# 5.0 Social Participation

## 5.1 Introducing Social Participation
Following different historical processes, various racial minority communities arrived in Canada after colonisation. There were reactions to these populations from the Canadian state and from contact with the colonial-settler society. While a comprehensive review of this settlement history is not possible in this report, this section will examine some important trends and concepts. It will explores how the social participation of racial minority communities has been inhibited or enhanced in Hamilton by looking at some of the available history specific to racial minority communities in the Hamilton area.

Isajiw (1999: 1195) traces the history of the Canadian state's responses to a diversifying population base. At the outset, Anglo-assimilationism legislated for everyone strict conformity with Anglo-Celtic institutional, cultural and behavioural norms in Canada. Even pluralism, which arose later, was devised initially as a colonial strategy for easing the French into accepting British domination in Canada. Isajiw notes (*ibid*) that pluralism "emphasizes assimilation into some central Anglo-Celtic institutions, notably the political and the economic." However, pluralism's allowance for difference laid the foundations for acknowledging and supporting diversity which led to the state policy of multiculturalism.

Isajiw analyses acculturation, assimilation and integration in an essay on social incorporation. He defines "social incorporation" as a "process through which a social unit is included in a larger one as an integral part of that unit" (1999: 1186). He identifies three types of incorporation: structural (also termed "integration"); cultural (also called "inculturation," "cultural assimilation," "acculturation," "assimilation"); and identity. Each, he claims,

> involves some degree of reciprocity between the host society and the minority ethnic groups. The latter, particularly immigrants, give up much of their own culture and identity as they become incorporated into the host society. For the process to take place, however, the mainstream society must meet the minorities part way and give up something to accommodate them (*ibid*)

The three forms of social incorporation should be considered in relation to each other. All embody a tension between the dominant groups in society and minorities. Structural incorporation can vary within different social structures at various times. For example, changes in immigration law over time have often meant limiting who gets into the country, where they live, what rights they may have or even what occupations they may work in.

Inculturation, he describes as "the learning, accepting and ultimately internalizing some, if not all, the patterns of behaviour of another, structurally, larger group or society."

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"Identity incorporation" is "the development of one's new identity in a new society…[it] refers to the process of self-inclusion or exclusion and of exclusion and inclusion by others (1999: 1188-1189).

As inculturation seems to be posited as a original "lack" of the official culture(s), it should be noted that mere efforts at acquiring traits may be often less important factors in integration for racial minorities than, perhaps, identity markers such as race or skin colour. For example, although inculturated, it could be argued that racism has prevented the full integration of the Aboriginal community, or even of the Canadian-born Black community in the Hamilton area even though it has been established here since in the mid-1700s.

Not all groups coming to Canada enjoy the same passage to integration or acculturation. Evidence suggests that the experiences of racial minorities in Canada differ markedly from non-British or non-French European immigrants to Canada.

> First, some ethnic minorities in Canada are visible, that is to say, racially distinct from the bulk of the population. As the vast majority of Canadians are White, in the Canadian case the visible ethnic minorities are non-White groups, such as South Asians, West Indians and Blacks, Chinese and Japanese, Native peoples, etc. To a considerable extent ethnic identity has been, and may continue to be, imposed on these racial minorities (directly or indirectly) because they are easily identifiable through visibility... Moreover, racial amalgamation tends to proceed more slowly than cultural exchange or assimilation, at least in North America... Therefore it seems that generalizations about assimilation, integration and the like which may be applied to Canadian ethnic minorities distinguished by their different cultures more than by physical appearance, do not necessarily hold for visible minorities (Anderson and Frideres, 1981: 106).

A study comparing the incorporation patterns of U.S.-born African Americans, European immigrants, and Black immigrants found that "contrary to the neat predictions of the pluralist view, racial obstacles do indeed complicate the group's bid for incorporation in New York" (Rogers, 2001: np). Robins cites a British study which tested employment discrimination for West Indians, Asians, Whites, and included a European foreigner (usually a Greek or Italian) "to control for discrimination against foreignness and not colour." The conclusion was that "skin colour" and not "alien status" seemed to be the deciding factor. "As Arnold Toynbee wrote: `The [Negro] may have acquired the White man's culture and learnt to speak his language with the tongue of an angel... And yet it profits him nothing if he has not changed his skin'" (Robins, 1991: 174).

There may be significant differences in the experiences even within the same racial minority communities depending on an interplay of variables. It is at these intersections that some of the more common and more complex impacts of oppression are experienced.

In a study of racial minorities and the Canadian political system, leaders in the Arab-speaking, Chinese, Haitian, Indian, 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 determinant." 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).

And, finally, it is important not only to recognise the dynamics specific to each racial minority community, but also to see such communities not as isolated, distinct entities but rather as porous structures that are heavily influenced by the larger society in which they exist.

> I have taken the theoretical position that one cannot fully understand a minority in the absence of the majority. In this sense, the majority and the minority are defined and produced by the relationships between them, and not by primordial cultures... it is just as important to understand the forces that generate the oppression and sustain the survival (of racial minority communities) as the oppression and survival themselves (Li, 1988).
>
> A perfect separation of internal and external factors, of capacity and environment, is rarely possible. The black community's morale and the clarity of its political objectives, for example, while owing much to its internal structure, were naturally also intimately connected to the weight, permanence and solidity of the larger society's opposition to it (Henry, 1981: 1).

In the context of present-day Canada, the political acculturation of racial minorities needs to be understood through personal, systemic and other barriers to advancement and participation that exist in the mainstream society which is economically and socially structured to serve the interests of a dominant group or groups. Through the daily pressures of negative stereotyping, differential policies, treatment, and unequal opportunities, racial minorities are sometimes forced to accept or internalise widespread notions of their ill-suitedness to politics through their "foreignness" and their socioeconomically constructed inferiority. This, in turn, ensures the perpetuation of the status quo.

