants. Frequently, the devices or infrastructure of these audiences support or make material the discourses at work. In some cases these material outputs balk at or even alter participants names on identity documents—a situation that can be hard to rectify given the effectiveness of these interdependent functionaries. In Law’s words,

Power may be seen as the effect of the creation of a network of mobile, durable, yet tractable agents that have been sent out in one-another’s company. A text by itself will be ignored. A person will be snubbed. A device will rust. But if the three are put together, it
may become … more difficult to ignore them. Under the right circumstances, the effect is that of power (1986b, p. 34)

Although it may seem from this conclusion that name conflicts are based on invasive, immovable and frequently invisible infrastructure, the next chapter tells the story of the second stage of the name-action arc: the actions participants take in response to these name conflicts. Chapter 6 describes another aspect of the participants’ identity labour as it responds to the question of how participants are agents in relation to the structures that undergird these name conflicts.
Chapter 6

6 Name (Re)Actions

6.1 Overview

In the previous chapter, an important component of this dissertation’s thesis was established: the changes participants make to their names are borne out of the name conflicts they experience—none of the participants have chosen to use their names differently out of whimsy or desire. Rather, real conflicts and difficult situations—even public or document-based re-namings—are what drive participants to alter the use of their names. Few name conflicts are direct triggers of name changes, but some are (i.e., cases where teachers create a new version of a student’s name and the student continues to be known in this way throughout adulthood). Instead, most participants explain that over time repeated, troublesome questions, series of uncomfortable circumstances, and conflicted feelings about how best to identify themselves in different groups have led them to make a decision about how their names should be altered.

Figure 10: (Re)Actions, the second mode of the identity labour trajectory

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22 These emotions may have guided the choice of a new name in a few cases, but they were not the initial driver of the name change.
This current chapter examines the second mode of the name trajectory: after experiencing name conflicts, how does the participant respond? The majority of interview data presented in this chapter is in response to the first interview question, “The story of the name.” The prompts for this question are:

How was your name chosen when you were born?

What does your name mean in the country/ies that you have lived in previously? How has migration to Canada created challenges for using your name as you were used to?

Describe any turning points, and how you have come to have your current name.

How participants respond to the name challenges they face demonstrates types of agency in relation to the existing structures that undergird name conflicts. These reactions are understood as agentive, and participants’ recognition of their multiple audiences adds another layer to the analytical lens: the significance of these audiences increases the complexity of understanding name conflicts and participants’ reactions in terms of structure and agency. Through name conflicts, social power is imposed from multiple audiences, and whatever the name-related action taken by a participant, there will likely be a response from each of their audiences: quotidian, institutional and traditional. For example, Harold*’s decision to maintain his original family name while informally using an English name rather than his Chinese first names, is one that disappointed his parents, a key part of his traditional audience. But the response from his quotidian audience has been the diminishment of name conflicts: Harold*’s English name works well in his work environment—better than his original name. In this case, Harold*’s action of taking an English name does not challenge—and perhaps even fortifies—Ontario’s current name-focused infrastructures. Meanwhile, to his parents and diaspora, it may seem that Harold*’s action, based on his experience in North America, erodes traditional Chinese naming structures and values. Harold*’s institutional audience is likely somewhat challenged by his unofficial use of an English name—however, this practice is so common, that over time forms
created to collect personal information have been adapted to acknowledge and capture this type of name use, with categories such as “Preferred Name”.

6.1.1 Name challenges as structural, name changes as agentive

Thus far, name conflicts have been considered (as above, in Harold’s case) as kinds of hegemonic structures that challenge and constrain participants’ name use. Described in terms of Law’s model, these conflicts are understood as interdependent functionaries: discourses guide and foster the actions of stewards, and then these discourses and actions are reproduced in and potentially further enhanced by the information infrastructure (i.e., “devices”) (1986a, 234-5). Stewards guide name use by following the rules of their workplaces, and by reading, saying, or questioning people’s names as seems most obvious, comfortable or natural to themselves and others of similar cultural backgrounds and training. The structures are described in detail in the previous chapter, and here we consider participants’ reactions to these uses of their names as agentive in that they can either bolster or erode the name structures that shape each of their audiences’ perspectives and expectations. Some participants choose to purposefully challenge structures that privilege the most common, or English, of names. Others decide to preserve their original names in order to retain the traditions and structures of their traditional audience, with less consideration given to the implications this may have when interacting with a quotidian audience. Each of these decisions reflects a choice of which audience’s norms are most desired, and for many participants, these choices are made with ambivalence and may shift over time and across circumstances.

6.1.2 Names as “devices”

In addition to considering name changes in terms of structure and agency, this chapter continues with Law’s framework, and repositions these three functionaries (i.e., discourses, devices and stewards) for a shift in analytic perspective. So far, Law’s framework has been engaged initially to understand the complexity of each of the participants’ audiences and second, to examine the types of name conflicts experienced by participants. In this current chapter, we consider how the three functionaries work at an individual level, for each participant. The participant is motivated

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23 As one example, in 2013, McGill University expanded its Preferred First Name Procedure so that students’ identity documents, class lists, unofficial transcripts and other documents will show their Preferred First Names in lieu of their legal first names (McDevitt, 2013).
by, and acts at these levels: first, as a steward trained or “drilled” by the social and cultural norms of the three audiences in which they function; second, the impetus for their training or enculturation comes from the often-conflicting discourses of each of their audiences. And perhaps the most provocative element of this perspective shift is that the “device” functionary is understood here as the participants’ name.

What does it mean to understand a personal name as a kind of device, a tool that can be redesigned for greater utility, or particular undertakings? Consider how the participant establishes and strategically uses a name to accomplish certain objectives. As a steward, the participant is more effective—the route of their vessel less turbulent—once their name/device is designed, created, tested, polished. If the participants’ circumstances change, the device may need to be reconfigured, a different one used, etc. Some participants have a full tool belt of options, while others maintain just one trusty name device. The use of a particular device aids the participant in bolstering selected audiences and discourses and/or diminishing others. As a unit, the caravel, the agent, is most effective when all three levels are functioning interdependently, harmoniously, comfortably: sometimes the agent’s goal is movement toward particular economic or social goals, while at other times the goal is to remain buoyant with the least amount of effort. Within the context of multiple audiences, however, it is sometimes challenging for participants to determine the best course to follow, and how their names should be.

6.1.3 Validation as a goal

Besides understanding the personal name as having a particular and significant purpose as a level of functionary, this chapter maintains the significance of validation as a goal and outcome of a name shift. As an example, Harold*’s current name is more effective with his quotidian audience because of the ease of its validation. When Harold* identified himself with his original name, it was misunderstood, misspelled, and people frequently used only one of his two first-name components. Further, in English, the connotation of each of Harold*’s original name components is meaningful, and the three taken together sound strange and “not very pleasant,” as Harold* puts it. Using his original name, initially, it was difficult for Harold*’s quotidian audience to validate his identity in a way that was productive or even comfortable for Harold*. But currently, in Jenkins’ terms, the identity that Harold* asserts is easily validated within his quotidian audience (2004, p.19). This validation occurs because “Harold*” is a common enough name that
people recognize and understand it immediately. “Harold*” is appropriately gendered and distinct, yet not incompatible with Harold*’s other identity components.

The name conflicts experienced by participants are key to their drilling or training. Each occasion where participants attempt to “pass”—with any of their audiences—the result may be a series of questions, requests for clarification, or other efforts toward their categorization or social location. In these ways, participants receive the equivalent of a red light, a buzzer sounding to indicate and draw attention to their lack of belonging. This feedback motivates shifts of different sorts: how to avoid scrutiny, how to engage and challenge categorizing questions, how to simply avoid these encounters without too much effort or change?

6.2 Name actions as identity labour

My analysis of the interviews demonstrates that participants react to name conflicts with one or both of “contextualizing” or “transformative” name actions. Contextual talk includes using introductory scripts and repeated explanations of ones name; transformation refers to actual shifts and adjustments (official or unofficial) to the ways that names are spoken and written. In many cases, both of these activities take place, although several participants have taken transformative action to avoid regular contextualizing activities and some participants have decided to maintain their original name and continue with contextualizing explanations. When enacted for a given audience, each of these types of activities—the thoughtful positioning of one’s names for it to be relevant and memorable, as well as the careful design of a name to fit with and be appropriately pronounced—involves a substantial amount of effort and should be understood as part of the participants’ identity labour.

6.3 “Contextualizing” vs. “Transformative” name actions

The first type of identity labour that is described here is the work of contextualizing name activity, or self-introduction, that is undertaken by participants as they use their names in varied contexts. Contextualizing name activity includes participants’ day-to-day talk about their names in order to make their names memorable, correctly pronounced and written, or just to explain their names when their audiences have questions. “Contextualizing” identity labour is theorized in this section in two ways: Erving Goffman (1959) describes self-presentation as a common, performative activity that every member of society enacts in our day-to-day lives, and Bowker
and Star (2000) describe “categorical work” as “the tremendously costly and brilliantly artful juggling” of “multiple demands-audiences-contingencies” (p. 309). The name explanations offered by participants are examined through Goffman’s lens of performance and within Bowker and Star’s definition of categorical work, but the second type of name-related identity labour examined here—name alterations, and how to understand the function of names in these circumstances—requires further theorization. To better understand the function of the names as they are harnessed during name shifts (as well as the refusal to change one’s name) Slavoj Žižek’s examination of Saul Kripke’s “rigid designator” is considered, as is Judith Butler’s critique of Žižek’s analysis of names. Finally, we return to Law’s framework, focusing on the “device” functionary, to examine names as a kind of technology that can be designed for particular functions.

6.3.1 Introductions: Performances about Names

The interviews began with my asking each participant to tell me the story of their names. This often included an explanation of how the participants’ parents chose their names, as well as the more common mispronunciation challenges that the participants experience. Participants also shared how they introduce themselves: many have developed specific scripts or techniques that make their names memorable to people they meet. A few describe these interactions in positive terms, as “a way of initiating genuine social interaction” (Jehad). Lina* explains her introduction this way:

Now I have a convincing script so I don't have to take ten minutes to explain. The other thing is, it works as an ice-breaker. … It's not a bad experience; it's just a part of my life.

Jaspreeta* explains that while she was growing up she was the “one person of colour in the room with the one ethnic name” and that her name was always mispronounced by new teachers at the beginning of a school year. Currently, her identity performance privileges clear introductions:

I think that introductions are important. … I always shake hands and say my name. … But, I found that this helps with the name situation: saying it clearly and hearing it. You might forget and it's
fine, but at least you've heard it once. … Every time I meet someone, I do a formal hello and introductions, so they know.

Another participant, Lingh-Lingh*, continues to find introductions challenging:

In a meeting when there's someone new, and we are introducing ourselves around the table, it's always uncomfortable. I always get stressed—not stressed, but where my heart beats a little faster, just before I have to say my name. Then I always do the debate: Do I say my first name and last name? Do I just say my first name, or do I say my formal first name?

Ronit sees people’s inquiries during introductions as an information-seeking tactic to which she is obliged to respond. So she began explaining herself in this way:

Ronit: I remember when I was little, not ever being embarrassed because of my name, but hating the fact that I had to explain. It's not Jane Smith. Then Rasimov* is my last name. [They would ask] “What is that? How is that?” [And] I would find that so alarming. I would say, “Do you know Isaac Asimov? It's the same. Add an ‘R’ to it.” I would constantly have to explain both names.

In his introductions, Tony also makes a reference to a common term, this one a verb:

Tony Mendes: They say, “How do you say your name?” I say, “It’s Mends, like the verb ‘to mend’, mend the trousers.” And then, they’ll spell it M-E-N-D-S.

In fact, frustration over this common misconception that Mendes should be pronounced in the same was as the Spanish-based surname “Mendez”, led Tony to further communicative action:

Tony: There was one time when I was about seventeen or eighteen that I wrote to the Toronto Star, to the “Letters to the Editor” and they published it. It was about the José [JOsay with Portuguese pronunciation] versus José [HOsay with Spanish pronunciation]
thing. I said, if you can pronounce a name, pronounce it, or get the
culture correct.

Lingh-Lingh ensures that people can see her written name so they’ll be more likely to spell it
correctly:

Lingh-Lingh: But that's always challenging, to get someone to
spell my name correctly on things. The reporter from the
newspaper interviewed me and my colleague. [My colleague’s] name is Sherry, which is pretty easy. When it came to me, I said
“It's probably easier for me to give you a business card” because
then I don't go through all of that. Not only is my name different,
but it's pronounced different from the way it's spelled, at least in
the way English pronunciation would go.

The effort participants make to interpret their names to their audiences through explanations and
mnemonic devices is a kind of identity labour; a thoughtful, effort-filled interpretation for a particular audience, or category, a maintenance of what Bowker and Star call the “borderlands” (2000, p. 309). Each time a participant is introduced there are cues that suggest to them how their name should be presented: Who is introducing me? Does the person I’m being introduced to appear to be from my cultural background? Is it likely that I will never see this person again? Name-related categorical work is significant, in part, because it is over-looked by those who don't need to do this labour; category members tend not to engage or see the work that is part of maintaining a standing in multiple categories. Category work is “almost necessarily invisible from the point of view of any single community of practice” (Bowker and Star, p. 309). If our names fit in the standard form lengths and are intuitively pronounceable by colleagues in our communities of practice, then we cannot really understand the challenge of having a name that does not fit and is always mispronounced. Indeed, “what white [person] really sees the work of self-articulation of the black [person] who is juggling multiple demands-audiences-contingencies?” ask Bowker and Star (p. 309, drawing from Collins 1986, p. 26). This ignorance is not purposeful, but rather a lack of that experience. Chang describes learning how to do name-related category work for his quotidian audience: when he arrived in Ontario, he had no idea how Canadians would read or pronounce his name. He was prepared to use an English name because
he had been called Tim when he took English classes in China. In an Ontario high school, however, a teacher encouraged him to use his given name, which he now does, with this script:

I went back to Chang and I feel like people have no trouble remembering it or pronouncing it, but at first when I introduce it there is always a bit of trouble. I say my name is Chang and they'll say Ching, Chung, Jing, Shun, or whatever. When I say “Chang” and spell it “C-H-A-N-G,” they say “Oh, okay…”

Goffman’s model of the dramaturgical scene as self-presentation suggests that the participant’s labour is a kind of performance, one which Siveta* describes as tiring and repetitious:

When you deal with something on a daily basis, it causes a problem and can be frustrating. … You are not necessarily meeting the same faces. So, to go through everything with them, it's a one-time event [for them]. They hear the explanation, they are happy, they learn how to say it, and they're done. For me it's a “déjà vu” every single day, five times a day. … It was tiring.

More than a rehearsed, tightly scripted performance to passive spectators, participants in the mode of introducing themselves are generally engaged, alive in the moment, aware of their audience, and how to fine-tune for each: there is no “fourth wall.”24 Employing Goffman’s dramaturgical metaphor model offers particular insights. One of these is “impression management” which provides a distinction between what is “given” or performed (what is stated verbally, as an “official discourse”) and what is “given off” or read from the performance (what is communicated indirectly). How Jagdeep* has chosen to introduce herself includes elements of the given and the given off:

I'll say “My name is Jag*, like the car”, because they'll say “Jane, Jack?”

As Jagdeep* links her name to the luxury car, the Jag, or Jaguar, she “gives off” that she is bicultural; she can and wants to guide her quotidian contacts, at least those from outside of her

24 A term coined by Denis Diderot to describe the “wall” between a theatrical performance and its audience.
traditional audience, to help them remember her name. Further she has connected herself to a symbol of wealth and power. Christina* does something similar:

I don't know if you know the car brand Porsche, (pronounced PORSHuh) but there is an “e” at the end, so the English way is to say it as one syllable, “porsch” but it is actually Porsche (pronounced PORSHuh), so my name is the same, Christine*, (pronounced Christina*) yet it is an “e” at the end, not an “a.”

Another of Goffman’s concepts that could be applied to these introduction scenarios is that of “idealization,” the approach of training ourselves from the outside inward. He suggests that performance tends to “highlight the common official values of the society in which it occurs” (p. 35). Goffman quotes Santayana who suggests the socialization process not only transfigures, it fixes. As a way of illustrating how this repetitive introduction for a quotidian audience can indeed highlight, or even alter one’s view of themselves, Jagdeep* articulates the loss she feels because she has abbreviated her name for introductions:

Jagdeep*: I feel like the last, maybe seven years, I have been losing part of my identity because I'm only giving part of my name, and it's an inanimate object. … I'm losing a lot of my own identity by abbreviating my name.

I had a problem when I was a TA the professor put just “Jag*” down. I thought, “Okay, I'm losing something.”

Diane: What do you feel like you are losing? What is not represented?

Jagdeep*: The ethnic, cultural significance or religious meaning of the word. I feel that all disappears when it is Anglicized to suit the mainstream and to fit the educator's way to pronounce my name.

Goffman’s concept of idealization and Jagdeep*’s description of her own experiences aligns with the corporeal performativity described in Judith Butler’s performative theory of names in the next section. Goffman does deal specifically with names, under the subheading of “Misrepresentation.” He writes: “It is felt to be all right for immigrants to impersonate native Americans in dress and in patterns of decorum, but it is still a doubtful matter to Americanize
one’s name or one’s nose” (p. 61). In the present, this reads as insensitive and potentially anti-Semitic, but in 1957 Goffman’s distinction between a recognized “immigrant” and a longer-settled American was, perhaps a more accepted one. The act of migration meant that an individual was categorized as a migrant, a person who had come from elsewhere, and that they could never really be in the category of “American.” These categories of immigrant and American are reflected in terms of Evelyn’s dissatisfaction with being referred to as an immigrant for much of her life (as described in the previous chapter). Even though Canada’s political leaders, most of who have not themselves migrated, frequently draw on the trope of Canada as a “nation of immigrants” (Canada, 2010), the distinct categories of “immigrant” and “Canadian” persist. And the role of names in these categories’ maintenance is significant. Indeed, Goffman’s suggestion that people who have migrated misrepresent themselves if they change their name to a more common American name only echoed an American law of the same era. Indeed, “at least until the sixties, there were instances where some judges perceived a public interest in requiring individuals to retain surnames indicative of ethnic origin. Clearly, the petitioners saw conformity with the dominant group as a social and economic advantage” (Scassa 1996, p. 172). Simultaneously, in Canada, legal name changes had to be heard before a judge and petitions were sometimes denied to stop petitioners from “concealing their ethnic identity” (Scassa, p. 173). In the less-distant past name shift activities, the focus of this chapter, were considered a form of misrepresentation. How names function in terms of maintaining or removing a distinction between the categories of “immigrant” and “Canadian” requires exploration. These categories, as well as the concept of validation, will be discussed further as the range of name shift activities the participants have undertaken is detailed in the next section.

6.3.2 Name shifts: Designing Names to Perform

A significant portion of my conversations with the study’s participants involved my learning how their names have shifted, most frequently through their own design, for their names to

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25 This perception of name shifts as a form of misrepresentation is one that lingers to a limited degree. During this study’s interviews it was not uncommon to hear a participant list the several ways that they had shifted their names informally, but next explain that they had not changed their names. (As was explained earlier, this is part of my reasoning for distinguishing between name use, name changes, and name shifts or alterations.) A few participants joked to me that they had done nothing illicit that caused them to change their names. As previously noted, only three of this study’s participants have legally altered their names, while all but two of the remaining nineteen have used at least one alternate version of their names at different times or locations. In Ontario the activity of name shifting, whether formal or informal, is alive and well, and when undertaken within immigration circumstances it is not generally understood as a type of misrepresentation.
achieve desired effects. The participants’ desires are not unanimously shared, nor do they remain constant throughout individual participants’ time spent living in Ontario. But, the potential of participants’ names, what can be done with them, and what most participants have opted to do with their names through tweaks and alterations, however minute and informal or substantial and formal, is well-understood by each: participants engage their names as devices in order to have increased control during name-related interactions. Rather than continuing to experience challenging introductions, or to have strangers assume inaccurate or undesired aspects of their identities, participants harness their names and essentially redesign them for better effect. In terms of Law’s framework, participants, as stewards who are knowledgeable in the discourses of Ontario society (i.e., the frequently-conflicting discourses of each of their audiences), use the “device” functionary, their name, to aid rather than hinder efforts toward their individual objectives, including their goals of gaining employment and feeling comfortable in Ontario.

6.3.2.1 Names as “rigid designators” (Kripke)

But what is this power within names that participants recognize and make use of? What do names do? How do names work? The power inherent in names—explicitly, their function in current day Ontario—can be better understood within the frameworks that were put into discussion by Žižek (1989) and Butler (1993). The discussion begins with Saul Kripke’s groundbreaking argument that a name is a “rigid designator” ( Naming and Necessity, 1980). Slavoj Žižek (1989) adds to this with his description of the “phantasmatic promise” of names, and Judith Butler (1993) then refutes Žižek’s view by arguing for a performative theory of names. Operationalizing these three perspectives by considering the participants’ audiences, name challenges, and name shifts produces salient tensions: How is Kripke’s concept of “rigid designation” challenged by transnational practices and cultural pluralism? How can Žižek’s “radical contingency of naming” apply to mispronunciations and to participants making official or unofficial name shifts? And finally, how might Butler’s argument that the power of names is performative—that names constitute what they enunciate—be made practical and differently meaningful when illustrated by the participants’ experiences?

Kripke describes names as “rigid designators” that identify individuals in “all possible worlds”: the name is linked to the individual not through an essential or descriptivist perspective such that the name actually describes what the individual is (i.e. every name bears a certain meaning), but
rather through the repetitive calling of a person by their name until their community comes to know them by this word, their given name. Kripke’s theory of naming refutes descriptivist theories of names (from Frege and Russell), and suggests that a referent is fixed—that a name becomes a rigid designator of a person—through the name being continually reproduced in discourse.

Someone, let’s say, a baby, is born; his parents call him by a certain name. They talk about him to their friends. Other people meet him. Through various sorts of talk the name is spread from link to link as if by a chain. … a chain of communication has been established, by virtue of his membership in a community which passed the name on from link to link, not by a ceremony that he makes in private in his study… (1980, p. 91)

Kripke notes the significance of baptismal naming, and though does not refer to J. L. Austin’s performative sentences (How To Do Things With Words, 1962), acknowledges the significance of an initial christening. But in Kripke’s anti-descriptivist view, “it is not how the speaker thinks he got the reference, but the actual chain of communication, which is relevant” (p. 93). With a perspective that is focused on naming, but quite similar to that of Jenkins’ view of identity as requiring the validation of others, Kripke writes, “In general our reference depends not just on what we think ourselves, but on other people in the community, the history of how the name reached one…. It is by following such a history that one gets to the reference” (p. 95). He continues: “when a proper name is passed from link to link, the way the reference of the name is fixed is of little importance to us. It matters not at all that different speakers may fix the reference of the name in different ways, provided that they give it the same referent” (p. 139).

What Kripke describes as the fixing of the referent is a way of understanding the name challenges described by participants. It should be made clear that like Goffman, Kripke is writing in earlier, though more recent times—1980—before immigration had created the demographic

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26 It is appealing here to invoke this dissertation’s three-audience framework, in order to demonstrate simultaneously existing worlds in which no common name identifies the same individual. But, Kripke urges readers to think of “all possible worlds” not as “a distant country… viewed through a telescope” (p. 44) but rather as situations logically stipulated through carefully crafted sentences or what modal-logic philosophers call “modal talk” (p. 15). To benefit the arguments of this dissertation, understanding Kripke’s theory of names requires focus on the rigid designator component rather than the possible worlds context.
diversity that now exists in North America. Because the participants have left their original communities, they are again beginning this chain of communication—through each social and bureaucratic interaction, and they are initiating links that become established through discourse each time their name is spoken, heard, and linked back to them. A challenge faced by participants is that using the same referent in each interaction is not always an option. The referent carries more or less meaning depending on the particular audience, and sometimes the referent is altered or mispronounced: for some audiences, names are immediately understood as rigid designators, but for others, who do not understand the name, or mispronounce it, the name does not come to function as a rigid designator. As described in the example of the résumé audit (Oreopoulos and Dechief, 2011), unfamiliar names may remain unspoken, and become disqualified, sitting unlinked.

