4.0 Political Participation

According to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,* "Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein." Moreover the *Charter* states that "[e]very individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability."

The historical and current realities of Canada are such that racial minorities face barriers to political participation, as explored below. These factors are interconnected with those discussed in the following sections on Social Participation and Economic Participation.

The central goal of the research in action represented by this document is to support racial minorities and public institutions in Hamilton in identifying and overcoming some barriers that citizens face in sharing power and resource at the municipal level.

A Note on Terminology
This study uses "racial minority" instead of "visible minority" as favoured by the federal government. Although various other terms such as "racialised minority," "person of colour" and "world majority" may be preferable, if not exactly problem-free, we have chosen to use "racial minority" which is widely understood. It avoids the euphemism of "visible minority."

According to the federal Employment Equity Act, "members of visible minorities" mean persons other than Aboriginal peoples, who are 'non-Caucasian in race or non-White in colour.' These minorities are divided into ten groups: Blacks, Chinese, Filipino, other Pacific Islanders, Indo-Pakistani, Japanese, Korean, Souteast Asians, West Asians and Arabs, and Latin Americans. This study has used broader categories of Black, East, West, South and Southeast Asian Canadians, and Central and Latin American Canadians to denote the larger racial minority communities in Canada.

Synnott and Howes (1996) question the usefulness of combining all "visible minorities," as listed above, into one category. They ask

> are all these ten ethnic (or more precisely, national origin) groups equally visible? No: some are more visible than others, that is, in the blunt terms of public discourse, some are darker than others... Indeed, anecdotal evidence and survey data suggest that some visible minorities face much more racism than do others (Synnott and Howes, 1996: 142).

While LaPonce (1994) and Stasiulis and Abu-Laban (1991) also valorise ethnicity as the "non-British, non-French, non-Aboriginal construct" in studying political participation, an overwhelming body of evidence exists to show that not all non-Charter groups experience equally the same barriers to socioeconomic mobility or to civic participation (Tossutti and Najem, 2002).

Negative stereotyping of identity persists, it would seem, more against non-European groups in Canada that have endured skin-colour racism historically (examples, the Roma people, East and South Asians and Blacks). Race then seems to be an important factor that intersects with others to produce some of the more persistent barriers to certain communities' advancement in, participation in and integration into Canadian society (Fleras and Elliott, 1996: 114).

In a study of racial minorities and the Canadian political system, leaders in the Arab-speaking, Chinese, Haitian, Jamaican and Vietnamese communities were interviewed. The results showed "the existence of an internal dynamic in each community" was based in a "series of cultural, religious, historical, generational and personal determinants." The conclusion is that it is risky to "generalize about how visible

minorities internalize Canadian political culture and participate in representative institutions" (Simard, 1991: 225).

4.1 Why Participation?

The *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Program noted that "people's participation is becoming the central issue of our time...People today have an urge – an impatient urge – to participate in the events and processes that shape their lives."

Participation is fundamental to a healthy, functioning democracy. Ottawa researcher John Biles noted that "the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988) is based upon the belief that political participation by all members of a society is considered to be of fundamental importance to the legitimacy of a democracy." In his polemic on Booker T. Washington, the American thinker W.E.B. Du Bois framed the importance of political participation as a right critical to the survival and advancement of racially marginalised or oppressed peoples (1995: 87-88). It is also worth paraphrasing Mohandas Gandhi on how the greatness and the democratic nature of a country is to be measured by how it treats its minorities.

Political participation can include a wide range of different activities: exercising the right to vote; attendance at political meetings; initiating contact with politicians to express an opinion on an issue; working for a politician on a campaign; or membership in a government advisory committee. Stasiulis includes other significant forms of political activism: "ethnocultural community or individual political involvement in various social and protest movements, trade unions, 'homeland politics,' and the like" (1991: 1).

In this report, the form of political participation that this report examines is running for political office. However, it is important to note that electoral participation and broader forms of political engagement are often related (Saloojee and Siemiatycki, 2003: 3-4).

Many other researchers, analysts, and writers on participation have also talked about the importance of participation. For example, according to a study of political participation based in California:

> Political participation is empowering, giving citizens access to representation and influence. Political participation also is a unifying experience, creating a context for diverse groups to interact and to acquire a common civic culture. Who participates, when, and why thus have obvious policy relevance. A single vote usually does not alter an election outcome, but when large numbers of people are not incorporated into the political system, the substance and legitimacy of what government does will be affected (Citrin and Highton, 2002: np).

Participation has also been a key theme arising in struggles for freedom and equity around the world in recent years. Canadian social commentator Naomi Klein has observed that the message coming out of the original World Social Forum, a sort of global summit of social movements held annually since 2001 (thus far in Brazil) was that "politics had to be less about trusting well-meaning leaders and more about empowering people to make their own decisions; democracy had to be...more participatory" (2003: np).

The choice to focus on municipal political participation of racial minorities in the Hamilton area is based both on an awareness of local need and a recognition of the relative lack of research in this area in the Canadian context. Studies of racial minority political participation have tended to neglect urban or municipal politics, especially at the experiential level. The discourses on city politics and municipal government restructuring have largely ignored questions of race.

At the time of the *Unfurling The Flag* study period, only one participatory study of racial minority participation in Canadian politics has been done, and that focused on "higher levels of electoral politics" (Stasiulis and Abu-Laban in Megyery, 1991: 3-99). Stasiulis (1997) and Louis Balthasar in a study on Quebec (1996) noted a gap in the "systematic study of minority representation at other levels of government including municipal councils, and provincial and territorial legislatures." Although studies of minority participation in politics in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Calgary, Ottawa-Carleton and Montreal exist, regions such as Hamilton-Wentworth and smaller cities and towns have been neglected (Weinfeld, nd: 10).

Canadian researcher in the area Yasmeen Abu-Laban has recently written that

> Although political participation has been central to what political scientists study, attention to the inter-section of gender and the activities of minorities in this country has been limited. The available evidence shows that women, ethnic minorities, and particularly visible minorities are under-represented in positions of formal power in Canada. The evidence also shows that minorities – both male and female – are not politically passive and engage in a range of activities from voting and electoral politics to community activities. Seriously attending to questions of immigration, ethnicity, gender and political activism requires rethinking and redefining political participation (2002b:279).

A primary area of study is why people do or do not participate. That cannot be answered simply by dismissing it as a matter of personal taste or choice. Rather, participation is responsive to a wide range of factors in the social environment in which people exist. For example, a recent study of 3,634 candidates who ran in three federal elections between 1993 and 2000 examined factors such as party affiliation, geography, local party competitiveness, and campaign spending in influencing the electoral success of racial and other minorities (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 85).

The object of the report is to identify structural, cultural, economic, and political factors that impede or promote the full and complete political participation of all members of society, with a particular focus on the political life of racial minorities in Hamilton-Wentworth during regionalisation and beyond.

4.2 The Canadian State and Some Ideas of Citizenship

Citizenship is a marker of belonging. It implicitly includes the definition of some kind of bounded group of people. The original term referred to membership in the class of individuals empowered to participate in the governance of a particular city. In the past century it has been most associated with the nation-state, though more recently it is

again being explored with respect to other levels of social organisation (Shuster and Solomos, 2002). A citizen is, then, someone who belongs to the group thus defined.

The most fundamental bounds of citizenship in Canada are described in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and defined by various other laws passed by Parliament and interpreted by the courts. These include a number of fundamental freedoms, such as those of conscience, expression, peaceful assembly, and association, as well as rights around mobility within the country, rights to legal due process, and equality. One condition placed upon naturalised citizens but not on those born in Canada is taking the oath of loyalty to the Queen as part of the citizenship process. This was challenged unsuccessfully by Toronto lawyer Charles Roach as an infringement of a number of freedoms guaranteed by the *Charter*, as well as a violation of the equality of Canadian-born and naturalised citizens.

Citizenship has come to be understood as more than just a formal set of rights. It is now recognised as something functional and experienced. For example, with the rise of the welfare state after World War II, belonging to a national community in most industrialised countries came to include access to a number of social benefits, however fragmentary and incomplete they might have been in Canada (Brodie, 2002; Siltanen, 2002). This led to the concept of social citizenship – the idea that full belonging in a national community led to social rights as well as to political rights (Marshall, 1950).

The current understanding of citizenship within the nation-state is based in liberal political theory (e.g. Kymlicka, 2001). In this understanding, the citizen is an undifferentiated, universalised, abstract entity. The collectivity of citizens constructs the state among itself through a contract and lives equally within it. Isin has pointed out that, throughout history, myths of abstraction and universality notwithstanding, inclusion within citizenship has always been fluid and grounded in the results of struggles between groups in society (1999b: 267; Jenson and Papillon, 2001: 1), a notion not understood by social theorists who develop models solely on economic principles.

Citizenship has been related to the concepts of social cohesion, social inclusion and social exclusion. Centring the discussion around citizenship itself may be more useful in attempts to apply a "thorough analysis of exclusion," something Saloojee (2003: 1) identifies as both crucial and lacking in many analyses that center on inclusion. "Citizenship" inherently foregrounds the political dimension, and draws attention to issues of power. This is consistent with organisations and movements in many different parts of the world that are increasingly recognising that their efforts to oppose marginalisation and oppression are in fact about claiming full rights of citizenship (Jenson and Papillon, 2000: 3).

4.2.1 Explicit Exclusion
Any discussion of racial minority experiences of exclusion and political participation in Canada needs to start with acknowledging the history of exclusion of racial minorities from political enfranchisement (Brown, 1996: 18-22).

The structural realities inherent in how Canada came to be must be kept in mind:

What, in essence, is the historical reality? Canada is a nation based primarily on conquest, resulting in two European peoples taking away land from an indigenous nonEuropean population and in time establishing their economic and political authority, languages and culture. Although the locus of power has always been with the "charter groups" (vis-à-vis all other incoming groups) the relationship between the two has been asymmetrical with the "British" dominant and the "French" disadvantaged. An important consequence of British dominance is that Angloceltic institutions and ways of thinking have come to constitute the major component of Canadian norms, the ethos which "Other" ethnic groups, including the original inhabitants of this land, are supposed to assume in the process of becoming truly Canadian (Dahlie and Fernando, 1981)

Lord Durham's report to the British Parliament in the wake of the rebellions of 1837 used language of race to explain why the uprisings had happened. Durham wrote, "I could not...believe that this animosity was only that subsisting between an official oligarchy and a people; and again, I was brought to a conviction that the contest, which had been represented as a contest of class, was, in fact a contest of races." In today's use of language the difference of "races" he refers to, that between English and French, would be understood as a difference of ethnicity, but it is still notable that his solution was the forced assimilation of the French (Liodakis and Satzewich, 1998: 95).

Canada was granted responsible government in 1848 and Confederation occurred in 1867. The rhetoric of citizenship and nationhood at Confederation was based on four "founding nations": French, English, Irish, and Scots (Morton, 1993: 53). The first post-confederation premier of Quebec promoted the idea of Confederation among his citizens as a compact between the French and the English, and Canada as a country of two allegiances (*ibid*: 54). Aboriginal people and racial minorities are notably absent from these formulations.

Even at that time, however, notions of citizenship were more complex and loyalties more diverse. Public life in Canada was shaped by allegiances not just to the nation as a whole, or its supposed two linguistic halves, but also to other countries (like Ireland), to the provincial level, and to the British Empire (Morton, 1993: 54). However, the context of the nation was still very much one of white dominance, and "provided that they accepted the racial hierarchies, Canadians could learn from their school readers and their popular fiction how other races reveled in the simple honesty and common sense of a mere handful of white administrators" (Morton, 1993: 55).

To a certain extent even into the 1960s, but certainly before 1914, the British Empire was a strong competitor with the Canadian state for loyalty and ideas of citizenship (Fulford, 1993: 110). Indeed, the idea of a racially stratified 'pre-multiculturalism' was inherent in the imperial vision of citizenship. As Desmond Morton has observed, "The empire took pride in its multiracialism" and White Canadians could see the Empire as their home, and look forward to positions of leadership: "The 'white man's burden' would be borne by men from Battleford, Glace Bay, and Calgary" (1993: 56).

This was reflected in explicit exclusion of racial minorities from political participation within Canada. Many racial minorities in Canada did not have or recover voting rights until after the Second World War. The Japanese, Chinese and South Asian Canadian communities were all specifically excluded from voting rights at one time or another.

Various stratagems were planned to prevent these groups from entering the country in the first place. Following the "White Canada" policy, the Canadian government enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act. The Japanese government restricted emigration with the Canadian government using a "gentlemen's agreement." "Rather than allowing Canada to legislate against its subjects, Japan, ever conscious of `face,' voluntarily restricted emigration. No other nation specifically controlled the movement of its people to Canada" (Michiko Ayukawa and Roy, 1999: 845).

In the case of South Asians, who were British subjects and entitled to the same rights (in theory) as others under the Crown, the ploy was subtler. A prohibitive measure involved a "continuous journey" clause, which stipulated that to be accepted in Canada, a ship could not break journey from its starting point in India to its arrival in Canada. Given that the voyage would last weeks, over many thousands of miles, this was an impossibility. The Canadian humorist Stephen Leacock called this as neat a trick as any that was used to deprive Black Americans of their rights in the Deep South.

"As early as September, 1904, Vancouver's city government was protesting to Ottawa about South Asian immigration; at that time there could not have been more than one hundred of them in the whole province" (Buchignani and Indra, 1981: 203). "Even though citizens of India were British subjects, British Columbia in 1907 disenfranchised them. The government feared that the South Asians might participate in the provincial elections that year" (Henry, Tator, Mattis, Rees, 1995: 71).

At the time of Confederation, very few Canadians (primarily White males with substantial amounts of property) had the right to vote. "In 1867, the electorate represented just 11 per cent of the population; by 1997 this proportion had grown to 68 per cent" (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997: xvii).

Voting rights rested on property ownership among the landed gentry. Property itself was allocated differentially on the basis of race, with Blacks often denied land grants (Khenti, 1996: 62-63). White United Empire Loyalists each received at least a 100-acre land grant for remaining loyal to the Crown.

> The British governor, Sir Frederick Haldimand, had suggested that deserving blacks should receive 50 acres. Sir John Johnson, who was in charge of the land grants for the Kingston area, disagreed and argued that he thought the blacks should receive the same proportion of land as other men. However, he suggested that these grants should go to the owner, not the slave himself. This, of course, would mean a substantial increase of land for slave-owners like Johnson, with no benefit for the hapless slaves. Ultimately, it seems to have been left up to local government officials as to which free African settlers were to receive land. Slaves received nothing (Meyler and Meyler, 1999: 70).

Although Black Canadians in central and eastern Canada may not have been legally excluded from voting because of race, they faced other systemic barriers. Listed as property, along with furniture and cattle, most Black people were enslaved in Canada before the American War of Independence, and denied land, which would have enabled them to vote (Khenti, 1996: 62). Walker observes,

In Upper Canada, naturalized black males who owned taxable property were legally qualified to vote and to serve on juries, but local convention frequently prevented them. On several occasions it required appeals to local magistrates for the civil rights of black Canadians to be recognized in practice (1999: 164).

Although the expansion of the franchise to women in 1918 was significant, White women campaigned for the right to vote by capitalising on the anxiety over the deterioration of the Anglo-Saxon race (Bacchi, 1983), and organised against the expansion of the franchise to people of other racial backgrounds.

In 1920, during a debate on the Dominion Elections Act, the Solicitor General, the Hon. Hugh Guthrie, said:

So far as I know, citizenship in no country carries with it the right to vote. The right to vote is a conferred right in every case... This Parliament says upon what terms men shall vote... No Oriental, whether he be Hindu, Japanese or Chinese, acquires the right to vote simply by the fact of citizenship... (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997: 81).

Racial exclusions to the franchise were not eliminated until after the Second World War. The right to vote and to be a candidate for office was enshrined in 1982 in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, this applies only to Canadian citizens, not to newly arrived immigrants and refugees (Biles, 1998: 23).

4.2.2 Substantive Exclusion
In immigration policy papers prior to 1967, Canada expressed an explicit preference for remaining a "white" country. Asians, for example, were judged unassimilable and unsuited to this climate. It was only in 1967 that references to race and ethnicity were removed from Canada's Immigration Act (Jakubowski, 1997: 10). In the following years, immigration from Asian countries increased dramatically. "The visibility of South Asians, blacks, Chinese, and others whose major phase of immigration began in the 1960's has shifted public consciousness about immigrant to them, with the result that non-white immigration and immigration are now more or less linked in the public's eye" (Buchignani and Indra, 1985: 225). This period marked at least an approximate transition to formal inclusion but substantive exclusion of racial minorities from the full benefits of Canadian citizenship.

Martin Papillon, in a study on diversity and social inclusion in Canadian cities, observed that participation in public life is a critical element in social inclusion of racial minorities. "Full participation should not be confused with assimilation. Inclusion is a two-way process...For diversity to be sustainable it must be part of the public life of the *polis*. Norms, rules and practices of the citizenship regime must acknowledge difference and allow it full expression in the public realm" (2002: 3).