A major study of nomination and election of 3,634 candidates in the 1993, 1997, and 2000 federal elections found that ethnic minority status and racial minority status had significantly different impacts. Representation of ethnic minority candidates was 20.7%, 23.1%, and 22.5%, respectively, wheras for racial minorities it was 4.1%, 4.1%, and 4.7%. "[T]he rate of ethnic candidacies approximate their presence in the population, but the same cannot be said for visible minorities" (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 95).

Statistical analysis of how different macro and micro factors contribute to nomination and electoral success also revealed difference between ethnic and racial minorities. Both are more likely to be nominated when there is a greater concentration of minorities in the riding. Ethnic minorities were more likely to be nominated if they were attempting to run for each of the four major parties (though the degree of this impact varied among parties), they were more likely to face ethnic minority competitors, and they were more likely to be found in Saskatchewan. There were no positive correlations between racial minority nomination and any of these categories and, in fact, there were negative correlations with seeking nomination in Ontario, and with the Progressive Conservative party (*ibid*: 103).

In the elections themselves, candidates overall showed that incumbency, running in a riding where the party has previously been competitive, greater campaign spending, and running for a party that is doing well overall in the election all contributed to success. However, for ethnic minority candidates, overall party success was not a factor, though

running in a competitive riding, spending more money, and being an incumbent all helped. The sample size was relatively small for racial minority candidates, so the authors treat the findings as preliminary, but only incumbency had a significant impact on racial minority candidate success (*ibid*: 104). However, as noted under "Racial Identity and the Campaign" in the Political Participation section, the success rates of candidates in general, ethnic minority candidates, and racial minority candidates were roughly similar (*ibid*: 94).

An important contribution to the different kinds and levels of barriers faced by racial minority communities seeking an equitable place in Canadian society, therefore, is the way that the state and mainstream society respond to them. Alok Mukherjee's grid (see next page) can be extrapolated to various state approaches ranging from racist to multicultural to anti-racist. This matrix is just one limited way of understanding the changing realities of the state and mainstream societal response to racial minorities within Canada.  A number of such models for analysis are less clear in naming and explaining certain important aspects of the situation.

**From Racist to Anti-Racist Change**

|  | RACIST | MULTICULTURAL | ANTI-RACIST |
|---|---|---|---|
| Origin | 19th century Anglo-American imperialist | Liberal-reformist acknowledgement of racism in traditional thought | Struggles of racial minorities against imperial, colonial and neo-colonial imperial experiences |
| Philosophical Bases | Human nature "Social Darwinism" "Survival of the fittest" | Human nature "Social Darwinism" "Fit" people can be found in all cultures | Racism is a result of concrete social, political, economic, historical and cultural forces and can be eliminated |
| Central Assumptions | All that's good and worth knowing originated in the west. | Cultural sensitization and celebration can counteract biased and prejudiced attitudes of individuals. | Culture is not the issue – racist thought, ideology and practices are. |
| Approach and Objectives | Elitist. To glorify the achievement of the West. To provide patronising information about non-Western societies. | Status quo, with exotic information about "minorities" added. | Question and reject the status quo. Critical thinking about race must be integrated. |
| Social Systems | Social systems are working fine. Staunchly supportive of existing power relations. | Social systems may need to be reformed. Generally supportive of existing power relations. Special efforts to accommodate needs based on culture. | Social systems must be altered. Challenges existing power relations. |
| Service/Access Issues | "I see no colour". Denies needs and experiences of non-white clients/customers. Does not support equity programs. Individuals must fend for themselves. | "I see no colour". Equality will be achieved through cultural sensitization. Mild support for equity programs but fails to address issues of power and powerlessness. | Focus on differences based on constructs of race, culture and ethnicity. Equality will be achieved through directly addressing issues of power and powerlessness. Strong support for system-wide equity programs. |

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The character of influences from the larger society, particularly from the state, has changed over time. The Canadian state's approach before the 1970s is often described as racist. Later, it moved its policies and responses towards the multicultural position as in the chart. It was in the state's response to the changing demographic profile of the population that the complex concept of "multiculturalism" evolved (Troper, 1999: 997-1006). Initially, it was a compromise to "bilingualism and biculturalism." It was an effort to recognise and accommodate non-Charter Europeans within the framework of the domination of Charter groups in Canada. Multiculturalism was later extended to refer commonly to the state policy or philosophy in response to multiracial diversity, with a specific kind of focus on the celebrating the cultural diversity of racial minorities.

Multiculturalism later became associated with immigrants, where "immigrant" often signified a racial minority. As Asian immigration particularly, to Canada grew, multiculturalism came under attack for opposing reasons, both from the emergent right-wing and from some immigrant communities themselves. Tom Flanagan, associated with the right-wing Reform Party, presented a paper on the "manufacture of minorities" at the 1984 Banff Conference on Minorities. The conference, where divergent views on definitions, and the philosophy of protections and recourses were debated, included a re-examination of the nature of minorities and their relation to the state (Nevitte and Kornberg, 1985).

According to Isajiw, the other critique of multiculturalism came from the South Asian immigrant community, which stressed the need to focus on racism and issues of power rather than just on race relations, cultural sensitivity or celebration, or on cultural retention (*ibid*; Liodakis and Satzewich, 1998). There have been efforts to push the state beyond multiculturalism to anti-racist policies and practices. However, since that period, particularly after the election that saw the rise of the right in Canada, antiracism and multiculturalism have both come increasingly under attack by the politics of revanche. Strong and effective forces in the last decade, many of which are associated with the reemergence of the political right, have pressured the state towards a more limited, less substantive multiculturalism, with calls to roll it back towards the "racist" end of the spectrum.

This ideology has led to the widespread public characterisation of immigrants, refugees, and racial minorities in the media as criminally bent, opportunist queue jumpers who live off the largesse of the state, abusing welfare and social assistance, and arguing for exceptionalism as opposed to merit-based treatment. There is growing pressure from the "mainstream" to abandon efforts to address the needs of groups who face social inequalities that may result from racism. The third stage of multiculturalism, which was to focus on "intersectionality," has not been developed as a result of this hostile climate.