6.3.2.2 The “radical contingency of naming” (Žižek)

As we begin looking at how Kripke’s modal logic theory of names is taken up by Žižek and Butler, it is important to note that Kripke has created a theory of proper names, while the latter theorists consider names as one of several moves within their broader work on ideology and performativity, respectively. As Žižek examines identity and its signifiers, he responds to Kripke’s work on rigid designators by declaring that both descriptivism (what Kripke is reacting to) and anti-descriptivism (where Kripke has positioned his theory) “miss the same crucial point” which is the “radical contingency of naming” (1989, p.101). To explain how “the radical contingency of naming” works, Žižek’s draws on Lacan’s “point de capiton” or “nodal point”: “a knot of meanings” that he compares to an upholstered button on a sofa (p.101). The “quilting” of the nodal point takes place when those signified by a particular name behave in particular ways because they are signified as such: when Žižek behaves as Žižek because he is called Žižek, then quilting is happening (p. 106). And we can understand this in our own lives with professional titles—a professor may behave a little more professionally, may take their writing and teaching more seriously when they are called professor, as they feel themselves being professor. Why not also with a name? In this way, that maxim of “the name makes the man” is conferred. When one is named, by one’s parents, or by self-design, a reference that can be differentiated and categorized is established, and as this differencing and categorizing occurs, our responses, our interactions related to our names, are the effects of the radical contingency of naming. In terms of the implications of validation—of participants being categorized as other, or even overlooked,
because of their names—Žižek’s work is significant. Participants are made to feel (at times) that they are other, because of how they—through their names—are treated.

The key difference Žižek sees between the “rigid designator” and the “point de capiton”—the latter is his strategy for illustrating radical contingency—is that the “point de capiton… implies an irreducible gap between the Real and modes of its symbolization” (p. 107). As Žižek puts it, never do the “circumstances begin to speak for themselves”; never does language manage to capture the real object in its entirety (p. 107). Žižek contrasts the function of the radical contingency of naming with the function of the rigid designator—the latter is established as an indexical reference: a name established through repetitive, communal use points confidently to a specific person. The radical contingency of naming suggests that there exists a space or tension between physically existing bodies and the names they are given. This gap is potential: energy to harness, a space that is not yet owned, perhaps a site to “promote new forms of subjectivities” as Foucault suggests (2000, p. 336).

6.3.2.3 A performative theory of names (Butler)

Butler brings another theory to this discussion, initially by establishing the difference between how names are positioned as signifiers: Kripke does this representationally and Žižek, performatively. Žižek “argues that the name does not refer to a pregiven object; Laclau concludes that this non-referentiality implies ‘the discursive construction of the object itself.’ ” (Butler, p. 210). Butler sees Kripke’s theory of names as rigid designators as one of “performatives operat[ing] rigidly, that is, to constitute that which they enunciate regardless of circumstance” which means that “names constitute a functional essentialism at the level of language” (p. 211). Žižek’s use of both the “rigid designator” and Lacan’s “point de capiton” as “stable unifying structures” has Butler asking if Žižek offers “the kind of variation and rearticulation required for an anti-essentialist radical democratic project” (1993, p. 211).

Butler returns to Kripke’s theory and offers a critical reading of the patriarchal inheritance of names, as well as the Christian view of the original baptism by Adam. Her critique raises

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27 The term “radical contingency of naming” also speaks to the impossibility of ever having a name that can truly articulate all that comprises an individual. Our histories, our dynamism, and our varied circumstances of social location—these are all aspects that our names can never quite capture. Names will always fail us when used representationally.
questions about the homogeneity of the composition of an audience, and its relationship to the participant: how does that audience understand a particular name? She suggests that “every language user must learn the right intention from a previous language user, and it is only on the presumption that right intention is rightly passed along this chain that the name continues to function as rigid designator” (p. 213). For the purposes of this dissertation, it is important to ask what an audience is likely to associate with a name it has never heard. Can a name transplanted from another culture still function as a rigid designator? How can an audience validate a name it has no links with, and how does someone with an unfamiliar name become accepted as a member of an audience?

As is relevant to this discussion of names as devices, in Butler’s interpretation of Žižek’s argument for the “phantasmatic promise” of names, Butler creates a significant differentiation between 1) a performative theory of names and 2) Kripke’s theory of rigid designation. Rigid designation sees names as having a transparent indexical function—the referent is fixed through the act of “primal baptism,” not by a function of the actual name, but rather the community’s role in validating and sharing a particular name. Here, the role of the community is much more significant than the function of the name. This makes sense in terms of a traditional audience still finding a participant’s original name meaningful, but other audiences having no sense of the meaningful links to the original designation of the name. Perhaps new kinds of primal baptism occur when an unfamiliar name is encountered—this may explain the quotidian audience’s impulse toward creating nicknames for participants (e.g., nicknaming was noted by both Victor and Christine*).

Meanwhile, a performative theory of names sees names as “not merely refer[ing to], but act[ing] in some way to constitute that which it enunciates” (Butler 1993, p. 217). Performativity sees the name as hard at work: “the ‘referent’ of a performative is a kind of action which the performative itself calls for and participates in” (Butler, p. 217). A key contrast is that rigid designation positions a name as a passive indexical reference established through the shared discourse of a community, so that the role of the community, particularly a homogenous one, is privileged. If we extend or hypothesize Kripke’s theory of rigid designation to make sense of the perceptions of recruiters and managers in the résumé audits discussed previously, we see that the names on résumés that have links to the recruiters are more likely to be selected. From the recruiter’s perspective, if the recruiter was not part of the “actual chain of communication”
linking the applicant to their name, then the applicant’s name is not meaningful, or perhaps means something undesirable (Kripke 1980, p. 93). In that case, it is easy to move the applicant’s résumé to a category where it will not be revisited.

The performative theory of names might interpret this same interaction, a recruiter setting aside the résumé of someone whose name is unfamiliar, as an interaction that changes the name bearer in some way. That no opportunity is offered, that validation is not given, surely has some implication, especially over time. Here a name has failed to perform adequately to impress the recruiter. Would a different name have performed more effectively for the recruiter and the name bearer? According to the résumé audit, this is quite likely, yes. Participants’ understandings of names as dynamic, as having particular powers in specific settings or with certain audiences, seems to comprehend names as performative. It is also possible that participants understand their audiences as using names in a more Kripkean sense. For many audience members, the participants’ name means too little as a referent: the individuals’ age and gender are not indicated as they may be to members of a traditional audience. To a quotidian or bureaucratic audience, all that an unfamiliar name, as referent, can do is link back to a particular nationality, language, or culture.

Conversely, from the participants’ perspectives, the performativity of names and their shifts offers a means to change how the participants are seen and understood, as well as changing the name bearer herself. Because the performative theory of names suggests that a name constitutes what it enunciates, then naming oneself and being called by that particular name repeatedly, even just by some audiences, can make you partly what that name is. For some participants, it makes sense to shift a name, even slightly. For participants who would like to be seen as something more than either “immigrant” or “Canadian,” something closer to their own understanding of themselves, a name adjustment makes sense. And if the categories of immigrant and Canadian must be called on—as they seem to be in situations like the résumé audit—then through a redesigned name, participants can position themselves more accurately and with greater nuance. The dynamism of their names—the performativity of names—allows for this kind of engagement.

What follows are examples of how participants alter the signifiers that are used by different audiences to refer to them, and to some degree the considerations that participants employ in
their decisions are also noted. One way to think of participants’ name considerations is by contemplating which audiences participants choose to privilege, and with which audiences name challenges will continue.

6.4 Names as “devices”

Following the argument that has been built through this chapter, names are understood as potent, dynamic material that assist in participants’ performative efforts to be seen and understood as individuals with their own unique experiences and perspectives. The crux of this argument is that participants counter the repetitive and frequently frustrating situations where their name is confronted as an unknown, by introducing themselves in particular ways, and by adjusting or designing their names to counter or shift the kinds of attention they receive because of their names. In these ways, names are positioned as devices used by participants to assist their performative work. But how does it benefit our understanding of name shifts to view names as devices?

John Law analyzed the Portuguese caravels with his framework in order to describe the effectiveness of three functionaries’ interrelated efforts. This framework contributes to “the sociological treatment of technology” (1986a, p. 234) by positioning technology and specific artifacts as “forming an integral part of such systems, interwoven with the social, the economic and the rest, and their form is thus a function of the way in which they absorb within themselves aspects of their seemingly non-technological environments” (p. 235). Law argues that devices are too often treated in isolation from the people and social systems that created them—so how does holding up names and describing them in terms of devices assist this project?

My goal is to draw attention to names because they do perform a particular and integral function that is made notable and even troublesome when names are used outside of the language from which they evolved. As social units, economies, and political systems have evolved to their present day states, so too have the functions of names shifted over time. Currently, our names are used in classrooms where teachers are initially strangers, on identity cards flashed to our own and other nations’ border guards, and at the top of the pages we use to apply, generally online, for work. In these examples, are names really a kind of technology? Yes, and perhaps no. But the argument here, that names are a kind of device that can be renovated and redesigned, as is required by new circumstances, is not intended to diminish or work against Law’s argument.
against devices being treated in isolation. Rather, there is something to be gained, a contribution to be found, in the holding up of something that is not really considered to be a technology and situating it, objectifying it, as we would a technology.

But there is also an argument to be made that a name is an almost-technology, a near-device. Language and numeric systems are amongst our earliest forms of technology (Carr 2008). Beyond our standard use of these symbols to communicate, consider how putting together a set of words as a list assists our work, how that orderly arrangement of words is actually a technology that allows us to do things that we couldn’t do before. Names function in a similar way. They are a system that allows us to refer to things, to one another, to be referred to when we are not present: in this way, names are a technology. It may be strange to consider something intangible as a technology, but think of how names are made tangible by writing them down, as in a signature. And as an extension, consider all of the tangible objects created to house names: forms, name tags, labels, degrees, identity cards, t-shirts, jerseys, trophies, signs for private homes, for businesses, for universities. Names are devices based on and built from the technology of language, then supported and extended by many more relevant and necessary technologies. In the examples that follow, names are considered as artifacts, as devices, designed by participants, to do certain things. How names are designed varies across cultures and languages. To function in Ontario, names share some commonalities based on these dimensions: sound (pronunciation), size (length), and shape (number of components and use of diacritical marks). How participants work with these dimensions is detailed in the next section.

6.4.1 Dimension 1: SOUND

In my conversations with participants about their names it became clear that the sound of our names is privileged. The original medium in which we learn our own names is spoken, and this sound that identifies us, that we identify with, is as relevant, or perhaps more so, than the written, visual version of our names or even their connections to our ancestors, or literal definitions. As Heidigger (1971) wrote “It is just as much a property of language to sound and ring and vibrate, to hover and to tremble, as it is for the spoken words of language to carry a meaning” (p. 98). These sounds that ring and vibrate and identify us, when not quite correct, be very uncomfortable to hear: the sounds hover in the air, people who have made these sounds expect us to react as if the sounds identify us, but they do not. Our names, when mispronounced, do not become us.
The majority of participants (15 of the 23 participants) explained to me that they have adjusted their names to achieve a pronunciation that is satisfactory to them. Some of these efforts use contextualizing explanations to demonstrate and make memorable how their names should be pronounced, while other adjustments are transformative respellings of their names. How each audience is able to pronounce or read aloud a name is dependent on language familiarity. The participants’ quotidian and institutional audiences share English as a common language within Ontario, but may not be accustomed to hearing or making the sounds that comprise the participants’ names. The participants’ traditional audiences are more likely to read and pronounce the participants’ names in their original form—as such, shifts to names have the potential to confuse or lose traditional audiences if these audience members can no longer recognize participants’ names. There is also potential for traditional audiences to recognize how a name has been altered.

6.4.1.1 Pronunciation shift

In terms of pronunciation, a few participants have decided to just accept popular mispronunciations of their names, or they have altered their names to be more easily pronounced by other residents of Ontario. The design strategy here is one of accepting the shape the name takes on through everyday use, and to continue to use it. For example, Jose explains that he doesn’t mind how people pronounce his name, even though it’s not quite the Portuguese pronunciation:

Jose: In North America we are more aware of Spanish-speaking names as opposed to Portuguese-speaking names. The spelling is exactly the same but the pronunciation is slightly different…. If I wanted to be very picky….it’s Jose [pronounced CHOsay]. For myself, it's just more hassle. So, Jose [pronounced HOsay] is fine. Jose [HOsay] sounds good. I like the way it sounds. I'll go with it.

And Victor accepted alternate versions of his name after experiencing challenges with how people pronounced both his first name and his last name:

Victor Raul Vanegas Blandon: In my case, I didn't have to change the spelling, but the pronunciation, yes. So especially the Blandon
[BlanDOHN]. It's just easier to say Blandon [BLANdon]. And it's easier to help people to get it. It doesn't become an issue then of, “Oh, how do you spell it?” I don't want to have to explain that every time I meet somebody. I think I changed the way of presenting my name to be able to blend into society easier.

Pronunciation-wise, in Quebec it was okay to pronounce Blandón [BlanDOHN]; it was a normal way for most French speakers. But in Toronto, it was a challenge in conversations, like in the library:

“What is your name?”

“Blandón [BlanDOHN].”

And they started with, “How do you spell it?” and so on.

So I started answering, “Blandon [BLANdon],” with the stress on the first syllable, and I noticed that it was more familiar for most people.

There are some English names that are more similar to Blandon. So for people, it was easier to identify Blandon. Sometimes I need to say that it starts with a B, not a P, but most of the time people get it right and I don't have to spend time explaining how it's spelled. So that's how I've changed the pronunciation.

In these two previous examples, the participants have opted to go along with how most people they interact with publicly pronounce their names. Names that were being mispronounced are now shifted because the participants introduce themselves in these ways for the sake of ease. Marta had a similar experience when she arrived in Canada to begin first grade: her name was changed from Marta to Martha. At the time, Marta didn’t mind being called Martha because it helped her fit in. But then she was faced with a pronunciation challenge! Marta’s name had become impossible for her and her family to pronounce.

Marta: We don't really have that “th” in Portuguese, so I couldn't even say my own name [Martha], so that was the only thing. We don't have any “th”s. I think that's what caused the problem.
Although the anglicized version of her name suited Marta in ways, it alienated her from her traditional audience, including her family, and for a period, herself. This is a striking illustration of how going along with quotidian and institutional audiences’ pronunciation of a name may be easier in the moment, but in some cases it may lead to a personal feeling of discomfort.

Tony and Minyang* have chosen a different name design strategy, one that involves more explanation and in-person talk about their names. Below, each explains how they have changed the pronunciation of their names to be consistent with their original names. They had accepted anglicized pronunciations of their names for years, but now pronounce their names in these ways.

Tony: So I became Tony Mendes [pronounced Mends]. But, people get very confused. They always ask, “How do you spell it?” If you say Tony Mendes [pronounced MenDEZ] people know how to spell it, except the last two letters. If I say Mendes [pronounced Mends], they’ve never heard that before.

***

Minyang*: At first, they just used my Chinese name and that's Min* Yang* [pronounced MinYOUNG]. People pronounce it Min* Yang* [YANG] because they saw it like that, and that's how I kept it when I first came to Canada. After I changed my name and stuck to it, people used to call me Minyang* [MinYANG] and I just decided: it's my own and it's something I want to identify with. So, I decided to change [the pronunciation] to Minyang* [pronounced MinYOUNG]. It's actually closer to the sound of how it is pronounced in Chinese, so it's more me.

Through repetition and correcting her audiences, Minyang* has redesigned her name, and returned it to the original, by changing its pronunciation.

6.4.1.2 Respelling

Another way to correct name pronunciation, and in a manner which also makes the pronunciation more concrete, is to shift the name’s spelling. During interviews, several
participants described how they have chosen to alter the spelling of their names in order to make them more intuitively pronounceable by other residents of Ontario. Christina* explains her actions in this way:

Christina*: My story is fairly straightforward because I didn't completely change my name, but … it was very important to me to do what I did. My name is Christine* Elisa* Knipfel* and in German it is Christine* [pronounced ChrisTINEuh*]… When I use my real name, which I have to use for financial things, important things, people always assume that my name is Christine [pronounced ChrisTINE*] and I have to explain to them that it is actually pronounced like Christina*. Informally, I changed the ‘e’ to an ‘a’ to get [closer to] the correct pronunciation.

Siveta*'s respelling was more involved, and it was her partner who revised it:

Siveta* [pronounced SiVEETah]: Because English is his first language [my husband] came up with this. He changed Cvijeta* to start with “S*” because people [here] say not “Cv*” but “S*”. And without the “J*” it's easier. Everybody knows what to say now: Siveta*.

*Diane: Was it hard [to explain it] at first, or just so much easier?*  
Siveta*: It was easier. It was like a stone dropped off my chest. I figured out a solution to the problem.

In Siveta*'s name redesign, we can see that her identity labour during day-to-day interactions was eased. In terms of balancing between audiences, Siveta* maintains her original name in Croatia, keeping ties with her family and cultural traditions, and she has not changed her name formally in Canada. She does informally use this anglicized spelling of her name anywhere that her name is likely to be said out loud, such as workplace and school environments. She said via these two names, she feels as though she as had two lives, one with her original name, and another with her anglicized version; she calls this the “Siveta* effect.”
The type of respelling that Siveta* and Christina* undertook is also common in the ORG dataset. (Examples are from January 2009).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dehghani, Anel.</td>
<td>Dehghani, Anelle.</td>
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<td>Merean, Mircea.</td>
<td>Merean, Mircha.</td>
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Above, we see examples of people respelling their first names, potentially with the intent of making the appropriate pronunciation more obvious.

It is noteworthy that Tony and Minyang* arrived in Canada as children, and had been in Canada for at least a decade, if not longer, when they began reverting to pronunciations that are consistent with the languages from which their names originate. Marta experienced similar shifts, but it happened without her own action, as a consequence of change in schools and the ways that her name was designated during roll call. In contrast, Victor immigrated more recently with the goal of integrating to the labour market. Participants experience different kinds of pressures at different stages in their lives, and those with greater economic and social security are also more comfortable insisting on particular uses of their names.

These different circumstances considered, the participants’ pronunciation solutions demonstrate how significant a name’s sound is as a component of its design. The device of the name is not just written, it also exists as a sound. It is important for the participants’ names to be pronounced loudly and clearly, as they wish their names to sound, especially in places where they have never before been heard. How else can anyone know by what sound the participants should be identified? Unfortunately, the sound dimension, though privileged by participants, is the most difficult to capture and reproduce for both quotidian and institutional audiences. Infrastructures that visually or digitally represent a name generally lack an audio option. Law describes gestures and words as being important during face-to-face interaction, but they travel poorly, and are ill-suited to remote control (1986b, p. 33).

6.4.2 Dimension 2: SIZE

Size is the second name dimension considered here. Although we do not generally contemplate the formats of our names, when a name is much longer or shorter than is common, it tends to
stand out. Consider how quickly our eyes note unusual formatting in a document like a letter or email. The same quick observation cues us to note names that seem unusually long or short. Besides the consideration of the visual length of a name, the number of syllables that comprise a name—as relates to the sound dimension—is also significant, and to a quotidian audience this may be a more significant factor than the number of letters in a name. Many Chinese names consist of a total of two or three syllables in total, which is short in comparison to many common English-rooted names. While there are common names in Canada that are just two syllables in total (one per component, e.g., John Smith), most are four or five syllables. A first name of one to three syllables is most common, and while surnames tend to be longer than first names, from a list of most common Canadian surnames, only Anderson has three syllables; the others have one or two syllables (Sieben, 2013). Linking back to sound, in Ontario our names tend to range from two to five syllables in total. First names are one or two syllables, usually no more than three, while last names can go on a bit longer, varying from one to four syllables. For an institutional audience, the number of letters matters: the permanent resident card limits name lengths to fifteen letters for a first name and twenty for a last name. In Victor’s case, having two surnames caused an automatic truncation of his name on his permanent resident card. But the application for citizenship form allows for more spaces. Several participants suggest that quotidian audience members’ mispronunciations are dependent on the length of participants’ names. Quotidian audiences, met face-to-face, online, or over the telephone, generally want to be able to speak an individual’s name, and in this way, the reproducibility of the sound dimension is linked to size. It is much easier to remember and reproduce a shorter name than a longer one.

6.4.2.1 Shortening

Challenges like mispronunciation, misspelling and confusion over name components can be reduced by altering the spelling or pronunciation of a name, or by shortening it in these three ways: abbreviating one component, removing an entire component, or both. These adjustments ease name use with both quotidian and institutional audiences. Truncation is among the most common type of both formal and informal name change.

6.4.2.2 Shortening one component

Samples of shortened components from the ORG data set include these:
During interviews, Jaspreeta* and Jagdeep*, each described how they have abbreviated their names for day-to-day use at school and at work.

Jaspreeta*: When I was 16, I shortened my name to Jazz* and I don't know, it was just a lot easier to pronounce so that's what I went by for a while, for a couple of years. Recently I changed it again because I still kind of struggle with the name, and I shortened it to Preeta.*

Jaspreeta* views each of her name adaptations as authentic versions of who she is, though acknowledges that some of her friends consider her to be “whitewashed.” Jagdeep* also indicated that she feels that shortening her name from Jagdeep* is a form of anglicizing. As well, the way she has chosen to abbreviate her name is common: “Anyone who has Jag* in front of their name will abbreviate it.” By informally decreasing the number of syllables used in their first names, Jagdeep* and Preeta have adapted their names for their quotidian audiences, but their names remain the full length for use with their traditional and institutional audiences.

6.4.2.3 Choosing one component over another

In her formal name change, Marika changed her name from “Marika Morris Kyriakidis” to “Marika Natasha Morris.” This added the desired middle name Natasha, moved Morris (Marika’s mother’s original and recovered surname), to the surname position, and ultimately removed Kyriakidis, the component that most had been most difficult to spell and pronounce, as well as serving as a magnet for ethnic categorization.

Informally, both Tian and Victor chose to use particular components of their names. Since elementary school, Tian-Yuan has gone by the first component of his name, Tian, because the second component, Yuan, was generally mispronounced as “Ewen.” Originally Victor Raul Vanegas Blandon, Victor is now used instead of Raul, and then only Blandon as a last name.
My short name is Victor Blandon. In some documents and on my email, I put the R as my middle name. I like my Raul. I try to keep it alive. And I keep Blandon because Vanegas no longer existed. In Quebec in some cases they used the two last names, but in Toronto there are no documents with the two last names, so it was neglected and forgotten.

These are examples from the ORG database of formally removing a surname and shifting a middle or first name to that position.

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6.4.2.4 Removal of one component

A common challenge for people who have migrated from Mexico, Latin America and South America is negotiating the use of the four name components that are common in these countries to three components, the most common number of names used in Anglophone Canada. Victor and Jorge, who are brothers from Colombia, both removed one of their last name components for their identification cards, and they now commonly go by two names, as many Canadians do.

Victor: So, for avoiding confusion, I decided that I would only use my first last name and so I applied for citizenship using one last name. The second last name was left off. I know some other people from Spanish background who applied with both. They wanted to keep them together, but me, I thought it was simpler to go this way.

Jorge: In Latin America, it is usual in to use two last names, but not here. When I did papers here, I had to eliminate the second last name and I keep the first: Jorge Blandon. But some [of my] papers have four names, some have three names and the others have two names. It could be a problem in the future, I don't know.
The ORG data offers many examples of formally removed components including these:

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6.4.3 Dimension 3: SHAPE

Shape is the dimension that describes the parts of a name: how many components, and other textural qualities like diacritical marks. Again, this dimension cues people reading the name as to its commonness.