Raymond Rocco's discussion on the Latino/a population of Los Angeles illustrates how this exclusion can function. He says that, for this community,

disjunction or 'difference' has generated a qualitatively different set of political issues and alignments, including a contestation over nature of the rights, responsibilities, obligations, entitlements and other privileges of being a member of a national community (Baubock

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1994). And these are precisely the factors that constitute and define the parameters and functional meaning of citizenship (Sassen 1995, 1996a, 1996b; Garcia 1996; Holston and Appadurai 1996). (Rocco, 1999: 253)

Rinus Pennix observes, of analogous situations in European countries, that

> even in those states where some form of citizenship applies [for racial minority newcomers], other social and political factors prevent their full public participation. This often results in political marginalization and sometimes even total exclusion of these residents. Evidently, such a situation challenges basic liberal democratic values, core institutional procedures, and even fundamental questions of morality. Formulated in plain language: such a situation is politically inconsequent and morally unjust. It is also unwise, because it creates tensions and neglects the positive contribution of the newcomers to their environments (1998: np).

One of the effects of colonialism or recolonisation, which may describe the experiences of some racial minority communities settling in Canada, is the internalisation of some of the attendant myths about who is a Canadian, about whose culture is valued, and about how people of different races behave. In the political context, with mainstream voters, it may take the form of depicting or construing someone with a darker skin colour as an outsider who would naturally be incapable of understanding so-called "Canadian" issues. Quite commonly, the reality of being a racial minority Canadian is to be interrogated on the right to citizenship.

> Where are you *really* from? or Where are your parents from? are loaded questions for people of colour born or raised in Canada. The questions suggest that we do not "look" Canadian... The questions are by nature racist; their faulty premise assumes that because we are not White we could not be Canadian. Their logic is based on colonialist and racist assumptions about what Canadians look like and what it is to be Canadian (Palmer, 1997: v-vi).

Racial minorities also respond to colonial ideology in different ways and have different patterns of racial identifying as responses to the colonial and racist attitudes and ideology they encounter. Howard-Hassmann (1999) has pointed out that some racial minority leaders in the region think of themselves as Canadians. However, thinking does not always translate into acceptance.

Historically, liberal political theory has ignored the issue of minority rights. In some ways, the writings of Bruce Hutchison illustrate quite well this "pre-theorized" liberal understanding. He paints a picture of Canada that feels stereotypical and remote to the modern, urban reader, with great use of images like the two solitudes, the wilderness, the railroad, and the mountains (1985: 19-21). It is a picture that ignores the realities of colonisation, racist oppression, and the lives of racial minority Canadians, while at the same time making national virtues of moderation, tolerance, common sense, and compromise. It is arguable that investment in these characteristics helped allow the steps towards multiculturalism (see Social Participation section) that began in the 1970s. The crises and pressures of the day – "In recent times, only in recent times, the word *racism* entered our common speech, and it was a dirty word for an age-old evil" – led to *ad hoc* legal measures to respond, which had no particular foundation in liberal theory but which were "wise and generally approved, though sometimes more honoured in the breach than in the observance" (Hutchison, 1985: 286, emphasis in original). It is only

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within the last two decades that establishing some sort of theoretical foundation for minority rights has begun to be seriously addressed (Kymlicka, 2001: 4, 39).

Different theorists have tried to deal with deviations from the abstract and universal citizen in a variety of ways. Charles Taylor, for example, has argued that most Canadians relate to the state as individuals, but that Quebecers and Aboriginal people have distinct, group relationships to the state and therefore somewhat different experiences of citizenship (Fulford, 1993: 105). Leaving aside the problematic assertion that Aboriginal citizenship in any way derives from the Canadian state (Henderson, 2002: 415-440), this still imagines a Canada based on a limited number of founding nations, and ignores the real complexity of experiences of Canadians, particularly racial minority Canadians.

Will Kymlicka, one of the foremost liberal theorists in this area, argues that the project of nation-building, because of its emphasis on a monolithic unity, has a tendency to be oppressive to minorities that do not conform to whatever ideal is at the centre of that imagined unity. "[B]ehind every minority that is causing trouble for the state, we are likely to find a state that is putting pressure on minorities" (2001: 2). Because of this, he argues that "unless supplemented and constrained by minority rights, state nation-building is likely to be oppressive and unjust" (*ibid*: 3). While he argues for perhaps a rather rosier picture of the success of minority rights as a tool in preventing oppression than we present in this document (*ibid*: 3), he acknowledges a "gap between the theory and practice of liberal democracies" (*ibid*: 4) and that "citizenship" and related concepts do not oppress due to "random or innocent mistakes but work systematically to the disadvantage of minorities" (*ibid*: 8).

The liberal ideas for nationalism and citizenship he presents place an emphasis on being non-coercive and allowing public space for mobilisation around different national character. National identity is "thinner;" self-governing institutions of other national groups within the state's territory are not dismantled; and overwhelming evidence for historical and current group mistreatment can legitimise temporary deviations from universal (i.e. non-targeted) processes and institutions (*ibid*: 39,188-197).

Kymlicka's formulations have been critiqued on the one hand as being too much of a deviation from the liberal-democratic principles of (supposed) universality (*ibid*: 49). Some theorists continue to use language around claims for equity that implies that the official naming and recognition of inequities is somehow the source of divisiveness, not the pre-existing oppressions themselves (e.g. Cairns, 1995: 120-1,170-180).

Others, such as Iris Young, want a notion of citizenship that is less categorical and more responsive to the complexities of reality (1990: 250-274; 1997: 48-53). She seeks "differentiated citizenship" (1999: 237) that is more radically responsive to experiences than to the dictates of institutions, leading one to "define the scope of the polity as extending across the city and region in which people share the effects of external economic and environmental forces, and interact in dense networks that create interdependences and mutual effects" (*ibid*: 237). This includes the idea not only of geographically differentiated citizenship, but of non-imposed differentiation by group – "that segregation is wrong, but that social group differentiation and reactive separation are not wrong" (*ibid*: 246).

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A fundamental challenge that remains to be addressed by multicultural citizenship based firmly in traditional liberal-democratic theory is the lack of clarity about how to deal with imposed identities and social inequities that are so much a part of the experience of racism. Kymlicka himself illustrates of this by a willingness to impose his own distinction between racial minorities whose historical and current experience he thinks warrant targeted efforts to address exclusion from full citizenship (Aboriginal people and Black Canadians) from those he thinks do not (all other racial minorities, presumably) (*ibid*: 52,178-197).

Another Canadian theorist who seems less closely tied to some of the liberal tradition, and whose notions of citizenship have a more post-modern flavour, is Mark Kingwell. His vision of citizenship recognises the very racist origins of the idea – delineation of tribe and "other" for the purposes of exclusion (2000: 12) – and foregrounds notions of justice and participation.

> Citizenship is a way of meeting one of our deepest needs, the need to belong; it gives voice and structure to the yearning to be part of something larger than ourselves. By the same token, citizenship is a way of making concrete the ethical commitments of care and respect, of realizing in action an obligation to aid fellow travelers – in short, of fostering justice between persons (*ibid:* 5).

> What we need is a new model of citizenship based *on the act of participation itself*, not on some quality or thought or right enjoyed by its possessor. This participatory citizenship doesn't simply demand action from existing citizens; it makes action at once the condition and the task of citizenship (*ibid*: 12, emphasis in original).

But while these ideas have a certain appeal, it is less obvious how they apply to the concrete realities of racial minorities in Canada in 2003 and beyond – a time when the state is still central to shaping the experience of citizenship, and in a period in which states have become noticeably less liberal.

As part of neoliberal globalisation, we see the ongoing change in the meaning of citizenship through the erosion of social citizenship resulting from the withdrawal of states from the provision of important elements of social welfare (Hindess, 2002; Flint, 2002). This exacerbates pre-existing social and economic marginalisation experienced by racial minority communities in Canada – "the implications of deteriorating Canadian social policies and social entitlements that have aggravated poverty, economic insecurity and social exclusion, especially amongst marginalized groups with tenuous links to the wage economy" (Stasiulus, 2002: 367).

There is strong resistance to addressing issues of race or racism nowadays, although there may be less discomfort with issues of ethnicity. Some of the issues involving federalism and minority groups were explored at a recent conference (October 1999) held in Quebec, entitled the "International Conference on Federalism in Era of Globalization." Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka felt that the debate had been dominated by the Quebec question at the expense of other minorities, a complaint heard sometimes when treating all forms of ethnicity uniformly in Canada.

The Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing was established in 1989. Its aim was to study "the appropriate principles and processes that should govern the election of the House of Commons and the financing of political parties and candidates' campaigns." The focus included the integration of "ethno-cultural" minorities (defined as non-Aboriginal, non-French and non-British) into the Canadian political system. Although the Commission recognised racism in the partisan resistance to changing the political system, there have been few such examinations of the barriers faced by racial minorities at the municipal level. Certainly, the gains, if any, have been minuscule in a diversifying city such as Hamilton.

The Neutral State
A basic conceptual problem with the traditional abstract and universalised citizen of liberal-democratic political discourse, and a factor that helps obscure from mainstream view much of the exclusion that racial minorities experience, is what Yasmeen Abu-Laban has described as "the myth of the neutral state" (2002: 478).

This violation of neutrality has been critiqued in two different ways. Some writers have pointed out the way in which states, in a deliberate and formal way, treat members of different groups in a way that is exclusive or oppressive, in violation of states' supposed neutrality. This is illustrated in the Canadian context by some of the older examples discussed below. Other theorists have approached the issue by pointing out that even when treatment is formally equal, it can create inequitable outcomes when applied to people/groups with vastly different lived experiences, resulting in differential degrees of representation and citizenship (Chaudry, 1999: 391). This criticism is more relevant to barriers experienced when formal equality of citizenship has been achieved.

These two criticisms are tied to two different ways of understanding the role of the Canadian state in relating to its citizens. Both work under the general framework of classical liberal theory and the liberal-democratic state, but they can be usefully distinguished by describing them as "conservative" and "liberal." In the conservative vision of Canada, formal equality for all members of society is enough. Any inequalities in outcome, or other inequities resulting from a playing field that is not level to begin with, are essentially privatized, and treated as being individual rather than social problems. The liberal vision of Canada admits inequitable experiences of citizenship as social issues and seeks to adapt the functioning of the state and civil society to moderate or even remove those inequities, while leaving the basic ways in which power works in this country intact.

More immediately there are the changes in and by the Canadian state in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States. The bulk of the harm and suffering that occurred in many Canadian cities after 9/11 (and some of the worst occurred in Hamilton) was in the form of hate crimes and other reprisals that targeted racial minorities, partly promoted by the right wing in Canada and the United States. Yet the majority of the state's response was not in response to these experiences. It was part of an agenda which will serve to further erode the rights of racial minority Canadians. However, it should be noted that the federal government provided funds to help rebuild the Hindu temple in Hamilton after the post-9/11 arson attack.

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Canada, like most other Western countries, passed a number of pieces of legislation whose purpose and/or content was at least officially intended as part of their response to the events of that day. Abu-Laban points that many of these actions have been important in "de-masking...the myth of the neutral state" and the consequent unequal experience of citizenship along racialised lines (2002: 478). They are "policies which serve to illustrate how the liberal Canadian state can and may act in a discriminatory fashion, [and] how easily this can be supported within some circles of the Canadian public" (2002: 477).

The new legislation included Bill C-35, "anti-terrorism legislation," and Bills C-36 and C-42, also referred to as "The Public Safety Act." These bills gave the government the power to arrest people "preventatively," to impose conditions without laying criminal charges, to tap telephones more easily, and to detain persons under a security certificate without publicly revealing the evidence against them. It gave cabinet the power to decide what organisations are labelled "terrorist," with minimal due process, and to impose penalties for supporting or facilitating such organisations and their members, even if the person in question knew of no specific terrorist acts. The legislation also allows cabinet the power to involve the military more easily in enforcing domestic order, to keep information secret that would previously have been public, and to grant legal immunity to "state terrorists" visiting Canada as part of official state delegations. CSIS, the RCMP, and other law enforcement and intelligence bodies have received more resources, and instructions that efforts against "terrorism" are to be given higher priority.

The federal government has also taken note of some public concerns, including subjecting significant portions of Bill C-35 to a "sunset clause" that will have the expanded police powers expire unless explicitly renewed by Parliament. As well, the federal government has been actively lobbying the government of the United States to prevent it from engaging in racial profiling of Canadian citizens, though this is still happening.

Some provincial governments embraced a similar agenda, as with the Ontario government echoing the new U.S. Department of Homeland Security by renaming its Ministry of the Solicitor General to the Ministry of Public Safety and Security. The Ontario and Alberta governments – both run by Conservatives – have also been public in endorsing U.S. military action abroad against countries primarily inhabited by racially visible people.

Canadian lawyer Rocco Galati, the only lawyer to win against an attempt to imprison someone with a security certificate, argued in his submission to the parliamentary hearings on Bill C-36 that "the Muslim and Arab communities will be directly affected" (16). A joint brief by a coalition of Muslim organisations and Toronto's Urban Alliance on Race Relations was particularly concerned with the use of "religious, ideological, and political" motivations in the bill's definition of terrorism – this inherently means that those whose religion or politics differ from the institutionalised norm are more likely to be targeted under this legislation. Struggles against colonialism or recolonisation can easily be labelled terrorism, as the African National Congress in South Africa was by U.S. officials in the 1980s. This is particularly worrying given that the U.S. is a likely source of much of the intelligence information that will be used to obtain security certificates.

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The same coalition of Muslim groups, whose members represent most of Canada's 600,000 Muslims, expressed concern about the "existing climate of hate and violence directed at Muslim-Canadians, and other minorities. The Coalition is concerned that this climate will influence the day-to-day application of the Bill such that Muslim-Canadians and other minorities will suffer a disproportionate share of the Bill's consequences" (2001: 2). This group, joined by the Canadian Arab Federation, the World Sikh Organization, the United Church of Canada, and other groups warned the government at the time that "Bill C-36 could become an instrument of institutionalized racism" (Beasley, 2001: np). The National Action Committee on the Status of Women made similar points.

There is some indication that South and West Asian Canadians have disproportionately experienced the impacts of these efforts (Beasley, 2002: np). At least half a dozen South and West Asian families in Hamilton were visited by CSIS in the year following 9/11 (Boase, 2002: D7), which contributed to a climate of fear. The activist community in Ontario is aware of a small number of people still detained under security certificates, all West Asian Canadian and North African Canadian men.

The passage of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* in November 2001 marked a change in state direction with respect to newcomers to Canada, particularly racial minorities. While certain features have been broadly welcomed, such as giving greater recognition to the rights of permanent residents, allowing the best interest of children to be taken into account when making decisions, and broadening the compass of the family class, there are others that have given great cause for concern (Jimenez and Crepeau, 2002: 18). The Act expands the range of people who can be detained on arrival in Canada, and the duration of detention. It expands the grounds for declaring people inadmissible to Canada on the basis of security, including "terrorism," though neither the Act nor the regulations actually define what that means. The right of immigrants to appeal has been restricted, penalties for violating immigration laws have been tightened, and provisions (both statutory and funding) for interdiction of refugee claimants and deportation of people already in Canada have been increased (*ibid*: 19). Because of all of this, "in the end the association between migrants, refugees and terrorists – already heavily covered by the media – is reinforced" (*ibid*: 20).

The 2001 Act also includes the "safe third country" clause, which forbids refugees who initially land in the United States from claiming refugee status in Canada, even though the U.S. makes greater use of dehumanising processes like detention and is more restrictive around which refugees are given status. This has been compared to the "continuous journey" clause which was used by the Canadian state to keep South Asian immigrants out of the country in the early 20th century (Krebs, 2003: 1).

The federal government is currently considering new legislation around immigration and citizenship, Bill C-18. It would give the government new powers to revoke the citizenship of naturalised Canadians, to refuse citizenship, to impose more and harsher penalties for immigration-related offenses, and to change the citizenship process from quasi-judicial to administrative (*Bill C-18,* 2003). Despite statements of intent to the contrary in the Bill, it contains a number of instances of differential treatment of citizens based on whether or not they were born in Canada, including the new powers for revoking citizenship as well as some rules for inheritance of citizenship by children of citizens when those children

are born outside of the country. It would give the federal cabinet the power to deny citizenship based on a person exhibiting "flagrant and serious disregard for the principles and values underlying a free and democratic society" but the meaning of this phrase is not clearly defined in law or public policy. Given the diversity of opinion within the public, and the fact that different cabinets could interpret it quite differently, there is great potential for abuse. A number of the situations for revocation or annulment of citizenship do not require that the evidence be shared with the person in question, and provide no opportunity for appeal (*Comments on Bill C-18*, 2003). It also proposes a National Identity Card which may contain identification data from various biometric scans.

A number of prominent groups who advocate on behalf of immigrants and racial minorities in Toronto have denounced Bill C-18 as "racist, draconian, and regressive" and said "it contradicts the notion that citizenship is an equal status conferred on all Canadians" (Greene, 2003: np).

In the past, the state has demonstrated such inappropriate application of deportation measures as using it to respond to Black Canadian youth convicted of crimes, even in cases where the youth in question came to Canada from Jamaica as infants, lived their entire lives here, and were being deported to a country which they did not know.

These changes in state policy and action are happening at a time when there are many racial minority Members of Parliament. A major study of the three federal elections between 1993 and 2000, by Livianna Tossutti and Tom Pierre Najem, analysed factors affecting the nomination and success of 3,634 candidates, with attention to the impact of ethnic minority and racial minority status. They found that racial minority representation in Parliament over this period remained consistent with the immediately preceding elections, though racial minorities are still significantly underrepresented and their share of the seats in Parliament has stopped growing (2002: 85).