One model of accommodation that is becoming popular in business circles and beyond in this climate talks about "diversity" and "diversity management." Like "ethnicity," "diversity" covers a spectrum of inequalities. The most common criticism of "diversity management" is that it ignores issues of who holds power over whom in society and its institutions. It takes an approach to "managing" diversity, as if it were a problem to be contained. Investing in good will on the part of the mainstream to change the practices by which it benefits is unlikely to produce significant structural or systemic changes or

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shifts in power. Diversity, as a state policy initiative, would seem to be more about social control and exploitation of peoples than about empowerment, if it ignored the impacts of power, as the business model does (Jenson and Papillon, 2001).

This model is closely tied to the notion of social cohesion, which has sometimes received a conservative, assimilationist interpretation in other places. The most common reading in Canada is that unfragmentary cohesion of groups in a nation state or a polity is an undisputed social good closely tied to economic structures, identity formation, shared values, and social capital, with a valency placed on "diversity" (Jenson, 1998). Papillon, however, reminds us that the "objective of sustainable diversity is not to even out differences and create homogeneous communities" (2002: 35), although the historical dimensions of exclusion are not fully adumbrated in this model.

Judith Maxwell, president of Canadian Policy Research Networks defines social cohesion in terms of maintaining social order, while recognising that "in this [Canadian] context of competition, diversity, and greater inequality, people yearn for a sense of belonging and common purpose to anchor their lives and to define their identity" (CPRN, 2003: 2). She asserts that "if citizens are to gain a sense of solidarity and common purpose, they must trust their political institutions to represent them fairly, to serve their needs, and to reflect a basic understanding of the turbulence they experience in their daily lives" (*ibid*; Jenson and Papillon, 2001: 23ff) while Jenson (1998) claims it masks growing social inequalities (also Bernard, 1991). This conformism certainly does not necessarily encourage the creation or growth of dissident spaces for arts, for culture, or identity.

The constituent elements of social cohesion then are common values and a civic culture; social order and social control; social solidarity and reduction in economic disparities; social networks and social capital; and territorial belonging and identity (2002: 2). The focus is on belonging/isolation; insertion/exclusion; participation/passivity; recognition/rejection; legitimacy/illegitimacy which can be applied to social, economic and political spheres (Bernard, 1999: 23). However, Jenson and Beauvais mapped "social cohesion" back to the OECD and the Club of Rome and older preceptors over a range of meanings, some of which are unfixed about the value of diversity or, more precisely, heterogeneity in retarding or promoting this sense of common purpose or identity (Jenson and Papillon, 2001: 23).

Social *ex*clusion arose as a focus of analysis in Europe in the 1970s, as a way of going beyond a purely economistic understanding of marginalisation. According to Rene Lenoir, "Social exclusion is the rupture of the social bond between the state and those living at the margins" (2001:12). The reversal of this to social *in*clusion is a more recent trend.

"Inclusion is characterized by a society's widely shared social experience and active participation, by a broad equality of opportunities and life chances for individuals and by the achievement of a basic level of well-being for all citizens" (Sen, 2001:12). While based in an understandable desire to focus on positive actions that can be taken and goals that can be reached, social inclusion's emphasis on an undifferentiated picture of what should be, rather than a nuanced map of what is, has led to criticism of its analysis and usefulness. Its use often erases the complexity of peoples' experiences of

oppression and marginalisation.  In order to rectify this,

> the various manifestations of racism as important expressions of social exclusion need to be tabled before there can be meaningful and constructive discussions of social inclusion.  Thus for social inclusion to matter, for it to resonate, it must provide space for a discussion of oppression and discrimination.  Social inclusion has to take its rightful place not along a continuum (from exclusion to inclusion), but as emerging out of a thorough analysis of exclusion. (Saloojee, 2003:1)

The history of the ascendancy of the social inclusion model as a funding formula in Ontario is recent. Christa Freiler, coordinator of the Laidlaw Foundation's Children's Agenda at Laidlaw Foundation in Toronto, applied social inclusion principles in developing a paper on children with disabilities. At the Federation of Canadian Municipalities meeting in Ottawa in 2002, Peter Clutterbuck of the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto and Marvyn Novick from Ryerson University presented the social inclusion model to participants, which included some funders. Despite some objections from anti-racist social planners, the model was developed with minor changes. On 27 January 2003, the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto in partnership with the Laidlaw Foundation and Ryerson's School of Disability Studies held a Symposium on Social Inclusion at Ryerson University. Speakers included Anver Saloojee from Ryerson University on social inclusion, anti-racism and democratic citizenship.

After the FCM meeting, the social inclusion model was adopted by Health Canada, which issued a "social and economic inclusion initiative" funding proposal which relegates racial/cultural inequality as one of six factors, such as economic and spatial inclusion/exclusion, rather than seeing them as integral to analyzing all these factors. The Alternative Planning Group in Toronto, which is made up of the African Canadian Social Development Council, Chinese Canadian National Council, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, and Hispanic Development Council, is preparing a critical response to the social inclusion model.

Peter Li argues that polls and research have used "diversity" and "inclusion" language to reify the articulation of "race" and "racial difference" in "Canada's normative order, public discourse, and economic relations" (2002: 17), tacitly confirming the hierarchical values that are well entrenched in Canadian society. Li notes that "[i]n public discourse of immigration, it is also apparent that 'racial' issues have been articulated liberally using a codified language that clearly conveys 'racial' subtexts, without resorting to blatant 'racial' references" (*ibid*: 16).

The limitations of social inclusion as a concept mirror what is found among many mainstream agency workers and activists in Hamilton with respect to access and equity concerns, including racism. Their discourse is limited to a vague wish for "inclusion" as a remedy to various oppressions, but without consideration about what that may mean in terms of actions to address the very real exclusions currently in place as a result of historical inequities.