6.4.3.1 Combining components

In a formal name change, Minyang* resolved the issue that both Tian-Yuan and Harold* (Feng* Lim*) also described: confusion over how to treat the second component of a Chinese first name. The change from Min Yang to Minyang* exemplifies a reasonably common name change in the Office of the Registrar General dataset, as well.

    Minyang*: I'm just trying to squeeze things together to make it easier. After I went through with it… I can give them my name—the way I want—without a space.

    I got my name changed and when I got it, it is just a tiny little piece of paper but I felt so proud.

    I called all my friends, “Guess what my name is now?”

    Then I said “Minyang*.”

    They asked, “Well, what is the difference?”

    And it makes such a difference to me.

There are many examples from the ORG dataset demonstrating that other people have chosen to combine two name components, though in the examples below, English names were also added.
In the next example, one surname component is moved to the first name position, and the original two first names are combined as one component.

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And in the next example, the original first name is divided into two components. (As well, the surname is changed.)

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Movement of name components is quite common in the ORG data. My conversations with participants indicate that this may be because the standard three-component name that is common in North America has little resonance with people from a variety of international cultures. Many participants indicated that they would like to maintain most of the components of their original names, but the order of a names parts was less important than keeping as much of it as possible, or at least the most personally relevant parts.

### 6.4.3.2 Removing diacritical marks

An additional way to change the shape (plus sound) of a name is to remove the diacritical marks. This happens generally happens when a name is entered into a Canadian database, as it did for Victor. Originally Víctor Raúl Blandón Vanegas, Victor decided it was best to go without any of these diacritical marks:

So now, on all of my documents, I am Victor Blandon, no accents.

There was no easy way to type it. You have to change the keyboard to Spanish to be able to put the accents over every name.
de E’Teme* Mbanga* Ekwe’s doesn’t have diacritical marks to denote pronunciation, but his name does include an apostrophe between two majuscule letters:

Mbanga*: They don’t know where the apostrophe goes. One mistake is that sometimes the capital is wrongly placed; they are missing some words or letters somewhere. Always something happening.

Although Mbanga* hasn’t altered his name, he recognizes that using some of the four components of his name challenges quotidian audience members; he is generally just called by the name Anglophones find easiest to say, even though it is one of his last names.

The dimensions described in this section describe the norms of name devices used in Ontario. The reasons that these dimensions have evolved as standard are based on the ways that English is commonly used in North America, as well as the structures (forms and databases) that store and communicate name information. It is important to note that these dimensions have evolved to certain standards over time, just as they have in other regions. The way that names are constructed in neighbouring Quebec are substantially different: names tend to be longer, to have more components, and to maintain diacritical marks. Hyphenated last names are very common in Quebec, and those named within Catholic traditions tend to have multiple first names as the gender-based Marie and Joseph are incorporated. In Quebec as in Ontario, name devices function best with these particularities. What follows this description of the dimensions of names is a series of design strategies that participants undertake as they adjust their names.

6.4.4 Design strategy 1: Use of an existing design

In choosing the best way for audiences to use their names, many participants added or shifted one of their components to a pre-existing name. The use of a common name is a simple way to avoid contextualizing explanations: a known name is easy for any audience to pick up and to repeat.

One participant whose original name was particularly hard for quotidian audiences to pronounce formally changed his name to add “Alfie”, a childhood nickname, as well as his maternal grandfather’s surname, both of which are easily pronounced by Anglophones.
At the beginning I thought, what about Alfie? That should be easy. I won't have to spell it over the phone... It works very well now. I don't have to spell my name. It is easy on people to remember who I am. It is easy for introductions.

Alfie’s formal name shift is a major commitment to his identity performance, but in this design choice, he eased his quotidian name-related challenges while maintaining ties with the traditional category, because he selected names that are meaningful to his family. In terms of the institutional audience, Alfie had to do some work to make sure that he was identified in the same way each time, but he described this work as minor, and has been pleased with his name change overall.

The choice of most participants is to alter their names as little as possible, or if they make a change, they tend to choose a name that maintains elements of their family history. However, the interviews do provide a few examples of participants choosing names for themselves from the array of established English names:

*Diane: How did you get your English name?*

*Harold*: It's a long story. First, some people I know, they use their Chinese name pronunciation to find and English name that is similar to that of the Chinese name. But unfortunately that is very hard with my name, to find a similar English name. So, I just used a Dictionary of English Names. Suddenly I found the name Harold*, and I thought, “There are too many Chinese guys who use names like Tom, James, Steve. Those are too popular.” And Harold* is not very popular. And the dictionary gave a meaning for Harold* that was over thirty and a gentleman, a very nice person, and I [starting to laugh] think that I am that kind of a person [finishes laughing, along with Diane]. So I decided to use Harold*.

Zhi chose his English name in a similar manner to Harold*, but it was a less thoughtful choice, and today he is not fond of his English name:
Zhi Li: My current English name is Leo, and this name was given to me by one of my host families. I was in New Zealand for just a summer to play and study with those students and when I got there, my Chinese name… I don’t know if you noticed but this part Zhi is very, very hard to pronounce in English. Everyone, really everyone, cannot pronounce it. It’s Zhi Li, so when I got to New Zealand, all of the people could not call my name, so I lived with a local family, and they said, okay, you can pick a name, so I looked in a dictionary but since I was young, I was 12 or something like that, I had no idea about the meanings of all of these names, so that’s why… For example, my first [family] name is Li, so I just looked at the names with the first letter L, and then I saw it and I thought it was good, so I said, “Call me Leo,” and that’s how my English name came.

Diane: Why did you choose the name Leo, besides the Ls. Was it the sound of it?

Zhi Li: Yeah, it was the sound. Because I didn’t have any idea of those meanings when I was twelve, because I hadn’t been learning English for long. So looking at the dictionary, all I knew was how to pronounce it. I had no idea what it meant.

Diane: Do you like it now? Are you still glad that you chose it?

Zhi Li: Hmmm…. I cannot say that I like it very much, but I don’t hate it.

Diane: It works?

Zhi Li: Yeah, it works.

In Marika’s case, she considered a name change for a long time and then added as a middle name, a new name that she really liked.

Marika: I guess I started thinking about it [changing my name] when I was about sixteen, about four years after my father died. I did talk with my mother about it, but not much. What happened was, my lawyer asked if, because my middle name was essentially
becoming my last name, did I want a new middle name? I chose the name Natasha as a middle name just because I liked the name. My mother objected to that and said how disappointed my father would have been [to know that] I replaced his [Greek] name with a Russian one.

_Diane:_ I guess, but you were eighteen and thought “I like the name; I may as well add it”?

_Marika:_ Actually my second choice was Athena and that's my daughter's name. So, I wanted to keep a bit of Greek heritage for her.

“English names” are an interesting international phenomenon that receives academic attention (Edwards, 2006; Bin and Millward, 1986). Anyone who has studied English as a foreign language has likely been encouraged to take on an English name, and these names are often treated as fun, informal, and context-specific. Several participants describe using an English name in addition to their original names, dependent on with whom they are interacting. These descriptions suggest that English names are more likely to be used in unofficial or informal circumstances, yet, for some participants, these informal uses may lead to the formal addition of a name change, as is common—and even on the rise—in the ORG dataset.

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Evelyn’s birth name in Greece was Evanghelia, and growing up in Romania, following forced migration, she used the name Vanghelita. Upon arrival in Canada, her husband’s cousins
suggested that she use an anglicized version, Evelyn, and that has become the name on all of her
degrees and identity documents. However, as mentioned earlier, she has never completed a
formal name change to Evelyn because the requisite documents no longer exist.

Jorge substitutes George, a similar name that is common in English or French name, when he is
asked to say or spell his name over the phone. And Ronit made use of a self-selected English
nickname at some stages of her life.

Ronit: I started to go by a nickname, Ronnie. When I started
cubbing, my girlfriend said, “You know what? Instead of having
to explain, who cares, people never get it right ever, so why don't
you use a shortened name?” So I used Ronnie a few times, and it
was okay.
When I graduated from university I did an organized tour of
Europe and I decided from day one that I was just going to use my
nickname. It was just, to me, so much easier. I was going to be on
a bus with twenty-nine people. Not a single one of them was
Jewish or Israeli and they would have absolutely no concept of
what the name is. So, to make it easier on myself I just introduced
myself as Ronnie; it became my nickname.

I remember my first day of grad school: I introduced myself and
said, “My name is Ronit. You are welcome to call me Ronnie.” It's
just easier all around, because I don't have to repeat myself a
million times. So the name stuck through grad school. I gave them
permission on that first day and they took it. It made it a lot easier.
I became Ronnie for many, many years. There are still some
friends who refer to me as Ronnie because that is how they were
first introduced to me. But family and closest friends know me as
Ronit. My partner calls me Ronit.

Harold* also selected his own English name and uses it quite broadly, though not on his
identification documents.
Harold*: Officially, I still use my [original] name. But in my workplace, or in social places, I use my English name now.  
*Diane: So does it work well to use Harold* in your work and social circumstances?  
Harold*: When I communicate with Western people it's very fine. Mainly I just use it in my workplaces and social environments and I'm very comfortable with Harold*. I think the name is very good.

Zhi Li is not as happy with his English name, and he also finds it quite challenging to have one name for casual use, and another for his formal documents.

*Diane: Do you use [your English name, Leo] quite a bit?  
Zhi Li: Yes, quite a bit. … I used Leo in all of my classes in New Zealand, and in China in English class, and then I came here, and I also call myself Leo in some cases, but that is a lot of trouble here.

6.4.5 Design strategy 2: Uniqueness as a goal/outcome

In the examples above, people selected relatively common names as formal or informal additions to their names, but many of the participants expressed appreciation for having a unique name within Canada, though they recognized the day-to-day challenges associated with it. For Jaspreeta*, a name change was attempted, but to another unique name.

Jaspreeta*: The name I was going to change to was Jaslyn*. It's close to my name but it's way easier to pronounce because the syllables, they flow. I would have spelled it J-A-S-L-Y-N* and I don't know, I found it really pretty.  
*Diane: It is pretty. And unique.  
Jaspreeta*: Yes, I wanted a unique name, still. I didn't want to change it to something more common.

And Siveta* created a new name by anglicizing the spelling of her original Croatian name, Cvijeta*, that was always mispronounced.
Diane: Does it feel different to have a name that's unique?

Siveta*: Yes, it definitely puts me aside. It puts me, tags me, with that uniqueness for sure. Sometimes they ask me a second time to say my name. I say, “Once you remember it, you're not going to forget.” That's just how it goes.

Lots of times [people have said]:

“Oh, it sounds so exotic.”

“It sounds nice.”

“That's a different name.”

Although she didn’t change her name, Lingh-Lingh* sees both positives and negatives with having an uncommon name.

Diane: As you have matured, have more years behind you, is not changing your name something you are happy with or proud of now? Do you see any benefits to having a less common name in Canada?

Lingh-Lingh*: I do. I see positives and negatives. I am glad I have a unique name in some respects because it is very distinct. You can refer to me as Lingh* and most people know who you are talking about. Then on the flip side, my job involves a lot of networking and I talk to a lot of companies and there is always this awkwardness with being introduced and knowing that my name is odd.

Marika’s original first and last name are both unique. She explains wanting to keep her first name, but not her last name.

Marika is my grandmother's name and it was her grandmother's name, so there is a continuation; my first name means a lot to me and I kept it. My last name was more problematic, in many different ways. My father died when I was twelve and I had no relatives that I knew of by the name Kyriakidis. My name reflected more my father's heritage and nothing of my mother's.
Marika: [Currently,] it's not a disadvantage to be called something that nobody else is called.

Diane: *And you kept it a bit by keeping your first name.*

Marika: Which I love! I didn't want to wipe out who I was, I just wanted to expand it. I mean, how many people have the opportunity to name themselves?

6.4.6 Design strategy 3: Maintenance of/return to original design

Frustrated by misreadings of her name, Hanaa returned her name to its original spelling—the addition of the second ‘a’ to her name made it less intuitive and straightforward for quotidian and institutional audiences, but to Arab-speakers (her traditional audience), Hanaa is more distinctly Arabic, hence recognizable:

Hanaa: So I said well, maybe Hana is too non-committal. It could be anything! It could be Jewish, it could be Japanese, it could be... So maybe it's important to identify that this really is an Arabic-origin name. If nothing else, it will help whoever wants an Arabic-speaking lawyer to know that I am Arabic. I really felt at the time very strongly that there were too few Arabic speaking lawyers for a very multicultural city like Toronto. I thought it was time to encourage others to also enter the field. I said, I'm going to put in that hamzah (ا) at the end, and I will become Hanaa. I said formally, I'm going to add that 'a' and there's no question about it then: it is an Arabic-origin name.

It’s my formal name, but I go equally by Hana (pronounced HanNA) and Hanaa (pronounced HanNEH). In fact, in the pronunciation, it’s always Hana (HanNA). But definitely, there’s no question when it’s written that [latter] way, that it’s of Arabic origin.

Diane: *Is having the second ‘a’ at the end of your name extra work? You were talking about people, over the phone.*

Hanaa: It is extra work, definitely extra work. You have to
Diane: And have people, like friends or peers, asked you about why you bother, or...

Hanaa: You know what? No, I don’t think it made any difference to anybody but me. I really don’t. My friends are still my friends, as they were, and they pronounce my name the way they always did. And many of them are you know, Jewish, and of all nationalities as well. It hasn’t really made that big of difference, but to me it has.

Hanaa’s name change is distinct amongst the participants I interviewed in terms of her clear political motivations and choice to use her name in a traditional way that is both more difficult for her quotidian audience to pronounce, and more contextualizing labour for her to explain. That stated, other participants have made choices to revert to their original names, which require more explanatory effort on their part to achieve correct spelling and pronunciation.

Several participants, including Ronit, Chang, and Minyang*, who have used English names at periods in their lives, have since reverted to using their original names. The unofficial use of English names makes reversion a simple process, but as explained by these participants, challenges remain.

Ronit: When I started working I thought, “This is my name. If I have to repeat myself, I will”. You know, I worked hard for my degrees and now I want my name to be in writing. I'm now signing my name to documents. It has to be legal.

For Minyang*, the choice to revert to her original name came after a long period of having negative feelings about the English name she had been given by a family friend, a period which included an attempt to use another English names that she preferred.

Minyang*: And that's why I wanted to change my name to Annie; I know two Annies and I just wanted to fit in. But at the same time there are challenges to keeping your name. It is a challenge because people will have this prejudice toward you because you
are different. It's a challenge to change the initial impression… I want people to remember me, and not just another Asian girl, with another itsy-bitsy name.

Diane: And you felt like having an English name was read that way?

Minyang*: Yes, I don't want an English name. I don't want to fit in. I learned that being different is not bad—it's just different. There may be challenges associated with that but it's not… it’s just annoying.

Using a shortened version of an official name can be easier in the moment, but it also has potential challenges. That it leads to participants having multiple versions of their names in use can be troublesome. And some participants find that eventually, even though it can be challenging and requires more contextualizing identity labour, they feel better using their original names.

Based on the participant interviews, two of twenty-three individuals have never used altered versions of their names, even informally. Here they explain why they feel certain that they will not make formal name changes in the future.

Lingh-Lingh* [31 at time of interview, living in Canada since 1980]: I wonder if my life would have been a little easier if my name was different, but it hasn't bothered me enough for me to want to change it. I'm at the point now where I am so old…

[Laughing at Diane’s response to her calling herself old…] You know what I mean. I've lived my whole life… Can you imagine if I came home one day and said to my husband, “You should call me … whatever?” It just wouldn't ….

***

Jehad [late thirties at time of interview, living in Canada since 1990]: Now I feel like I am for all intents and purposes fairly integrated. I'm fully bicultural. I really understand both. And I care
about my space and my role here. It's important that my relationships, connections, contacts, professionally and personally with the non-Arabs, with the general Canadian, are based on a very genuine first interaction that makes them think that my name is Jehad. It's not like you know Jim, and you know Jim is nice, and then two weeks later, maybe after the first dinner you find out that it's not really Jim.... In many ways I'm much more confident with the relationships that have evolved because, it's like having it again, going back to being a young, you know, Arab guy, because that played a major role in my in my first years in Canada. Coming here, it was easier to say I was Jehad from the first, from the get go. I wouldn't want to go through explaining, you know after the second meeting, especially if your name, you know, is Jehad. Okay, why are you hiding it, or what's the concern with it? You know, I accepted, I decided to keep it, so now I am confronting it.

Both Lingh-Lingh* and Jehad’s responses acknowledge the challenge of using their original names as well as using altered names, but perhaps more importantly, they describe a kind of crystallization of name with identity and audiences that takes place over time. Because they have each overcome challenges and established themselves in Ontario with their original names, they have a sense of having completed a significant amount of contextualizing identity labour, which, in part, has made them who they are. The performative power of their names has shaped them into the people who they are and they are satisfied with their names’ outcomes.

6.5 Establishing a standpoint

The kind of crystallization and and certainty in their names that is apparent in the cases of Lingh-Lingh and Jehad is echoed by Minyang*. She describes her experiences with her name in this way:

Minyang*: I think it's like a journey of life's struggle in trying to get control. My name is something special, something about me. I mean, society uses it as a label, but it's not just a label. It's how I want other people to see me, and it kind of corresponds to how much control I’ve had throughout my life.
Hanaa, Siveta*, Marika, Ronit, Victor, Alfie, Chang, and more, also articulate a kind of certainty about their names and naming choices. Following significant identity labour, they have established and use their names as they would like to be seen by members of their audiences, and as they see themselves. Their bicultural perspectives allow for a view not only of their multiple audiences, but also to see how they themselves are seen via the perspective of dominant culture. And this view allows them to see others, like them, who are comfortable establishing themselves, by name and action, as someone who fits within Canadian culture by making a space for themselves. According to Standpoint Theory, the emergence of standpoints is more than an individual’s social location, but rather “a collective process occurring through the recognition and acknowledgement of others who occupy the same standpoint as oneself” (Bowell, 2008). Self-determination, in terms of naming oneself, or maintaining an original name, leads to increased self-assertion, and “challenging those identities imposed by conventional stereotypes that form part of hegemonic ways of thinking from the point of view of the socially and politically dominant” (Bowell, 2008). Occupying a standpoint means that significant identity labour has been undertaken, and that more will ensue, but it likely also means that you are communicating a decision you have come to about your perspective and position in Canada, and this standpoint is recognizable to members of each of your audiences.

6.6 Conclusion

In Ontario, using a name that is not of English origin requires significant day-to-day work, work that is described in this chapter as identity labour. One of the research questions posed at the beginning of this dissertation asked how individuals shape their names during and social interactions, and Chapter 6 has responded by analyzing the various modes of name use. Whether explanatory and contextualizing, or transformative and based on altering name components, it is through their identity labour that participants design how they are seen and how they see themselves.

Each of the name theories put forward by Kripke, Žižek, and Butler resonates in how participants describe their name use and their decisions to alter or retain their original names. Participants see that their names are frequently used as indexical devices, like Kripke’s rigid designators, to categorize the participants as immigrants, and perhaps additionally to further classify their ethnicity or language of origin. We also see the impossibility of the perfect fit of a name within
all three audiences: Žižek’s radical contingency of naming focuses on this persistent tension between the participants’ disparate experiences and the names they use. The efforts made by participants to redesign their names, and to make the names better fit with who they are currently, is in ways a reaction to this tension. And over time, participants tend to find that how they use their names leaves them with a particular feeling—in how participants use their names themselves, as well as how names are used by others to validate the participants’ identities. An altered name may cause participants (such as Jagdeep*) to feel that they have lost something of themselves, and as with Hanaa and Minyang*, participants may respond to this feeling by returning to a more traditional version of their name. Or, as with Alfie, a modified name is fine, as long as it still reflects components of his family. Considering Butler’s description of the performative power of names along with the participants’ feelings of names helps to illustrate how names do contribute to identities, even when substantial identity labour is required.

Examining the participants’ name design techniques is much like analyzing authors’ writing to understand how they’ve achieved a particular effect. Following this notion, consider Stanley Fish’s suggestion that

the shaping power of language cannot be avoided. We cannot choose to distance ourselves from it. We can only choose to employ it in one way rather than another. We can only choose our style, not to abandon style, and it behooves us to know what the various styles in our repertoire are for and what they can do (How to Write a Sentence p. 42)

Participants do not have the option to not use a name—that device is requisite—so they shape their names as feels best over different stages in their lives in Ontario. Contextualizing these name shifts in Law’s framework allows us to see the influence of and the consideration given to each of the three audiences based on how their discourses influence participants, stewards in their own right, to shape their name “devices” in particular ways. Together, these three functionaries exert power. Chapter 7, the final discussion chapter, considers the ongoing effects of designing names for people who have immigrated to Canada. How does it feel to continue on with a name designed to balance between these dynamic and sometimes conflicting audiences?
What are the longer term effects of being in Ontario; when and how and does one ever come to belong?
Chapter 7

7 Be(long)ing in Ontario

*I’m not as Canadian as I should be.* –Evelyn

7.1.1 Overview

This chapter seeks to better understand participants’ final but continuing stage of the name action arc: be(long)ing, and to describe how this stage is significant to cultural shifts within Ontario. This term, “be(long)ing”, is used to capture the circumstances of being in Ontario with the feeling of belonging existing only as past, potential, and in progress—not currently realized. While being is necessary, belonging is a possibility that is not consistently obtainable by everyone. Depending on early life circumstances, some participants have experienced belonging in their place of birth, while others moved to Canada at a later age, or have always lived in circumstances such that they have not felt part of a dominant culture. For other participants, this feeling of belonging exists in Ontario, but it’s easy to remember a time when it did not, and for them it is through effort and considered decisions that belonging occurs.

Figure 11: The final stage of the identity labour trajectory, Be(long)ing

The three audiences model demonstrates visually the disparateness between feeling part of dominant culture, of belonging, versus balancing between audiences, so not necessarily having a
feeling of belonging with any, and rather experiencing be(long)ing (See Figure 9). For someone who is born in Ontario with a common name that is traditional to Ontario, audiences tend to overlap almost seamlessly. Challenges such as using a second name instead of a first name demonstrate differences between institutional or traditional audiences and quotidian ones, but these types of name challenges do not generally include discrimination and othering. The category work that is required for these audiences is common to everyone: dressing a particular way for a certain task, behaving politely at certain gatherings, etc. A member of Ontario’s dominant culture may rarely notice their varied audiences, because these audiences function with many shared or very similar functionaries in terms of discourses, devices, and stewards.

In contrast to the unquestioned sense of belonging felt by members of dominant culture, the substantial and persistent identity labour carried out by participants, and the lasting implications of their name decisions, contribute to mixed feelings about their present sense of belonging. The argument that is built in this chapter is that participants’ name choices tend to reflect how participants see themselves and/or want to be seen in terms of being, belonging, or be(long)ing within Ontario. Previous chapters have contributed to the action arc of name changes by analyzing participants’ varied audiences, name challenges, and responses; this chapter begins with participants’ feelings about their names.

7.1.2 Public Feelings
Taken together, participants’ varied and sometimes-ambivalent feelings about their names and identities in Canada benefit from being contextualized within Ann Cvetkovich’s (2012)
description of “public feelings.” Cvetkovich’s work in the field of affect, a perspective that emphasizes bodily experience, focuses on potential roots of common embodied experiences, especially the pairing of racism and depression. Part of Cvetkovich’s engagement with affect is to describe the ways that migration, and particularly racism, contribute to what she calls “public depression.”