Despite this presence in Parliament, the racialised impacts of all of these changes can be difficult to put on the public agenda. Currently, the groundswell in prejudice and hate-crime activity, the attacks on equity, the rolling back of safeguards, the backlash against immigrants, and the media outcry against "queue-jumping" refugees have combined to delegitimise the concerns of racial minority communities in the eyes of the public. It is seen as impolitic for a candidate to mention the issue, let alone adopt it as an election platform. Yet given the lived experience of racial minorities in this country, it makes sense to insist, as Aylward does, that "We should not ask why 'race' is an issue, but rather why 'race' is not an issue" (1999: 191).

4.3 Hamilton and the Municipal Experience

The role of the city level in the practice and experience of citizenship should not be underestimated. The Western tradition traces its democratic roots to the ancient Greek city-states: politics" to "*polis,*" "citizen" to "city." From European liberal theorists of the 1830s and 1840s to later American political scientists, many writers have "considered the city as an incubator of democratic politics" and therefore of citizenship (Isin, 1999a: 167). Many commentators see the role of the city in citizenship as increasing in the current period of neoliberal globalisation (Bender, 1999: 216; Shuster and Solomos, 2002: 46). "[T]he concept of local citizenship – voting and or standing in local elections,

becoming a local business leader, developing community associations that link with the host society – is a very important means of inclusion" (Shuster and Solomos 2002: 51). During debates about municipal restructuring in Toronto, the idea of giving the new urban entity a more autonomous role within the Canadian confederation was raised by a number of people.

The origins of the colonial institutions which evolved into what is now the City of Hamilton were humble. In 1792, Upper Canada was divided into nineteen counties. The townships of Ancaster, Barton, Binbrook, Glanford, Saltfleet, Beverly, West Flamborough and East Flamborough were created for land-granting purposes. However, "there was still no local government responsible to the people of the region" (Stewart, 1978: 10).

In the days when it was easiest to travel by water, Hamilton-Wentworth's location at the head of Lake Ontario was very strategic. Dundas became one of the most important early settlements at the head of the lake because it was the westernmost point that could be reached by water. The many creeks and waterfalls flowing over the escarpment in the region were also of strategic importance in the days when water power was essential for industry. Mill villages flourished at Ancaster, Dundas, Crook's Hollow, and Waterdown.

The early history of municipal politics in Canada was a process of the British slowly and cautiously relinquishing colonial control. The earliest incorporated municipalities in Canada were St. John, Montreal, Quebec City, Hamilton and Toronto (Nicol, 1997: 19). However, the incorporations were of a very limited form. The first community in Upper Canada (modern-day Ontario) that managed to secure a charter of incorporation from the British government was Brockville in 1832. Hamilton was second in 1833, followed by Toronto in 1834.

> [A] series of laws passed between 1832 and 1840 established boards of police in nine towns in Upper Canada. With these laws, the institution of the municipal corporation was reintroduced in a quite distinct British North American pattern, a pattern that demonstrated continuing caution by the legislature toward the formation of corporations: only the members of the boards were incorporated, not the town inhabitants (Isin, 1995: 67).

> British authorities recognized the need for a decentralized administrative framework, but they were reluctant to grant local self-government since it was widely believed that the overly-democratic townhall meetings of New England had been a primary cause of the American Revolution (Matthews, 1985: 2).

While rivalry existed among the early villages (Stewart, 1978: 11), it was Hamilton that was named the seat of government in the area by the colonial administration. "Hamilton originated in 1816 largely because of the need for a courthouse to serve the growing settlements at the western end of Lake Ontario" (Weaver, 1995: 7). Hamilton became a town in 1833 and a city in 1846. "In 1847, Dundas was made a town at the same time that Waterdown and Stoney Creek were given more limited municipal powers" (O'Brien, 1999: 2). The town of Ancaster was incorporated in 1850.

Two significant points should be made about this early history. First of all, local municipal governments in the region were established before either national (Canadian) or

provincial (Ontarian) governments. Although today local government is seen as the least important of the three levels of government, its origins tell a different story.

In understanding the legacy of cities within Canadian federalism, Isin asks,

> How did the colonial political discourse in the 1850s and 1860s dramatically shift its emphasis from cities and towns to provinces, which ultimately constituted the political entities of confederation? To put it differently, during the confederation debates, how did the provinces emerge as the "local" in the "central-local" debate, while until the 1850s "local" meant cities and towns? (Isin, 1992: 40).

Secondly, local government in the Hamilton area antedated the Baldwin Act of 1848, which established municipal corporations in Ontario (Higgins, 1986; Isin, 1992). The Act is often referred to as establishing "responsible government" (O'Brien, 1999: 2) in the sense of a government responsible to the people rather than to the British Crown. However, despite this transfer from a colonial government to a local government, even today the symbolic links between municipal government in the region and the British Crown remain strong.

By contrast, most colonies did not enjoy responsible government until the end of the Second World War. "Virtually all of the seventy-odd new nations carved out of these empires since 1945 represent transfers of political power from whites to non-whites" (Isaacs, 1968: 76).

Locally, after the Baldwin Act, "Brant, Halton and Wentworth Counties were united, but Wentworth became a separate county in 1853. Hamilton, because of its status as a city, was never a part of the county governance system" (O'Brien, 1999: 2). Therefore, from 1853 until regionalisation in 1974, local government in the region consisted of the city of Hamilton side-by-side with the County of Wentworth. Wentworth County was in turn divided into several smaller municipalities.

At the time, only men with a relatively high amount of property could vote. In Hamilton's first election in 1833, there were only 46 eligible voters (*Municipal Handbook*, Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth).

In terms of structure, according to O'Brien (1992: 2)

> The system of representation on County Council was problematic from the beginning. In the 19th century, all area municipalities in the county system were represented on county council by their reeve and deputy reeve regardless of their population or assessment base. The inequities of this were eliminated in 1896 when a system of direct election of county commissioners from districts drawn on a population basis was instituted. The reeves were angry at being bypassed, so this system lasted only ten years. The changes made in 1906 returned to the system of indirect election of County Council, although the new system recognized differences in population by providing that each municipality had either one or two representatives on county council depending on its population with a system of weighted voting which allowed each representative to cast either one or two votes.

The city of Hamilton has seen a number of changes to its ward system over the years. As Hamilton grew, the number of wards was increased in 1846, 1873, and 1919. A Board of Control was added in 1910 (Weaver, 1982: 186) which consisted of the mayor and four controllers who were elected at large by general vote of the entire population of the municipality. The Board of Control acted as both the executive and finance committee of city council, and its powers and duties were "established by The Municipal Act in all cities having a population of not less than 100,000 people" (Agro, 1975: 10).

In 1960, there was a major realignment of the wards in the city of Hamilton. The wards established in 1960 "were simply strips running from the mountain to the bay without regard for historic or neighbourhood groupings... Ostensibly the strip wards were to guarantee that aldermen would represent a cross section of the city and not work for a particular neighbourhood or interest group" (Weaver, 1982: 186).

Weaver notes that the 1960 shifting of ward boundaries "ignited little controversy," despite the fact that the realignment of wards "disturbed a traditional concept of representative democracy, one proposing that a constituency have some community cohesion" (*ibid*). The new ward boundaries would have meant that the aldermen would have had to campaign in unfamiliar territory and "as a result, half of the aldermen for the 1961 council were newcomers" (*ibid*).

The Hamilton Spectator editorial on 22 August 1960 stated that:

> There will be two wards on the Mountain instead of one. In the lower city the present seven wards become six with boundaries extending from the Mountain to the Bay, replacing the traditional divisions along King and Main Streets from east to west. When ward boundaries are changed, some aldermen seeking re-election are to some extent placed in jeopardy by losing some of their former supporters; they must gain support from new groups of voters. We think council deserves credit for a good measure of statesmanship, therefore, for approving Mr. Berry's plan to equalize the wards so that each pair of aldermen will represent about the same number of voters.

By contrast, when a strip plan was proposed in Toronto in 1969, there was a great deal of controversy. Toronto's Board of Control was eliminated in 1969 and in order to preserve the same number of municipal politicians, Toronto council decided to undertake a major realignment of ward boundaries in Toronto, creating additional wards. The Toronto strip plan

> created wards with as few new voters as possible for the sitting aldermen. By using this criterion, the city clerk maximized the chances that sitting aldermen would be re-elected in the coming civic elections. This is because experience has shown that incumbents in a ward generally are re-elected no matter how good or bad they are (Lorimer, 1970: 38).

Community groups organised to fight the plan and, when the matter went to the Ontario Municipal Board, the strip plan was rejected in favour of a bloc plan that produced wards with more community cohesion.

In 1970, there were further changes to the ward system in Hamilton, although they were not as drastic as in 1960. A *Hamilton Spectator* editorial on 28 February 1970 summed

up the changes thus: "City Council acted responsibly and sensibly by adding a third ward to the Mountain, reducing lower city wards from six to five, and keeping the council at its present size...which is quite large enough... If 23 councillors are enough to rule Toronto, then 21 are more than sufficient for Hamilton."

At the time of regionalisation in 1974, there were eleven municipalities: Ancaster, West Flamborough, East Flamborough, Waterdown, Hamilton, Saltfleet, Beverly, Dundas, Binbrook, Glanford, and Stoney Creek, plus a Wentworth County government providing some services to all but Hamilton. With regionalisation, the eleven municipalities were reduced to six, and the Wentworth County government was eliminated. Binbrook and Glanford became Glanbrook, Saltfleet became part of Stoney Creek, and Flamborough assimilated Waterdown, Beverly, East Flamborough, and part of West Flamborough. Also, parts of West Flamborough and Ancaster merged with Dundas.

There were two major differences between the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth and structures which preceded it. First, the City of Hamilton and Wentworth County were now combined in one governing structure. Second, the upper-tier Region was allocated responsibility for substantially more services than the county had provided. This was meant to be an urban-style government for an area which was highly urban at its core, and becoming more urbanized in its outskirts (O'Brien, 1999: 5).
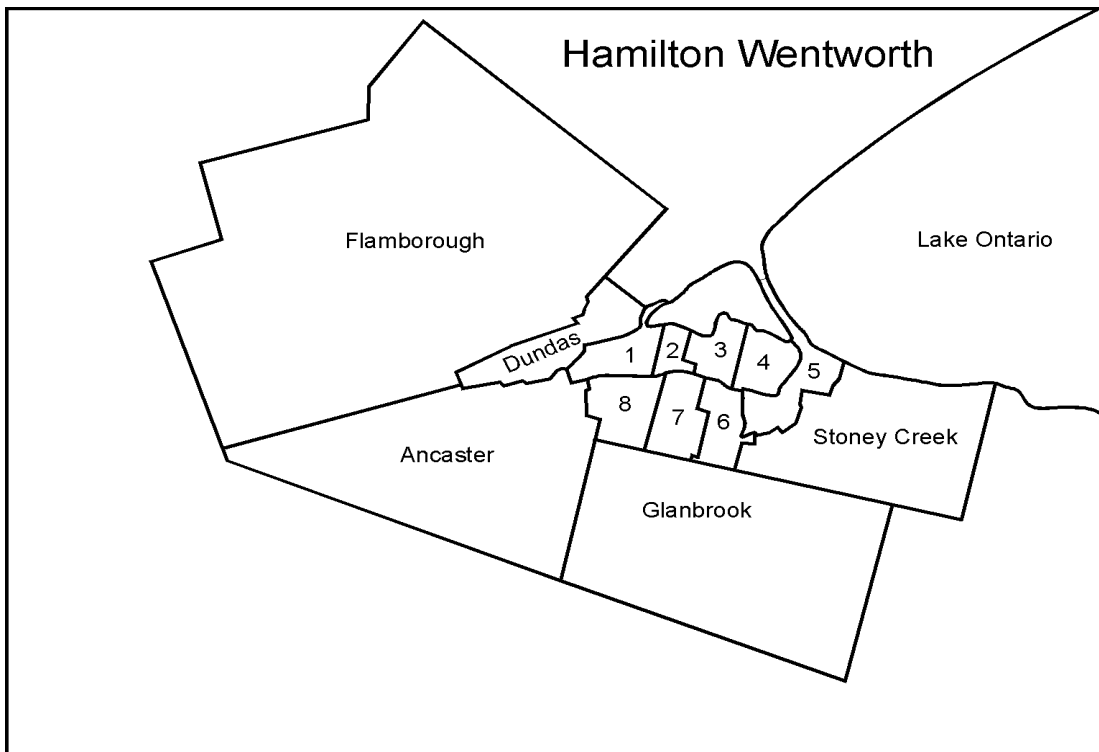
The Region of Hamilton-Wentworth

After seventy years of a mixed system (wards plus some at-large representatives), the city of Hamilton reverted to a ward system in 1980. It has remained as a ward system with little or no discussion as to the relative merits of different electoral systems, even

during the recent municipal restructuring debates. The old City of Hamilton's ward system was a multimember format, where voters elected two aldermen per ward. Most other area municipalities had one representative per ward, except Dundas, which was the only area municipality where councillors were elected at large. Ward descriptions had been mapped out in Dundas but were not used for electoral purposes. The question of establishing a ward-election system was put on the ballot at least twice in Dundas (most recently in 1991), but the voters chose to maintain the at-large system. Also, Dundas was the only area municipality that had a bylaw disallowing lawn signs during municipal elections. This meant that a candidate in Dundas had to campaign across the entire town (not just one ward), without the use of lawn signs to aid in name recognition.

There were 17 members on Hamilton city council, 9 in Stoney Creek, 9 in Dundas, 7 in Ancaster, 9 in Flamborough, and 7 in Glanbrook. 28 of the 59 politicians sat on regional council which was made up of the regional chair, the entire 17-member Hamilton city council, and two members (the mayor and the deputy mayor) from each of the other five municipalities. The last changes to the ward system in Hamilton were made in 1983, in time for the 1985 elections. These were minor changes and shifts of the ward boundaries, in order to try to equalise the populations in each ward.

In 1988, the Hamilton-Wentworth chairman became the first directly elected head of a regional council in Ontario. There was overwhelming support for this initiative, and most people saw it as more democratic. However, Henry Jacek, a political science professor at McMaster University, warned of potential pitfalls. He made the point that it would be an election by a larger aggregate number of voters than any federal or provincial member or existing municipal politician, and that the prohibitive cost of campaigning throughout the region could make the chairman's job available only to the rich, and/or could invite party politics ("Some pitfalls in popular race professor warns," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 4 February 1987).

> It must be recognized that in non-partisan municipal elections with no public funding of campaigns (i.e. in most elections outside Quebec), the raising of money is a crucially important task, especially in cases where the electorate is larger than that in most federal electoral districts. The extent to which mayors – and other members of council – are beholden to corporate donors concerned with property issues in their communities remains the most important issue in the study of the Canadian urban political process (Sancton, 1994: 186-187).

In 1998, the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth and the city of Hamilton voted to combine their administrative structures, and found that: "as a result of this consolidation, 91% of the combined municipal total expenditure in the region is now channelled through the amalgamated Region-City of Hamilton administration" (O'Brien, 1999: ii). This meant that over half of the municipal politicians (31 out of 59) represented only 30% of the population of the region and control only 9% of the expenditure of the region. "The numbers reflect the dominance of the City of Hamilton, even though it is actually under-represented on a representation by population basis" (*ibid*: i).

4.3.1 Municipal Political Structure
Kushner et al. found that smaller municipalities were more likely to have an at-large electoral system. Even though Dundas had such a system, the entire town has fewer

voters than many Hamilton wards. Heads of council (mayors) were also elected at-large. Although Kushner et al. state that the success rate of non-incumbent candidates does not vary between ward and at-large systems, other evidence suggests that an at-large system or a mixed system (i.e. something like a Board of Control) would favour racial minority candidates whose supporters are not geographically concentrated.

Kushner et al. also found that the number of candidates per seat was a factor. They suggested that a greater competition for a limited number of council seats likely motivates a candidate to launch a larger campaign. Also, larger municipalities consistently attract more candidates than do smaller ones. However, smaller communities have failed to translate overall increases in the number of female candidates into elected positions. In Hamilton, the number of racial minority candidates has increased. Until 1990, there was an average of 1.7 candidates from racial minority communities in each municipal election; from 1991 onwards, there was an average of 7.6 candidates from racial minority communities. This increase in candidates has not translated into elected positions.

Evidence shows that women are more likely to gain election in cities where council members are elected at large. "The reasoning, in the case of at-large elections, is that women benefit from the multimember format and a tendency by voters to seek diversity in their ballot choices" (Bledsoe, 1993: 47). In the last term before municipal restructuring, there was a significantly higher proportion of women on Dundas town council than on any other council in Hamilton-Wentworth, and Dundas was the only one with an at-large system.

However, the evidence on the electoral success of racial minorities is quite different, at least in the experience of American Blacks.

> Current evidence indicates that, in cities employing at large elections, blacks are likely to win council seats at about 80 percent of proportionality... While in district election systems black council representation approximates proportionality. The overpowering evidence of a discriminatory effect of at-large systems led to a number of cities to voluntarily or involuntarily change to a district or, more commonly, a mixed election format in recent years (Bledsoe, 1993: 48).

This may be related to the fact that Black Americans tend to be geographically concentrated within cities, whereas this is less true of racial minorities in Canada, particularly in Hamilton. In fact, "the single-member district plurality system inherited from the British tradition of responsible government may exacerbate rather than reduce tensions in a diverse society such as Canada. For one thing, the focus on territorial-based, as opposed to interest-based, representation may systematically exclude minority groups without a significant territorial base" (Jenson and Papillon, 2001: 25).

The city of Vancouver also cites American research: "Mixed systems are used in an increasing number of cities in the United States, according to figures collected by the International City/County Management Association. A study based on these figures suggests that mixed systems may be a "reasonable form of compromise for jurisdictions facing representational controversies" (Renner: 67).