Social conditions, state perspectives, and analytical frameworks are important in understanding and shaping the capacities of racial minority communities to participate in society. However, regardless of the approaches that might be dominant in each of those

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areas at a given time, racial minority communities still generally have at least some space to act with agency – to respond, resist, and shape the social environment in more equitable directions.

In the face of the history of experiences of racism and the state responses described above, there are a range of ways that individuals and communities can respond. Allahar describes three different, common strategies of resistance to racism, albeit incompletely: multiculturalism (or accommodation), assimilation, and violence. Allahar states that none of these strategies seeks theoretically "to link racism with the dominant class and economic structures of exploitation under capitalism. As a consequence, they tend to be ideologically conservative and reformist by assuming that racism can be defeated without drastically changing the system (capitalism) which nurtures it" (1998: 339), although anti-racism does address those issues.

> Resistance, whether spontaneous or planned, is a two-way street; and each oppositional act of resistance can expect to produce or provoke counter-resistance by the establishment... Clearly, then, the strategy is not to surrender to the forces of racism in Canada or elsewhere, but to prepare oneself better for the challenges of resistance. And this implies more study of, and research into, the various available strategies (retreatist, reformist, violence, class revolution) that correspond to the empirical conditions at hand, and the efficacy of each. One must not be deluded into thinking that a mere tinkering with surface manifestations of such a deep-rooted social problem will rid society of racism (Allahar, 1998: 352).

This retreatist approach against the forces of alienation can lead to an inversion of the political culture of communities. As explored elsewhere in this report, it has a direct impact on community capacities, on the political organisation of and on the involvement and participation of marginalised groups in mainstream society. This climate also makes it harder for racial minorities to access direct services in Hamilton.

## 5.2 Service Responses

What happens in Hamilton is part of a broader social context which includes the changed political climate in the province that sustains a backlash against group claims to equity and against immigrants and refugees (Palmer, 1999). This has resulted in a number of policy, program and funding changes at the local level. These changes are still an inadequate response by funders, planners, agencies, boards and commissions, and politicians at the municipal political level, to what a fast-changing population base of residents feels are growing issues of racism, inequality and marginalisation. These decisions have further distanced racial minority communities from the municipal apparatus although recent post-amalgamation efforts to respond to needs have produced some visible changes at city hall.

Racial minorities continue to experience barriers in accessing mainstream services in Canada, which has its roots in the history of these institutions.  Christensen notes that:

> Philosophically and historically, social work in Canada is rooted in the English Poor Laws and in the benevolence of the French Catholic Church, modified by the North American social welfare movement. The belief that the wealthier classes should be charitable only to the `deserving poor' set the stage for subjective judgements to enter into assessments of personal problems that have systemic roots. During the formative years of the development

of social services, few workers attempted to respond to the plight of oppressed racial groups such as Aboriginal peoples, Blacks, or Asians. Social services were segregated on the basis of race and religion... At the same time, negative myths and stereotypes about racial and ethnic groups were incorporated into social-science literature and social work theories... The poor of the pre-industrial era have been replaced by many of today's refugees, migrant workers, immigrants from developing nations, and racial minorities. Along with the indigenous population, they often experience oppression in a multicultural society that professes equality of opportunity but practises discrimination (Christensen, 1996: 143-144).

Most changes in the last decade have centralised power and resources in key mainstream institutions at the expense of grassroots community groups and needed services. This has enabled powerful interests to act as gatekeepers to the community. Some organisations and personnel limit community access and participation. In addition, the loss of core funding and the support for the one-stop "service imperialism" approach to marginalised communities has meant that fewer and fewer communities are now given the resources to develop their capacity to meet their own needs. This has reduced the critical mass of community leaders, advocates and spokespersons who would have otherwise emerged from the social-service sector as change agents in the social development process. Though the combination of a social change agenda with state funding for non-governmental service provision can often result in dilution or cooptation of some of the change agenda (Shragge, 1990), the stability provided by such arrangements can be crucial. The current clustering of community leadership, for the most part, remains organised according to faith-based and cultural groupings.

In 1977, the Hamilton and District Multicultural Council was founded and the Hamilton Multicultural Centre established. The council was composed of 43 ethnocultural community members and 21 individual members. Each ethnocultural community delegated three persons to represent the community at the council. From this body of some 137 people, a Board of Directors (of 20) was elected every two years. Before 1979, the Hamilton Multicultural Centre, Inc., the Hamilton and District Multicultural Council, and the Hamilton Folk Arts Council were all housed in the same building at 35 Catherine Street South. In 1979, the Hamilton Multicultural Centre, Inc. and the Hamilton and District Multicultural Council moved to 500 James Street North. And, by 1980, the amalgamation of those two groups was complete.

According to an employee, the Centre provided some leadership development training although there were complaints about the way the Centre was managed and how its programs were run. Critics thought the Centre should have focused on settlement and integration needs more than on cultural celebrations. Initial efforts such as the Multicultural Centre were criticised for not targeting the needs of racial minority immigrants or refugees. Critics claimed the centre had adopted a "song and dance" approach to settlement and integration issues.

A few years later, the St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre was established and, in 1989, the Immigrant Serving Interagency Network (ISIN) was formed. Immigrants and refugees have organised around issues of settlement and integration since about 1986 with the formation of the Immigrant Women's Action Group.

In the wake of federal government funding cuts, the Hamilton and District Multicultural

Council closed its James Street North office indefinitely in December 1991 and laid off its four employees. An operational review had "criticized the council for not playing a leadership role in the community and for failing to implement a number of recommendations for administrative changes. Both federal government departments have said their decision was influenced by the findings of that review" ("Multicultural council forced to close centre," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 30 December 1991).

In a subsequent column, Michael Davison speculated that the Conservative federal government had political motives for the closure.