Although the “affective turn” has occurred over the past two decades, Cvetkovich points to Raymond Williams as an earlier author whose own focus on shared, public feelings came much earlier. In 1977, Williams theorized “feelings” (in his foundational chapter “Structures of Feeling”), with an acknowledgement of the movement of feelings, from “practical consciousness of a present kind” into what is frequently their later stage: “formalized, classified and in many cases built into institutions and formations” (p. 132). Although Williams points to ways that literature, and art more generally, are a reliable early means for expressing the feeling of a period, he concludes by suggesting that, “the emergence of a new structure of feeling is best related to the rise of class… [or] contradiction, fracture or mutation within a class…[;] when a formation appears to break away from its class norms, though it retains its substantial affiliation, … the tension is at once lived and articulated in radically new semantic figures” (p. 134-5). In this final dissertation chapter, the feelings and experiences shared by the participants in this study are situated as an illustration of a structure of feeling in action. Tensions related to participants’ names are currently evolving in urban Ontario: demographic diversity is on the rise, but cultural pluralism is not so obvious, save for the shifting ‘namescape’. And the namescape is a somewhat vague and under-theorized cultural representation. How could participants’ feelings about their names become expressed in formalized structures and institutions? How is this already happening?

This chapter mirrors the growing feelings that result in structural change, as theorized by Williams. Describing, first, how participants feel about experiences with their names in current-day Ontario, then how participants’ names and related identity positions are shared and made public, and finally how these shared feelings—including participants’ views of the future of names in Ontario—have the potential to shift policy and change infrastructure. While previous chapters examined individual participants’ experiences with their names, and their responses to name challenges, this chapter focuses on how participants feel, and the effects of these feelings:
how bodily experiences do and will continue to alter day-to-day life and name policies in English-speaking Ontario.

7.2 Feelings\textsuperscript{28} about names

The majority of this chapter’s interview excerpts are responses to my asking participants how they see their name in relation to their identity. The interview prompt was written in this way:

How does your name relate to how you see yourself, and how others see you? Please describe differences between your previous and current name, and between your experiences in Canada and in any other countries you have lived in. Do you consider your name to be a Canadian name?

7.2.1 Somatic feelings

One striking initial outcome of the interviews was their visceral tone. I quickly came to understand that participants really feel the name challenges that they experience—if not each individual interaction, then over time a kind of weariness and dread sets in: the accumulation of these mispronunciations and misspellings is significant. Of course, name challenges are in addition to other feelings related to immigrating, which are also described in visceral terms, using physical metaphors:

Jehad: Immigration is a true dislocation experience. It's similar to when you dislocate your shoulder: you can live with it, but it's so uncomfortable and there is pain.

These experiences of exile and dislocation—if they're not addressed and confronted and given the kind of comfort and massaged back to normal—they can create the stresses that we see in society, these feelings of alienation. There are good reasons as

\textsuperscript{28} I am using this term, “feelings”, because it best suits the ways that participants spoke about their names. In Cvetkovich’s words “it is intentionally imprecise, retaining the ambiguity between feelings as embodied sensations and feelings as psychic or cognitive experiences. It also has a vernacular quality that lends itself to exploring feelings as something we come to know through experience and popular usage and that indicates, perhaps only intuitively but nonetheless significantly, a conception of mind and body as integrated” (2012, p. 4).
to why people feel alienated and that they do not belong. It's that feeling of dislocation. Whether it's forced migration or migration by choice, people have to go through the process of massaging it back to normal and being comfortable with the new space. It might never heal 100%, but it's in place.

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Siveta*: When I came to Ontario, it was really hard. It’s hard for someone who is lost, and lost because when you move it's a huge loss until you gain again. So it's that in between, in that limbo situation, that you have to deal with something like that [a name challenge], as well.

This sense of loss described by Siveta*, is mentioned by other participants in relation to their names; in Tian’s case, it ties back to that idea of being rooted by an original culture.

Tian: I decided to stick with [my name] because a) it's not that difficult to pronounce, and b) I want people to know that I'm still Chinese! I have Chinese in me. I feel that when you change your name to become English you become lost in translation. Or you become misunderstood, I guess. People think you're more white than not. I didn't want that. I would have felt my identity would have been diminished a bit. I really also love my name.29

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Siveta*: When I moved here it was really tough. I had difficulties all over the place. It was really, really hard for me, no matter how hard I tried to explain. My English wasn't that good. It was frustrating. I was trying to explain to people what my name was.

---

29 Tian also describes his personal decision of how to use his name as feels most culturally comfortable. For him, maintaining the first component of his Chinese-origin first name is a demonstration that he is Chinese, even though he has lived in Canada for most of his life, and he is a native English speaker.
when my roots were still in the old country… I loved my family and my friends and I was trying to build a new life. And your name is your identity... So people were twisting it all over. And it's never deliberate… It's just different and a different way people pronounce it.

But Siveta* said that after she changed her name, “It was easier. It was like a stone dropped off my chest. I figured a solution to the problem.” That a mispronounced name carried the weight of a stone on one’s chest, and that a name alteration had the effect of removing that stone are feelings that have stayed with me throughout my work on this project. Another exchange that has lingered is Jagdeep*'s description of the feeling of the name change that she is no longer happy with. Here, Jagdeep* articulates the loss she feels because she has shortened her name:

Jagdeep*: I feel like the last, maybe seven years, I have been losing part of my identity because I'm only giving part of my name, and it's an inanimate object [referring to the car, Jaguar]. … I'm losing a lot of my own identity by abbreviating my name.

Besides loss, other feelings about name mispronunciations were expressed by physical descriptions indicative of neglect, force, and even violence. Victor and Christina* describe the shifts to their names in terms that give names physical qualities:

Christina*: I told them, “You omitted my middle name.” And then I found out later they omit that because they don't have any space on their Permanent Card. So what can I do? There is nothing I can do. But to me, but I don't think that's adequate to not think of a person's name. To me that was very peculiar because that is my name. It is on my birth certificate; it's on my passport. I don't know how they can just decide to drop my middle name. But that's the decision that was made. And because they dropped it on my Permanent Resident card it affects other cards such as my driver's license, health card, and all the other cards.

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Victor: My original Colombian name is Victor Raúl Blandón Vanegas. And it's a first and middle name and a first and second last names. That's normal in Colombia to have two last names. The first one is from the father and the second one is from the mother… In Colombia I go by Raúlito Blandón Vanegas. When I came to Canada, when my wife and I first applied for immigration, we filled out papers, and there was space for two last names. But when I received my visa to come as a resident, the second last name, Vanegas, had disappeared. So it just said “Blandon, Victor Raul”.

While Christina*’s name was actively “dropped”, Victor’s name more passively “disappeared”—each of these verbs carries its own feeling. Christina*’s description is accusatory; she is concerned by the negligence of a bureaucratic system that would cause a name to be removed, and by doing so, dropping a component of her identification. Victor is also troubled by what has happened to his name, but he is less accusing, and finds the situation mysterious. How could this possibly happen? What else might happen in the future?

Both Lingh-Lingh* and Jaspreeta* use the verb “butcher”, to describe the mispronunciations of their names:

Lingh-Lingh*: Sometimes if I've sent an email out, people will call me and say my name wrong, or totally butcher it, like nothing even close.

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Jaspreeta*: [Growing up], I would be the one person of colour in the room with the one ethnic name. And, you know, every September, with every new teacher, as they would approach to my last name's first letter, I would know…

I would automatically put my hand up right before they were going to call it, like, "Hey, it's going to be hard to pronounce! It's just
me." I would put my hand up right away! I knew they were going to butcher it...

Ronit draws on the same metaphor of violence, but more explicitly:

Ronit: English speakers have no idea when they look at it. I introduce myself as Ronit [RoNEET]. And they say, “What is it? What? How do you pronounce your name?” You know that first day of school? Every single year they screwed up my name the first day of school.

Diane: How did they screw it up?
Ronit: You know it's unbelievable. … I used to joke, “I'll just respond to anything with an ‘R’,” because they would brutalize it. They chopped up my name and rearranged the letters.

These interview excerpts caused me to pause and consider that these visceral descriptions are not uncommon ways to talk about names. We tend to refer to our names as if they are physical, in close relation to our bodies. “Butcher”, in particular, is a common way to describe a serious name mispronunciation. A bad haircut may also be described in this way. Things in close proximity to our bodies, if altered in undesirable ways, feel “butchered”: someone less invested than us had their way with our personal attributes, and the result makes us feel mistreated and uncomfortable. Besides these descriptions of name errors, participants also express the feelings associated with the misuse of their names in ways other than the deeply visceral:

Christina*: Even though it may seem very small to you, to me it makes a big difference. I don't want to be called “Christine”* for some reason. That doesn't reflect the way I see my personality. It may seem minor, but it is very important to me.

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Diane: Do you think that the problems you had with your name contributed to you feeling like you weren't fitting?
Victor: With the Raul, and with having to give up my Raul? That
wasn't a good sign. And now, it's no problem anymore: I'm Victor.
I tried to overcome that because I needed to adapt to the
environment where I am.

These kinds of feelings related to names, both the somatic descriptions at the beginning of this
section as well as the emotional and intellectualized ones described just above, make evident that
participants have significant feelings about their names and their own representation through
their names. If this dissertation did not at any stage focus on the affective qualities of the
participants’ experiences, it would have ignored a substantial part of what participants are
sharing in these interviews. It is critical that we consider “the surfaces and textures of everyday
life rather than [just] exposing the putative realities of underlying structures” (Cvetkovich
quoting Kathleen Stewart, p. 5). Although these feelings may be the result of what can be
theorized as identity politics, social construction, or power established through discourse, the
feelings persist and have their own weight and consequences. Most participants describe
experiences with their names as making them feel as if they don’t fit in, getting in the way of
connecting, and even working as a site of exclusion or racism.

Cvetkovich points to how these common situations that make people feel “small, worthless,
hopeless” contribute to a “depression [that] should be viewed as a social and cultural
phenomenon, not a biological or medical one” (p. 13, p. 90). Part of her project is to discuss the
ways that migration, and particularly racism, contributes to public depression. While bearing
these feelings of weight and loss and exclusion is described in this dissertation as an aspect of
identity labour, Cvetkovich describes similar feelings as attributes public depression: “the
dynamics of assimilation, expos[e] the ambivalent status of the quest for middle-class
respectability that is so frequently the cause of depression or sadness for white people as well as
people of color” (p. 122). The feeling that is emphasized in this chapter is that of being in
Ontario and feeling ambivalence about belonging. Interactions with each of the participants’
three audience types result in mixed feelings of belonging. And yet being is consistent; we are
here.
7.3 Feelings of Be(long)ing

7.3.1 (Long)

The position of “be(long)ing” at the end of the action arc, and as an ongoing process of life in Ontario points to the significance of time as a key element of identity labour. According to participants, individual moments such as citizenship ceremonies tend to be less meaningful than ongoing challenges and repeated responses to these challenges. Lemke (2008) describes “identities across timescales” as “integrated by means of the material continuity of bodies and other socially meaningful material constructions across time” (p. 18). Through immigration, the generations-old significance of a name moves out of one national and linguistic context and into another where the meaning is lost to most audiences. This move opens questions of identity for the name bearer. Does my name still identify me appropriately in Canada? How frequent are the contexts that require me to explain it or use it differently? Or, have my name and identity become so established that is too much to shift my name now?

Age and life-stage play a significant role in these decision, as was particularly clear during interviews with most of the younger participants, especially those who were students or were uncertain if they would stay in Canada.

For Lina*, at age 31 and completing her doctorate, both her name and her national identity have potential to shift, depending on her life’s trajectory. Lina* was born in Japan, moved to Canada for graduate school, and is a permanent resident.

Lina*: It's kind of tough, kind of hard to balance [between] my own friends, my own identity and all those administrative issues. So what I'm thinking is that if I naturalize, become a Canadian citizen here, I might change the spelling from Rina* to Lina* and I can be just Lina* for every purpose. For now I am stuck because as a Japanese citizen my name spelling is Rina*. I cannot change my name here so I have to use two different names.

When I asked Lina* is she identified as Japanese, or Japanese-Canadian, she said that she is Japanese.
Lina*: but as I live longer here and if I have a family here then I might say that.

* Diane: But not yet.

Lina*: I'm not here long enough.

Likewise, Chang, who is an undergraduate student and reverted from using his English name “Tim” to his original name, imagines that he might one day change his name:

Chang: I feel like maybe after several years I will probably feel a little uncomfortable with the name Chang. I might want to change my names, but I think Chang is fine with the situation I have now. I've heard stories of people having difficulty even finding a job because of their names. They pass judgment that if you have a Chinese name you didn't change: you're not going to speak English well, and you're not going to have any Canadian mentor or that kind of thing. I might want to change my name later but for now I think it is fine.

*Diane: And if you change it later because of work do you think you'd go back to using Tim or would you use a different name altogether?*

Chang: I might have a different name. My parents want me to change my name. …They had to find jobs so they know how difficult it is. They don't want me to have anything aside from my actual work experience to keep me from finding a job. … If I came to a point that I have to change my name I would probably change my first name and keep my last name.

Jaspreeta*, a graduate student who has used different versions of her name at different times since she was a teenager, privileges the current time, and she acknowledges that she may also privilege a future time. As we looked at the several versions of her name she has used, I asked her to choose the best fit.
Diane: Which of the names that you wrote down do you feel is most truly you? Which one do you think identifies you the most?

Jaspreeta*: I'm going to have to say this one [points to Preeta*], because that's what I've chosen right now. That's what I feel comfortable with. It could change in the future, but I think for now that's probably who I am.

But for Lingh-Lingh*, who was thirty-one at the time of interview and had completed a doctorate, her name and identity are now so established, she no longer considers a name change.

Lingh-Lingh*: I wonder if my life would have been a little easier if my name was different, but it hasn't bothered me enough for me to want to change it. I'm at the point now where I am so old…

[Laughing at Diane’s response to her calling herself old]
You know what I mean. I've lived my whole life… Can you imagine if I came home one day and said to my husband, “You should call me … whatever?” It just wouldn't ….  

Names are a fruitful site for considering the significance of time to identity. Although a name is generally a long-term identity signifier, not just for an individual, but for a culture and a nation, immigration is a rupture, a dislocation, that calls the fit of a name into question.

7.3.2 Belonging
Besides the misuse of participants’ names contributing to feeling less accepted, the feeling of missing one's roots, this loss or longing, is in part a feeling of being consistently seen as an immigrant, as being from somewhere else and not Canadian. Several participants used the word “belong” when explaining how they felt about their name and/or being part of Canadian or other societies. For Alfie, a name is important for membership and belonging; to become a “member” of Ontario society, he formally added two traditionally relevant but English-sounding names to his two original Egyptian names.
Alfie: We're all human beings and when someone does not sound like they belong to us, we tend to sort of treat them differently, and apparently an Anglicized name is a sign of membership so to speak, or a symbol of membership. And that's it.

Jagdeep* has had many experiences where people try to determine where she belongs; this has made her feel more closed in her responses, and she chooses to use her original surname rather than her husband’s name in order to prevent people from thinking that she doesn’t belong.

Diane: Do people ask you about your name or your ethnicity, your background, because of your name?

Jagdeep*: Sometimes and I'm always cautious of that because it's trying to [determine] whether you actually belong to the Canadian mosaic. …I feel like my last name is associated with some sort of privilege and you can't tell what community I belong to if I just have my last name. So, should I try to fit in by having on my résumé [first initial and last name] and seeing if it will get in further that way because you don't know who is on the other end reading it and the sort of things they value?

Marika maintains her distinct Greek first name, but has swapped her original Greek surname for her mother’s English-sounding surname, as a way of both easing and indicating her belonging in Canada.

Marika: I was at a conference once here in Canada where there were two women of Greek heritage. They saw my name badge and started talking at me in Greek. I said, “I'm sorry I don't speak Greek”. They said, “We lost another one”, and they moved on like I was no longer worth talking to. So, I felt like I really didn't belong in the Greek community. That was actually part of my reasoning [for changing my name], as well. I wanted the name to reflect my whole heritage, not just one part that I didn't even feel like I was included in. … I still feel very uncomfortable when I'm in a room full of Anglo Saxon people. I feel weird. I feel like I
don't belong there. … Also, I visited all the countries of origin of my ancestors, like Ireland, France Greece and also Egypt. I didn't feel any kind of affinity to any of those places. I feel my sense of belonging is here.

Jehad has chosen to keep his original name and to do so proudly, to make it a name that belongs in Canada.

Jehad: I felt the need to live up to my name and to stand up for it, and that's one way of asserting my identity. And asserting my belonging and my pride. And it's my way of saying that you can be perfectly Canadian with the name Jehad. That's the whole issue, trying to displace some of these nets. The Canada of today has space for all of these kinds of things, including someone named Jehad.

At another point in our interview Jehad indicated that following the destruction of Manhattan’s Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, he wanted to make sure that Arab children in Canada who might be feeling insecure about their names would see adult figures who maintained their names despite the challenging political climate. Drawing on Canada’s geographic size, Jehad offers a great metaphor for our potential cultural pluralism: “The Canada of today has space for all of these kinds of things.”

Richard Jenkins states that identity must be validated—for participants, feelings of their names “belonging” is in part a feeling of their identity being validated by multiple, even all, audiences. One way that belonging occurs is when your name is used easily, unremarkably in day-to-day and legal circumstances. To Jehad, Canadian society has the elasticity for a name and identity such as his to belong: Jehad belongs in Canada.

### 7.3.3 Being

As we consider Jehad’s decision to belong in Canada while using his original name, we should note that other participants use the verb “to be” as an indicator of their not prioritizing fitting in by changing their names. Choosing to “be”, in this chapter, means maintaining an original name, rather than making alterations in order to belong. As discussed in the previous chapter, decisions
to maintain an original name still require forms of identity labour such as experiencing name
mispronunciations and providing contextualizing name explanations during introductions.

As an example of just “being”, consider the position of Jose Abilio who has come to be called by
his first name at school and work and his second name when he’s with his family or in the
Portuguese neighbourhood where he grew up. He feels that it’s good to just use your name in its
original form.

Jose Abilio: I'm not comfortable with people anglicizing their
name because whatever your name is at birth, use it. If it sounds
[different] use that spelling.

*Diane: Why do you feel that way?
Jose: It's just being real, being who you are. You don't need to
anglicize it. People will get comfortable with your name.

Minyang* has been identified by several names in Canada: her original name; an English
name not of her choosing; an English name of her choosing; and most recently, she has
formally altered her original name so her first name components read as one name. From
these varied name experiences, and the different types of belonging associated with each,
she has decided that she is comfortable “being different”.

Minyang*: I don't want an English name. I don't want to fit in. I
learned that being different is not bad, it's just different.

Harold* found that he was having various challenges with using his original name in Canada, so
he decided to use an English-sounding first name, but he wanted to ensure that it was a less
common name so that he would still be unique.

*Diane: So in Mainland China your name was very common, and
here your [English] name is not very common. Do you like that?
Harold*: I like being a little special, but not too special.

The relevance of “being” was recently popularized by Janet Mock who, in *Redefining Realness*,
describes herself as “being”, not “passing”: “To pass means that you are passing as something
that you’re not… Passing comes off as if you are actively… engaging in some kind of trickery or
deception” (Mock, 2014). Similarly, participants do not want to be seen as trying to be something that they are not, not to any of their audiences. But with names, there is an interesting tension related to legitimacy, one that is connoted in “being”. Audiences anticipate an appearance based on a name, and if it is not met, we may associate our surprise with some kind of failing of the name bearer. We may ask ourselves, and even voice these questions to the name bearers, how it is possible that this name is associated with this person who does not appear as we suppose they should. We might ask for more information so we can find an answer to this puzzle we’ve created for ourselves. As part of “being”, or legitimizing their identity, participants who alter their names generally do so as little as possible, or choose names that are very relevant to their original names and/or to family members. In cases where names are not traditionally relevant, they tend to be carefully selected for other attributes, or else not used for long.

To clarify the difference between belonging and being described here, trying to “belong” means wanting to have your name “fit” or be validated by varied audiences, while “being” means selecting an identity that feels legitimate, regardless of the fit with quotidian and institutional audiences. Ideally legitimacy and belonging co-exist, as they do for members of dominant culture. For most participants, the goal is to belong and to feel legitimate in that belonging; as discussed in the previous chapter, some participants do choose or have previously favoured one of these elements—feeling legitimate, or being validated—over the other at different stages in their lives. Regardless of the varied positions of being and belonging, significant identity labour ensues. This labour is not a kind of deception or performance, but rather extra effort that participants’ audiences demand—via requests or questions—in everyday interactions. Participants, and most people who have immigrated to Ontario, identify and explain themselves in ways that are understood by their current audiences on a regular, even daily, basis. This question of legitimacy is not one that is posed to members of dominant culture.

As a case in point, throughout these interviews, I am one of those audience members probing at where and how the participants belong. My questions are not so dissimilar to those that participants are asked on a regular basis, although the context differs in that the purpose of our meeting is to discuss names, the focus of our conversation is the participants’ responses, and participants chose to contribute to this study. Still, continuing with this uncomfortable probing, the next section provides participants’ responses to one such particular question: how do you identify yourself by culture, ethnicity or nationality?
7.4 Other(ing) names: National, cultural, religious identifiers

Besides personal names working as a site of choice for how to be/belong, another identity-focused decision made by participants is how to self-define in terms of cultural and national descriptors. Although quotidian audience members do ask, “where are you from?” this question of self-identification is most commonly posed on documents created by institutions. The federal government’s census form described in Chapter 5 is one example, but applications for many types of government funding, admissions to graduate schools, and other such benefits and privileges request that applicants designate who or what they are within particular categories. An increasingly common type of response made on open-question forms or in conversation is one that hyphenates two or more nationalities. While personal names offer more flexibility—and a variation of name components, letters, diacritical marks are the raw materials with which to fashion a name that works well—choosing from established identity terms is more rigid. Participants demonstrate their individuality by their choice of the number of terms, their order, and their kind (i.e. nationality, culture, religion, language).

At the end of each interview, I asked participants how they identify themselves in these established cultural or national terms. My question was generally worded in this way: What are your cultural or ethnic origins? How do you describe yourself today? Initially my motivation was simply to be able to describe people in the way they would like to be described when I wrote about them in this dissertation. But, after the first two interviews, I realized that this question resulted in very detailed and insightful responses. Participants’ decisions about where to position themselves in relation to cultural, national and even religious categories, and how these descriptors changed based on time and place, indicate the varied audience pulls that participants experience, as well as their thoughtful balancing of these audiences. These same considerations and shifts are experienced perhaps even more personally and significantly in terms of personal names, although changes to names are less obvious to an outsider.

Three of the study’s twenty-three participants describe themselves as maintaining their original ethnicity.

Christina*: I have strong affiliation with Germany. I don't like to even use the term “landed immigrant.” I usually call myself German. I don't know if it's relevant to your study but I consider
that I will be here for an undefined period of time.

*Diane:* Would you consider yourself to be German-Canadian or just German?

Christina*: For me living in Canada, European is first, then German, of course. I definitely appreciate Germany a lot more than I used to. Part of the reason I came here voluntarily was because I wasn't happy with some things, how things are done in Germany, but you do realize you are German when you are here for an extended time.

Lina*'s response was similar, but with more openness to remaining in Canada permanently:

*Diane:* Do you say, “I'm Japanese.”?

Lina*: I think so.

*Diane:* Not Japanese-Canadian?

Lina*: I say not at this moment, but as I live longer here and if I have a family here then I might say that.

Neither Christina* nor Lina* are Canadian citizens, (or at least they were not at the time of our interview), so their choice to identify with nationalities other than Canadian seems entirely logical. Lina’s perspective on the potential for time and experience within Canada to make a difference in how she describes herself in relation to the state is insightful, especially considering the following views of several participants who are longer-established in Canada. However, Siveta* is an exception (amongst the participants) in that she does have Canadian citizenship, but she self-describes with her original nationality.

Siveta*: I always have a tendency to say I am Croatian.