"The controversies refer to the need to increase the representation of minority groups" (City of Vancouver website). "There has been considerable pressure recently in the United States, particularly since the passage of the 1982 Voting Rights Act, to find election systems which elect (or do not in some way exclude) groups that in the past have been under-represented on city councils." The conclusion is that: "One of the main arguments against the at-large system, particularly if it is combined with `winner-take-all' voting, is that it leads to city councils which under-represent minority groups" (City of Vancouver website).

Foster notes,

> The difference between Canada and the United States is that Blacks in Canada do not congregate in large enough numbers that, as the saying goes, would allow them to elect a dog catcher. Canada does not have the inner-city housing projects, populated in large numbers by African-Americans, as are those found in the United States. This means that the Black vote in Canada, even in cities like Toronto, Montreal and Halifax, is very diffuse. There is no real clout. Even at the riding level, the total Black vote is marginal. This difference is even more dramatic at the national level: whereas African-Americans make up 20 per cent of the American population, African-Canadians account for less than 1 percent of the population (1996: 143).

However, Malton in Ontario was noted for fielding all Sikh Canadian candidates from various parties in the last provincial election. In 1992, the first independent boundaries commission in Nova Scotia recognised the particular histories of the Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq communities. It created five protected ridings in the province. Four were designed to protect the interests of the Acadian community and one to consolidate the Black communities in the Preston area (Landes, 1992).

THE CASE OF NOVA SCOTIA…

Black Nova Scotians will be guaranteed a seat on each school board in the province from the fall 2000 elections, according to Education Minister Jane Purves. These will be new seats. Only those who identify themselves as African Nova Scotians will be eligible to vote. Those who vote in this election will not be allowed to vote in other school board races. Ms. Delvina Bernard of the Council on African Canadian Education in Halifax noted that racial barriers prevented Blacks from winning elections. In 1997, Blacks won two out of 82 school board seats. Two Black candidates who ran for Halifax Regional Board lost the election. Wayne McKay, A Dalhousie University law professor, said "It's not reverse discrimination. It's reversing discrimination." Ms. Purves said "They've arguably been the most discriminated against group in our province." In 1993, electoral boundaries were redrawn in the Halifax riding of Preston to group several Black communities. This led to the election of the province's first Black MLA. Mi'kmaq and Acadians already have secure representation on school boards in Nova Scotia ("N.S. School Boards to be elected by race," *National Post*, 28 April 2000).

More history was made in 1993 when Wayne Adams of Nova Scotia was elected in the new provincial riding of Preston, deliberately created to concentrate black voters for greater electoral impact. All three major parties nominated black candidates in Preston, and when his Liberal Party formed a government Adams joined the cabinet as minister of supply and services (Walker, 1999: 169).

Attempts to manipulate spatial districts so create communities of interest have become more commonly known as "gerrymandering." This concept has a negative connotation. "Whether it is racially or politically motivated, gerrymandering is the inevitable byproduct of an electoral system that aggregates people by virtue of their assumptions about their group characteristics and then inflates the winning group's power by allowing it to represent all voters in a regional unit" (Guinier: 206). Dixon (1990) gives a more complex discussion of what gerrymandering is. He states that: "gerrymandering is discriminatory districting. It equally covers squiggles, multimember districting, or simple nonaction, when the result is racial or political malrepresentation" (Dixon, 1990: 245). It could be said that the opposite of gerrymandering is race-conscious districting. On race-conscious districting, Guinier says:

These critics have fixed their aim on a deeper message-that pressing claims of racial identity and racial disadvantage diminishes democracy. We all lose, the theory goes, when some of us identify in racial or ethnic group terms... their dissatisfaction with racial group representation ignores the essentially group nature of political participation (Guinier: 205).

Evidence from California indicates that "minority voter participation tends to be higher in the districts where racial and ethnic minorities enjoy majority status" (Gay, 2001: 51).

The Nova Scotia Provincial Electoral Boundaries Commission based its approach on a landmark 1991 Canadian Supreme Court decision, popularly known as the Carter decision. The Carter decision "rejected a strict population equality requirement and, instead, held that the goal was 'effective representation' to be achieved by a `relative parity of voting power'" (Landes, 1992: 6).

In light of this Supreme Court decision, one of the respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study asks an important question when he asks "Can we present total non-representation as a crisis?" Generally, in the Canadian context, the population concentrations of racial minorities do not exist to allow for race-conscious districting (with the exception of Preston, Nova Scotia). Other structural issues such as multimember districting are the key factors that have an impact on minority representation.

It is argued that in single-member wards, voters who do not agree with their representative may feel that no one on council speaks for them at all. Multi-member wards, particularly those combined with cumulative voting systems, are said to remedy this problem but may be perceived by voters as too complicated. On the other hand, multi-member wards are used in some American cities specifically as a way of increasing the chances of electing minority candidates to council. (City of Vancouver website).

Hamilton's Community Coalition Against Racism (CCAR) has proposed that three at-large seats be added to Hamilton City Council, and that they be reserved for Aboriginal candidates, racial minority candidates, and candidates with disabilities. It was suggested

that this be put in effect for the 2003, 2006, and 2009 elections. Voters who wished to vote for one of these council seats would have to declare this intention and remove themselves from the voting rolls of the ward in which they live. CCAR argued that this was a useful way of addressing the historical underrepresentation of these groups on Council. After the three-election period, there would be a sufficient pool of high-profile candidates from these seats to compete more equally in the ward seats. Not all equity advocates agreed that this was the right way to foster participation. The proposal was described by a former racial minority candidate for City Council as being "patronizing" (Nolan, 2002: A7). In Toronto, the idea setting aside a seat for an Aboriginal representative has received some community support, but as part of a more general strategy for reducing barriers to accessing municipal power by racial minority communities, and in the context of moves towards urban Aboriginal self-government (Shaw et al., 2002: 17).

The election system is based in the assumption that communities of interest are geographical and that someone who does not live in the same area does not have the same interests or values. When this kind of parochialism is combined with skin-colour racism and colonial ideology, it could mean that racial minority candidates may be seen as being incapable of representing the majority interests of a particular area.

4.3.2 Amalgamation of Hamilton-Wentworth
The Association of Municipalities in Ontario (AMO) states that there were 471 municipalities in Ontario in January 2001 after the fall 2000 elections, 100 fewer than in January 2000. In summer 1996, there were 815 municipalities. In addition, there were 520 fewer councillors contending in the fall 2000 elections across the province (2,937 as opposed to the 3,457 in office in 2000 or the 4,586 in 1996), just before the restructuring drive began. A similar "rationalisation" philosophy was encouraged in the realm of municipal service delivery, following in the footsteps of earlier efforts applied to organisations that serve new immigrants, refugees, racial minorities and other disadvantaged groups, to avoid duplication of services and promote a one-stop mainstream service approach.

The cuts to the number of services, municipalities and politicians have been justified on the basis of cost, although gerrymandering across party lines and centralisation of power have also been alleged. For example, a study of amalgamations in Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia found that "there is no academic evidence to suggest that consolidation produces savings" (Sancton, 1996: 267). Keil attributes the amalgamation practices of the provincial government in Ontario as part of an effort to restrain progressive impulses in the urban centres of certain municipalities, and "the desire of powerful groups to reform and modernise municipal structures without raising the spectre of democratization" (2000: 762).

A special advisor, David O'Brien, appointed by the provincial government in 1999 was asked to make restructuring recommendations, focusing on ways to achieve:

- Lower taxes
- Enhanced or improved services
- Reduction in the number of municipal politicians
- Less bureaucracy, and

- Clear lines of responsibility and better accountability at the local level.

Responding to the racial and cultural diversity needs of the changing population was apparently not an important issue.

O'Brien summarised previous reports and concluded that: "Thirty years of study and analysis have concluded that a single level of government is the most efficient and effective form of governance for the Hamilton-Wentworth region" (O'Brien, 1999: i). He also commented that one-tier government would be beneficial in terms of population growth, economic development, and political accountability:

> The growth of this area has been slower than the growth rate in Ontario over the last twenty-five years.... Throughout the history of the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth there has been a great deal of tension between the central city and the suburban municipalities. This tension can be one of the forces which hinders the growth and development of the area. Another recurring characteristic of two tier systems is a lack of understanding on the part of the citizens about the operation of the system, mirrored by a lack of accountability on the part of some politicians and administrators within the system (1999: ii).

This idea of complexity causing a lack of accountability was recognised early on with regional government. In 1975, Controller Vince Agro wrote a book called *You Can Fight City Hall*. The introduction by Shelagh Brooks states: "The complexities of city government often cause confusion in the minds of citizens. The implementation of Regional Government in the Hamilton-Wentworth area has only served to complicate matters for most citizens. People who felt at home with the traditional structure of local government are now perplexed."

O'Brien recommended a single city, with thirteen single-member wards and a mayor elected at large. "This creates a Council of fourteen members in total, which represents a reduction of forty-five elected positions or a reduction of 76%" (O'Brien, 1999: x). Although there would have been a wide range of populations per ward, (the highest ward population being 52,098 and the lowest being 21,713), O'Brien stated that "it is anticipated that those wards with the lowest population will be growth areas of the future and the population of those wards will grow to the average over time" (*ibid*).

However, the lobbying and pressure from the suburban areas was intense. After O'Brien's recommendations were enshrined in provincial law in December 1999, the minister of municipal affairs announced that that two more seats would be added to the new structure ("Suburbs get two more seats," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 24 December 1999). "The move means the five suburbs, with a combined population of 140,000, will have seven seats on the new council and that Hamilton, which has a population of 310,000, will have eight." The town of Flamborough voted to opt out of the restructured city of Hamilton, but was not permitted to do so by the provincial government.

O'Brien made some recommendations about the agencies, boards and commissions controlled at a municipal level. He recommended "that the five existing hydro-electric commissions should be dissolved and one hydro-electric commission to serve the same customers as the previous commissions be created," and "that the three existing library Boards should be dissolved and replaced by one Board serving the entire City of

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Hamilton" (O'Brien, 1999: 49). Again, there was no declared intention of making these bodies representative or reflective of the racial diversity of Hamilton.

The final structure that was adopted was 15 single-member wards and a mayor elected at-large. The ward boundaries within the old city of Hamilton remained the same. The other area municipalities were divided into seven wards, roughly corresponding to suburban Flamborough, rural Flamborough, Dundas, Ancaster, Glanbrook, and two sections of Stoney Creek.

The board that was appointed by Queen's Park to oversee the transition to this new structure was criticised for not reflecting the diverse population. In a column, Mike Davison asked, "Who will speak to and for the visible minorities who have so well helped turn Hamilton into a world city? Not this panel" which he termed "right-wing, white bread, privileged and old" ("Unrepresentative board members should resign," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 4 February 2000).

Transition Board chair Marvin Ryder responded to these concerns, saying,

> "[W]e are all – what would you call it – middle or upper class. Certainly, yes, the board would be different if we had poor people, or disadvantaged people, or lower income people there...[but] would a lower-educated person, or someone who is younger, would they know how to work with income statements and balance sheets? Would they understand some of the technicalities of hydro?" (Neigh, 2000c: 6)

He went on to say, "I don't care how you cut it... It's impossible to get a board that is truly representative out of seven people. So in picking these people, I think that the government said that there are some things that are more important that we balanced, and some tings [sic] that were less important" (*ibid*). Class and racial identity were, apparently, "less important." In response, Fred Loft, a local activist in the labour movement and the Aboriginal community, publicly described the response as "racist." It should be noted that Ryder, a professor of business studies at McMaster University, has declared his candidacy for mayor of Hamilton in 2003.

A number of submissions to the province's special advisor on the restructuring process raised related issues. Jackie Gordon (*Public Submissions*, 1998: #142) mentioned that "Hamilton for example is the third-largest receiver of newcomers to Canada so any definition of accessibility must refer to linguistic and cultural accessibility. Some wards contain a high number of people who feel disenfranchised from the political process." Peter Hutton likewise noted that a "reduction in number of politicians" is a "reduction in ability to represent the population" (*ibid*: #100). Graham Meredith, president of the Social Planning and Research Council (*ibid*: #91) suggested that there be standing committees to address "communities of interest" although there was a lack of specificity as to which communities were meant.

A consultation process held by the City of Toronto on its plan to eliminate racism and discrimination, which talked to more than a thousand city residents, found that many residents had noticed that, since municipal restructuring and amalgamation in Toronto, issues of equity and social justice were "on the back burner" (Shaw et al., 2002: 8).

Siemiatycki (1998:11-12) noted that the mobilised resistance to the Toronto amalgamation plans were predominantly "Anglo WASP or WASC" middle-class, who presumably felt entrenched enough to feel that they have a stake in the city. The Hamilton experience was no different in this respect, with a few token exceptions, though it is significant that the resistance in Toronto was led by the core city, whereas in Hamilton-Wentworth people in the suburban and rural areas were most vocal in their opposition.

4.3.4 School Boards

Elections for school boards were first established in Hamilton in 1948. Prior to this, "the fact that the City Council appointed Secondary School Trustees ensured that the Union Board's main concern was taxes and not education... The only way a Union Board could be replaced by an all-elected one was by a public referendum. Persuading city council to put such a referendum on the ballot for the municipal election of December 1, 1948 was not an easy task... *The Hamilton Spectator* for May 27, 1948 reported that Ernie Hutton's appeal for democracy was "an arbitrary bid for power by a totalitarian mentality." In spite of such negative reporting, the Union Board was voted out with a wide majority and the Referendum of 1948 was known... as Emancipation Day" (Aikman, 1997: 67-68).

At the municipal school board level, voters are asked to elect representatives on the basis of religion and on the basis of language. Electors are enumerated as "Catholic" or "public," and as "French-language" or "English-language" speakers. They vote for representatives accordingly. The fact that this structure of representation by group at the municipal school board level exists is largely unexplored in the literature.

From 1973 until 1988, there were six members of the Catholic school board elected at-large from across the city, in addition to one or two trustees from each ward. The public school board did not have such a system (one or more trustees were elected from each ward, but there were no trustees elected at-large from across the city). In 1988, the six at-large positions were eliminated. Also in 1988, provincial legislation "changed the trustee/ratepayer representation formula, increasing the number of trustees in wards 7 and 8 from two to three" for the public board ("School trustee seats open door to women," *The Hamilton Spectator*, Sept. 26, 1988).

In early 1995, the Royal Commission on Learning set out a list of recommendations including governance of French schools by French school boards and student trustees. The current government has made drastic changes to education. First, the government passed legislation to amalgamate school boards. The original 129 boards were collapsed into 72. The Board of Education for the city of Hamilton and the Wentworth County Board of Education amalgamated on 1 January 1998. That bill also reduced the number of trustees for each board. There are now a total of 11 trustees (including one student trustee) for the amalgamated board, which formerly had a total of 28 trustees. The Catholic Board underwent a name change (from the Hamilton-Wentworth Roman Catholic Separate School Board to the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board), and is now represented by nine trustees, down from 20 trustees. Their salaries have been cut.

Bill 160, which sparked a province-wide teacher walkout for two weeks in November 1997, followed that bill. It passed, transferring financial control from school boards to the

provincial government. Today, school boards no longer set their portion of local property taxes. The province determines each board's budget, since trustees can no longer raise their own funds. A board is now funded with a base amount for each student enrolled, and with some special grants.

There have been two racial minority women who have served on school boards in Hamilton: a Black woman who served on the public Board, and a South Asian woman who served on the Catholic board.

Both school boards, and particularly the Catholic board, had recruited teachers from the Caribbean, particularly from Trinidad and Tobago, in the sixties. A McMaster University thesis (Cole, 1967) was written on the immigration of West Indian teachers and nurses to Hamilton.

Sylvia Kajiura became the first married female (i.e. not in holy orders) principal in the Catholic system in Hamilton. At least two Black Canadian women (Nancy DiGregorio, Yvette Beach) and an East Asian Canadian (Wuchow Than) male have been principals in the Catholic schools system in the region. Joan Browning (Japanese Canadian) served as president of Women Teachers Association in Hamilton, and was also seconded for a term as executive assistant at the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario (FWTAO). While she was seconded to FWTAO, she organised an antiracism panel at a conference for 250 educators across Ontario.

Many racial minority teachers from both the public and Catholic school boards (Michael Webber, Carolann Fernandes, Eleanor Rodney, Tyrone Childs, Neville Nunes) belonged to AMENO (Antiracist and Multicultural Educators Network of Ontario) and took leadership roles in their boards on racial issues. However, many of these people are now retired. Some have expressed their concerns that the school boards are not doing enough to ensure that racial minority teachers are hired.

Calls for Action
A community member remarks that "20 years ago, 1978, there was a young Jamaican Association in Hamilton and they met with the Hamilton Board of Education about placement because there was an unwritten placement formula, come in from the island and you get placed two years behind where you should be. And, yes, we worked, dismantling that." In 1979, the Jamaican Association of Hamilton and District, led by Dr. Tony Macfarlane, petitioned the Hamilton Board of Education regarding the education of students from the Caribbean. As a result, a survey was initiated regarding students and their placements. The results of the survey were presented to the Board.

- The Jamaican Association then proceeded to host three conferences, chaired by Neville Nunes. The first one was on 17 November 1979, the second on 26 April 1980 (with guest speaker Dr. Wilson Head), and the third on 18 October 1980, at McMaster University. Issues discussed were education, settlement, discrimination, inter-group communication, and a Community Centre.
- In 1980 and 1981, a Special Needs Task Force was struck by the Board. Neville Nunes served on the Special Education sub-committee and made two presentations, one on Culture Shock, and a Report on the CariCan Conference on Multiculturalism and Education, which had a focus on West Indian Immigrant

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children. As a result, a recommendation based on the demographic changes in the 1970s was drafted for the Task Force, calling for specific in-service to meet the special needs of racial minority students.