> It is no secret that the new Canadians in the Hamilton-Wentworth-Burlington area have formed the political backbone of the Liberal party... when Poles and Ukrainians, Muslims and Hindus, Somalis and Italians, Portuguese and Latin Americans, Vietnamese, and well the list is long, work together in celebrating the diversity of Canada, it is nothing but trouble for a government that favors a highly-selective immigration policy that would favor, say, a conservative entrepreneur over a trade unionist fleeing persecution. The more they share their experience, the less they can be divided and the more they must see some common cause against the current government and its local representatives... Intriguingly, the government claims the council was not providing enough leadership in the community. I'm certain that the problem, from the Conservative point of view, was exactly the opposite ("Did politics kill ethnic council?" *The Hamilton Spectator*, undated column by Michael Davison).

The Centre received $12,500 in 1992 from the provincial Ministry of the Solicitor General to run a series of workshops with local police, but core funding from the federal government was never reinstated. The centre also received $8,000 from the region for administrative costs, but other funds were withheld.

> Hamilton councillor Tom Jackson, the region's representative on the multicultural council, said, however, that Hamilton-Wentworth's $25,000 annual grant has been put on hold pending provincial and federal government's decisions to finance the council... The long-term role of the centre depends on government funding and the function of a new, centralized agency to be established in Hamilton by October to provide settlement and integration to new immigrants ("Multicultural council back on track." (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 16 March 1992).

In January 1992, the Hamilton and District Multicultural Council (HMDC) was defunded and settlement workers were temporarily moved to Wesley Urban Ministries. Welcome Houses were also phased out later in Ontario.

A sense of place is very important for a sense of identity. Arguably, the Hamilton and District Multicultural Centre played an important role in building ties between communities through some sort of shared, central community centre, though that was not its main objective. Although community groups and organisations exist, many community members feel the lack of a meeting space in which they have a sense of a community "home" available for a range of racial minority community groups. This was not identified as a prime need during the interviews and the planning session for the *Unfurling The Flag* report, though some of the newer communities at the community roundtable thought it necessary. However, given the community capacity and the funding climate, it has raised questions of sustainability and priorities.

In 1991, the Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) used federal funds to

conduct a service needs assessment. The goal of the advisory committee was to identify service barriers and gaps and to develop a new model of service delivery to newcomers in the region. As a result of the call for ethnospecific services, Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO) was established in 1993. SISO recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. It has a staff of 50 and an annual budget of more than $2 million. SISO is a key player in the city and in the province on the issues facing immigrants and refugees.

In 1996, the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton-Wentworth developed a Social Well-Being Index, which combined eleven indicators of social well-being, including, for example, the unemployment rate, reported cases of child abuse, and rates of library use. Remarkably, in a multiracial city where a quarter of the population is foreign-born, the Social Well-Being Index did not include any indicators of racism or xenophobia. Coincidentally, 1996 was the first year that the Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police began collecting hate-crime statistics.

In 1999, the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth established a Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Issues. In 2001, as part of the new City of Hamilton's committee structure for citizen input, it constituted an Immigrant and Refugee Committee to advise it on related issues, in addition to the newly struck Committee Against Racism at City Hall. In the 1990s, the Public Health Department tried to include issues of equity and diversity in its work. It is unclear what the results are or whether the work has been sustained.

There are reports of differential treatment of racial minorities in local services. A bus driver from HSR, the regional public transport company, was accused of racially harassing a passenger. Other incidents of racial harassment from HSR drivers have also been aired in community gatherings. HSR drivers belong to the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 107.

Although there have been some anti-racism initiatives undertaken on immigrant and refugee issues in Hamilton and region, there has been an emphasis on serving all immigrants and refugees without necessarily focusing on the needs of racial minorities. Around the same time, the United Way of Burlington, Hamilton-Wentworth initiated an anti-racism organisational development process. The resulting media controversy served as a good case study of the region's failure to respond to the backlash against equity.

The United Way has complex ties to the municipality. Previously, politicians used to sit on its board. As one of the larger social-service funders in the region, the United Way in the 1990s had decided to respond to the growing diversity of the region by initiating positive social development initiatives, including anti-racism organisational development, internally and among the agencies whose services it funds.

In 1997, *The Hamilton Spectator* published a series of articles that showcased some agencies' anger at the United Way's anti-racism policy requirement although this requirement had not yet been enforced. Columnist Andrew Dreschel wrote about an agency that "has been gravely offended by what it perceives as suggestions it might be guilty of racial discrimination" ("Racist question offends St. John's," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 31 March 1997: A3). Although the United Way's responses, weak though they may have been, made it clear that no such suggestions were made, there was not any

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supporting response from the Mayor's Committee Against Racism And Discrimination or from regional council.

However, there were attempts in the region to address issues of racism in local service provision. In the 1990s following the United Way's trainings, the Immigrant Serving Interagency Network (ISIN) tried to use the network to provide a forum in which these mainstream organisations could hold one another accountable while they underwent internal anti-racist change processes. The network collapsed in 1997, with minimal results.

During the transition process to the new, amalgamated city of Hamilton, Transition Board chair Marvin Ryder (who will be running for mayor in Hamilton in 2003) emphasised that, in terms of redesigning service delivery, "we've asked the staff task force to start with a blank sheet of paper" (Neigh, 2000c: 8). He wanted to see "improved service, not just the same level of service," and went on to talk about increased web-based services for people who commute to Toronto to work and are not able to go to City Hall during the day. When pressed on the subject of organisational change to make services more welcoming for racial minorities, he said that "those people who thought that this exercise was going to lead to that sort of change, I think are just wrong. That isn't what this exercise was to be" (*ibid*).

A recent survey of organisations and groups dealing with homelessness and poverty issues in the city (74 responding) was conducted by the Social Planning and Research Council, and the results were included in *Progress Report on Homelessness in Hamilton 2003* (Wingard, McCormack, and Neigh, 2003). The survey included some material related to access and equity issues, including racism. It found that only 34% of responding organisations clearly advertise and promote the availability of cultural interpretation for people wishing to access their services, while only 48% regularly arrange and pay for such services for clients who need them. Almost two-thirds of respondents do not translate written materials into languages other than French or English (*ibid*: 29).