That Siveta*'s go-to response to questions about her national identity is one that distinguishes her within Canada, even though she does hold Canadian citizenship, points to the complexities of identity-descriptors. Because one descriptor is available, and apt, does not necessarily make it the one that is selected. Lemke’s (2008) consideration of “identities across timescales” probing the role of performativity at varying intervals and durations to suggest that a single performance,
such as a citizenship exam or ceremony, does not determine longer-term aspects of our identities
(p. 24). Harold*’s response also supports Lemke’s understanding of time and the performative:

Diane: How do you describe your ethnicity?
Harold*: Canadian-Chinese. When I first came I felt more
Chinese. Citizenship didn't make a difference for me, but my
feelings changed. The longer time I spent here, the more I felt
Canadian. It's changed slowly over time, and I'm proud to be
Canadian.

Like Harold*, the majority of participants describe themselves as a mix of national and cultural
affiliations, with a tendency for these to shift, depending on location and time. Here, Victor
disunites his citizenship from his cultural foundations.

Diane: How do you describe yourself culturally? What is your
culture?
Victor: Latin.
Diane: Do you call yourself Canadian, sometimes, too?
Victor: In terms of citizenship, yes. I cherish many of the values,
but culturally I feel like a blend of Canadian and Latin culture.
[Feeling Canadian] comes with time. Now, I feel like I'm in-
between. I'm involved in community work and stuff like that. I
share some of the values; I criticize some of them. That makes me
feel like, okay, I am part of the culture because I am able to say,
“No, I don't agree with this.” That is part of the culture. In that
sense, I feel proud of the Canadian culture.

But my background… I spent 32 years in Colombia. All of my
childhood, I grew up sharing some values and knowing my friends
in Colombia. I don't have access to them now as easily as I did
before, so those ties still exist, and my background and the music I
like, and my humour and the cultural things I like are still more
Colombian than Canadian. Culturally, I am Colombian, but who I
am now—I am starting a business in Canada and am selling things
to Canadians—in this way I feel that I am more part of Canadian society. Initially I didn't feel like this, but right now I am feeling this way.

Victor’s feeling of being “in-between” is shared by many participants, and this is very much the affective state of be(long)ing. Although he is optimistic about his future in Canada, Victor cannot ignore the culture that shaped him until his early thirties, especially in that his family and close friends remain in Colombia.

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Three of the study’s participants are of Portuguese heritage. In Ontario there exists a strong Portuguese diaspora and all three of the participants mention their immersion and strong ties to their traditional audiences.

Jose Abilio: I say I’m Portuguese-Canadian.

*Diane: Have you always thought of yourself that way?*

Jose Abilio: I always make sure to include Canadian, so definitely not Portuguese by itself. As soon as I step into Portugal I ask, “Do I want to be one of them or act like one of them?” That's a huge part of my identity being Canadian. So I'm Canadian, definitely.

Marta: I identify as a Luso-Canadian which is a Portuguese word for it. Um, we're Canadian. I always called myself both. It's hard to explain, because I always feel like I'm Portuguese, but we're all Canadians, right? I've always been that way. I'm Portuguese, but I've got the best interests of Canada.

Tony: I say Canadian, or Portuguese-Canadian or Luso-Canadian. Have you ever heard of that? It's like saying Sino-Canadian instead of Chinese-Canadian.

Although Jose Abilio was born in Canada, he articulates his cultural identity in a similar way to Marta and Tony, who both came to Canada as children. Marta and Tony each use the endonym “Luso” to articulate their cultural identities, rather than the exonym “Portuguese”; this indicates a kind of fluency and belonging with both Portuguese-
speaking diaspora and quotidian audiences. The continued strength of the Portuguese community in Ontario may be part of why the term Luso-Canadian is an available term in our discourse on national identity. During the interviews, I was grateful that both Marta and Tony took this opportunity to introduce me to the term. Their actions support the thesis that when we use less common personal names and hyphenated or fine-tuned cultural identifiers, these labels are taken on and shared and extended; this means that as an evolving culture, our language shifts and create new spaces and ways of identifying.

Several participants move beyond the two-nation hyphenated terms for describing citizenship.

Ronit: I’m an Israeli-born Canadian with Russian parents.

Although Ronit’s identifying narrative is simple, much is stated. Through this description, Ronit suggests that she acknowledges and values her birth in Israel, that she identifies as Canadian, and that she is influenced by her parents’ birthplace and cultural experience of being Russian. Indeed, this narrative structure carries far more information than a series of terms interlocked with hyphens: we are able to understand a family’s movements over time, influences based on location, and how an individual values and prioritizes each. Although in the next example, Hanaa uses hyphenated terms, she creates a narrative by amending her hyphenated self-description twice.


Diane: And has that changed over time? When did you start to consider yourself Canadian, as well? After you were here a short time, or longer?

Hanaa: I started identifying with this country as my home when I had my children here, definitely. But there was a moment, a highlight of my feeling of belonging here was when my older son

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30 The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (2007) defines the terms endonym and exonyms in these ways: an “endonym” is a “name of a geographical feature in an official or well-established language occurring in that area where the feature is located” and an “exonym” is a “name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language is spoken, and differing in its form from the name used in an official or well-established language of that area where the geographical feature is located”.
graduated from university. It was just such a beautiful moment. His school was just everything that Canada is to me… I really felt wonderful to be part of this country.

Hanaa’s response shows her increasingly precise set of descriptors as well as the pairing that she uses most commonly. It is during a performative event for her eldest son, his graduation from medical school, that Hanaa feels a highpoint in her belonging in Canada. All of the labour and effort feels worth it and can be celebrated in the achievement of this goal.

Below, you’ll see that because Jehad is the first participant in the study, I was still learning how best to ask the interview questions; the structure of my question about his identity restricted his response. Even so, my follow-up probe did prompt an explanation of how his other personal identifiers are no longer used, partly for the purposes of belonging.

_Diane: Would you identify yourself Arab-Canadian?_  
_Jehad: Yes._

_Diane: Did that change over time?_  
_Jehad: Yeah. Now that's the most comfortable identity I have. It’s Arab-Canadian because it's much less important to me that I'm a Muslim, or a Palestinian for that matter, as much as I'm committed to the Palestinian National struggle. The overall identity that I'm most comfortable with is really an Arab-Canadian. My identity kind of reaches out. My world is a lot more than being a Palestinian and a Muslim. I grew up in a place that is 100% Muslim. So, this is a different world._

The use of hyphenated nationalities is a reliable short-hand, but its common use positions hyphenated Canadian citizenship as a possibility and even an expectation that makes some participants feel uncomfortable. Especially when including “Canadian” as part of ones identity. While expressing feelings of being Canadian, some participants also explain their discomfort with this identity.

_Evelyn: I do feel Canadian, although I do feel very strong heritage with Greece…. Also, because I was raised in Romania, I feel more_
Romanian as a background. When I travel abroad I feel more Canadian and people call me that. The Greeks don't identify me as Greek, and even in Romania they call me Canadian. My accent changed slightly and I say words in English without realizing I do that. And I feel I identify more with my friends here, who are Canadian, [and] with my daughter's friends who are Canadian…. The years apart change [us]. When I'm in Canada, I feel Canadian, but society makes me feel not Canadian, somehow, indirectly. So maybe I'm not as Canadian as I should be.

The participants’ views echo what is stated in theoretical work on hyphenated Canadian identity: Mahtani writes, “since the inauguration of multicultural policy in Canada in 1971, the notion of the hyphen, employed to articulate the marriage of ethnic and national identity…has taken on a particular political, and, at the same time, paradoxical, salience in Canada” (2002, p. 1). She adds that the hyphen is seen as a byproduct of the implementation of multiculturalism in Canada, a policy that aimed to acknowledge every Canadian’s right to identify with the cultural tradition of their choice, while retaining Canadian citizenship. For others, however, the hyphen is understood as a union of contradictions, each word symbolizing the inversion of the ‘other’ (Hanchard 1990), marking places of both ambiguity and multiplicity” (Mahtani 2002, p. 1-2)

Potentially because of these contradictions inherent in a partially Canadian identity, some participants do not describe themselves in hyphenated terms, but do expand on their conflicted Canadian identities, and demonstrate that identity decisions are influenced by location as well as feedback provided by quotidian, institutional or traditional audiences.

Jagdeep*: I always find this complicated. Am I British or Canadian or by religion or culture? So I guess it would depend on where I am, how I would identify myself. You always see those little boxes on how you identify yourself: South Asian or Punjabi Sikh.

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Lingh-Lingh*: In Canada, because they know I'm Canadian, I say I'm Chinese. Outside, I say Canadian. Then if they say “Originally?” which they sometimes do, then I say I'm Chinese. Then they sometimes say, “Oh, but you have a Vietnamese first name.” So I will say, “Yes, my parents were born there,” so then the whole story [is required]... I met a girl at a conference once and she was from China. She was asking me what my background was and I said that I was Chinese. I explained that my parents were born in Vietnam, but my grandparents were from China. She said, “You are not really Chinese.” That's the first time that ever happened to me where I was rejected by my own group. It was really weird. She was telling me I couldn't self-identify that way because of the journey my family had gone on. I guess that's partly why they left Vietnam, too, because it was one of those things. They didn't belong there. So it was weird.

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Tian: To be honest, sometimes I would associate myself as more Chinese than Canadian. I passionately claim to be Chinese. However, I innately or deep down I'm definitely not more Chinese than Canadian. I'm no more Chinese than Canadian…. none of them outweighs the other.

The remaining identity descriptors comprise the views of the three participants who have successfully undertaken formal name changes. It is interesting, and perhaps unsurprising, that their formal name changes complement their views of themselves as, or at least nearly, “Canadian”.

*Diane: Do you describe yourself as Canadian in terms of ethnicity?*
Marika: Yes, I've always been the one nobody knows what to do with.\textsuperscript{31}

Alfie: Definitely Canadian. My way of thinking, my views in life, my philosophies are all North American. I guess my experience in the States… I really liked the American values at that time, you know, when I came in the fifties.

Diane: When did you shift to feeling like you're Canadian?

Alfie: I came here in '68, and four or five years later Canadian values started to settle in. … I admire Canadian values, and they have become mine.

Marika and Alfie’s views of themselves as fully Canadian are in contrast to how the other participants, who have shifted their names informally or not at all, see themselves as hyphenated Canadians or as not Canadian. The third participant who has completed a formal name change is Minyang*. By establishing her identity as between Canadian and hyphenated Chinese-Canadian, Minyang* offers an image of the kinds of spaces and continuums that potentially exist within these pre-determined categories.

Minyang*: [I’m ] between Canadian and Chinese-Canadian. I want to go with Canadian but the Chinese part of me sticks with me even though I don't like it that much. I can't get rid of it.

Through participants’ descriptions of cultural and national identities in both simple and complex hyphenated terms, as well as their expressions of discomfort with the “Canadian” identity component, this section has unpacked some of the complexity of choosing how to identify within Canada. Participants’ responses relate to their feelings of being, belonging, and their stage of life.

\textsuperscript{31} At the end of the study, when I doublechecked my representation of participants with the participants themselves, Marika noted that without the context of our conversation, what she meant in this sentence became unclear. She added this explanation, “When people ask about my ethnicity, I actually do say that I’m half Greek, a quarter Irish and a quarter French, or I say that my father was Greek from Egypt and my mother was half Irish and half French, but francophone from rural Quebec. When people ask what my nationality is, I say Canadian. For some people ethnicity and nationality are the same thing; to me they are not. On census forms I do check off Greek, French, Irish and Canadian as my ancestry. I am all of these things.”
7.5 Other(ing) names: “FOB” and “Whitewashed”

Besides formal cultural identifiers, such as the terms used on census and other bureaucratic forms, slang phrases also demarcate gradients of belonging. When I asked Jaspreeta* the same question as other participants, she indicated that she receives some suggestions from her traditional audience that she does not belong, or that she should behave differently in order to better belong.

Jaspreeta*: I'm Indo-Canadian.

Diane: Has that changed over time?

Jaspreeta*: I've always been kind of that. I know a lot of people who say “I'm Canadian” [laughs] “and it doesn't matter where we're from.” But I associate myself as Indian and Canadian…. It's funny because I grew up in Waterloo and at the time when I lived there, there weren't many Indian people there. So my friends who grew up in the Mississauga area, where there's a lot of Indian people, they use certain terms that basically say that I'm not Indian…

Jaspreeta*: A lot of people don't think I'm very cultural. But, they don't know anything: I think I am. I still have my values and everything. It's just things, like the way I speak, or like the things I wear, the events that I don't attend… I don't attend all of these Indian events, like Bollywood stuff. I'm not really into that. So I get kind of classified as not being very cultural because of that. Even though I don't think that way at all. I think I'm Indian, but some people don't.

Diane: So the friends you're talking about from Mississauga, they see themselves as more Indian?

Jaspreeta*: I'll tell you the word: they call me whitewashed.

Always. I found that offensive at first. They basically told me I was disrespecting my culture.

Diane: That sounds hard to hear.
Jaspreeta*: But there's nothing wrong with that. That's who I am. That's totally okay, and…. I'm kind of a mix of both. Yeah, they classify me as that sometimes.

This criticism and labeling by Jaspreeta*’s friends about the degree to which she is Indian is not dissimilar to the discomfort that participants feel when their Canadian identity is questioned, when they are asked where they are really from, or the question of origins emphasizes original ancestry. The term “whitewashed” is sometimes used by diaspora to describe too little traditional affiliation, or rather, too much affiliation with quotidian and institutional audiences. Jaspreeta* describes herself as a Indo-Canadian, but her Indo-Canadian friends (or perhaps they would describe themselves differently) modify her identity with the term “whitewashed” which at least initially offended Jaspreeta*, although she agrees that she doesn’t take part in many of the traditional audience’s culturally representative pastimes. During our interview, Tian defined and used the term “whitewashed” to describe other Chinese-Canadians he knows who have changed their names:

Tian: Whitewashed means someone who relinquishes their culture. … Whitewashed means negligence, too, about your past. No matter how short that root might have been, now you don't care. I've met a lot of Chinese kids who don't speak Chinese at home, who don't like China at all, who hate China… when someone doesn't understand that much about their own country and doesn't want to and doesn't care to, that is whitewashed to me.

And at the other end of the continuum of belonging within a traditional audience, Chang taught me the term “FOB”. When Chang described himself as Chinese, I asked if he felt Canadian at all:

Chang: I do, sometimes I do, because—I don't know if it's a bad word—but sometimes people refer to refugees as FOB [pronounced “fahb”] and I don't see myself so not native because, unlike other people, I can speak English whenever I want. I don't have that much difficulty speaking English.
Diane: What was the word, FOB?
Chang: That's a word people at the university are using, people who just landed or people who just came. They keep their cultural background and just regroup with people who just came and they form this group and don't really talk with others.
Diane: Is it F-O-B [spelling it]?
Chang: Yes.
Diane: I've never heard it, but I'm not in the know sometimes. So, in that way you feel more Canadian versus FOB?
Chang: Yes, I do. Because I do have some white Canadian friends I sometimes talk with. When I hang out with my Chinese friends, they see me talking with a foreign person and they say, “Oh, you know some white people.” So I feel a little different. Some of my Chinese friends only hang out with Chinese people. They feel really nervous when they start speaking English so they don't have any Canadian friends.

While the term “whitewashed” refers to significant affiliation with quotidian and institutional audiences, the term FOB (which was later explained to me as an acronym for “Fresh off the Boat”) is used by diaspora and others to refer to people seen as having too little affiliation with or understanding of quotidian audiences. For participants, the feeling of belonging is along continuums of Canadian-ness as well as traditional-ness. From each audience, there are questions about the rightful place of belonging for the participant. For this reason, it is desirable for participants to carve out a precise and specific location along these continuums, one that they can defend and maintain.

7.6 Name contributions from “mixed race”: “mixie” and “Cablinasian”

Although none of the participants in this study identify as mixed race, literature describing and theorizing the experiences and views of people who identify as being of more than one racialized ethnicity benefits this discussion. Here, journalist Nick Hune-Brown describes his experiences of growing up a “mixie” in Toronto and includes an articulation of his own biases. Minelle
Mahtani, perhaps Canada’s most established “mixed race” scholar, draws from her project of interviewing Canadian women of mixed racialized backgrounds and contributes to this discussion of working between multiple audiences and feeling excluded. Finally, LeiLani Nishime’s critical race and critical rhetoric reading of professional golfer Tiger Woods’ creation of the term “Cablinasian”, to describe his Caucasian, Black, Indian and Asian heritage, describes the benefits and challenges of Woods’ innovative alternative to hyphenating his cultural affiliations.

Illustrating the significance of perceived readings from both quotidian and traditional audiences, Hune-Brown (2013) writes about his experience of explaining his own (mixed Chinese-British) cultural origins:

Today, when I think clearly and honestly about my childhood mixie pride, it wasn’t just about celebrating my snowflake-unique cultural identity. There was something ugly there. To insist on being seen as mixed race allowed me to avoid being categorized as Asian. The unfair stereotype of the Chinese guy—some geeky, sexless striver who probably spent his spare time learning rote math at the Kumon32 on Bathurst Street—was so distasteful that I backpedalled away from it as fast as possible, never mind that none of my Chinese friends were anything like that.

In another article, Hune-Brown reflects on being part Asian, when enthusiasm for Chinese-American basketball player Jeremy Lin, “Linsanity”, reached its zenith in February 2012.

No matter how you happen to think of yourself, an Asian face means that people see you within a particular set of expectations. … Part of the promise of Jeremy Lin, after all, was that he could somehow distance me from the stereotypical Asian. Part of his appeal was his unaccented English, his fluency with basic North American …

32 Kumon is a very popular “afterschool, self-learning program for kids”: www.kumon.ca
And that's how prejudice works, poisoning everything. It's not just about white magazine writers airing fears that our universities are “too Asian,” as Maclean’s did last year. It's about Asian kids thinking their own parents are too Asian. It's about second-generation Tamil high-school students tormenting the “fresh-off-the-boaters” who give them a bad name. It's about black hip-hop artists rapping about “sexy young ladies of the light-skin breed.” It's about the way that, when your face represents an unwanted stereotype, the easiest and most cowardly route is to distance yourself from the people that display those qualities.

Hune-Brown articulates very clearly several feelings and views: he demonstrates that who comprises traditional and quotidian audiences is less obvious for someone of mixed race. He also extends the previous section that discusses the terms “FOB” and “whitewashed” to provide further examples of how the perceptions of traditional audiences are significant. Particularly, he suggests that how diaspora see and interact with one another is linked to how diaspora are seen by dominant culture; in Hune-Brown’s terms, dominant culture’s prejudices “poison… everything”. Although quotidian and institutional audiences are not directly equivalent to “dominant culture”, Hune-Brown articulates this way that audiences work to condition one another. In this example, institutional and quotidian audiences’ perspectives shift how traditional audiences see themselves. Because of its official, legal position, institutional policy, even at the level of word choice (discourses of the institutional audience), influences the language and the perspectives of quotidian and traditional audiences. Yet for quotidian and traditional audiences to influence institutional audiences generally requires an organized approach or an official challenge. Quotidian audiences may influence traditional audiences because the benefits of belonging in the quotidian audience are often tied to broader social and economic success.

Focusing on the influence of institutional policy, Mahtani (2004) adds that Canada’s multicultural policy “demands a model of homogenous people, which is not representative of the complex and diverse ethnicity of the country” (p. 4). Mahtani proposes that “‘mixed race’ women construct new kinds of citizenship outside of the ‘two solitudes’ model, which take into consideration and transcend racialized elements” (p. 4). Similar to the participants interviewed about their names, some of the women in Mahtani’s study “find it difficult to identify as
‘Canadian’ because of systematic racism and dominant definitions of the national narrative as ‘white’” (p. 5). Mahtani (2002) also probes the label “mixed race” and notes that the women she interviewed “alter their emphasis in announcing their ‘mixed-race’ status in a variety of contexts” just as this study’s participants may use their names differently within different audiences (p. 476).

Mahtani consistently encloses in critical quotation marks the term she is interrogating—“mixed race”—to designate this label as problematic. However, she describes the term as a “fluid ‘linguistic home’ across racialized territories, a kind of wayside station during a long trek or perhaps a comfortable place for shelter over longer periods of time” (p. 476). This, too, resembles how some of the participants have identified with certain cultural identifiers at some points in their lives but no longer do. Similarly, participants’ use of versions of their names, or even English names, at certain life stages also resembles Mahtani’s description of the often-temporary benefits of using the term “mixed race”. As a cultural geographer, Mahtani’s focus on space and notion of ‘home’ in “linguistic home” suits her project, but her accent on the linguistic that is of greater interest to this current chapter. As Mahtani suggests with this quote from Bramadat (2001): “Identity emerges out of dialogue” (p. 7).

Hune-Brown’s description of his conflicted feelings about his own cultural identity demonstrates how the category of traditional audience can be more complex for individuals of mixed cultural heritage. This may be especially true for celebrities. As exemplified by basketball star Jeremy Lin’s capturing the attention of so many people of Asian heritage, traditional audiences may generally be keen to support celebrities who are seen as sharing share cultural attributes, especially celebrities who are succeeding in fields that are generally dominated by people of other cultural backgrounds. Within this context, Nishime (2012) describes how Tiger Woods’ addition of a new label to racial discourse shook up the status quo of American racial categories, at least temporarily. Although Woods’ traditional audiences would have preferred that Woods choose the cultural identifiers that they use, supporters of his linguistic creativity and individualized identity label took up “Cablinasian” as a cause and in 1997 proposed a bill to include “multiracial” as a category on the American census (Nishime, p. 92). Both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium opposed the bill and “argued that the new category would undercount legally recognized racial groups resulting in less political power and fewer resources for those groups”
(Nishime, p. 92). While traditional audiences’ desire to claim Tiger Woods as one of their own is understandable, for Woods, his racial identity is more than its parts.

Nishime suggests that Cabilasian is “an exemplary approach to multiracial naming rather than an idiosyncratic solution” (p. 93). She sees the public debate about adding “multiracial” to existing racial designations as demonstrating “how official categories, such as those listed on the census, do not reflect already constituted racial categories but help create those categories as they name them” (Nishime, p. 98). Woods’ choice to continue to use the racialized terms Asian and Indian as part of Cabilasian “remains within the cultural logics of racial difference” but simultaneously “tries to rearticulate them in an altered way, like a palimpsest layering new meaning over the old” (Nishime, p. 103). Woods’ case is exceptional because of his fame and influence, yet his creation of the term “Cabilasian” bears similarities to this study’s participants’ decisions about their hyphenated status in Canada and their personal name choices. Through Cabilasian, Woods chose to be and belong in a way that felt to him like a legitimate expression of his ethnic identity, even though it was not a popular choice amongst some of his traditional audiences.

7.7 Feelings of nostalgia: Name choice as an expression of nostalgia

Woods’ creation of the term Cabilasian to represent himself racially serves as a comparable illustration of the kinds of decisions many of the participants make about how to use their personal names in Canada. Determining a label of this kind is like creating a riddle or a puzzle, a playful invention out of existing terms. It gives the reader pause: many will never understand the word, but those who do will have a new appreciation for its creator. As is likely the case for many people who have lived largely in English-speaking Canada, I could not intuitively understand most participants’ names as I can with names that are familiar to me because I grew up with them or have heard them many times. It was necessary to have a conversation with each participant to understand their names, and to begin to see the significance of their name decisions. These realizations came through explanations: the mysteries were unraveled. Many participants show a lot of creativity in the audience balance that they attain with their name shifts: Victor, Jagdeep*, Preeta*, Minyang*, Siveta*. Without an explanation, these names would remain puzzles, and I could not appreciate them as such: they would just be unknown words.
Svetlana Boym (2001) describes these kinds of “riddles and puzzles” as the language of nostalgia (p. xvii). Many of the participants speak of their feelings about dislocation and rootlessness with an urgency and discomfort, but these feelings could also be described with the more poetic word, nostalgia. Boym describes nostalgia as a kind of public feeling: nostalgia is “not merely an individual sickness but a symptom of our age, a historical emotion” (p. xvi). Nostalgia is an aspect of be(long)ing: “unlike melancholia, which confines itself to the planes of individual consciousness, nostalgia is about the relationship between individual biography and the biography of groups or nations, between personal and collective memory” (p. xvi).