- In 1985 and 1986, there was an Ad Hoc Committee on Meeting the Education Needs of the Visible Minority Students, chaired by Dr. Colin Pryor, with members Tyrone Childs, Michael Webber Sr., Sandi Bell, Mrs. Jean Arthur, Neville Nunes, and Dr. Fred Ofosu.
- Later school board documents state that the Board of Education for the city of Hamilton had undertaken a commitment towards race relations and ethnocultural equity since 1986.
- In 1986, agreements were reached, resulting in a posting for an ESL/D Consultant (0.5 time), a model for ESL/D service, and a protocol which was developed in January 1987.
- In 1988, the Consultant was appointed full-time. This was the position which Neville Nunes held until his retirement. Also in 1988, a Black History Month program was initiated in the schools, and development of a Race Relations Policy began.

Francophone Education

The province created a new South West French school board to serve Francophone students in Hamilton-Wentworth and in a massive area from Windsor to Belleville and north to the Bruce peninsula.

In 1998, a deal described as "historic'" involved Hamilton's public school board giving a complete school and $2 million to the new South West French school board ("Hamilton Francophone deal 'historic,'" *The Hamilton Spectator*, 21 July 1998). This school was opened in 1999 as the first French Catholic high school in the region, in addition to the previously existing French-language public high school.

Of the three documents in 1999 produced by the Hamilton-Wentworth District Health Council on the Francophone community, only one recognised the diversity of the population. *A Framework for French Language Services* mentions that "French-speaking individuals from outside Canada come from France, Algeria, Haiti, Vietnam and, more recently, from Africa" (7).

There are also two French language Catholic elementary schools in Hamilton, with enrolments of only 577 and 273 students. Hamilton's public board has one French-only elementary school, and eight elementary schools and two high schools which have French immersion classes. "At issue is whether the small French population in Hamilton can supply enough students to fill the two French Catholic elementary schools now in place as well as a new French public school" ("Francophone school targeted for west end," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 18 April 2000).

There has not been any similar expansion of services for students needing English-as-a-second-language instruction, despite community members (including the Chief of Police) calling for one. Chief Robertson's comments were made in the context of his view that meeting the needs of immigrant youth would reduce violence in the schools.

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Educational Conferences
In April 1989, a one-day student conference was held called "Issues '89," on Ethnic/Race Relations, Human Rights, and Kids at Risk, sponsored by the Board of Education for the city of Hamilton and the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police. In March 1992, a two-day conference was held by the Hamilton-Wentworth Race Relations Steering Committee, which was chaired by the Hamilton Board of Education's Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity Program Consultant, Steve Barrs. This Committee consisted of members of the public and private sectors, under the leadership of the Board of Education, the Hamilton & District Multicultural Council and the Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police.

In September 1994 a conference entitled "Achieving Diversity as a Culture" was run by the Hamilton Board of Education in co-operation with the other two school boards, and with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship. In 2003, the Working Group on Racial Equity was approached to participate in an anti-racism event by a Barton Secondary School teacher concerned about racist incidents on campus.

In about 1994 or 1995, the Catholic school board began development of a Diversity Conference, which provided training to selected teachers and student leaders on a variety of issues of prejudice, bias and discrimination, including race but a number of other factors as well. This conference is now held annually for three days in the fall at Camp Brebeuf in Flamborough, a facility owned by the Catholic Youth Organization. At first, the conference was organised centrally by staff at the School Board. For the last three years, there has been an emphasis on grassroots participation through representation from each school.

School Policy Development: Key Events
In 1989, a working paper on Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity was distributed widely (over 8,000 copies), and over 2000 responses to the working paper were received. In December 1989, the Board's Development Committee approved the Working Paper as a policy in principle. In January 1990, it approved the general and specific recommendations in the Review, and the development phase began. In 1993, the Working Paper was finally approved as a Board Policy on Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity. In 1993, the Catholic school board approved an Anti-Racism and Ethnocultural Equity Policy. In June 1995, the Wentworth County Board of Education approved a policy on Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity. By 1995, the provincial Ministry of Education required all school boards to have such a policy.

Both policies have the same basic format, with statements on:

- Leadership
- Community relations or school-community partnership
- Curriculum
- Special services (student languages, student evaluation, assessment and placement, and guidance and counselling)
- Racial and ethnocultural harassment
- Employment practices
- Staff development

Yet, despite this work, in the aftermath of school board amalgamation policy development had to start again. The current phase of policy development has been going for three years. The Working Group on Racial Equity and other community organisations offered input on the draft anti-racism component of the policy at a community validation process in early 2003. Since the management does not sit at the community or drafting table, it is expected that the process would go through several layers of management approval over a further year before the policy is approved. Implementation will take even longer. Community groups that have grown tired of the process and the delays have questioned the board's commitment. Many have walked away from the table.

Board Program and Policy Changes
- In 1995, a pilot Native-as-a-second-language program for elementary school students was introduced in the Hamilton school system for the first time. This was the same year that Neville Nunes retired, and the Board moved to reduce his former position as English-as-a-Second Language Consultant to half time. It was eventually eliminated.
- In this period, the School Board paid for a school board official to travel to Asia to recruit Asian secondary school students to Hamilton schools as a means of raising money for the school board.
- In June 1994, the Ontario Ministry of Education introduced its Violence-Free Schools Policy. The introduction of the Safe Schools program took over from other approaches to racial diversity. The school board no longer has a Consultant devoted to ESL and to special services for racial minority students. It has directed funds and staff to the Safe Schools program. The program is seen to target racial minority students unfairly.
- *The Report of the Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System* (1995) found that "a third of staff members (35%) think black students are more involved than white students in incidents that "require" police intervention at school" (1995: 362). The *Report* noted "that black students widely perceive racial differentials in their schools' use of the police and in how police officers treat black students" (1995: 363). The Commission concluded that "participants in our consultations believed that the application of safe school policies is targeting black students" (1995: 361).
- Early in 1995, Hamilton Board of Education trustees approved a new Safe Schools Program. The key changes of the Safe Schools Program are a Zero Tolerance Statement and an Expulsion Policy.

In January 1988, a new ESL/ESD Department was formed at Sir John A. MacDonald Secondary School and a department head was appointed. The concentration on second-language training in one school has led to enormous changes in the student population at the school. Vietnamese Canadians form a sizeable part of the student population. Yet the teaching staff does not reflect the population.

Hess Street School, which also has a high percentage of Vietnamese Canadian students, offers some targeted program supports such as a Vietnamese Moms' group that meets once a week. Although Lake Avenue School's South Asian Canadian student population outnumbers the Cambodian Canadian students, it has provided some much needed programs and supports to the Cambodian Canadian community.

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Despite these developments, respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study who ran for the school board felt it impolitic to name race or racism as municipal or campaign issues.

Board Trusteeship
Provincial changes to education in the late 1990s prevent school boards from setting educational tax rates and reduced their flexibility in expending money (Puxley, 2002: A4). In 2002, Hamilton's public school board joined those of Ottawa and Toronto in refusing to pass a balanced budget because of the service cuts that would necessitate. The province appointed a supervisor, Jim Murray, who took over all powers of the board. His advisory group featured people with prominent and powerful positions in the community, including former municipal Transition Board chair Marvin Ryder and local businessman Ron Foxcroft, and was reputedly specifically crafted so Murray could get advice from people who were not parents or teachers directly involved in the issues (Dreschel, 2002: A3).

Murray has since balanced the board's budget. This resulted in a mid-year reorganisation under which staff were laid off and some class sizes increased (Prokaska, 2002b: A9). The budget also included program cuts, increased fees, 2-year delays for psychological assessments for special needs students, and has raised concerns over an increasing gap between have and have-not schools based on the ability of parents and local neighbourhoods to donate money (Prokaska, 2003: A6). Board Chair Judith Bishop has also raised concerns about the impact of the supervisor's budget on ESL classes (Prokaska, 2002a: A1).

Apparently Murray considered changing the electoral system for the school board to an at-large system (Dreschel, 2003: A3), but ultimately decided to leave it (Fazari, 2003a: A3).

4.4 Racial Minorities and Municipal Political Participation

4.4.1 Municipal Political Culture
People will become active and participate only if they feel that what they do has some relevance to their lives. Alienation from municipal government can discourage participation. Community perceptions of municipal politicians lacking importance and power can also discourage people from getting involved.

It is common these days to romanticise the inherently democratic character of municipal government. However, as Sancton points out, "Municipal government is, in a trivial sense, the level of government closest to the people. It is also the most difficult to understand. In this more important sense it is the level of government most distant from the people" (1994: 187).

In a submission during Hamilton's municipal restructuring hearings, former political candidate Jessica M. Brennan asserted that "although local government is supposed to be the closest to the people each of the widely known restructuring proposals that have been put before make local government more remote and, consequently, less responsive to our needs than it is now" (*Public Submissions*, 1999: #203, 2).

Historically, local government in the area has not been seen as particularly responsive to concerns around access and equity. At the Third Metropolis conference, John Biles criticised a similar "belief that the lowest tiers of government are the most open to diversity [Stasiulis and Abu-Laban 1991]" (1998: 20). In earlier years, Hamilton-Wentworth regional council voted down a motion to appoint a race relations coordinator. Only in late 2001, under direction from WGRE, was the Access and Equity Office created. There has also historically been a lack of a strong municipal response to the kinds of incidents, patterns, and outcomes of concern to racial minority communities, described elsewhere in this report. Such decisions and attitudes may have had the effect of distancing racial minority communities from the centre, particularly as the work of the WGRE is over. In Ottawa in 2000, Kass Sunderji presented a case for inclusivity to municipal staff, asking for an explicitly multicultural approach to urban planning and a more active embrace of a municipal role in settlement and integration activities for newcomers to Canada living in Ottawa. Little change resulted, with budgetary constraints cited as the reason.

Evidence from the federal level supports the idea that a history of alienation from a political institution can have an impact on participation. A study of federal candidates in the elections between 1993 and 2000 shows that the Liberal proportion of racial minority candidates was the highest. The NDP also did well. The study partially explained the former as the historical legacy of being the party that enacted the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and official multiculturalism, and cited the emphasis on social justice and social welfare (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 96). However, the picture is more complicated, because, even in these parties, racial minorities are underrepresented as candidates. The Canadian Alliance, a party generally not seen as receptive to social justice concerns, had higher minority representation than the NDP in 2000 (*ibid*: 95-96).

Though the City of Hamilton has historically lagged behind the City of Toronto in addressing issues of racial equity, indications of alienation can also be found there. A study from Toronto notes that racial minority community leaders are alienated by the fact that they are often treated as service providers only, and not as legitimate participants in the governance process of social-service provision (Salojee and Siemiatycki, 2003: 4). As well, in a recent consultation around eliminating racism done by the City of Toronto, "participants expressed frustration that they were being consulted again. Individuals and community groups asked why they were being consulted when the City and other governments had a catalogue of actions that could be taken" (Shaw et al., 2002: 8).

Over the years there have been a number of changes to the culture of municipal governance. In many cases, early Canadian mayors were elected because they were already part of the community elite. Becoming mayor added little to such a person's status and power. As the franchise expanded and as Canadians adopted new American ideas about mass democracy – including the direct election of the mayor – there was more space for more populist candidates. More recently, though candidates are not necessarily rich or the elite individuals they were at the birth of local government, they are seldom from the poorer sectors of society and are usually supportive of business interests in their decision making. This results in an environment often not friendly to equity concerns. This may be truer for amalgamated cities.

There is often a sense of "voluntarism" to involvement in local politics, which can influence individual motivation and action and the overall civic political culture. This is particularly true at the school board level, where cuts to the salaries of school board trustees provides a significant barrier to involvement by low-income earners and the unemployed. This is a product of the same political culture that encourages work without due reimbursement for low income Ontarians, through "workfare" schemes.

The middle-class "norm of voluntarism" is described by Prewitt:

> Prewitt concludes that the `norm of voluntarism' has seriously damaged political accountability in city politics. The consequences, explains Prewitt, are far-reaching: Where the norm of voluntarism is more present, councils are (a) more likely to vote against what they see as majority opinion, (b) less likely to feel under pressure from the public, (c) less likely to consider the upcoming election when choosing among policy alternatives, (d) less likely to involve constituencies as a part of the strategy of policymaking, (e) less likely to view political groups as having an influential part to play in city politics, (f) less likely to facilitate group access to the council, and (g) less likely to perform services for constituents. Furthermore, these consequences may feed back into the political system causing "political disillusionment among the electors" and contributing to a self-perpetuating cycle of political decay (Bledsoe, 1993: 11-12).

Although often seen as a union town, the power structures in Hamilton and region seem to be dominated by the interests of the business elite. In many ways, the structures reflect Floyd Turner's classic analysis of elite (business-dominated) power structures of Atlanta, Georgia rather than the complex pluralism of New Haven or the domination of the Democratic Party in Chicago (Banfield and Wilson in Cox et al., 1974: 107). Katz provides a detailed description of how, in the nineteenth century, politics in Hamilton was dominated by the business class: "The entrepreneurial class formed an overlapping elite, governing all the major activities within the city... These leading citizens made the public interests of Hamilton and their private economic interests the same" (Katz, 1975: 184). These have continued to dominate Hamilton politics. "Despite the huge population of industrial workers, Hamilton had long been dominated politically by local business groups" (Freeman, 1982: 58).

At a trade union conference held in Hamilton, George Williams said

> The issue is power-sharing. Until the people who presently hold the power are committed to the principle of employment equity, and they're committed to share that power, we're not going to get anywhere. Right now, they're not prepared to share their power with us; they want to hold onto it. I have worked in the municipal sector and will therefore speak plainly about it... The Federation of Canadian Municipalities... Say local governments, large and small, urban and rural, are now taking a leadership role in improving race relations in their communities... I ask myself where are the results? I work for a municipality and have dealings with lots of municipalities across Ontario. I have seen no results. That is where the word `mandatory' becomes important... If there is nothing else that comes out of this conference, we have to impress upon the government the need for `mandatory' changes... They (the municipal politicians) could affect real change if they wanted to. They know the local conditions because they provide essential services in the community. They can deal with race relations at the grass roots level. They fund voluntary agencies and they influence school boards because they collect the school board taxes. They appoint people from the

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municipality onto school boards. And it is at the school boards that we can start to change the attitudes of our young people. Some questions the municipalities should be asking themselves – and other levels of government – is "Do we know how many ethnic, racial and linguistic minorities work in their communities?" "Do we know if municipal services are being fully used by these minorities?" "Do we have outreach programs?"... Do they have training and development for the municipal employees? Do they have race relations and cross-cultural training? Does the human resource department have an employment equity policy? (*ibid* 531-535; Das Gupta, 1998: 315-334).

It should be noted that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities initiated a Municipal Race Relations Program in the mid-1980s. Its core activities included creating a resource centre and consultation service to provide information and expertise to municipalities, a national committee on the subject made up of municipal officials and community leaders, a program of workshops and seminars throughout the country, and printed material related to anti-racism. The printed material included manuals on starting a race relations initiative in the municipality, accessibility of municipal services, training for municipal staff, equality in employment within the municipal corporation, and employment-related measures that municipalities could take in their broader communities. The advisory materials produced by the program presented a number of options for municipalities in implementing a race relations strategy. A core element of this strategy was the establishment of a committee where significant responsibility would lie, as well as providing resources to this committee to do its work.

Providing an infrastructure through which expertise on anti-racism issues could be shared among municipalities is valuable. Many smaller municipalities are less able to invest the resources to develop materials, and the chance to learn from the experiences of larger municipalities is useful. The challenge of making the materials palatable to the broadest possible audience seems to have had some impact. Creating a "mayor's committee" or similar body has long been recognised as being useful but has limitations in achieving goals of racial equity. The FCM material contained little discussion of resistance to this kind of work. The lack of discussion of how to deal with it could lead to rapid retreat and disillusionment. Moreover, an important finding of the WGRE's work in Hamilton is that its community dynamics are quite different from Toronto's, even though the cities are geographically close to each other. It is unclear whether significantly different local contexts were adequately considered in the FCM's program.

The biggest problem with the FCM program, of course, is that it was not sustained. When the FCM held its annual conference in Hamilton in 2002, the WGRE submitted a brief (Appendix B) encouraging the federation to return to a more active role in facilitating anti-racism work at the municipal level. The feedback was that the program was being reopened.

More generally, the conservative dismissal of equity as "special treatment and reverse discrimination" has found a voice with the public with the result that resources are now being diverted from addressing the needs of all the members of the community. Despite gains, the political culture in Ontario has become more corporate and alienating for some parts of the electorate, with resultant social upheavals and strong emotional resistance to equal treatment.

Unsurprisingly, alienation from local government is often linked to scepticism towards local politicians. Municipal politicians cannot be confident they will keep their job longer than the current term of office (i.e. there is a sense of job insecurity), and are often seen as having limited pay and limited power. The limited pay and job security are definitely disincentives to run but the limited powers of municipal government also mean that municipal issues are not seen by the public to be "sexy" or interesting to younger citizens. Many municipal issues, such as the huge processes involved in municipal restructuring, are actually controlled by the provincial government. Voters perceive the municipal government to be less important than provincial and federal governments, and therefore local politicians are seen as less important.