35% of the respondents did not have any anti-racism, anti-discrimination, or anti-harassment policy. Follow-up requests with those that said they had a policy showed that 23% of those that responded to the request actually did not have a policy, or if they did, it was only a trivial policy. Of those that provided a copy of a reasonable policy, 80% did not deal at all with systemic racism, only with personal-level harassment or discrimination (*ibid*). Similar results were found when asking about implementation of anti-racism initiatives: 20-30% seemed to engage in ongoing anti-racism training for staff or volunteers. A handful had made isolated changes to hiring procedures or board recruitment, but only two or three organisations seemed to be engaged in systematic change. About half of the responding organisations reported that they did not consult racial minority communities while developing new programs (*ibid*: 30).

Another service need faced by members of racial minority communities in Hamilton, which has not been adequately addressed, is that of basic security. Hate crimes and acts of racism in the community — some are described in the sections on specific communities — are nothing new. Yet it took the surge of hate crimes in Hamilton — one of the worst violence-affected cities in Canada — in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist

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attack on the World Trade Centre to get dedicated police resources for the problem. An entire unit was created, which has more recently been downgraded to a single dedicated officer in the major crimes unit (Fazari, 2003: A13). However, the police have committed to acting on certain systemic recommendations made by the City Safety Committee of the *Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative*'s, co-chaired by a member of Working Group on Racial Equity. The timelines remain unclear. Until the city ensures that targets are met and that there is some accountability, these recommendations will remain on paper.

Part of the issue can be studied in the priorities of funders. Generally, all the support for anti-racism initiatives in the city comes from the local Multiculturalism and Aboriginal Programs of the Department of Canadian Heritage. Attempts to involve other funders to focus resources on fighting racism through the Strengthening Hamilton Community Initiative had proved to be a struggle in the early stages.

## 5.3 Other Local Responses

Divisions also function strongly *between* different communities. In a city with as broad a mix of communities as Hamilton, it is hard to ignore the absence of political cooperation across community lines in shaping the potential for successful participation. This had proven to be a powerful tactic for racial minority communities in some jurisdictions, like Los Angeles, but in some, such as New York, leaders have failed to carry their communities across the race divide.

Activism in white-dominated political groups has not been particularly effective in increasing the numbers of racial minority politicians elected. Racial minority leaders "hesitate between self-exclusion – after all, matters would be decided with or without them – and the search for new political models" (Simard, 1991: 235). An articulation of this viewpoint is the drive to build community-specific "separate" institutions, now said to be gaining backing among disaffected Black youth in Hamilton.

> Eventually, every person belonging to a minority group must ask this question: Is the pain and frustration of getting these institutions to make room for us worth the effort? Or is it better, as some black activists argue, to go out and form our own groups, have our own agendas and social pecking order? When answering these questions honestly, Blacks and other minorities cannot but come to an obvious conclusion: groups reflecting the dominant culture have agendas and priorities different from those of minorities. Seldom do the dominant groups and the minorities see things the same way (Foster, 1996: 141).

A central problem is that, in working in biracial coalitions, there is the reality of the issue of racism getting deflected or diluted, taken away from the control of racial minorities. When racial minority candidates join political parties or organisations dominated by White people, their experience is often one of "being manoeuvred once again by whites intent on implementing a program that is only peripherally concerned with effectively eliminating racism" (Major, 1971: 163-164).

London, England has another positive example of political mobilisation across communities. Leader of the Greater London Council (GLC) during the days of Margaret Thatcher, Ken Livingstone, a radical Labour Party councillor, had launched anti-racism

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initiatives that widened his strong base of support. As a result, Asian and Black support grew for the Labour Party although the new party apparatus, including the current Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair, was openly unhappy about Mr. Livingstone's easy win in 2000 in what was an overtly partisan mayoralty race.

For the mayoralty elections, Livingstone is said to have built "a coalition of disadvantaged groups such as women, the poor and unemployed, disabled people, homosexuals and ethnic minorities such as Afro-Caribbeans, Irish and Asians" (Layton-Henry, 1998: 6-7). It should be noted that, unlike Hamilton-Wentworth, most of these communities are often concentrated in specific boroughs in London (although the mayor is elected at-large).

In the Canadian municipal experience, there is not much evidence of true coalitions across racial lines. In Toronto, the Urban Alliance on Race Relations has a name that is suggestive of coalition politics but, as Wilson Head pointed out, "it was a misnomer. There was no intention of forming an alliance of a variety of other existing groups and the Urban Alliance was to be a group composed of individuals elected on the basis of their individual interest and concerns about race relations issues. They would represent and speak only for themselves"  (Head, 1995: 296-297).

Given what the *Unfurling The Flag* respondents reported on challenges to addressing the impacts of marginalisation within specific communities, as discussed above, it is unsurprising that successful inter-community coalition politics remain largely a goal for the future. Respondents were bitter about the lack of communities working together to produce results. They mentioned the failure of groups to work together on sustainable cross-community initiatives. Respondents felt that some of the community leaders do not have a vision or the coalition-building skills that go beyond diversity celebrations. They felt said they were too preoccupied with their own feudal empire-building.

It has been noted that productive linkages between racial minority communities and predominantly white progressive political spaces also remain elusive in Hamilton. For example, the omission of issues faced by racial minority communities, immigrants, and refugees from the "Social Priorities for Social Justice: The New Hamilton" conference, organised by the Hamilton-Wentworth Coalition for Social Justice in anticipation of municipal restructuring, is a significant example. That this not only happened but was unchallenged in the community is evidence of how normalised this exclusion is, even in local progressive political practice. This is not surprising as the local social justice movement is often seen as a White, middle-class project.