For those who belong, riddles and puzzles are less a currency of communication. As Boym writes, “When we are at home, we don’t need to talk about it” (p. 251). To be at home is to be able to interact with all your audiences simultaneously, yet seamlessly. But because people who have immigrated may feel something more akin to nostalgia, to be(long)ing, communication comes in the forms of puzzles and riddles. Obvious and direct modes don’t suit the requirement of interacting with several audiences simultaneously. Instead there is diasporic intimacy. Names and cultural identities are intimated: “To intimate means ‘to communicate’ with a hint or another indirect sign; to imply subtly” (Boym, p. 251).

According to Boym, ‘diasporic intimacy’ is “not opposed to uprootedness and defamiliarization but is constituted by it” (p. 252):

Diasporic intimacy can be approached only through indirection and intimacy, through stories and secrets. It is spoken of in a foreign language that reveals the inadequacies of translation. … In contrast to the utopian images of intimacy as transparency, authenticity and ultimate belonging, diasporic intimacy is dystopic by definition; it is rooted in the suspicion of a single home, in shared longing without belonging. It thrives on the hope of the possibilities of human understanding and survival, of unpredictable chance encounters, but hope is not utopian. (Boym, p. 252-3)

Applying this excerpt to the example at hand, that of choosing how to use your name after immigrating, it seems that most participants’ name choices are nostalgia-fuelled. Choosing an English name that is commonly used in Canada would be the only sort of non-puzzle, non-
riddled option, but even that, because of its seeming unsuitability may be discomfitting, may seem to demand unriddling.

In terms of name choices, Boym cautions, “diasporic intimacy does not promise a comforting recovery of identity through shared nostalgia for the lost home and homeland; in this case, the opposite is true” (p. 254). Rather, maintaining an original name or making a name choice that demonstrates cultural origins can work as a sort of marker:

Diasporic intimacy could be seen as the mutual attraction of two immigrants from different parts of the world or the sense of precarious coziness of a foreign home. Just as one learns to live with alienation and reconciles oneself to the uncanniness of the surrounding world and to the strangeness of the human touch, there comes a surprise, a pang of intimate recognition, a hope that sneaks through the back door in the midst of the habitual estrangement of everyday life abroad. (Boym, p. 254)

Boym draws on Arendt (1968) and Appadurai (1996) to support her view of diasporic intimacy as a kind of nostalgia. Arendt sees intimacy as “the shrinking of experience, something that binds us to national or ethnic community (even if it is a pariah community), to home and homeland, rather than to the world” (p. 253). An original name is a choice to privilege a traditional audience over others that may seem part of the outside world. And Appadurai suggests “that in light of globalization, mass immigration and the development of electronic media, one has to redefine the notion of ‘locale.’” (p. 258). Overlapping audiences may be a particularly relevant way of understanding participants’ challenges because according to Appadurai ‘locale’ “is no longer a specific place where one belongs but rather a social context that could export into diaspora” (Boym p. 258). The actual physical location or in-person versus virtual distinction of interactions may be less important than a balance or interaction between audiences. Yet, as Appadurai continues, “nostalgia depends on the materiality of place, sensual perceptions, smells and sounds” (Boym p. 258). Names can serve as a trigger of nostalgia, a reminder of another culture. In their written and spoken forms, original names from outside of Ontario are materials and sounds that intimate, that are read and understood—unriddled—by those in the know.

Boym’s description of diasporic intimacy continues to align with this project’ understanding of names, including the varied shifts and reversions and uncertainty about future name choices that
many participants describe: “Diasporic intimacy is belated and never final; objects and places were lost in the past and one knows that they can be lost again. The illusion of complete belonging has been shattered. Yet, one discovers that there is still a lot to share” (p. 255). Much can be intimated and communicated, especially by and between people who recognize themselves as not part of dominant culture, those who can unriddle what is being intimated in a name decision. Nostalgia is in part a result of this feeling of being perceived as not belonging. It is a longing for a place where you are seen as someone who belongs. Sometimes belonging is sharing the feeling of be(long)ing with others.

7.8 Feelings of interpellation

Continuing to consider the significance of established labels and names and their role in the feeling of be(long)ing, we next examine the role of interpellation within identity labour. While Boym’s description of nostalgia is a means for understanding the motivations for particular name choices, interpellation provides a view into the roles of validation and legitimization of those choices. Interpellation, originally described by Louis Althusser (1971), is a theory which states that individuals’ identities, how they are know to themselves and others, are created by how individuals are “hailed” or verified by discourses, particularly institutional discourses. How one is seen or hailed, in part, makes someone who they are. Butler suggests that “the mark interpellation makes is not descriptive, but inaugurative. It seeks to introduce a reality rather than report on an existing one; it accomplishes this introduction through a citation of existing convention” (1997, p. 33). Woods’ introduction of Cablinasian to the racial discourse in the United States of America can be understood as both a citation and an extension of existing conventions. Although organizations advocating for members of particular cultural backgrounds eagerly sought to have Woods recognize himself as they saw him, less prominent and less recognized forces were also at work interpellating Tiger Woods.

Interpellation is brought into this discussion as a way of making sense of another kind of pull at work in the feeling of be(long)ing. In Hune-Brown’s statement “No matter how you happen to think of yourself, an Asian face means that people see you within a particular set of expectations” we see a consistent, everyday hailing which is not desired. And Hune-Brown describes, with some discomfort, using his mixed race identity to attempt to distance himself from being categorized with untrue, unfair stereotypes of Asians.
Previous excerpts from participants reveal similar kinds of feelings. Evelyn feels that she is Canadian and identifies most with other Canadians, yet she is sometimes made to feel as if she is not Canadian enough. Minyang* sees herself as somewhere between Canadian and Chinese-Canadian, unable to “get rid of” being Chinese. But in terms of her personal name, Minyang* is happy to have formally established her original, Chinese name in a way that works well within all of her audiences. Several participants spoke of their concerns about not being selected for work because of their names; in this final situation, people are interpellated as unsuitable for job interviews, even though present only in name.

Althusser’s original example of interpellation is a situation where a police officer calls out to a group of people, “hey you there” (1971, p. 174). The person who turns around, who is interpellated by the call, becomes the criminal; this is apparently the person whose guilt creates recognition of the police officer’s call (p. 174). The person is aware of the potential of being hailed. And when they respond, they are seen by the police officer as the guilty party. They are interpellated. The policeman’s shout together with the reception of the shout, creates a criminal subject, names a criminal. In comparison to this original example, part of the identity labour of someone who has immigrated to Canada, is their awareness of being seen as other, as an outsider. Interpellation occurs when participants, through their experience in Ontario, are poised to expect questions, to have to give explanations, to be named as other. Although a participant, for example Marika, sees herself as Canadian, she has an experience where, because of her name, she is hailed as Greek. This type of event happens to her regularly, in various ways, and so she considers changing her name.

Imagine the quite plausible scene in which one is called by a name and one turns around only to protest the name: “That is not me, you must be mistaken!” And then imagine that the name continues to force itself upon you, to delineate the space you occupy, to construct a social positionality. Indifferent to your protests, the force of interpellation continues to work. One is still constituted by discourse, but at a distance from oneself. Interpellation is an address that regularly misses its mark, it requires the recognition of an authority at the same time that it confers identity through successfully compelling that recognition. Identity is a function of that circuit, but it does not preexist it. (Butler 1997, p. 33)
Butler suggests that, “Althusser’s view of interpellation requires revision. The subject need not always turn around in order to be constituted as a subject, and the discourse that inaugurates the subject need not take the form of a voice at all” (1997, p. 31). Although Marika’s examples tend to be spoken, there are many situations described by participants where interpellation is unvoiced: census form categories, truncated names on identity cards, ignored résumés.

The interpellative name may arrive without a speaker—on bureaucratic forms, the census, adoption papers, employment applications. Who utters such words? The bureaucratic and disciplinary diffusion of sovereign power produces a terrain of discursive power that operates without a subject, but that constitutes a subject in the course of its operation. This does not mean that there are no individuals who write and distribute the forms. It only means that they are not the originators of the discourse they convey, and that their intentions, however strong, are not finally what control the meaning of that discourse. (Butler 1997, p. 34)

Butler continues, “Interpellation must be dissociated from the figure of the voice in order to become the instrument and mechanism of discourses whose efficacy is irreducible to their moment of enunciation” (1997, p. 32). Indeed, as has been demonstrated in previous chapters, interpellation occurs at each level of functionary, and through interrelated activities. This feeling of interpellation missing the mark, of consistently being misnamed—literally—or perhaps misrecognized as in being seen or read as just one aspect of one’s identity (e.g., Asian, or immigrant) is uncomfortable. It’s the physical squeeze of a form that won’t quite allow your full name to fit, or the shocking moment of opening an important envelope from Citizenship and Immigration Canada and realizing that your chosen country of residence has misidentified you on your most important legal document. These kinds of negative feelings are part of the identity labour of be(long)ing. Many of the hails that participants experience within their quotidian and tradition audiences succeed as interpellation, and do not validate the identities that participants choose for themselves.

The name constitutes one socially, but one’s social constitution takes place without one knowing. Indeed, one may well imagine oneself in ways that are quite contrary of how one is socially constituted; one may, as it were, meet the socially constructed self by surprise, with alarm or pleasure, even with shock.
And such an encounter underscores the ways in which the name wields a linguistic power of constitution in ways that are indifferent to the one who bears the name. (1997, p. 31)

Be(long)ing is this constant tension over participants’ identities: audiences hailing participants with misnomers, with stereotypes, with limited perspectives, with or without participants’ awareness. And when participants are aware, they must determine, or even have previously determined, how to respond: accept the hail, correct the hail, ignore the hail?

Interpellation is an act of speech whose “content” is neither true nor false: it does not have description as its primary task. Its purpose is to indicate and establish a subject in subjection, to produce its social contours in space and time. Its reiterative operation has the effect of sedimenting its “positionality” over time. (Butler 1997, p. 34)

The repetition of the hailing, even when it misses the mark, has effects; this is due to its consistency across audiences and over time. Participants find themselves frequently classified by their original heritage, or by their earlier act of immigrating, and although they do not generally wish to disguise these aspects of their identities, they do ask why those experiences become the focus of so many interactions. To disrupt this focus becomes the motivation for participants’ contextual or transformative identity labour. Decisions and actions taken with how to proceed with names, by designing an alternate or additional version, or by establishing beneficial scripts that tend to work with particular audiences, can ease some of these pains, but not entirely. (In some cases, participants choose to hyphenate their ethnic identities because they acknowledge that how they are seen matters, and they know that they are not seen just as Canadian.) Focusing on injurious speech, such as being called a derogatory name or dismissed with a stereotype, Butler writes:

One is not simply fixed by the name that one is called. In being called an injurious name, one is derogated and demeaned. But the name holds out another possibility as well: by being called a name, one is also, paradoxically, given a certain possibility for social existence, initiated into a temporal life of language that exceeds the prior purposes that animate that call. Thus, the injurious address may appear to fix or paralyze the one it hails, but it may also produce and unexpected
and enabling response. If to be addressed is to be interpellated, then the offensive call runs the risk of inaugurating a subject in speech who comes to use language to counter the offensive call. (1997, p. 2).

The inaccurate or denigrating hail is then the motivator, the trigger for the actions that follow, and because interpellation is based in language—in words chosen to describe and to name, in categories chosen to classify—it is with this same lexical currency that participants respond. Butler asks if we are “linguistic beings… who require language order to be” (1997, p. 1). And as support for the significance of language, Butler describes being called by name as “one of the conditions by which a subject is constituted by language” (p. 2). So participants use language, in particular personal names, and ethnic and national identifiers, as the medium of their responses to express the tension of their feeling of belonging.

As we think about worlds that might one day become thinkable, sayable, legible, the opening up of the foreclosed and the saying of the unspeakable become part of the very “offense” that must be committed in order to expand the domain of linguistic survival. The resignification of speech requires opening new contexts, speaking in ways that have never yet been legitimated, and hence producing legitimation in new and future forms. (1997, p. 41)

And this is where we see the shifts that illustrate Williams’ theory, the movement from feelings to structure. Appropriate names are designed, spoken, insisted upon in public spaces. Forms that are too narrow to capture the full legal names of people who immigrate are contested, people’s descriptions of their own social locations are stated, regardless of the number of categories that do or don’t contribute.

7.9 Feelings of pluralism: Including new names in Ontario’s cultural lexicon

*My identity kind of reaches out. –Jehad*

Drawing on these two previous sections, first on how the public feeling of nostalgia diaspora experiences translates into names that intimate meaning and identities that may require unriddling, and second on interpellation and its fuelling of “unexpected or enabling response[s]” (Butler 1997, p. 2), this section continues this explanation of how feelings turn into structure,
how names are added to Ontario’s cultural lexicon. False hailing provides an impetus and
diasporic intimacy offers a mode, but through what practical actions do new names begin to be
recognized and understood by quotidian audiences? And how are these names then, with their
particular dimensions, incorporated into the set of Canadian names that the institutional audience
recognizes and creates forms and databases to capture and store?

Prior to Butler, there were many authors who understood speech, and words, as affecting our
lives, as creating new realities (i.e., Giambattista Vico, J. L. Austin). But, as Butler writes,
Hannah Arendt “is probably one of the first 20th century political theorists to make a very strong
case for performative speech, speech that founds or ‘enstates’ a new possibility for social and
political life” (Butler & Spivak 2007, p. 27). Butler, through her own work on performative
speech, continues Arendt’s focus of demonstrating and evolving the ways that we understand
language use as producing our current day, politicized realities. In their 2007 conversation, Who
Sings the Nation-State: Language Politics, Belonging, Butler and Gayatri Spivak are concerned
by the language used in the U.S.A. to describe citizenship, and similar to the othering established
through specific state categories described in Chapter 5, Butler suggests that the “modes of
national belonging designated by ‘the nation’ are thoroughly stipulative and criterial: one is not
simply dropped from the nation; rather, one is found to be wanting and, so, becomes a “wanting
one” through the designation and its implicit and active criteria” (Butler in Butler & Spivak
2007, p. 31). As a further critique of this problem Butler writes:

…we deprive ourselves of the lexicon we need to understand the other networks
of power… or power is recast in that place, or even saturated in that place. It
seems to me that we’ve actually subscribed to a heuristic that only lets us make
the same description time and again, which ends up taking on the perspective of
sovereignty [insert subject here] and reiterating its terms and frankly, I think
nothing could be worse (Butler in Butler & Spivak 2007, p. 43).

But in this conversation, Butler offers an excellent example of a shift to this type of linguistic
roadblock and challenge to greater inclusivity. This example is the 2006 activism of illegal
residents in California in which they sang both the Mexican and the U. S. national anthem in
Spanish (p. 58). In response, then-President George W. Bush claimed that “the national anthem
can only be sung in English”; here, language is used to “assert criterial control over who belongs
and who does not” (Butler and Spivak 2007, p. 58-9). But this lack of authorization “does not make the anthem any less sing-able” in Spanish or in any other language, and the event is one way of tracing the “rhetorical terms through which the nation is being reiterated” (Butler and Spivak 2007, p. 60).

Although not a staged protest and much more a part of every day “being”, participants’ name use activities form an interesting parallel to singing the American anthem in Spanish. A name introduction, much like singing is “a plural act, an articulation of plurality” (p. 59). A name is not a private word, or a solo piece; an exchange of names usually includes repetition, clarifying, a kind of harmony. By introducing yourself, when your name is not of English origins, you are asking a new acquaintance to speak another language, to move out of their comfort zone of English, to potentially combine letters in a different order, to make a new sound. You are teaching your acquaintance a new song. They may try to revert to a more familiar tune; does it go like this? But hold firm, as it takes some repetition: my name is this sound; you spell it like this.

I say my name is Chang and they'll say Ching, Chung, Jing, Shun, or whatever. When I say “Chang” and spell it “C-H-A-N-G”.
They say, “Oh, okay….”

Butler asks, “does this speech act… not install the task of translation at the heart of the nation? A certain distance or fissure becomes the condition of possibility of equality” (Butler and Spivak 2007, p.62). Language is at work in two modes, as a “plural act and as speech in translation” (p.62). In the case of introducing a new name, the plural act is the exchange, that language and cultural learning are undertaken not just on the part of people who immigrate, and this lesson is a translation, a means of unriddling. We are being taught an endonym, when perhaps we’d be more comfortable using a famil iar exonym.

These acts of pluralism and translations, these everyday songs, shift our discursive possibilities. New identities are created, recognized, validated, legitimized. Through names, standpoints are occupied, recognized, shared. The namescape—populated with these new names and sounds—is shifting, reflecting our broadening culture back to us, and increasing the potential for future names and expressions of identity.
The feeling of be(long)ing experienced by the participants, is in part created through interpellative (mis)hailings. Being seen as not quite Canadian does not encourage participants to take on a common Canadian name. Being identified only as “from elsewhere” fuels the kind of name shifts described in this dissertation: name shifts that can be understood as riddles and puzzles created out of and to increase diasporic intimacy. These name adjustments are creative translations of names into versions that can be understood and legitimized by broader audiences, and this creation is part of the participants’ identity labour.

7.10 Ontario’s Shifting Namescape

Currently, the rapid demographic changes taking place in Ontario are shifting the culture in many ways. One of these shifts is evident in our namescape: the existing lexicon of personal names. Through their identity labour, participants are expanding the namescape and adding new words and sounds to our shared lexicon. Some of these additions to the namescape are names that are directly transplanted from languages besides English, while others are new names that shape original names, words from other languages, into Ontario’s name dimensions, potentially by altering their size, shape and sound. These include shortened names, respelled names, names out of their traditional order, names without diacritical marks. We tend to link names to languages (a French name, an English name, a Spanish name), but the shifts made to names in Canada reflect socializations, and specific cultural compositions, or even influences of particular regions of Canada. As in Victor’s case, a version of his name that worked well in Quebec did not work well in Ontario, and neither version is identical to his original Colombian name.

When I asked participants if they thought of their names as Canadian names, most participants’ responses were unequivocally negative, certain of what their surname communicates to themselves and others:

*Diane: Your name works in Canada. Do you feel like it's a Canadian name?*

*Marta: No, it’s a Portuguese name. Definitely.*

*Diane: Do you ever see your name as being a Canadian name?*

*Lingh-Lingh*: No, never.*
Diane: How do you feel about your name being a Canadian name?  
Jaspreeta*: It's definitely not. There's nothing Canadian about it, I don't think. It's very Punjabi. It's funny because within India you can tell the different regions you're from so I know when someone is Punjabi, so mine is clearly Punjabi because of the “Jas*” part. I don't see it as being a Canadian name.

Diane: Do you ever consider your name as Canadian?  
Ronit: No, definitely not. It doesn't sound Canadian, but by Canadian, is it English? I don't know. I consider myself Canadian but not my name.

Diane: Do you feel like Morris is a Canadian name?  
Marika: Morris is an Irish name and there is a very long Irish tradition. There are certainly more people in Canada called Morris than Kyriakidis.

Diane: And you never felt [your former surname], Kyriakidis, was a Canadian name?  
Marika: No, people didn't even know what they are saying.33

The contrast is striking: most participants identify culturally or nationally as hyphenated-Canadians, but feel quite strongly that their names are not Canadian names. For some participants, their names and naming decisions are potentially indicative of identities changing, identifying differently between audiences, or choosing to identify oneself in the way that best

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33 At the end of the study, when I doublechecked my representation of participants with the participants themselves, Marika noted that without the context of our conversation, what she meant in this sentence became unclear. She added this explanation, “I do believe Kyriakidis is as Canadian as any other name. There are people of all kinds of ancestry who are Canadian citizens, and their names are the names of Canadians. I don’t think people around me at the time I changed my name thought Kyriakidis was Canadian, and there are still such people now. What has made a difference is people like George Strombolopoulos, who has a fine Greek name, becoming prominent as a Canadian star. When I changed my name, one of the boxes available on the legal name change form was to "Canadianize" your name. There is nothing like that to convey the attitudes of authorities and others at the time that some names are Canadian and others aren’t. To me, all names of Canadian citizens are Canadian. To many others, they aren’t because they maintain ethnic stereotypes about what “real Canadians” are. … Many other people, including the authorities, thought Kyriakidis wasn’t Canadian, but this isn’t my personal belief. My father was Dr. Nikiforos Kyriakos Kyriakidis. He was Canadian, and therefore so was his name.”
suits a feeling of be(long)ing. Perhaps shifting, too, are ways of classifying names, and/or understanding culture based on them. These participants offered further insights:

_Diane:_ Even with the size of the South Asian Community do you ever feel like South Asian names are Canadian names?

_Jagdeep*: You can tell from the last name, because you can't really abbreviate that or shorten it or somehow change it to fit the norms of the Canadian values. The South Asian community in Vancouver, in particular, is huge. It is equal to, if not surpassed, the white community, but they still feel the need to abbreviate their name to anglicize it.

_Diane:_ Do you feel like names are a significant symbol of ethnicity or cultures, of solid ways that culture goes out into the world?

_Jagdeep*: Yes. We can identify someone who's a Sikh from their name, just based on their name, or Hindu or Sikh or whatever, so there is that significance behind the name. And then when it's anglicized, it's mixed up. I've seen some first names very different from the last names so I'm curious why some people do that. Maybe it's to fit with employment.

The “mixed up” names that Jagdeep* describes are, to me, Canadianized names, new hybrids that exist nowhere else but in Canada, demonstrating a balance between audiences and expressing be(long)ing. Harold*’s name demonstrates this mixing effect:

_Diane:_ How do you feel about your name in terms of your identity? Does having the name Harold* make you feel less Chinese, or do you feel more Canadian?

_Harold*: More Canadian. Because Harold*… I like the name. It's very simple and [laughing] I just like it. It's more Canadian and because I still have a Chinese last name, so that's enough. The last name is enough.

_Diane:_ Do you feel like since you moved here and you took the name Harold*, who you are is a bit different now?
Harold*: Yes. I guess I think I'm not 100% typical Chinese. I'm different now. I'm really different. In China I didn't feel like I was one of the most typical Chinese. I'm a little bit different from those people. So that's one of the reasons I came to Canada.

For Harold*, a combined English first name and Chinese surname makes him less Chinese, more Canadian, and provides him with a cultural balance that he likes. Perhaps to others, as well, Harold*’s selection of a mixed name will demonstrate his preference for a mixed cultural identity. Alfie explains that because his hybrid name contains components that belong to each audience, he is validated and legitimated by all.

Diane: Do you consider your name Alfie Merimose* to be a Canadian name?

Alfie: For Canadians, they consider it a Canadian name. For me, I consider it an Egyptian name, so it's going both ways. This is the same consideration that I had in finding a name for my son: it has to be both a Canadian name and an Anglo Saxon name and an Egyptian name at the same time. [And now] when I am giving speeches or presentations or something else, because I really don't look Anglo Saxon, I start with a joke by commenting on this: “Believe it or not, this is an Egyptian name.” People get shocked when they see my name as an Egyptian name.

Alfie enjoys pointing out the diasporic riddle that he has created as his name. One that functions perfectly in Canada, but retains its Egyptian origins.

To Tian, an English first name taken on by a person of Chinese origin indicates a lack or honour or commitment to being Chinese. Tian prefers that Chinese diaspora retain their original names.

Diane: Do you think that when a Chinese person chooses an English name it's more playful or irreverent, less important?

Tian: Yeah, I feel that. That's why although some Chinese people here create English names like Allan, Rick, Jack, Sam, that don't sound anything like their Chinese names, I think it's just because it
doesn't really mean much to them. They just decide to go with something that is easy and yeah, I don't think that personally it means that much to them.

Diane: And does it make you feel differently about them, because they have a name that doesn't mean that much to them? Or is it fine?