In the American context, Bledsoe describes the limited terms, pay and power of municipal politicians:

> Political leaders are often given only two-year terms and are occasionally limited to no more than one reelection. They are paid at a rate only somewhat above the minimum wage and are provided with little or no staff support. As if this were not enough, local elected officials are often denied (or are limited in) authority over many areas of public policy (Bledsoe, 1993: 7).

While the issue of power may be of concern in Hamilton, low pay is not. Councillors in the new city of Hamilton make $50,000 a year. A portion of that is tax-free, so it is equivalent to approximately $60,000 in gross pay from most jobs (Dreschel, 2001: A3). However, not all currently sitting councillors agree that this pay rate is fair. Councillor Marvin Caplan suggested that a salary of $80,000 was appropriate, though he chose not to vote for it (Wells, 2000: A1).

Lack of interest by the electorate is particularly critical at the school board level:

> When one considers the importance of education in society and the large operating budget of the Board of Education, one soon realizes that the election of good Trustees is just as important as the election of other government officials... In fact, the public shows little interest in electing Trustees. Campaigning is on a low key and acclamations are all too common. For example, in the 1973 election of Public School Trustees there were acclamations in five wards and elections in only three. This reveals a shocking apathy towards the election of Trustees and consequently, educational issues. In an attempt to combat this apathy, the Board of Education, in recent years, has encouraged greater citizen participation in its affairs (Agro, 1975: 143).

Nicol offers a hopeful comment:

> Yet, if we can conclude anything from the remarkable history of Canadian municipal institutions, it should be that planners and politicians alike have consistently underestimated the role of the grassroots in Canadian local government... Even the fact that new global or extra jurisdictional forces loom larger in the political process of Canadian cities than at any period in the recent past does not make the local political context irrelevant. It merely offers new directions and possibilities for the expression of community concern (Nicol, 1997: 30).

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4.4.2 Hamilton and Racial Minorities

Given the discussion of the relationship between participation and citizenship above, evidence of barriers to full political participation by racial minorities in the local context in Hamilton has quite profound implications. In the 26-year history of the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth, more than 5000 candidates bid for local political office. Of these, only 23 (less than 0.5%) were from racial minority communities. Only four of these 23 were successful.

In 1991, Hamilton Alderman Dominic Agostino noted that "it's really a lily-white, male dominated structure here, and council is a perfect example of that." Newcomers to Canada and racial minorities are underrepresented in municipal politics in other Canadian cities as well, including Toronto (Jenson and Papillon, 2001: 25). Although there were two racial minorities holding elected office during the period of the *Unfurling The Flag* study (1999-2000) in Hamilton-Wentworth, most of the regional agencies, boards and commissions had little or no racial minority representation. That also held true of staff at city and town halls in the region.

At a conference in Hamilton in March 1990, then Mayor Bob Morrow cited a recent survey saying that "we actually have a greater number of visible minorities within the civic employ than what exists in the community at large" (Jain, Pitts, DeSantis, 1991: 206). This evidence was disputed. In any case, there is not any proof that this is true anymore. Certainly, very few racial minorities, if any, are in key decision-making positions in the municipality now. However, the new city's approach to human resources does include plans for workforce surveys and targets to be developed and implemented soon.

There has been stark under-representation of racial minorities on regional boards, commissions and committees for some time ("Few visible minorities on city boards, survey finds," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 15 May 1990). The city's Advisory Committee on Equitable Representation on Boards and Commissions is no longer in force. As described above, the recent Transition Board overseeing municipal amalgamation for the region was also criticised for its lack of diversity.

Until 1996, the provincial government made all citizen appointments to the Regional Police Services Board. During the tenure of the previous provincial government, three racial minorities were appointed to the Board (Sharon Laffrenier in 1991, Sylvia Kajiura in 1993 and Surinder Ahluwalia in 1995). However, after the change of the provincial government in 1995, and new legislation in 1996 giving the municipality the responsibility of appointing citizen members of the Police Services Board, subsequent appointments have been less reflective of racial diversity.

In the past, former Hamilton Mayor Robert Morrow had suggested that more racial minorities consider running for office. "It's a question of encouraging people to run. We have to get the word out there that they are wanted. The message has to get out that everyone has a role to play." Dr. Harish Jain, a professor at McMaster University and founding co-chair of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee (later the Mayor's Committee Against Racism and Discrimination) in Hamilton, said, "I tell people that's the only way they're going to make a dent in city politics and the political system."

Respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study noted a shortage of community people they could consult, although one mentioned talking to people other than Lincoln Alexander. People recognised the shortage of role models as a problem. However, they did not have a high awareness of other racial minority municipal candidates, even among those who had been successfully elected.

Several reasons contribute to this lack of awareness of past racial minority candidates: (1) the low profile of municipal politics in general; (2) a lack of racial community organisation and awareness of its local political history; (3) some previous candidates not having been identified as racial minorities, in the media or the community; or (4) racial minority candidates who do not identify with their communities in terms of communication and political accountability on issues.

Several *Unfurling The Flag* respondents discussed the fourth issue and criticised some federal racial minority politicians. The role models who exist are not always seen as such, may not be available for advice, and have been often criticised for their lack of accountability to the communities that elected them.

Research in Toronto has found that, in general, "minority politicians who do hold elected office are generally not regarded by community activists in the non-formal sphere of political life as adequate champions of community interests" and are often seen as "detached from their community" (Saloojee and Siemiatycki, 2003: 3).

The relationship between the identity of elected representatives and the ability of communities to have their issues addressed is a complex one:

> First, simply being like something or someone is not the same as representing it or him politically... Second, we might ask if constituents really want someone who is 'like them' in as many ways possible as their representative? Would they not rather have someone who can effectively act on their behalf because he has the knowledge, skills, and experience they lack?... Third, is it possible for a representative to share, or even accurately reflect, the view of all of his constituents, given the diversity of opinion likely to exist there? Can he really present each of them with equal force, especially when on occasion they might conflict?... Fourth, what should be done if constituents have no views on some matter of policy? One can hardly represent something that does not exist, much less represent it accurately. This view of political representation leaves no room for representatives to take the initiative in defending and promoting the interests of those persons they represent, for them to show leadership (Johnston, 1990: 15-16).

Some researchers "question whether 'standing for' translates so readily into 'acting for' a particular element in the population. Descriptively accurate representation, in other words, does not guarantee responsive government" (Blais and Gidengil, 1991: 66).

It is very easy in researching racial minority political participation to lose sight of the internal diversity within the category "racial minority." When is it appropriate, for example, to treat the political interests of different racial minority communities as roughly equivalent, and when must they be recognized as distinct? Beyond that, there is the fact that "there are minority politicians who do not identify themselves as minorities, nor do they consider their [race or] ethnicity relevant to their political lives" (Young, Lisa, 2002:

19). It is important to "struggle with the tendency to reduce political actors' highly complex political identities into overly simplistic categories" (*ibid*).

Jerome Black points to evidence that representation alone is not a panacea:

> Representation, in fact, constitutes a second broad area in the research programme. In the most general of terms, it entails consideration of the impact of numerical representation on substantive representation. The most important specific questions centre on how well, if at all, minority issues are or can be championed under the existing political and institutional constraints, included those associated with the operation of party discipline, budgetary constraints, and the like. The fact that many key policy areas such as immigration, employment equity, and multiculturalism, which are of particular concern to many minority communities, appear to be receiving less attention – some would maintain hostile attention – accentuates interest in these questions. So does the fact that, ironically, the minority agenda might be losing ground at the very same time Parliament is witnessing a record number of MPs with minority backgrounds (1997: 12)

Racial minority politicians in Canada have made different choices about how to relate to the communities of which they are a part.

Foster (1996) compares and contrasts the leadership styles of black/African Canadian politicians in relationship to the black/African Canadian community. In Foster's analysis, Ovid Jackson stands out as the exception. He feels no responsibility to represent the black/African Canadian community outside of his riding and "he does not feel compelled to be a spokesperson for Blacks in Canada" (1996: 158).

By contrast, Jean Augustine "did not earn her stripes in the trenches of municipal or provincial politics. She was lifted up when the prime minister reached down into the black community and designated her a star candidate" (Foster, 1996: 159).

Zanana Akande is often cited as an example of a black Canadian politician who has stayed in touch with black organisations across the country. "Akande says she did not buy into the notion that the black politicians have to somehow make a choice between representing issues of the constituency that elected them and carrying the black agenda" (Foster, 1996: 170).

Akande says that:

> Our community has a way of being very suspect [sic] of people who assume a leadership role because we have been burnt before. We have a way of believing that they are going to be divorced, they are going to be separated from them and this person is going to go on to garnish their own career and to make the best of it. So you have to be certain that they see you, that they know what you are saying… that they hear you directly and they can see you so they can give you that information, or they will be suspicious of you. I am aware of that. I show up at meetings that are relatively small and my staff would say Why would you go? And I would say, It's a group of people that needs to know what I'm thinking, and besides, I need to know what they are thinking because I am directed in many ways by that information, and that would be small black groups and other groups (Foster, 1996: 169-170).

One member of the black/African Canadian community in Hamilton, quoted in Etoroma (1992: 128) commented about the former role of Lincoln Alexander: "We have a Lieutenant Governor who is Black, okay? But I guarantee you that has placed a strain on him in terms of his relationship with Black people. And it has, because he cannot and does not want to be seen as favoring Black people in anything that he does."

Recently, the political appointment of Sylvia Hudson, a former police officer in Jamaica, to head the Ontario Police Services Complaints Commission came under criticism by the African-Canadian Legal Clinic as she had not adequately supported the experiences of black/African Canadians with the police.

If a racial minority candidate's leadership style is to be responsive and to represent substantially his/her community, will that style result in greater statistical success in getting elected? The literature is relatively silent about how the different concepts of representation translate into electoral strategies for racial minority candidates. In order to win an election, a racial minority candidate needs the support not just of people who are racially similar, but also of the white majority. How important is it for a candidate to be responsive to and substantially represent his or her racial or ethnic community when that community may not have the numbers or the resources to elect their representative? What are the attitudes of the white majority towards the election of racial minority candidates, and what strategies should a racial minority candidate use to appeal for their support? These are key questions for future research.

Some writers focus on the need to make governments responsive. Murphy and Min Choi point out that democracy should be about widespread inclusion and participation in policy-making, and not just about electing leaders:

> Rather than simply a method for electing leaders, democracy is a strategy for encouraging widespread participation in public affairs... democracy is actually a form of antigovernment whereby the polity is dispersed throughout society. A proper culture must be established that fosters the inclusion necessary for this dispersion to occur. This dimension of democracy has been mostly ignored by American realists, who are thoroughly enamored of the technicalities of governance (Murphy and Min Choi, 1997: 117).

Siemiatycki comments:

> Clearly, identity representation in political office is no guarantee of state policy responsiveness; and politicians can give voice and leadership to the policy interests of groups to which they do not personally belong. *Yet a group's under-representation in elected office is likely, in the absence of other means of influence, to be reflective of its relative political marginalization* (1998: 8, emphasis added).

He adds: "To be sure, members of minority groups frequently point to electoral representation as a significant cause of their political marginalization" (*ibid*: 17).

In a Supreme Court decision, Madame Justice McLachlin states:

> Factors like geography, community history, community interests and minority representation may need to be taken into account to ensure that our legislative assemblies effectively

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represent the diversity of our social mosaic…It is my conclusion that the purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s.3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se, but the right to 'effective representation'. Ours is a representative democracy. Each citizen is entitled to be represented in government (cited in Landes, 1992).

What is clear, however, is that lack of representation is a useful indicator of broader barriers to political participation faced by racial minority communities. A mobilised and politicised community can, however, hold its representatives accountable to an agenda that includes access and equity concerns.

As Bledsoe points out, "Of what value is it for working-class ethnic communities to elect their own people to public office, if, once elected, the people turn their backs on the needs and preferences of those communities and are unresponsive to those who put them in office?" (Bledsoe, 1993: 15).

4.4.3 Campaign-Related Factors

Voting
Because campaigns tend not to be fought on the basis of underlying issues or on the basis of partisan politics, the campaign culture is quite personalised, like a personality contest. Several respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study disliked the need for self-aggrandisement, or begging for votes.

> Many municipal governments today are run like corporations, and citizens play a role in municipal decision making equivalent to the role of stockholders in corporate decision making. The municipal citizen and the corporate stockholder may be vaguely aware of conflict when elites in the city or corporation clash but may remain largely unaware of the underlying principles or issues of the clash and ignorant of how to play a meaningful role in resolving the conflict (Bledsoe, 1993: 4).

It is obvious that voting behaviour is one index of how groups may behave politically, though it is far from a complete explanation. In fact, although this study focuses on racial minority candidates for municipal political office, most Canadian research on political participation of racial minorities has been on voting patterns. LaPonce (1994) provides an analysis of Canadian voting studies over a 20-year period. Patricia Roy (1981), Yasmeen Abu-Laban (1992) and John R. Wood (1981) have studied voting behaviours of racial minorities in Vancouver. Jerome H. Black (1991) and Siemyaticki focused on Toronto (1998).

People may not exercise the right to vote if they do not feel they have the option of voting for a candidate who they think can and will represent or reflect their views.

> From the point of view of the individual, political participation is largely symbolic, rather than rational, behaviour... Participation, therefore, symbolizes a sense of social commitment: a belief that the system works, that it can be influenced through the ballot box, that the voter is a worthwhile member of society whose opinions count. People who are relatively deprived, or for other reasons feel socially marginal, do not share these beliefs: they do not find political participation meaningful (Reitz, 1980: 226).

They may, of course, choose other modes of participation. As Salojee notes, "One of the consequences of dealing with the effects of oppression and discrimination is that members of racialized communities and their organizations find other avenues to engage in political activities" (Salojee, 2002: 42).

Siematycki notes that "elections are an important, if inherently ambiguous, measure of political participation and belonging. Analysing the ethnocultural composition of elected officials, two elected officials have noted, `may index the equality of access the system provides into the corridors of power'"" (1998: 21).

These disincentives and lack of interest in municipal affairs leads to very low voter turnouts at the municipal level. Across Canada, voter turnout is consistently lower in municipal elections than in provincial or federal elections. "The higher turnout for national elections is universal, although few other countries show as great a variance between local and other elections as does Canada" (Kushner et al., 1997: 541). Federal voter turnout is usually over 70% across the country. "The lowest turnout since Confederation was 61 percent in 1896, and in thirty-four federal elections the turnout was less than 70 percent only five times. Voter turnout in federal elections has been 80 percent or higher five times" (Nader, 1992: 78).

According to Kushner et al., Hamilton would be classed as a large municipality, with a population over 100,000 (1997). They found that large municipalities in Ontario averaged a voter turnout of 38% between 1982 and 1994, compared to 55% for small municipalities. Municipal consolidation will affect the chances of electoral success for new candidates as restructuring will mean larger wards and fewer seats. Candidates will need more votes. Lower participation rates could result. To mount effective campaigns, candidates will also need more resources, which respondents named as a barrier. The ability to target a larger ward within the same campaign period will probably result in a candidate having less contact with the voters. That could determine the effective use of strategies such as door-to-door campaigning.

A study of the impact of municipal amalgamation on voter turnout was done in all municipalities in the Netherlands. Over five election cycles, the researchers found that the impact of amalgamation on turnout was small compared to the steady autonomous decline in turnout over the study period, and the amalgamation effect faded quickly (Kraaykamp, Van Dam, and Toonen, 2001: 402).

At the municipal level, there is a significant relationship between voter turnout and the size of the municipality. "Voter turnout rates are highest in small municipalities" (Kushner et al., 1997: 542). It is in these larger jurisdictions, such as Hamilton with the lowest participation rates in municipal politics, where racial minority communities are the largest. As well, research from California has shown that municipalities which do more in terms of service delivery – i.e. have more responsibility, power and influence over peoples' lives – tend to have higher voter turnout rates (Hajnal, Lewis, Louch, 2002: 64).

In Hamilton, voter turnout rates appear to be even lower than the average for large municipalities. "The confusing electoral system, the absence of parties and the issueless campaigns produce very little interest and anticipation in the city's politics. Voter turnout

in Hamilton is usually less than 35% and sometimes as low as 20%. This reflects one of the lowest participation rates in the country" (Freeman and Hewitt, 1979: 31).

Of the 353,165 people eligible to vote in the 2000 municipal elections in Hamilton, 43.2% chose to vote (*Municipal Election Process*, 2002: 2). While this is still distressingly low, it is higher than the immediately preceding elections, which showed turnout rates of 34.6% in 1997 and 36.9% in 1994 (*Monitoring Motion,* 2002: 103). This could be explained by the heightened attention to municipal issues due to amalgamation, as well as a mayoral contest including two mayoral incumbents, a former federal cabinet minister, and another sitting councillor. We will have to wait for future elections to get a reliable idea of how the structural changes connected to amalgamation have affected voter turnout, and the ability of candidates to participate. To date, there have been no studies of voting patterns in Hamilton by race.

Lack of Political Organisation
Pre-existing, supportive, politically focused organisations can be crucial for campaign success. Saloojee and Siemiatiycki cite a number of studies showing that communities that are well organised for non-electoral purposes are also more likely to be successful in electing candidates to office (2003: 3). Racial minority communities in Hamilton generally lack political organisation.

In some cases, people are willing to become politically involved as individuals but not in the name of a community organisation. Since government strictures on advocacy groups or groups with a political purpose can result in penalties, community groups may be wary of aligning the group with political candidates for fear of losing their chances of funding from government sources.