While in North America, the anti-globalisation movement is identified with the summit-focused protests that became known due to the actions against the World Trade Organization summit in Seattle in November 1999, or perhaps with the left nationalist efforts against the Free Trade Agreement and NAFTA beginning in the 1980s, in the rest of the world it is sometimes seen as just the latest phase of the 500-year-old struggle against European and Euro-American colonialism. Within North America, the anti-globalisation movement has been criticised for not adequately addressing issues of racism in its own practices and in its demands of elites (e.g. Martinez, 2000; Sivesind, 2002). While individual racial minority activists have at times played prominent roles, the movement as a whole, with certain exceptions, has remained largely white and

disconnected from the realities of racism. Hamilton is one site where the connections between race and globalisation are not made.

Particularly since 9/11, a number of community groups or initiatives that are not specific to one particular racial minority community have been active on related issues. Citizens Against Racism and Military Aggression (CARMA) formed in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks from mainly young activists whose previous main identification had been with what is commonly referred to as the anti-globalisation movement. CARMA's name and early politics drew the links between imminent U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan and domestic incidents of racism. In terms of internal functioning and the focus of its activities, international peace issues have predominated over issues of racism.

### 5.3.1 Mayor's Committee Against Racism and Discrimination
In Hamilton, the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations under Dr. Harish Jain served as an effective, multi-community space for challenging and changing municipal leadership attitudes and responses to the issue of racism (see elsewhere in the report for details) though it was never intended to be a full-fledged coalition in the usual sense of that term.

As long ago as 1985, Toronto's Urban Alliance on Race Relations wondered if such committees were just an example of "the Canadian conventional panacea for every social problem... Is there a danger here of relegating [sic] and marginalising the goal of racial equality and of not directly and rigorously combatting [sic] the facts of racial discrimination?" ("Local government...," 1985: 4).

Some writers have claimed that mayor's committees in Canada "have not significantly addressed racism in the municipal corporation itself" (Henry, Tator et al., 1995: 271). The authors ascribed this shortcoming to a focus on race relations instead of antiracism, although the committee in Hamilton played a strongly interventionist role at the beginning.

The first co-chair of the Mayor's Committee in Hamilton was Dr. Harish Jain from 1985 to 1992. He was succeeded by Marlene Thomas Osbourne, co-chair from 1992 to 2000. In its early history, the Mayor's Race Relations Committee was a powerful force in keeping the issue of racism on the table. It took a lead role in challenging leadership and media attitudes on racism and was in the vanguard of some notable human rights cases in the region, including a number of the important issues discussed in the sections on specific communities.

During the municipal elections in 1988, a proposal by the Race Relations Committee to hold a referendum on the question of a city-employed race relations coordinator was defeated ("Faulty survey techniques let candidates off the hook," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 12 November 1988).

On 29 November 1989, the executive committee of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee unanimously passed a resolution recommending that the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Council ask for Alderman Tom Murray's resignation from the Hamilton Board of Police Commissioners.

On January 9, 1990, the Hamilton Spectator ran an article about a member of city council who had circulated a document at city hall which attacked, with very strong language, the concept of multiculturalism. The document called for the dismantling of any special programs aimed at the immigrant population. A few weeks previously, the same alderman had spoken against Sikhs in the Hamilton-Wentworth Police Department being permitted to wear turbans, and against encouraging more minorities to apply for placement on local boards and commissions. During this time, a series of racist pamphlets was displayed on telephone poles and otherwise distributed around the City of Hamilton (Kramer and Oliver, 1990).

"One of the main consequences of the decrease in overt racism in contemporary Hamilton is that some Hamiltonians now assume that, unlike the case in Toronto, racism does not exist in their city. For instance, at least one local politician, Alderman Tom Murray, has stated that Hamilton does not need a race relations committee, and that the present one should be eradicated, since he can find no evidence of racism in the city (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 30 April 1992: D2; Etoroma, 1991: 114). "I don't believe there is a racism problem in Hamilton" – Alderman Tom Murray, April 10, 1990 said in support of his argument that the mayor's race relations committee wasn't needed" ("No racism problem in Hamilton? Nonsense," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 16 July 1990).

Ironically, it was in the same time period that Tom Murray could see no evidence of racism in Hamilton, that the Ontario Human Rights Commission rendered a decision about the Corporation of the city of Hamilton and racial discrimination towards Tillie Johnson (see box on p. 118).

In spring 1990, the Mayor's Race Relations Committee "received a number of formal requests from some local politicians to consider fundamental changes to its structure and mandate (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 28 April 1990: B2). The major requests of these politicians are that the committee reduce its present size of 35, become more representative of local "ethnic groups and visible minorities", and become less "adversarial" (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 30 April 1992: D2; Etoroma, 1991: 114).

In August 1991, at a heated meeting regarding disbanding the Jamesville Business Improvement Area (representing the James St. N. area which is "very multicultural"), ward two alderman Bill McCulloch publicly called a city businessman "a loud-mouthed foreigner." The matter was reported in the media ("Alderman apologizes for 'stupid thing to say'" *The Hamilton Spectator*, 27 August 1991), and the businessman met with members of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee. Alderman McCulloch made a public apology, but the issue appears to have escalated.

In August 1992, two city councillors in Stoney Creek tried to convince their council colleagues that a race relations committee was needed in Stoney Creek ("Developing tolerance: Race relations officer supports councillors' bid for committee," *Stoney Creek News*, 26 August 1992). The two councillors, DiIanni (cuurently on Hamilton city council) and Santarelli, were both of Italian heritage and said they had experienced discrimination themselves while growing up. The *Stoney Creek News* article stated that

about one-third of Stoney Creek's 50,000 population is made up of minorities. At 10 per cent, the Italian community is the largest percentage of minorities in the city. But the two councillors said it might not be easy to convince council to establish a race relations committee. A resolution put forward by Mr. DiIanni in May asking council to reaffirm

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Canada's multicultural policy was not immediately approved. Dilanni states that "we've had problems at some of our local high schools.