Tian: I think a name, you have to honour. It's a commitment. It really is a commitment. … I think I haven't ever really thought about this, but I do have to say that if I found out that someone didn't really care about his root, and he was whitewashed and he had an English name that didn't correspond I wouldn't like that. But if he retained his Chinese name but he was still whitewashed, I would not understand [that either]. …

In contrast to Tian’s view, Chang suggests he is becoming Canadian, but retaining his original Chinese names.

Chang: The group of friends I have, and people I know are almost 80% Chinese people. Half of them kept their name, half have English names, so I feel like I'm getting there. I feel more and more Canadian but I still see my name as a typical Chinese name. If I see a similar name somewhere, in the newspaper, I think it's a Chinese person. It's a Chinese name and I don't see that as a Canadian name. Maybe after a couple more years I will change that, but now I still think it a Chinese name. People who kept their Chinese name are somewhat more based on Chinese culture than Canadian culture. That's how I think.

In general, participants see their names not as Canadian names, but rather as names associated with other, older national origins. And really, no names, not even traditional First Nations names, have their origins in Canada as a nation. Canada is such a young country that it can claim only name innovations, hybrids and hyphens, and related name trends: names that within Canada have
been altered, created, validated, copied and carried on. And these origins are put forward, reiterated, made modern via participants’ chosen names. This is how our namescape is changing.

The strength of a traditional audience makes a significant difference, and increased cultural diversity is key to the structure of feeling described here: without the rise of local traditional audiences, and their overlap with quotidian audiences, the maintenance of original names is far less relevant. But as many Canadians’ traditional audiences are growing and becoming a significant component of their quotidian audiences, it is important to be recognized by this audience as well as quotidian and institutional audiences. Looking to this trend in the future, participants have a strong sense of how their children should be named for their lives in Ontario and elsewhere.

Most participants want to shield their (potential or existing) children from the kinds of name challenges that the participants themselves endure or have experienced; most said that they had or would choose a name that reflected their own tradition and culture, but still works well in Canada.

Alfie: My son was born here, and with that [sur]name, it was really difficult for his teachers to pronounce, and the other kids thought he was a foreigner. Some people thought he was Indian and started telling him, “Paki, go home!” and these kinds of things. I said, “I can't leave my child to be stuck with this all of his life, so I have to do something about all of this.” … Some names are really extremely difficult to pronounce and that makes it hard on everyone. Especially their children, you know. How do you leave your child to be burdened with a name that would make the child's life so difficult?

For their son, Alfie and his wife chose a name that reflected his Egyptian, Italian, and Canadian cultures, a name that balanced between a mix of audiences and followed the diaspora riddle format that Alfie had chose for himself. Mbanga* also followed the name traditions that were important to him, but considered how the Canadian context shifted the relevance of this tradition.
Mbanga*: [In deciding on my name] I had to think about how I’d like my kid to be called and this is very important. If my kid has to be called for where he is from, it is meaningless [in Canada], whereas if they have to be called by my name or my grandfather’s name, then that is something that can be traced to that location anyway. But they cannot have the location name because they are not born there, right? So my choice was very simple, to fit Mbanga* within the form of first name and these parts as the last name. It works so far, both ways. They have my grandfather’s name and then my own name, and then their own name. This is absolutely necessary for my own tradition.

Based on his own experiences of having a double first name in Canada, Jose Abilio plans to name a child with just one first name, unless he lives in a context where two first names are the norm.

Jose Abilio: One thing I would say, if I ever have a child, or a boy, I'd only give him one name. I’m not going to give him the whole name, or anything like that, even though it's traditional, especially for a first-born, if he's male, to be named after the grandfathers. Maybe if I had a child in Portugal and was living in Portugal I would do that, but not here. I'd never give my child a double name, just one single name and that's it. It simplifies it. It's just worse to explain [two names].

Like Jose Abilio, Ronit would like to break away from the experience she had. After growing up with a distinctly Israeli name, she would give her child a name that works well in both Israeli and Canadian contexts.

Ronit: One of the things I know I definitely would try to do, as long as my partner would agree with me, is I would definitely want to give my children English names, not to have my children go through what I've been through. It makes it sound like, “Oh my God, I was traumatized,” but I live in Canada, I plan to stay in
Canada. We live in an English-speaking society. That's not to say I would pick Jane or Sarah as names but I'd definitely try to find a name that perhaps would be like my partner's name: names that can easily be translated into English. I would prefer that, versus all my friends who have given their children Israeli names. They are all going through exactly the same thing that we went through. I remember when they named them.

I asked, “So why would you pick that? Why would you give your children the same problem as we had?”

“Because we are Israelis we want to give them Israeli names.”

But they were born in North America, in Canada. I don't understand.

*Diane: Would you still use a distinct name or one that just wouldn't require as much explanation?*

*Ronit: You know what? Chances are… because in Israeli tradition you have to name after loved ones who have passed away… So, chances are, that's going to happen. Now, I would prefer a name that I just like versus “I need my child to be different.” It's a big responsibility to name a child.*

In the end, it seems that Ronit may carry on a key tradition of Israeli society. Lingh-Lingh* would like to give her child a distinct, traditional name, but would rather not impose name challenges on her child.

Lingh-Lingh* [is pregnant at the time of this interview and is discussing the challenge she and her partner’s have with choosing a name]: We are having a hard time because we don't agree. When we name him, we think about a lot of things, like I want something that's unique. I don't want him to be one of many. I want something unique, but I also don't want something trendy, not a Chad. I would go with more of a traditional name that's less frequently used.
Maybe that's because I don't want my child to go through what I went through. If you have a name that is spelled funny and people don't know how to pronounce it, sometimes that's an issue, too.

Jagdeep* would also choose to name a child as she has been named, and expresses a strong alternative perspective to the others, that the child should be the one to consider a balance between audiences and alter their name if they’d like to.

Diane: If you had a child, what kind of name would you use?
Jagdeep*: Initially, I would want them to keep their name, to stick with the ethnic and religious and cultural significance of it. Later, if they feel they need to do this to fit in… whether it's with employers or at school.

Based on the participants’ responses, Ontario’s future namescape will likely be a vibrant mix of cultures, perhaps designed to fit within Ontario’s naming dimensions for the ease of future populations. By creating new names that did not previously exist for any of their audiences, or by combining names originating from two audiences, or even by transplanting a name from a traditional audience into a quotidian environment, participants are prompting changes in discourse. New words—in the form of names—are being inserted, mobilized, even mainstreamed. In Raymond Williams’ words, “radically new semantic figures” are being introduced. In this way, Ontario’s namescape is changing, and it seems likely that it will continue to broaden. This is happening because of the feeling that is named in this chapter: be(long)ing. Personal names, like national and cultural identifiers, are determined by participants as indicators of their identification both within and outside of the dominant cultures of Ontario, and more broadly Canada. Participants feel, and are often made to feel, that although they live in Canada, they are “not Canadian enough” and do not belong. These feelings motivate choices of names that acknowledge that gaze, but also an alternate position. The use of a name that is not known or common in Ontario inserts a new sound and a new combination of letters and perhaps even diacritical markings into discourse. Because no one can exist without a name, this is just a necessity of being. But this way of being and be(long)ing in Ontario changes the common discourse. This name appears on lists, is spoken aloud, and others may choose to use this name once it is known. And so, the namescape is altered.
Strikingly, the participants’ labour, action arc, and name outputs closely resemble the work of cultural designers, as described by Anne Balsamo. These two types of labour, creative and identity, are described and compared in the following section.

### 7.11 Participants as Cultural Designers

In *Designing Culture: The Technological Imagination at Work* (2011), Anne Balsamo describes designers as working “the scene of technological emergence: they hack the present to create the conditions of the future” (p. 6). Balsamo provides ten lessons learned by studying the work of technological innovation; she examines technological and material designs as well as exhibitions to argue that “technology and culture are inseparable and they have always been so” (Thornham 2012, p. 1). Participants in this dissertation are also using their present name options and audience assemblages to contribute to a more diversely named future population: they are “hack[ing] the present to create the conditions of the future” by working within current name policy constraints and their names from language origins other than English, to choose a suitable name, and to increase the potential for themselves and others to belong in Canada. The details of Balsamo’s lessons read as remarkably comparable to participants’ experiences with establishing their names for use in Canada.

This dissertation’s argument (beginning in Chapter 4) that name challenges are not only dependent on the particular forms and databases used in Ontario, but rather that these issues stem also from cultural traditions and are maintained through the interdependent functions of discourses, stewards and devices, is buttressed by Balsamo’s argument that “design processes work within, and emerge from, power … relations” and “the relations of labour, the everyday, the discursive and material relations are at the forefront of… the success and impact of technology today” (Thornham, p. 2). This view of seeing innovation as embedded in culture and driving technological change is, of course, not mine and Balsamo’s alone: STS literature offers many studies that establish this perspective. Indeed, Law’s focus on the three interdependent structuring elements is one. That said, within this dissertation, our understandings of devices has been challenged by positioning personal names as something similar, even though a device is a sturdier and more tangible thing than we generally view names to be. But by reading through Balsam’s ten lessons, and swapping out “Innovation” for “Names”, we can see the striking comparability of Balsamo’s findings to this current examination of names. Just as technology is
not the real obstacle faced by people who have immigrated and now deal regularly with name challenges, neither is a technological fix the sole or best response to these problems. The role of names within language, as shifters of discourse, is perhaps the strongest possibility, the best option available to participants, as a means of disrupting the status quo and creating an increasingly plural future for Ontario. The carefully crafted names that participants select are innovations that are grounded in culture, and are potentially accomplishing cultural shifts.

7.11.1.1 Lesson #1: Innovations [Names] are Historically Constituted
As discussed in the Chapter 4, names were initially established out of economic demand for a nation to know how many and what kinds of people lived within its boundaries, so taxes could be collected, and wealth could be inherited. Colonialism, religion, and numerous examples of dominant cultures influencing less powerful cultures have left their imprints on the ways that names are currently used. Naming systems are a kind of cultural formation, and as Balsamo writes, “Cultural formations are dynamic phenomena; they are neither preordained nor randomly assembled. They are structured in a particular way, with an internal organization that is, in turn, integrated into a broader social order” (p. 8). Chapter 4 provides examples of how integrated and communicative names are, and how much they contribute to a culture’s “internal organization.” In Ontario, traditional names support our cultural norms by including indications of gender, functioning without diacritical marks as the English language does. Even the trend of women shifting their names at marriage can be understood as a remnant or continuance of patriarchal influence in Ontario. A decision to use a name that does not indicate gender and includes a diacritical mark innovates by moving against tradition, which may results in challenges, but also contributes to the dynamism of a broader social order.

7.11.1.2 Lesson #2: Innovations [Names] are Not Objects
In the case of names, it is generally understood that names are not (just) objects, but in Chapter 6 I ask readers to consider names as objects in order to challenge our understandings of both names and technology. It’s true that names are not (just) objects, but they do innovate and offer affordances much like new technologies or other devices that we generally understand as objects. Just as all innovations should not be seen just as “bounded objects”, names, naming policies, and identification processes too, “are better understood as hybrid socio-technical-cultural
assemblages” such as those described in terms of John Law’s functionaries: devices, stewards and discourses (Balsamo, p. 9).

7.11.1.3 Lesson #3: Innovation [Naming] is an Articulatory and Performative Process

Participants’ name choices are based on their knowledge of different audiences and their efforts to use different explanations or name iterations over time. Name shifts are not necessarily based on single events like a citizenship ceremony. Rather, naming “…innovation cannot be so novel that it makes no sense at all. To be comprehended, an innovation must draw on understandings that are already in circulation within the particular technocultures of users” (Balsamo p. 9-10). In previous chapters, participants including Jehad and Chang discuss their own learning curves during settlement and how becoming bicultural made it easier to explain and proceed with their original names in a variety of contexts. And in particular, Jaspreeta*, Tony and Victor, describe the variety of audience-dependent names they have used their names in the past; they have each taken part in cyclical name action arcs. Name choice processes are in part innovative because of the ways that they depend on an understanding of audiences, and then choose a best design to suit participants’ social and well as individual identity needs.

7.11.1.4 Lesson #4: Innovation [Names] Manifests the Dual Logic of Technological Reproduction

The dual logic of technological reproduction is the argument that culture and technoscience are mutually constitutive. This lesson is reinforced by considering how interactions in quotidian Ontario culture encourage name changes, but simultaneously, that participants’ use of their original names, or slightly re-designed names, also shift day-to-day interactions and expand our cultural lexicon to create an increasingly plural namescape. Participants draw on their culture knowledge to produce cultural innovation.

Balsamo states that “…formations do not get set in place once, and only once, but … the articulations among elements must be reproduced over time and over place” (p. 10). Likewise, participants’ explanatory and transformative work with their names can best be described as chronic identity labour. Links between identity and names are formed through acts of interpellation and performativity that are repeated over time; these processes contribute to the feeling of be(long)ing and, although enacted in registration processes, introductions and thoughts
about names, can also be seen as incremental series of innovative identity labour, resulting in validation and legitimization. Slowly, identities and culture shift.

7.11.1.5 Lesson #5 Designing [Naming] is an Important Process of Cultural Reproduction

As Bourdieu (1984) writes, “Designers serve as cultural mediators by translating among languages, materials, and people—to produce among other things—taste, meaning, desire, and coherence. Through the practices of designing [names], cultural beliefs are materially reproduced, identities are established, and social relations are codified” (Balsamo, p. 11). Participants designing their names for use in Ontario serve as mediators by introducing their traditional culture’s name, and naming system, to Ontario’s namescape. Participants, and other people who have immigrated to Ontario, are on the frontlines of this name design work, which brings demographic diversity into view, and works to meet the need for increased cultural pluralism.

In considering not just personal names, but also national and cultural identifiers, the hyphenated and multiple-component formations used by participants to describe themselves also shift culture by creating new cultural-identity options. The articulation of cultural positions beyond “Canadian” and “immigrant”, “FOB” and “whitewashed”, “Black” and “White” are of benefit to us all. We rely on standard identifiers and other categories, but they function as blinders; new combinations of these terms, like any innovation, forces at the very least, a moment of questioning, a pause that comes with making sense of something novel. And if taken up, if used repeatedly, these innovations have the potential to shift our existing categories.

7.11.1.6 Lesson #6: Designing is [Naming is] as much about Social Negotiation as … about Creativity

The name choices made by this study’s participants demonstrate how participants work with an original name, to prioritize and balance between audiences in order to determine a name that receives validation, is legitimatized, and provides a comfortable level of being and be(long)ing.

As Feenberg (1991, 1995) suggests, “the ‘rightness’ of a design—is an outcome of social interactions; designing a solution is fundamentally a process of meaning-making and negotiation” (Balsamo, p. 11). The riddling and puzzling (part of Boym’s diasporic intimacy) that makes names meaningful to particular audiences is a illustration of how participants design a
name. These combinations of social negotiation and creativity are “not (just) about an individual vision, but also about compromise and dialogue in realising, reimagining, renegotiating and revisioning. Those processes all reveal cultural and social relations” (Balsamo, p. 11).


“Participants in the designing process are never merely passive receivers of preconceived meanings; they are better understood to be active co-producers of meanings… that can be material as well as digital, representational as well as gestural, and theoretical as well as physical” (Balsamo, p. 12). This lesson is a key, perhaps understated, argument of the dissertation. Participants are not passive, subordinated others, but rather active communicators whose perspectives include varied audiences and perhaps even the desire to have their traditional culture and name be better recognized and understood within Ontario.

7.11.1.8 Lesson #8: Technological [Name] Innovation is inherently multidisciplinary

Balsamo describes designers as “actively seeking to identify the multiple contexts within which technologies take shape and have effects” (p. 12). While the contexts of name challenges tend to make themselves known, participants name choices are responses that bridge and balance between various pulls: they are frequently balancing or prioritizing between institutional, quotidian and traditional audiences. New social contexts may bring about new considerations: for example, a social networking site such as Facebook, where all audiences can be present at one time, and where the written name is privileged, generally lead to new considerations and particular name design choices.

7.11.1.9 Lesson #9: Technological [Name] Innovation offers the Possibility of doing things differently

Making choices about names provides “many moments when the meanings of a technology-under-development [a.k.a.: personal name] are under construction. Although these moments may be fleeting, each moment of reproduction offers an opportunity to change the way in which [technologies names] are developed, deployed, implemented, and discarded; it also offers opportunities to do something that hasn’t been done before, and to create something unique and untried” (Balsamo, p. 13). Opportunities to think about names and how they could be easier to
use or explain are filled with potential. At the individual level, consider how much could be conveyed in one of these riddles, to the right audience. Or how does the choice to use an uncommon, original name or to alter one slightly, in a way that makes for a striking new combination of sound and meaning, open up the possibility for others to speak, and choose to replicate this name, or even to feel encouraged or free to use their own distinct name choice?

7.11.1.10 Lesson #10: Failure is Productive Name challenges can be Productive

With this final lesson, there are perhaps more differences than similarities between the scenarios of participants’ name change decisions and professional designers. The kinds of challenges experienced by participants are too frequently othering, discriminatory, and contribute to what Cvetkovich calls “public depression”. Hence, the kind of iterative shifts described in Balsamo’s final lesson is best retitled, for current purposes as “Name challenges can be productive.”

Balsamo describes everyday culture as “a zone of struggle and contestation, where failure is but one texture of that struggle. This is to say, while it will never be pleasant, failure is productive. It is a rich resource for the performance of creativity, the design of innovation, and the reproduction for technoculture, and it stands as one of the abiding lessons of designing culture” (p. 25). While this kind of struggle is a healthy norm for a design professional, what is happening during the name challenges experienced by participants is the result of an established culture reproducing its colonial heritage, sometimes at the cost of excluding individuals. The failure is of that of institutional and quotidian audiences’ effort to include and incorporate participants’ names. And participants’ significant labour identity results: discomfort motivates change. The productive outcomes are a) the innovative name choices made by the participants, and b) the potential these names have for our cultural lexicon. All audiences are increasingly aware of and in contact with names and cultural identifiers that may disrupt traditional understandings of culture and names and propose new potential identities.

7.12 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that social change related to names is occurring in an ad-hoc, individual style, by the insertion of new cultural name designs to Ontario’s namescape. Following the initial discussion of participants’ feelings about their names, a parallel was
established between participants’ personal name choices and how they choose to identify within familiar cultural and national descriptors. At both levels of identity determination—adapting personal names, and selecting cultural and national descriptors—participants draw on discourses of more than one audience: this demonstrates their fluency with each audience as well as the complexity of their choices. Further, the device or the position that participants choose is nearly never one that reflects just one single ethnicity, nor do most select a simple national category.

As we continued to consider public feelings and affect, what becomes apparent is that it is not the actual combinations of letters and words that participants select for their names that is most significant but rather, participants’ feelings of being interpellated in multiple ways, yet none of these quite fitting: none of these hailings feels quite right; too few members of quotidian or institutional audiences hail participants as if they belong. Motivated by this feeling of be(long)ing participants create a suitable cultural/national position via a name choice, and with it they proceed. Demonstrating who participants are at this particular moment in time, as based in part on their audiences, and how these audiences validate their names, is the motivation for the kinds of name shifts participants make in this study. The goal is to belong within and between the audiences that are most relevant to each participant—participants are, in many cases, articulating their standpoint. Once selected, these names become part of the namescape, a broadening cultural lexicon that continues to represent varied cultural backgrounds and name choices, even if muted somewhat by Ontario’s current name dimensions: pronounceable, short, and no accents.
Chapter 8

8 Conclusions, Contributions, and Recommendations

In this final chapter of the dissertation, we look first to the past—to the ways that Ontario’s Name Change Act has been changed over time to increase inclusivity for some groups, while generally decreasing it for people who have immigrated. Next, I describe the ways that my dissertation has contributed to the fields it has drawn from: onomastics, critical immigration, identity and performativity, and science and technology studies. Finally, I offer a few recommendations that evolved during the writing of this dissertation, all with the goal of increasing perspectives and broadening the view we have of names, particularly those of people who have immigrated.

8.1 Conclusions

As a way of drawing this study to a close, we first examine how Ontario’s Name Change Act has been altered over time to actually be made less accommodating for people who have immigrated. It is also important to see this outcome in the context of shifts made toward greater inclusivity for women, Inuit and people who are transgender.

8.1.1 Historical name policies in Ontario

Ontario’s name policies allow for significant freedom in the choice of a name, yet participants have shared stories of their names being omitted, truncated, mispronounced, discriminated against, and made fun of. Currently, neither Ontario’s identification policies nor its social norms related to names appropriately serve people who have immigrated. While the expansion of the namescape is occurring, the alteration of policies to ease name challenges for people who immigrate to Ontario has been limited. This final section provides a brief history of Ontario’s policies involving immigration and names. This policy overview offers an opportunity to consider how Canadian names and name policies have come to be as they are, as well as describing the structuring elements that contribute to participants’ current day interactions related to their names.

The genesis of this structure of feeling, this current shift that is being expressed and built in names, can be tied to Canada’s immigration reform of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly the
initiation of the point system in 1967 and the implementation of the *Immigration Act* in 1978. Prior to this time, Canada’s racial composition was largely white, as the previous *Immigration Act* (of 1910) allowed the federal government to “prohibit…the landing…of immigrants belonging to any race unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada” [italics added for emphasis]. Although race is not tied directly to names, a greater influx of immigrants from countries outside of the British Isles and Commonwealth countries meant an increased diversity of cultures and names in Ontario. With neither critical mass of more recent diasporas established, nor transnational interactions for social or work purposes existing until perhaps the late 1990s (i.e., the internet was not yet widely used), there was less reason to maintain one’s original name: the traditional audience was small or lived far away. Quotidian and institutional audiences, with less cultural diversity, and less of an awareness of cultures beyond those of English Canada, exerted more pressure to have a conforming name than in the 2010s.

Canada was internationally lauded for the introduction of its meritocratic immigration policy, and additional policies since that time have encouraged immigration from a diverse range of countries. Yet, critical immigration scholars have described several kinds of institutionalized racism that occur in Canada. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, racial tensions were acknowledged and addressed through municipal policies that dealt with schools, and other organizations (Ungerleider 2006, p.207). Racial discrimination, particularly in hiring practices, was observed and analyzed by at least three studies during the 1980s (Ungerleider cites Billingsley and Muszynski 1985; Henry and Ginsberg 1985; Henry 1989). In Sunera Thobani’s (2007) study of historical conceptualizations of Canada’s national subjects, she suggests that “underneath the sanitized garb of a postmodern, multi-racial, multi-ethnic ‘tolerant’ Canada, beats the heart of a stubbornly colonial national-formation, sharing a common imaginary with other white settler societies” (p. 29). Roxana Ng, in a 1993 study of provincially funded employment agencies for women who immigrated to Toronto defines “the Canadian state” as comprised of a “multiplicity of institutions, and departments which administer and coordinate the activities of ruling” and she suggests that “strong racist and sexist assumptions and policies” are key to the structure and maintenance of the nation-state (p. 238). Simone Browne (2005) sees the administration of the Permanent Resident Card as “one of the key disciplinary practices of the nation-state” as Permanent Resident Cards “not only regulate mobility and access to space, but they do the organizing work of ‘fixing’ identities” (p. 428). Much like the census, “the
identification and classification achieved through the Permanent Resident Card help to write the nation on the body, and shape our individual and collective imaginings about citizenship and belonging to the nation” (Browne, p. 424). Sherene Razack’s (1999) analysis of Canadian national narratives suggests that polarized understandings of people who have migrated to Canada are frequently created through national mythologies. There is the “good immigrant who establishes Canada’s essential goodness, and the bad immigrant who forces otherwise generous people into taking stern disciplinary measures” (Razack, p. 174). With this lens, we can very crudely classify the “good immigrant” as having a name that ‘fits in’, while the “bad immigrant” might insist on being called by her full name, or using a name that is more challenging to pronounce. The “bad immigrant” complains when her name is altered through the processes of immigration.