Another issue affecting political involvement identified by respondents in *Unfurling The Flag* as "the home country philosophy," which has two impacts. Although it results from being socially and politically shut out of the city, and feeling that communities do not have a stake in its running, such a philosophy can stop people from becoming politically engaged in Canada. It stunts community solidarity and growth among people from different countries.

> If home is where the heart is, it is also where structures of national and racial sentiment are connected to daydreams of self-empowerment. Such dreams of are associated with having a "property," which holds the connotation of permanent and desirable residence... At the same time, for those who do not own their own homes, and do not exert any real control over the political ecology of the neighbourhood, the issue of "who belongs" directly resonates with the question "Who rules round here, Us or Them?" (Cohen, 1996: 72).

Although cultural retention has been officially encouraged as a sign of integration, by itself and without the prospects of advancement, it can lead to isolation. While Italian Canadians may celebrate the "home" country linkages, the feeling among some racial minority communities is that they are sojourners who do not belong and whose actions are not important. The home-country philosophy can extend even to the second-generation, to the Canadian-born children of immigrants.

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There was a time in my life when I was confident I would "go home". "Home" was not my birthplace, nor the land where I grew up, but far away in the Caribbean, in the land of my dreams (literally), a home that spoke to me in spirit and blood... I am legally, technically, semi-culturally, "naturally" a Canadian, but for all the years I've been in Canada I have never once felt "at home" (Hernandez-Ramdwar, 197: 93).

As discussed under the sections on social participation and on political parties, white-dominated political spaces in the community can also shut out racial minorities, and limit access to political organisation of that sort.

An Example: Political Mobilisation of the Sikh Canadian Community
Basic Facts…
- 400,000 Sikhs in Canada, concentrated in Ontario and B.C.
- Get the vote in 1947
- Ujjal Dosanjh, premier of B.C.(2000-2001) – the first provincial leader who is a racial minority
- Two other Sikh members of B.C. Cabinet: Moe Sihota and Harry Lali
- Federal fisheries minister Herb Dhaliwal
- B.C. Supreme Court Judge Wally Oppal
- Gurwant Grewal holds B.C.'s Surrey Central for the Reform Party.
- Ontario Tory MPP Raminder Gill
- Ontario Liberal MP Gurbax Singh Malhi
- B.C. Liberal MLA Sindi Hawkins
- In one riding alone, in the west-end, all five candidates seeking nominations are Sikh.
- April 1997: Reform Party election organiser resigns after accusing Sikhs of banding together to "shut-out" non-Sikh candidates in suburban Vancouver riding.
- The World Sikh Organization is based in Ottawa, 7 gurdwaras

Media...
- In B.C., there are four Punjabi-language weeklies, and four English-language weeklies newspapers on Indo-Canadian issues. In southern Ontario, there are seven Punjabi weeklies and a twice-monthly English newspaper
- In both B.C. and Ontario radio stations serve Punjabi listeners, Sikh and non-Sikh.
- Dave Hayer (son of murdered Tara Singh Hayer, editor/publisher of the *Indo Canadian Times*, the most widely-read Punjabi publication on the continent; Hayer was murdered in 1998) is still publishing the Indo-Canadian Times, and sought the Liberal nomination in the provincial riding of Surrey/Tynehead.

Court challenges...
- Singh v. Security and Investigation Services (landmark decision). Gurudwara in Dundas and OMB hearings
- Boxer Nagra's case over the right to fight in a turban.
- Something as simple as the right to drive a TTC bus while wearing a turban had to be battled through years of public debate and petty politicking until it was finally granted in
- the mid-70's, and the issue had to be debated ad nauseam in other parts of the country and the world. The Metro Toronto Police force took over a decade to decide whether Sikh officers could wear their articles of faith, then a further six years to hire its first turbaned Sikh officer.
- Sikhs have joined with other groups to form the Coalition for Justice in Educational Funding, to lobby the government (February 2000)
- February 1997: Sikh challenges airline's right to make him surrender his *kirpan* (blade).
- May 2000: First turbaned Sikh enters the Canadian Air Force.

Recently…

- In 1986 the Chair of Sikh Studies was established at the University of British Columbia, under the Federal Government's Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship's Ethnic Chairs Program.
- In 1997, representatives of the World Sikh Organization of Canada joined other faith groups in pressing the government to act against suspected war criminals hiding in Canada.
- February 2000: the Canadian Punjabi Seniors Organization (in Hamilton Wentworth) held three separate events last year, with funds from Heart Health Hamilton-Wentworth Community Partnership Initiative Program. "Hundreds of Sikhs in the local South Asian community sat through information sessions run by fellow Sikh seniors telling them how to alter their lifestyle to avoid the heart disease that is so prevalent in their community."
- In 2001, World Sikh Organization joined other faith and racial minority groups in opposing Bill C-36 "Anti-terrorism legislation" because it "could become an instrument of institutionalised racism"
- In 2002, community advocate T. Sher Singh awarded the Order of Canada, and Kaur Khalsa awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award for community service
- In 2003, Baljit Chadha appointed to CSIS civilian oversight committee and as first non-politician South Asian member of the Queen's Privy Council in Canada
- Federal Minister of Fisheries Herb Dhaliwal is considering running in the Liberal party leadership race. Though not expected to win, his ability to mobilise committed support may put him in the role of "kingmaker" at the leadership convention, which would give him a great deal of power in the new Liberal regime.

A concerted community response of internal mobilisation has been effective in other jurisdictions. For example, in the partisan political environment that defines municipal politics in England, and frustrated with "the success of major parties in keeping ethnic minority issues and grievances off the political agenda" (Zig Layton-Henry, 1998), Bangladeshis in London formed a People's Democratic Alliance which had the backing of a number of community associations.

> In the 1982 borough elections the PDA decided to support independent Bangladeshi candidates against the Labour Party candidates convinced they could win seats in predominantly Bangladeshi wards. The independent Bangladeshi candidates did well in Spitalsfield ward coming first and fourth…In the 1996 borough elections seven Bangladeshis were selected as candidates and of those five were elected candidates (*ibid*).

Nothing of this sort has yet occurred in Hamilton. This may be connected to the geographic dispersal of racial minority communities in the city.

Political Parties
Although municipal politics is not structured by partisan support, most respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study recognised the presence of political parties behind the scenes. Among people who follow municipal politics, the party affiliations of sitting councillors are an open secret. In terms of their function, it has been observed that, "Parties serve to help candidates gain election (particularly initial election) to office but play a less important role in organising the council itself" (Bledsoe, 1993: 108).

On the one hand, this relevance of parties can be a barrier to potential racial minority candidates because parties themselves are not necessarily free of barriers to accessing power for racial minorities (Salojee, 2002: 40). Drawing on Jerome Black's work, Anver Salojee says these barriers function

- through recruitment, including gatekeepers, the tendency to recruit in one's own image, and reliance on established networks in British and French-heritage communities;
- through mainstream domination in the upper echelons of parties, and a reluctance to share power;
- through subtle, persistent acts of discrimination within party environments;
- and through the power of incumbency to maintain the status quo (*ibid*: 42).

However, in an environment where party support does not occur, access to personal connections and resources, which may be in shorter supply for racial minority candidates given the racialisation of poverty described in the Economic Participation section, becomes all the more important.

> The decline of parties give a major edge to those who can afford to invest substantial sums of money in their own campaign for office or to the well connected... Recruitment now depends on a highly individualized selection system that centers less on loyalty and accomplishments than on personal contacts and personal finances as determinants of political success (i*bid*: 10).

This balance is illustrated by a study of candidates in federal elections between 1993 and 2000. Racial minorities were underrepresented as candidates as a result of barriers in a party-oriented system. Those who were candidates, however, managed to raise just as much money as non-minority candidates and had similar electoral success rates (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 94,102).

Muhammad Anwar, Research Professor at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick, found that South Asians and Blacks in Birmingham overwhelmingly voted for the Labour Party (1998). Despite these close links to Labour, however, Anwar also cited examples illustrating the persistence of important barriers even in this "friendly" party. In the recent general election for the Scottish Parliament, a number of local organising committees labelled Labour's post-9/11 policies "racist" and called on Muslims to vote for other parties, even though that constituency has historically voted 90% or more for Labour (Swanson, 2003: np).

A study of political belief systems in Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the US found that the Canadian belief system about minority rights was substantially different than in the other four countries.

> Thus in four of the five national samples, the left-right scale is indeed a powerful predictor of minority orientations, and one that applies with virtually the same force across the four countries. In the Canadian case, however, the relationship between the minority and left-right scales is much weaker... Canadian respondents tend to have a less coherent outlook on minority issues, and tend to anchor that outlook less firmly to the left-right scale (Nevitte and Gibbins, 1990: 93).

"[P]arties' capacity to represent diversity within their ranks is key to citizenship practices. It can serve as one indicator that the political culture is truly inclusive, by providing access to all and enabling the institutions of representation to become a location for dialogue across diverse groups" (Jensen and Papillon, 2001: 23). Canada's political culture has a way to go before it is "truly inclusive," since racial minorities remain significantly underrepresented in the ranks of candidates in federal elections (Tossutti and Najem, 2002).

Historically, the Liberals have attracted racial minorities. In a study of federal candidates between 1993 and 2000, the Liberals fielded the highest percentage of racial minority candidates, at 7.3% in 2000 (*ibid*: 95). The authors link this to the party's history as the originators of multiculturalism and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (*ibid*: 95-96). Other parties such as the NDP and the Conservatives have also made efforts to recruit minorities (Megyery, 1991). The NDP has had relative success on a national level, if not in Hamilton, and fielded 4.3% racial minority candidates in 2000. This may be explained by an emphasis on social justice concerns and a deliberate affirmative action policy (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 95-96). Such recruitment efforts, however, have not necessarily been accompanied by changes in the party culture and rarely in the leadership structure. A Black community activist in Hamilton lost her bid to run for the NDP provincially in early 2003.

Conservatives have been rather less successful, with only 2.4% racial minority candidates in 2000 (*ibid*). Ironically, the right-wing Reform Party (now the Canadian Alliance) – often characterised as racist, homophobic and anti-immigrant – gained a great deal of representation in its rise to national prominence. Indeed, the Alliance's Preston Manning targeted the South Asian Canadian community for support in his bid to overthrow the federal Liberal government in his last election as party leader. In 2000, 5% of its candidates were racial minorities. This alignment may reflect the changes in immigration policies that favour business persons and entrepreneurs. The "individualistic principles it expounds may attract individuals who reject or downplay a close identification to their ethnic collectives" (*ibid*: 96).

Other than the Bloc Quebecois, it did not appear that parties were more likely to place racial minority candidates in unwinnable ridings (*ibid*: 98). An important predictor of success by federal candidates was party affiliation, i.e. a candidate is more likely to win if they are running for a party that does well overall in the election, and if they are running in a riding where that party has historically done well. However, these factors did not appear to be as important for racial minority candidates (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 104-5).

In Hamilton, there is a strong Liberal Party base at the federal level, especially among the European immigrants, and strong support for the NDP provincially from the unions and workers. Sheila Copps (Liberal) and David Christopherson (NDP) are from the region. Christopherson is running for mayor in 2003, after a stint in provincial politics, while Copps has declared her candidacy for the federal Liberal Party leadership. Locally, the Liberals and the Conservatives seem to have some connection to racial minority communities, unlike the NDP party apparatus, although some prominent NDPers have worked with racial minority communities.

Several years ago in Ontario (in December 1999), a Black MPP, Alvin Curling, ran unsuccessfully for President of the Ontario Liberal Party. Political reporters remarked that the Ontario Liberal leader needs Curling's help "in extending the base of the party's membership" (*Pride*, 2-8 December 1999).

This was an indication of the value placed on Curling. Instead of getting White party members to support a Black politician, he was seen as someone who would bring Black voters to vote for White party members. It may be true that many White politicians support the idea of "extending the base" and, as Siemiatycki notes in Toronto, "some of the most outspoken and passionate voices on council in support of immigrant and minority rights have belonged to non-immigrant or minority members" (Siemiatycki, 1998: 9). The question for future research is how willing are White people to vote for racial minority leaders?

Previous political experience is a limiting factor that may get compounded with race. Most of the *Unfurling The Flag* respondents had high levels of previous political experience but were unable to translate that experience into success. One respondent, who ran twice in the same ward and was defeated the second time by someone with less political experience, concluded that race was a factor in her defeat.

Cose gives an example of how previous political experience gets compounded with race and that even a highly politically experienced candidate such as U.S. Senator Edward Brooke in the early 1970s met with racial barriers:

> At the time, Brooke was the highest-ranking black politician in America. His name was routinely trotted out as a vice-presidential possibility, though everyone involved knew the exercise was a farce. According to received wisdom, America was not ready to accept a black on the ticket, but Brooke's name seemed to appear on virtually everyone's list. During one such period of vice-presidential hype, I interviewed Brooke for a newspaper profile. After asking the standard questions, I could no longer contain my curiosity. Wasn't he tired, I asked, of the charade of having his name bandied about when no one intended to select him? He nodded wearily and said yes, he was (Cose, 1993: 67).

Bledsoe's study of municipal politicians in the United States shows that most were able to get elected with very low levels of previous political experience. "About two thirds of officials held no prior public positions, either elected office, appointed office, political party office, or leadership position in a community organisation. Thus, the common view of city councils as political entry points is generally correct" (Bledsoe, 1993: 58).

Motivation
The two respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study with connections to a particular neighbourhood had been inspired to run after getting involved in some specific issue-based lobbying (the closing of a school, and environmental issues and a land-use dispute). These were the only two in the study who were successfully elected. This observation might suggest that the geographically based nature of the municipal election system produces a bias in favour of those candidates who work with a geographically based community of interest although "whole-city" issues are recommended by campaign strategists. Bledsoe found that "clearly a focus on the whole city met with

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almost universal acceptance" (1993: 94), while focuses on a neighbourhood, a business constituency, a political party, or an ethnic or racial constituency were all of lesser importance in Bledsoe's study of municipal politicians in the United States.

Many politicians use municipal office as a stepping stone to higher office. In Hamilton, there have been at least six politicians (Mike Davison, Peter Peterson, John Smith, Dave Christopherson, Dominic Agostino and Shirley Collins) during the post-1974 study period who were first elected to municipal government and later to provincial or federal government. There may be others who made an attempt for higher office but were unsuccessful. There are also examples of being elected as a school board trustee before being elected to council, or to higher office. For example, Terry Cooke was a public school board trustee before being elected to council. Bernie Morelli was a Catholic school board trustee before becoming a councillor; Dominic Agostino, a Catholic school board trustee before he was a councillor or an MPP. Helen Wilson was a public school board trustee before being elected provincially. Ted McMeekin was on Hamilton city council between 1976 and 1980, and later became Mayor of Flamborough. He became an MPP in the 2000 provincial by-election in the riding of Wentworth-Burlington.

Six of the *Unfurling The Flag* respondents made a point of saying that their decision to run was last-minute, that they decided after the election was called, that they were the last to submit their nomination papers, or that they did not start as early as they should have. One respondent mentioned a long-time interest in being a political candidate, particularly at the federal level, but did not do any pre-planning for the campaign. Two respondents who ran more than once did some pre-planning for their second bid, but not the first time. Only one respondent mentioned any pre-planning for a first-time election bid, which she won.

Incumbency
James Rusk, a *Globe and Mail* reporter covering the restructuring in the Greater Toronto region, noted that "unlike national or provincial politics, where politicians are swept into or out of office on the tides of their parties' fortunes, municipal elections overwhelmingly favour incumbents" ("Municipal politicians exiting in droves," *The Globe and Mail*, 12 June 2000: A17).

There are no restrictions on the number of terms municipal councillors in Ontario can serve. In order to determine incumbency rates, detailed research into election results was necessary. Incumbency rates between Hamilton and Toronto were compared in *Unfurling The Flag*. A cross-section of three wards from central Toronto was compared to all eight wards in Hamilton. For each election since 1974 it was determined how many open seats there were (when there was no incumbent running for re-election), and how many times an incumbent actually ran and was defeated. The raw data was converted into a percentage of the total number of seats for that election year. These percentages were then averaged for the election years.

The results are that in Hamilton 15% of incumbents were defeated, and in Toronto 12% of incumbents were defeated. However, the remarkable difference is that in Hamilton 13% of the seats were "open" (had no incumbents running), whereas in Toronto there were 27% open seats. Therefore, in Toronto there is a significantly greater chance of not having to run against an incumbent in the first place. To add these numbers together,

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 with both open seats and incumbent-defeats, Toronto had a 39% turnover rate, whereas with both open seats and incumbent-defeats, Hamilton had only a 28% turnover rate. However, it is also interesting to note that there was not a single case of an acclamation in Hamilton between 1974 and 1997, whereas there were several acclamations in Toronto. There is evidence that increases in newcomer representation on Toronto city council have stalled in the wake of amalgamation, leaving racial minority communities particularly underrepresented (Saloojee and Siemiatycki, 2003: 2).

In Hamilton, politicians have a high rate of longevity, and open seats are not always available. A successful, organised, non-partisan grassroots movement to defeat incumbents in 1985 was presented as a being a result of community frustration about the lack of turnover in city council. A group called The Concerned Citizens for Hamilton refused to endorse any incumbent candidates, only a slate of alternative candidates. In that year, there were two open seats and six incumbents were defeated, resulting in a total of 8 new faces on council out of 16. This may indicate that when the community decides to mobilise around city politics, it can be successful. What prompted this initiative was the success of a slate of openly New Democratic Party candidates in the previous election. This functioned as a 4-member caucus on council, forced extensive debate on issues, and was moderately disruptive to the pro-business mindset at city hall. The Concerned Citizens for Hamilton is seen by some as a populist incarnation of the business lobby rather than an actual citizens' movement.