The résumé field studies completed by Eid (2012) and Oreopoulos and Dechief (2011) demonstrate institutionalized discrimination in relation to names in Canada. To gain a better understanding of name tensions in Ontario, we can look to the evolution of non-dominant names in Ontario, as well as shifts in policies related to names including the Name Change Act of Ontario. Analyzing the evolution of previous name shifts for non-dominant groups, Mina Kuttner (2003) describes the First-Nations’ assimilative “gradual adoption of the two-part name” and notes a lack of regulation for the naming of slaves who resided in Ontario (p. 513). Kuttner states that although the legal right of a family to share one surname “resonates with the community belief that people are born free and bonded by family ties,” it could also be viewed as “the defeat of communalism and the victory of European colonialism” (p. 515). Kuttner suggests that the law requiring people to be identified by at least two components, a forename and a hereditary surname, could be considered as a violation of the collective rights of minorities found in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988) (p. 515). This is because Ontario’s naming practices have and continue to require some First Nations and some immigrants to modify their names in order to adhere to provincial naming laws. An examination of women’s name choice policy shifts in Ontario in 1976, reminds us that women once occupied a lesser role in Ontario society than they do today. In the following review of these policy documents, we can also see how rhetoric related to naming social norms has shifted substantially, even over the past forty years.
Ontario’s Name Change Act was first established in 1939. Before that time, Ontario’s common law, based on England’s, held that “a person could adopt any name in the community, provided that this was not done with any intention to defraud other” (Ontario Law Reform Commission, 1976). Prior to 1939, women and men had equal naming rights, but “conventions did, of course, grow up: it became customary in our society for a woman to lose her birth name upon marriage by the adoption of her husband’s name” (Ontario Law Reform Commission, 1976). The Ontario Law Reform Commission’s Report on Changes of Name (1976) states that “there is evidence to suggest that Ontario’s Act was originally passed with the intention of controlling ‘aliens’, as they were called; no one could change their names unless they were a British subject, eighteen years of age and not a married woman” (p. 40). From 1963 to 1964, efforts were made to establish legislation that if successful, would have potentially eased name tensions for these ‘aliens’ who had immigrated to Canada. If successful, those efforts may have also meant a different present-day reality in Ontario, at least for name documentation challenges, than the one described by participants in this study.

In May of 1963, Vernon M. Singer, then the Member of Provincial Parliament for North York, wrote to the Department of the Attorney General about a suggestion made by a federal Member of Parliament, Dr. Harry C. Harley:

several of his constituents feel that would be of substantial benefit to them both in time and money if they could legally change their names at the time they are being granted Canadian citizenship… an amendment could be made to the Change of Name Act to allow a citizenship judge to deal with applications for change of name and if such application were to be granted, provision could well be made to allow this action at the time citizenship certificates are being granted

This proposed joining of bureaucratic activities, which would have resulted directly in a reduction of the identity labour required of new immigrants, was not to be. Rather, in September of 1963, K.C. Foster, Registrar of Canadian Citizenship, wrote to a legal adviser in the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, stating “I do not see how we could combine a change of name procedure with the taking of an application for citizenship.” And in 1964, what may have been a useful system, or a “loophole” for people to attain an anglicized family name was terminated:
The problem herein appears to arise from the fact that the Citizenship Registration Branch will in some cases issue a Certificate of Canadian Citizenship to a person not only in his legal surname but also in the anglicized surname that the person may have adopted subsequent to his arrival in Canada. Both surnames, therefore, appear on the Certificate of Canadian Citizenship. When a child is born to that person, an attempt is made to have the birth of the child registered under the anglicized version of the surname.\textsuperscript{34}

These details about the form and processes undertaken by people who immigrated to Ontario in the 1960s indicate that historical bureaucratic name challenges were similar to those of today. However, as part of its recommended “framework of choice” for women, the Report on Changes of Name of 1976 also provides some specific insights on the topics of hyphenated surnames and nuclear families sharing the same surname. From this document it becomes clear that the important social rules and conventions related to names in Ontario in 1976 have since shifted, at least somewhat.

\subsection*{8.1.1.1 Hyphenated names}

Of the recommended name options at marriage, hyphenated surnames were not encouraged:

Although such a practice is not illegal, in the sense that the law does not prohibit it, it is unlikely that a woman could legally insist upon the practice being respected by third parties prepared to resist it… The chief difficulty would seem to be that in our culture this practice seems to be a rare, unconventional and elaborate departure from our existing customs… If this proposal is accepted, some such grammar of social rules would have to be worked out in Ontario to govern the reduction of two hyphenated names into one (p. 46).

Some may question whether a man should be able to change his name at marriage to a hyphenated name. It is quite possible that as our social customs change, that some men may wish, for personal reasons or because they have cumbersome or unusual surnames, to adopt their wives’ birth names, at the time of their marriages. The full implications of these questions go far beyond the scope of this

\textsuperscript{34} Excerpted from a memorandum written to Mr. D. H. Christie on September 19, 1963. Author unknown.
paper. The use of hyphenated names may seem an attractive compromise solution to the conflicts of values that we have been discussing: but it is at best a temporary solution and does not offer a universally acceptable future pattern for names in Ontario (p. 46)

8.1.1.2 Family Names

“Family names” or the sharing of one surname, usually that of the father or husband, by all members of a nuclear family, was seen as a very strong convention; indeed, it is one that persists today.

Those who wish to safeguard the family and the symbols which surround it, can point out that family names are the norm in Ontario. The convention of a family name is very strong in our society; as a pure statement of fact, few women have ever departed from the convention. Our existing legislation, and our bureaucratic and business practices all assume the use of a family name…

It may be desirable to restrict [a married woman’s] choice if children, especially young children are involved. We should consider their rights, too: their right to know who they are, their right to be identified with both parents in a stable, happy, home atmosphere. Who knows what impact a mother’s change of name may have on the child’s sense of security or emotional well-being? (p. 48)

The Report on Changes of Name sought to increase and standardize women’s name choices—within particular parameters—at the same time as Ontario’s system of granting and denying name changes was undergoing significant reform. Eventually, the overhauled process “removed from the courts the burden, formality and cost of hearing applications” and transferred “all of the responsibilities and administration for change of name to the Registrar General of Ontario” (Cabinet Submission made by Consumer and Commercial Relations, Office of the Registrar General, 1978). Until 1980, name changes were determined in Ontario’s court system, and the findings of some of these name change decisions remain references for more recent decisions. These findings also offer windows into judge’s own perceptions of current social norms and conventions related to names. Teresa Scassa (1996) argues that judgments in such cases demonstrate that there are three purposes for the nation state’s control of “the language of surnames: segregation, assimilation, nation-building” (p. 170).
One decision, *Re Rezek or Rennie*, from 1947 provides both assimilative and segregating views:

The applicant maintained that the name “Rezek,” because it is foreign-sounding and is not easily pronounced or spelt, is a handicap to him, his wife and child in their social life. He stated that the bulk of the population in eastern Canada, not being of foreign extraction, feels strongly against a person whose name is not Anglo-Saxon-sounding, and, as he put it: ‘I want my son to have better breaks in life than I had with the name Rezek’ (Scassa p. 181)

The court was empathetic to the desire to assimilate:

The child in the school, the student in the university, the professional and the business man, with the foreign-sounding name (subject of course to certain exceptions) feel the impact of that prejudice, and barriers created, which prevent the assimilation of that individual in his community or unification of that community (Scassa p. 182 citing *Re Rezek or Rennie* 1947)

The courts found in the petitioner’s favour and his family’s surnames became Rennie, but there was opposition voiced by people who now shared the surname Rennie with the petitioner. They demonstrated a segregating view in their resentment of “a person of foreign extraction assuming the old Scottish name of Rennie, a family name of good repute” (Scassa p. 185 citing *Re Rezek or Rennie* 1947).

Although similar motivations and tensions related to assimilation, segregation and nation building likely remain part of both successful and unsuccessful name changes today, we are no longer privy to these types of considerations and outcomes. That these historical decisions and persuasive documents such as the *Report on Changes of Name* remain, and that we have access to them, allows a rare glimpse of the precise considerations that arise in each case of name change: the role of institutions in determining outcomes, and how some of these considerations have persisted while others remain. Scassa suggests that trends in judicial name change decisions are not static; they shift with the attitudes of a nation to foreigners in its midst. They shift as well with definitions of outsiders and insiders. The current trend towards globalization may well cause some shifts either towards greater ethnic nationalism as old borders are torn apart to make new ones, or greater tolerance as
notions of self and other collapse. The extent to which surnames will play a role in an emerging politics of post-national identities is unclear; their potential to do so remains evident. (p. 170)

Scassa adds that her own study’s “focus on legal actors should not exclude the fact that policies expressed in law and enforced by government can have an important impact on nongovernmental action. … informal activity may be a stark reflection of these official policies” (p. 170). This note points to the ways that the institutional audience influences quotidian and traditional audiences through the interplay of interdependent structuring elements. In the case of the initial efforts by Vernon M. Singer and Dr. Harry C. Harley to unite name changes and citizenship applications, residents voiced their concerns over too great a cost and too much time spent (i.e. too much identity labour), to their elected representative (the institutional audience), who then worked to ease the identity labour of his constituents. The exact events are not known, but the archives indicate that legal and other experts, stewards, were consulted; the device of concern, the Canadian citizenship certificate was examined; and the discourse of children inheriting only a legal surname, not an unofficial anglicization, was upheld. The institutional audience’s differentiation between the legal name and the unofficial anglicized name encourages the same distinction for the quotidian audience, and perhaps questions about real names versus English or Canadian names become normalized, or perhaps a taboo related to unofficial or changed names is edified.

The same archive also contains several letters written to elected representatives about the lack of name options available to women whose marriages dissolve. In 1976, a woman may have informally reverted to her name at birth, or another name, but in order to remarry, or to alter a child’s name, a legal name change was required. Because no established name options existed after marriage dissolution, a judge would hear the case and determine if any third parties (i.e., the ex-husband) would be injured by a change of name. Given the few options available to women, and that such a demanding and potentially embarrassing interaction was required for a name change, women and their families found the procedure or “device” lacking, so sent letters to elected officials. A critical mass of these concerns led to the Report on Changes of Name, excerpted above, which draws on 176 individual and group submissions on this topic to provide a focused discussion and specific recommendations for increasing legal name options for women in Ontario. A “discourse” of married women having no means to change their surnames was seen
as archaic and limiting by a critical mass of women and other concerned citizens. Their elected officials became aware of these concerns, so submissions were collected and public meetings were held to hear potential solutions recommended by various stewards of the quotidian and institutional audiences. Once these contributions were brought together as the *Report on Changes of Name*, this report (i.e. a device) was used to further persuade elected officials (stewards who liaise between quotidian and institutional audiences) to replace these outdated discourses. The result was successful, at least eventually, as men and women now share the same naming options, whether wed or unwed. In these cases, what have become our current naming policies and procedures, bit by bit, slowly replaced the old processes. Yet our current-day discourses, however advanced, still bear the imprint of the discourses of 1976, both institutional and quotidian, that cautioned against hyphenated surnames and sanctified the family name.

Today, we remain stewards, influenced more or less by these official discourses, even in our day-to-day interactions.

With this examination of the relevant and accessible threads of immigration and name change policy contextualized by Law’s framework, it is possible to gain insight as to how historical changes to name policies affecting residents from outside of dominant culture in Ontario were initiated. Although further information was requested as part of this study, it was not possible for the Ontario Registrar General to provide data related to current name changes in Ontario (those made since 1980) beyond what is published in the Ontario Provincial Gazette. From looking at the lists of Previous and New Names published there each month, it is clear that throughout the past decade a large majority of official name changes have been made by people whose surnames are based in languages other than English, but without moving beyond a content analysis of types of changes undertaken, it is impossible to know why these changes were made and what meaning it has for how people who have immigrated identify within Ontario and Canada.

In contrast, the participant interviews for this project are particularly fruitful. Because so few of the participants (4 of 23) applied for legal name changes, it is likely that the number of people

35 The list of submitters includes the Towers Department Store President, the Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police, the Deputy Registrar General of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations (all of these are men), Women’s Bureau of the Ministry of Labour, Canadian Federation of University Women (of Windsor and of Orillia), University Women’s Club (of Brockville, Guelph, Scarborough), Status of Women Committee of Hamilton, as well as many individual submissions made by women and men, some anonymously.
who officially change their names each year only hints at the number of people who change their names informally, or even experience name challenges related to immigration (excluding name changes related to marriage, the total ranges from 2,000 to 10,000 people annually between 1990 and 2010, with a generally increasing trend). Further, because name changes are processed by the Ontario Registrar General, and documents are issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, traditional tools for registering concern and initiating change have become less used and less productive. Departments within each of these organizations accept complaints, and it is likely that fewer letters are written to MPPs and MPs. But perhaps these traditional modes of lodging complaints should be reconsidered and taken up once more: How it is that so many individuals who emigrate from countries where names are not drawn from the English language have their names altered on official documents in surprising and displeasing ways, and why is it allowable that such a long process exists for consolidating one’s identity following immigration? As Scassa writes, “Where it is established that certain names belong to the nation and others do not, the language of one’s name can take on a tremendous significance. Bearing a foreign name can lead to exclusion from institutions and benefits. It can also lead to unofficial exclusion” (p. 190). People who have immigrated have been excluded from beneficial name policy updates, whereas such shifts have occurred for other groups who were historically excluded—women, First Nations, and people who are transgender.36

If a similar determination of appropriate procedures or a framework of choice in relation to names was discussed and determined by people who have immigrated to Canada, is it possible that this would benefit their status within Ontario? How have name policy amendments for women, First Nations and people who are transgender benefitted these groups’ inclusion, safety, economic status, esteem and equality within Ontario? Besides the recognition by their audiences that they have these rights, the actual benefits that come from these policies are critical: these rules police identities and the right to identify as one determines.

36 In 2006, the Change of Name Act was determined to be discriminatory by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and then altered to better suit the needs of people who are transgendered. In particular, the requirement to publish previous and new names was seen as violating transgendered individuals’ rights to privacy. More details at http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/annualreports/ar0607?page=eng-COMMISSI.html
8.2 Contributions

This dissertation makes identifiable contributions to several of the fields that it draws from: onomastics, critical immigration, identity and performativity, power, and science and technology studies.

Onomasticians may be most interested in understanding the kinds of names changes made people who have immigrated to Canada. As represented by the participants, we have seen that beyond formal changes, many types of informal name shifts are undertaken. The shifts tend to be minor adjustments to maintain the sound of one’s name, without using diacritical marks, and while adapting the name to fit into just three components, and an appropriate length. As well, it is important to note that contemporary name alterations tend to honour original names, and to be made only for ease of use, not in order to be identified as a member of dominant culture. In fact, some name shifts and reversions are undertaken with the goal of clearly demonstrating participants’ original cultures, and some names are even established in order to occupy a particular political standpoint.

I have also borrowed and complicated some terms from onomastics: endonym, exonym and namescape. It is my thinking that the field of name studies may benefit from a greater engagement with and an expansion of related theory, and my use of these terms is intended to encourage others to do the same. I became aware of Kripke’s theory of names as rigid designators through an unusual and welcome theory paper at a names conference (Smith, 2013), and in the discussion that followed I learned that Kripke’s work had been extended first by Žižek and then by Butler. To me, it was important to bring this debate into onomastic discussions, and I hope that my working through these theories of names will encourage others to do the same in their own name-focused projects.

The major contribution of this dissertation is defining and illustrating identity labour. That the original names of people who have immigrated can be met with such significant challenges and that deliberation, emotion, and even a willingness to politicize one’s identity contributes to the re-design of names, are all labourious name-related considerations that have not previously been a focus of study in Canada. This is a contribution to onomastics, and to other fields. The fit of the identity labour trajectory with Mwarigha’s stages of settlement is a minor contribution to critical immigration, but the larger contribution here is the detailed analysis of numerous examples of
name challenges and name re-designs that are experienced and undertaken by people who have emigrated from fourteen countries as well as by second-generation Canadians. Describing the labour, the emotions, and the exhaustion that are the result of systemic name challenges will hopefully draw attention to the significance of the challenges faced by people who have immigrated, and that establishing related policies and initiating social change could help many more people to feel that they belong in Canada. The third component of identity labour’s name-action arc, the continuing feeling of be(long)ing was communicated to me in terms of names, but this description of affect, of a shared, public feeling may be generalized to resonate about other aspects of living in Canada and feeling outside of dominant culture. Critical immigration studies have noted challenges related to names (Ng et al., 2007; Browne, 2005), and I hope that bringing many of these concerns together in one document can serve as a building block for future name-focussed studies.

In terms of a contribution to literature on power and to the field of science and technology studies, this dissertation’s adaptation of John Law’s framework effectively enables the analysis of various social situations as contexts of power and domination. That Law’s model is flexible enough to move from levels of functionaries within audiences down to individual’s use of their names as devices for belonging on their own terms, establishes it as model to be used for further examinations of how the interplay of otherwise passive agents increases their power, even in individuals’ agentive responses to powerful infrastructure established and maintained by dominant culture.

A unique quality of this dissertation is that it was written by someone who self-describes as having a weird name, but sees herself, and is generally seen, as belonging in dominant culture. In some ways this social location may make me a less credible resource, (e.g. it has at times made me feel regarded with some suspicion amongst racialized critical immigration researchers), but my perspective may connect well with others like me, and more generally with people who, however they view their social location, are interested in these name challenges that occur so often and who would like to know more about how and why they occur, and especially how to address them. In terms of connecting with other members of dominant culture, Tim Wise, a white anti-racist activist writes (2005) that as a white person writing about racism and asking white people to stop being racist, he has actually been very effective in reaching a broad audience. He sees his success as a benefit of white privilege because he is repeating the same
things that black people have always said, but somehow Wise reaches a broader audience (p. 138). While I have no illusions about my dissertation having any of the effects that Wise’s strong anti-racist stances do, I wonder if my position will have some consequence for readers.

8.3 Future Work on Name-specific Identity Labour in Canada

Because so little academic work has focused on immigration-related name shifts in Ontario and in Canada, much work remains! If the data can be made available, a quantitative description of immigration-related formal name changes undertaken in Ontario would be terrifically interesting. Determining the regions in Ontario, the immigration periods, the gender, and the cultural origins that correlate with the largest numbers of formal immigration-related name changes would likely yield some very interesting findings.

Further qualitative analysis of name shifts undertaken by groups with particular demographics in Ontario would also be beneficial. Because this study’s participants are very well educated, contrasting these findings with an analysis of the identity labour undertaken by people who have less education, and/or who occupy a less privileged socio-economic position more generally, may provide different findings. Residency status is another potential axis of comparison that relates to the significance of time, and the application of the identity labour trajectory. What experiences do temporary foreign workers have with their name use in Canada? Which audiences do they privilege? How has this changed over time spent working in Canada?

While this study demonstrates how identity labour is required of participants with a broad range of cultural origins, analyzing the name challenges, reactions and feelings of be(long)ing experienced by multiple individuals of similar cultural origins could prove very insightful. In particular, the formal adoption of an English first name by people of Chinese heritage is an obvious trend among the name changes published in the Ontario Provincial Gazette—this common choice begs further exploration.

8.4 Recommendations

While writing my dissertation, a few ideas occurred as to how the name challenges of people who have immigrated to Ontario could be reduced, generally in terms of broadening perspectives and enhancing our views. Some of these fit well with Clement’s (2011) “fair identity practice” principles which promote a “citizen-centric-identity-based approach to personal identity as
opposed to an organization/system-centered view (p. 85-93). This shift in focus is also encouraged by Borchorst et al. in terms of “bridging identity gaps” between “the messy reality of identity and the rigid necessity for identification encoded into government systems” (2012, p. 588). In my dissertation, I’ve described the perspectives of different audiences, and that part of the participants’ identity labour is to see and understand each of their audiences’ perspectives, knowing that the audiences have little inclination to see as the participant does. A goal of my dissertation has been to show as much as possible from the participants’ views.

Drawing on the views of Clement, Borchorst et al., and the participants, here are some of the ways that relevant perspectives could be enhanced:

*Assert your right to identify as you would like to.* Use the name that best identifies you and functions with a level of identity labour that is manageable. Be aware that it is not illegal to submit a résumé using a version of your name other than its complete legal form. But also be aware that it may benefit others who have immigrated or who are second generation Canadians to see you using a version of your original name, or even your complete original name.

*Establish name processing systems to collect and reproduce individuals’ complete names.* Although many names are long, have diacritical marks, hyphens or apostrophes, it should be made possible to collect and store a complete version of every resident’s name, including the name bearer’s pronunciation of their name. Individuals could then opt to have a preferred name, or versions of their complete original name printed on identification documents.

*See how and where multiple names are linked to a single identity.* As was established beginning in Chapter 4, many individuals balance between multiple audiences who may refer to the same individual by different names. And until the mid 1960s, the Certificate of Canadian Citizenship conveyed both an original name and a Canadian name, if the two co-existed. (In 2014, alternate names are still collected by Citizenship and Immigration Canada on the application for citizenship.) Existing identification systems could bridge the gap between the lived reality of someone who has immigrated and the rigid demands of an official identification system by allowing people to see how our varied names are attached to the same identity across databases, and to link additional (notarized) names to the same identity, if desired. In this way, systems would recognize identity as multi-faceted, not monolithic.
Preview to people applying for identity cards how their name will appear before the card is created. Using one page of Citizenship and Immigration Canada’s website to demonstrate to potential migrants how their current name will appear on official documents before forms are submitted would save significant effort to repair one’s documented identity after identity cards are received. Applicants could then modify their names as they choose, rather than experiencing unanticipated truncations that cannot not be altered, as was experienced by Victor Blandon. More generally, it would be beneficial to provide people who apply to immigrate to Canada with the details of federal and provincial name restrictions and challenges, including component length, number of components, and use of diacritical marks.

Establish name use policies. Issues related to names exist in every diverse environment in Ontario and perhaps across Canada. While these issues exist and people are aware of them, few organizations have established name use policies. The details of these policies will vary depending on need; the goal is for people to discuss name use and their own concerns. For example, a workspace that encourages diversity may establish a guideline for members of that space to identify individuals as they wish to be identified, by an original name or another name. While establishing a name use policy, members of the organization can discuss and determine appropriate questions or actions, and even titles to be used in that space. Policies can be put forward as guidelines for “drilling” organizations’ members. A benefit of these policies is that they may create an opportunity to discuss types of identity labour, and essentially the cost of this identity labour for people who have immigrated.

Make use of existing communication channels. In the concluding section, I suggest that to make elected representatives aware of existing name challenges, individuals should write detailed accounts and include timelines and images that demonstrate the types of identity document issues, or name shift challenges they face. This should be undertaken only after efforts to phone or email complaints have been exhausted. But in contrast to earlier eras where elected officials were made aware of such challenges in letters, current systems are designed to reduce the number of complaints that find their way to elected representatives, and a key communication channel is under-used. Social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter are also beneficial for making people in the public sphere aware of political challenges, such as identity labour. Potentially, social media is a sphere in which to gain support from broader audiences with significant social and political capital.
Let’s see all of our names together\textsuperscript{37}. Perhaps the best way to increase the view or perspective of our names is to create an installation in a public space where, on an opt-in basis, all of our names could be seen and heard together. The possibility that we could in some way “see” all of the names of Canadians present and past is quite significant. An embedded recording of each person saying their full name would further enhance this potential public name installation.

\textsuperscript{37} Thank you to Dr. Andrew Clement for the basis of this idea.
Bibliography


Appendices

Appendix A: Application for Permanent Resident Card (Citizenship and Immigration Canada)

Appendix B: Application for Canadian Citizenship (Citizenship and Immigration Canada)

Appendix C: Application to Change an Adult’s Name (Office of the Registrar General of Ontario)

Appendix D: 2011 National Household Survey N2 (Statistics Canada)

Appendix E: National Household Survey Guide (Statistics Canada)