Although there have not been any acclamations for any of the city council politicians, the Hamilton public school board has had an average of 13% acclamations every election. If one does not include the French-language electors, the acclamation rate is only 7.75%. The Catholic school board acclamation rate has been much more dramatic. Until 1988 (when large changes in the structure of the board were made), the acclamation rate (at least for the Hamilton city part of the Catholic board, which records are available for) was 65% on average. After 1988, the average acclamation rate dropped to 19%. Of particular note on the Catholic Board are Father Kyran Kennedy and Patrick Daly. Both have been on the Board for the entire *Unfurling The Flag* study period from 1973 until at least 2000, and have survived even with a drastically reduced number of trustees. Father Kennedy has been acclaimed seven times and re-elected three times, and Patrick Daly has been acclaimed six times and re-elected four times.

The vital importance of incumbency is affirmed by a study of candidates in the three federal elections between 1993 and 2000. Incumbency rates were found to be largely similar for ethnic minority, racial minority, and non-minority candidates in these three elections (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 101). Incumbency was found to be a powerful contributor to electoral success for all three groups, and in fact was the only factor that correlated strongly enough for racial minority candidates to be found statistically significant despite the relatively small sample size (*ibid*: 105).

The reduction in the number of seats municipally meant that, in the November 2000 elections, powerful incumbents ran against each other and against other prominent figures in the community. The sitting mayor of Hamilton, Robert Morrow, ran against Robert Wade, mayor of Ancaster; Fred Eisenberger, a Hamilton councillor; and John Munro, a former federal cabinet minister, as well as a large number of less prominent candidates. Wade was victorious. In addition, incumbents ran against each other in

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several ward races and all winners were sitting municipal politicians in the preceding term. No progress was made for racial minority candidates in that election cycle. There is no research data available to forecast the likelihood of new or previously unsuccessful politicians upsetting the balance of incumbents in the fall 2003 elections in the city.

Family Ties/Name Recognition
One of the reasons that incumbents have a huge advantage is that they benefit from name recognition. Even when open seats are available, candidates with powerful family connections have an advantage. One of the respondents who ran in an open seat was running against a candidate who was the son of a sitting federal cabinet minister. This could be described as a form of vicarious incumbency. Although he was not an incumbent, his mother was a very powerful incumbent at the federal level, and he won the election.

A striking feature of politics in Ontario has been family connections. Some years ago, a *Globe and Mail* article had named family members working in the Ontario NDP government. The Hamilton-Wentworth area is not an exception. There are many examples of what may seen like dynastic continuities. Vic Copps was a popular Mayor of Hamilton from 1963 to 1976. His widow Geraldine Copps was a city councillor in Hamilton. Their daughter, Sheila Copps, is a federal cabinet minister who is currently running for the leadership of the Liberal Party. Bruce Charlton, who sat on city council from one of the mountain wards from 1982 to 1985, is the brother of Brian Charlton, a former MPP from the Mountain who was a provincial cabinet minister in the Bob Rae government. Paul Drage was elected in a by-election in 1979 to the seat in ward 1 vacated by his mother, Kay Drage. Similarly, Chad Collins, son of Liberal MP Shirley Collins, was elected in a by-election in Hamilton.

In Ancaster, the seat in ward 1 vacated by Barbara Ferguson was filled by her son Lloyd Ferguson in 1985 and then in 1994 by her other son Murray Ferguson, who now sits on Hamilton City Council. Wilma Southall, a town of Dundas councillor for many years, was related to John Southall who was on Wentworth County council before regionalisation. Don Ross (former municipal politician) is the husband of Lillian Ross, former provincial MPP. Former federal MP Ian Deans is the husband of June Deans, who was elected public school board trustee in ward 6 for many years. The Munro family was never represented on a municipal level but John Munro was a federal cabinet minister as well as a mayoral candidate in 2000 and his ex-wife Lily Munro became a provincial cabinet minister. Other examples of family connections include former Ancaster town councillor Luanne Robertson, who is the wife of Ken Robertson, Chief of Police of the Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police.

There seem to be a lot of family connections among those elected to the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic School Board. In the past, trustees have included both Dermot Nolan and Kathleen Nolan (at the same time), and Craig Dowhaniuk and Nick Dowhaniuk (at the same time). On a previous board, a husband and wife team were both elected trustees at the same time. Ralph Agostino represented combined wards 3 and 4 and his wife Rose Agostino (living in the same house) represented ward 5. Ralph Agostino, who still sits on the board, is said to be related to Dominic Agostino. One Catholic trustee, elected in 1994, stated on her election material that her great-grandfather was a Hamilton Separate School Trustee.

Family ties often play an important role in municipal hirings. After a long struggle, Toronto council recently succeeded in outlawing the hiring of close relatives or the relatives of other council members. "Councillor Joe Mihaevc said that as guardians of the public trust, councillors ought not to hire relatives. `I think our images are sullied when we have relatives working for us'" (Rusk, "City votes against hiring councillors' kin," *The Globe and Mail*, 10 June 2000: A25).

Although insiders often describe Hamilton-Wentworth as a closed club run by an elite where family and friends count for a great deal, there is insufficient data on nepotism at the municipal level in the region. Evidence suggests that a strong anti-nepotism policy is in place at Hamilton city hall. There have been some public cases involving family members in the municipality. John Gallagher was a Hamilton politician and his wife, Mary Gallagher, an employee of the region. Mary Gallagher complained to the Ontario Human Rights Commission on 11 October 1991. The Board of Inquiry made a decision on 17 June 1996. The decision is referenced as "Gallagher v. Hamilton-Wentworth (Regional Municipality), 1996."

Mary Gallagher alleged that

> as a result of her relationship with John Gallagher, she was the victim of a course of events which constituted harassment and discrimination during her employment with the Respondent, the Regional Municipality of Hamilton Wentworth (the Region). These events can be described as: the transfer; the creation of a poisoned work environment; the performance review; the reprimand; and the position of Legislative Coordinator.

"Commission counsel argued that because the Respondents applied the principles of the Region's nepotism policy to the relationship between the Complainant and Mr. Gallagher to transfer her out of the Regional Chairman's office, this is evidence of marital status discrimination."

The finding in the Gallagher case:

> I adopt MacGuigan J.'s reasoning that the identity of a particular spouse cannot be included in the notion of marital status because it is a purely individual rather than a group aspect of life. I am assisted in this view by the specific language contained in the Code pertaining to the definition of "marital status", that is, "the status of being married..." The identity of one's spouse is not included.

To sum up, the Board of Inquiry found that the Gallagher case did not fall under the jurisdiction of the Human Rights Code because it was about the identity of a particular spouse, rather than marital status. However, it is important to note the case law that says a general "no-spouse" employment rule would be a contravention of human rights law.

The Decision quotes some case law, such as: the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in Brossard (Town) v. Quebec (Commission Des Droits De La Personne, 1989). In Brossard, the Supreme Court of Canada found that the Town of Brossard discriminated against Line Laurin because of her civil status when it refused to hire her as a lifeguard

because her mother was already employed by the municipality. The Court also found that the town's anti-nepotism policy was overly broad and could not be justified as a bona fide qualification for employment.

There is some legal debate as to whether discrimination based on the identity of a person's spouse constitutes discrimination based on marital status. That is to say, is the discrimination because you are married, or because of whom you are married to?

Another case (the Federal Court of Appeal decision in Cashin v. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1988) quotes MacGuigan, J. as writing: "However, it seems to me that a general no-spouse employment rule, precisely because of its generality it may have the effect of imposing a general or group category, may well fall under marital status."

Racial Identity and the Campaign
There were at least four cases of racial minority candidates in the Hamilton area who have experienced sign vandalism, racist graffiti on their signs, or threats to their personal safety. Considering the low number of racial minority candidates who have run for office in the Hamilton area, this is a very high incidence.

Tom Jackson, a Hamilton alderman of Armenian descent, recalled that in 1985, "[o]ur campaign was picking up momentum and I remember one night coming home and there on a series of signs we had placed along the Mountain Brow, someone in spray painting had written Go Home Paki on them." Tellingly, Jackson felt that in 1985 "that he would have stood no chance of even being in the running for a council seat as Toros Toumajian when he made his first attempt in 1985." He also faced questions about his ethnic background. He claimed that he had done better in the diverse neighbourhood south of Mohawk Road where people did not question his ethnicity ("Would you vote for Toros Toumajian," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 17 April 1997). Federally, racial minority candidates are likelier to compete in culturally heterogeneous ridings (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 101).

In 1993, Ray Johnson was a candidate in the federal election in the federal riding of Hamilton-Wentworth (comprising Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, and part of Hamilton mountain). "In early October the campaign turned ugly when a large number of Conservative candidate Ray Johnson's signs were defaced with racist graffiti. Most disturbingly, the graffiti appeared in the Ancaster area where Johnson, an emeritus professor at McMaster University and chair of university athletics, has resided for more than half his life" (Eagles et al., 1995).

Respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study experienced a number of incidents, though most downplayed or denied the existence of racism even though, as noted, the relative incidence was high. Mainstream advice about sign vandalism, hate literature and personal threats is to ignore it (Moran, 1986: 162-165).

"Polite" or smiling racism was also named. Some recognised when this was occurring. Other respondents spoke about what a positive reception they had, and how friendly and cooperative people were. A polite electorate does not mean that politeness translates into votes. It may give the candidate a damaging sense of security. If a voter smiles and is polite and promises to vote for the candidate but has no intention of doing so, "pulling

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the vote" on the last day might be a wasteful tactic. Evaluations made on the strength of these promises will lead to disappointment. Cose discusses the lies that are an integral part of racism.

> Some (lies) stem from an unwillingness to acknowledge racial bias, as when people who have no intention of voting for a candidate of another race tell pollsters that they will…Polling has proven to be problematic in political campaigns that pit black and white candidates against each other, because a gap exists between those who say they will vote for a candidate of another race and those who actually will in the privacy of the voting booth (Cose, 1993: 67, 117).

In a study of federal candidates between 1993 and 2001, racial minorities were underrepresented as candidates, whereas ethnic minorities were not. However, electoral success rates were similar for candidates who were racial minorities, ethnic minorities, and non-minorities (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 85).

It is an important decision for racial minority candidates to consider how or if they are going to identify in terms of their racial background during the campaign. Given the incidents cited above, even by candidates who generally did not publicly emphasise their racial identities, it is a very serious issue.

Racism is sometimes not identified as an issue for different reasons. Sometimes, the person does not see it as an issue or may not feel it is safe in naming it as the issue. There is pressure on racial minorities in societies such as Canada to deny one's identity and the existence of racism publicly in order to gain wider acceptance. "Looking back I can see that things ran fairly smoothly as long as the question of race could be ignored, as long as I did not transgress the bounds of artificial `colour blindness' under which I was constrained" (Adrienne Shadd, quoted in Novogrodsky, 1996: 190). Aware of the potential backlash, racial minorities may choose not to name the issues except when they feel it is safe to do so. If someone does not have a critical analysis of racism, he/she will not name racism as an issue even when it is experienced in a blatant form. On the other hand, if an individual has a critical analysis of racism, he/she may strategically choose how he/she racially identifies in response to certain conditions. Not responding to issues can often lead to charges of cooptation as in this example about the Black American middle class.

> The reluctance of many members of the black middle class to talk about their anger out loud should not be confused with complacency. It is best understood as a painful adaptation to a society that does not want to hear that privileged members of a generally `underprivileged' group still harbor serious complaints. The problem with such silence is obvious. In the words of Edward Jones, the management consultant, `How the heck do we solve something that we can't talk about?" Yet even he concedes that the truth `makes people uncomfortable.' Alvin Poussaint, associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and a close advisor to Bill Cosby, sees black self-censorship as a simple tool of survival. `It's always a risk for a black person in a predominantly white corporation to express individual anger,' he says, because whites tend not to understand what the anger is about. As a result they are likely to dismiss the complainer as a chronic malcontent or a maladjusted person who perhaps needs to be eased out (Cose, 1993: 32-33).

In an atmosphere where merit is denied to deserving racial minorities under the banner of "reverse racism," the anger of people who are excluded from participation can be quite real. "Indeed, many successful blacks know that if it were not for discrimination, they would have done much better. They know because they see others with no greater ability progress far beyond them; and they know that race is all that distinguishes them from their more successful white colleagues" (Cose, 1993: 33).

As a trailblazing black politician, Paterson had spent plenty of time pondering the art of survival in a predominantly white political system. He had concluded, he said, that `whites don't want you to be angry.' So black politicians, in order to get along, often conceal their true feelings. `We're selective in our terminology. We waste a lot of time that ought to be devoted to candor'... Many of these normally outspoken professionals were extremely reluctant to own up to or have attributed to them the anger they clearly felt. To acknowledge their race-related anger or frustration, they feared, would be to alienate (and perhaps provoke reprisals from) those whites whose goodwill was essential to their well-being (Cose, 1993: 31).

In some respects, the answer to `Why are these people so angry?' is not at all simple. For one thing, none are angry all the time. A few deny their anger even as they show it... Some have been beaten into an almost numb submission, into accepting that they will never reach the goals they once thought possible. Others have refused to accept that being black means being treated as a lesser human being, and they respond to each insult with furious indignation. A number wonder whether, given the blessings they have received, they have any right to be angry at all (*ibid*: 13).

Both *Unfurling The Flag* respondents who were unsuccessful in provincial nomination bids mentioned the disappointment of their (white) supporters. It is difficult to assess the reaction of supporters. This may be because white supporters were shocked to come up against the barrier of race, which may not have been part of their previous experience or analysis. Or, a feeling that if the candidates had been white, their previous political experience should have been more than sufficient to get the nomination. Or it could just be disappointment. The research theme, though, is intriguing.

While conflicts over race in politics have been noted in party nominations, there is very little analysis of the dynamics of an interracial team working for a racial minority candidate at the municipal level. Ken Livingstone was heavily supported by a coalition of disadvantaged groups in his bid to become the mayor of London, England in 2000. Similarly, there are data on racial minorities supporting White candidates or people from their community. Very little experiential information, however, is available for studying White municipal campaign workers' interactions with their racial minority candidate and his/her circle of workers, friends and family.

The impact of the racial identity of campaign workers supporting a racial minority candidate's campaign is a largely under-researched area. Since wards and other systems in the region do not have a concentration of minorities, racial minority candidates need mainstream voters and possibly campaign workers. Traditional campaign workers may have considerable experience with election strategies for electing White people but possibly a limited understanding of the barriers facing a racial minority candidate. Although no conflicts between White and racial minority campaign workers were reported by *Unfurling The Flag* respondents, many campaign activities are

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carried out on an individual basis (door to door, etc.) and only one respondent spoke of interaction between white and racial minority campaign workers. Often campaign activities in the mainstream community and in the racial minority community were conducted quite separately.

Planning, Strategy, and Tactics
Some *Unfurling The Flag* respondents had experience working on other politicians' campaigns. They were able to use that experience to model their own campaigns. Others made reference to ethnocultural communities which seemed to have a history of political organising, such as the Italian, Polish and Portuguese communities. Some recognised that these communities do not face the same persistent barriers that racial minorities do but that there are elements that can be used. None mentioned the Sikh community or the Black Canadian-born community in Nova Scotia as models for campaign or community mobilisation. One respondent made reference to the campaign of another respondent in the study for use as a model.

Moran's book (1986) is a general guide on how to win a municipal election. It does not pay attention to overcoming barriers encountered on the basis of gender, race, class or other factors. The book assumes that everyone is starting from a level playing field.

Some *Unfurling The Flag* respondents spoke about their choice of campaign manager and other key campaign workers. Some respondents had no real identified campaign workers other than family members. While some relied on friends and family for campaign management and work, others took in party functionaries who had offered to help. Some respondents spoke to different levels of politicians. Others went in cold on their debut. Most did not have job descriptions and performance outcomes or a critical path set up to guide their campaign.

Some *Unfurling The Flag* respondents mentioned the need for more media preparation. Most had a passive approach to the media or even avoided media attention. There were no examples of candidates staging media conferences or trying to be a newsmaker or gaining media attention in an original way. One respondent had support from a racial minority academic (not from the respondent's community) in responding to the media. None had problems with discomfort with the media although one mentioned shyness. Another responded to the wrong question in a debate. Most were satisfied with or undemanding about the coverage they received in the mainstream and in local community media.

The *Unfurling The Flag* respondents seemed to emphasise tactics rather than strategy. For example, they produced a brochure for door-to-door campaigns but did not discuss the strategy behind the design of the brochure, or the messages that the brochure was meant to convey. The candidates seemed to know what kind of tactics or activities were part of a typical campaign but did not seem to emphasise how those tactics or activities could be better tailored or targeted to their particular situation. None translated campaign literature into other languages although mainstream candidates have successfully used multilingual brochures in Hamilton municipal politics. However, such translations require resources (financial or human). Kushner et al. (1997) have noted that incumbent candidates "likely have better access to resources to deal with issues of ethnic diversity such as multilingual translation."

As the above sections illustrate, barriers to political participation continue to shape the experiences of racial minority communities. This collision between the promise and the reality of the liberal-democratic state means that racial minorities are less able to enjoy the benefits of Canadian citizenship. However, the analysis above also points towards some approaches to addressing these barriers and moving forward.