In 1994, the Mayor's Race Relations Committee partnered with the Committee for Conscience in Broadcasting, and paid $4,000 for Katherine Watson's *CHML Talk Shows: Patterns of Prejudice*, a study of racism and prejudice in John Hardy's talk shows at CHML ("Talk show controversy. Study slams CHML for racism. 'Minorities are overwhelmingly presented in a negative manner,'" *The Hamilton Spectator*, 25 October 1994). Hardy became a leading figure in United Way's fundraising campaign some years back.

In 1991 (approximately), Doris Skorpid, a founding member of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee, quit after six years, making public criticisms of its work ("Race committee playing politics: Former member," *The Hamilton Spectator*, undated news clipping). Ms. Skorpid is the sister of Jackie Washington, a famous musician, and a prominent member of the established Black Canadian-born community (Strecker and Washington, 1996).

> Since the committee was formed in 1985, Mrs. Skorpid said it has taken on only two cases dealing with racial discrimination. One case dealt with alleged racial discrimination in giving out taxi licenses. The other dealt with alleged racial discrimination at the downtown farmers market... She also criticized the committee for putting too much emphasis on the debate about whether Sikh police officers should be allowed to wear turbans. The matter became an issue at regional council, last November... Mrs. Skorpid agreed a full-time race relations co-ordinator is needed at the city level, but she has reservations about making the co-ordinator accountable to the race relations committee. City council recently voted down a funding proposal for a full-time co-ordinator which would have cost $45,000 a year.

In 1994, the Mayor's Committee changed its name.

> A new name means new terms of reference for the Mayor's Race Relations Committee, which soon becomes the Committee Against Racism and Discrimination, says Marlene Thomas-Osbourne. But one committee member thinks new terms of reference which include discrimination other than racism will ultimately blunt the committee's effectiveness ("Gay policy shift irks committee member," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 25 October 1994).

The main impetus for this change can be linked to activists in the gay and lesbian community. Joe Oliver and Mary Cahill were the first gay and lesbian representatives on the Mayor's Committee. Oliver had complained to the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1992 about Mayor Robert Morrow's refusal to proclaim Gay Pride Day. In 1995, the commission ruled that the refusal was discriminatory and illegal. Hamilton, Ancaster, Stoney Creek and Dundas decided to stop all proclamations.

In 1995, a Hamilton steelworker named Lamont Webb filed a human rights complaint over "a pinup of a busty woman welder at Local 1005 headquarters" ("Union bounces whistle blower: It's payback, says ousted steelworker," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 21 October 1995). He received little support from relevant municipal bodies.

In 1997, the committee was streamlined and restructured so that the co-chair 's position was weakened. Also, after 1997, the representation on the committee had become less

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diverse. Racial minorities on the committee were numerically fewer and unable to carry a decision. According to some authorities, without an anti-racism focus, committees may choose to bring in "unrelated issues" (Henry, Tator et. al., 1995: 271) although the ideal arrangement would be to work together with an intersectional approach. On the Hamilton committee, there came to be less stress on racism issues, as the committee spent more time and effort on issues of religion and sexual orientation. In 1998, the committee gave its top award, the Harish Jain Leadership Award, to Bari Mohamed for his work on disability issues. This was seen by some racial minorities as a signal that the committee was switching its focus away from racism.

Towards the end of its existence (i.e. when municipal restructuring took effect), the committee often was reportedly prevented from making decisions because of a lack of quorum at its meetings. Agenda items were tabled from meeting to meeting. Several committee members expressed their concerns about dysfunctional committee processes both verbally and in writing. In April 2000, a new co-chair was selected, but resigned shortly afterwards as co-chair as well as from the committee. There was a community perception that the committee was in a crisis of leadership. Issues of racism were minimised or deflected without being challenged, despite the record of confronting racism in the committee's earlier days.

The Status of Women Subcommittee ran a candidates' school for potential female municipal candidates at least once. It has also held all-candidates debates featuring women's issues several times. The Mayor's Committee Against Racism and Discrimination did not have a history of organising any type of political event. It did not support racial minority candidates in achieving fuller political participation. One of the *Unfurling The Flag* respondents served first on the Status of Women Subcommittee and then later on the Mayor's Race Relations Committee Advisory Council. The Status of Women Subcommittee nominated one respondent for a provincial appointment to the Board of Mohawk College, and the appointment was accepted. She claimed that she learned a lot politically from serving on the Board of Mohawk College, which was a direct result of the support received from the Status of Women Subcommittee.

### 5.3.2 Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative (SHCI)
This report has mentioned the appearance of a white supremacist group following an Ebola scare involving a Congolese visitor to Hamilton. In summer 2002, a wave of racist stickers appeared in Hamilton neighbourhoods (Myrie, 2002: A11). In June 2002, a 15 year-old youth was charged with defacing a local elementary school with racist grafitti ("Youth, 15, charged with hate crime and vandalism", *The Hamilton Spectator*, 2002: A7.) There was also a rash of hate crimes against South Asian Canadian and West Asian Canadian community members. It is therefore obvious that a strong and sustained municipal response to racism remains vital.

The city's response to the horrific post-9/11 reprisals against racial minority Hamiltonians was the creation of the *Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative* (SHCI). The idea began in discussions held at regular, informal gatherings of managers in different parts of the local social-services sector who took the idea to Mayor Bob Wade who then adopted the initiative. It was publicly launched on 20 May 2002 at the Art Gallery of Hamilton. It is now sponsored by the local United Way. Staff seconded from the United Way and from the City of Hamilton play important roles. It has various local champions,

such as Lincoln Alexander.

The original title of the initiative was *Strengthening Hamilton's Community Civility.* Canadian philosopher Mark Kingwell has written of a particular understanding of "civility" as the core of citizenship. In that usage, "civility" conveys a commitment to vigorous dialogue in the context of basic respect for the humanity and value of those with whom one disagrees. However, he laments that the usage has rapidly been degraded in public discourse, so much so that "calls for more civility quickly revealed themselves as exercises in self-serving moralizing and cynical insistence on a nonthreatening form of public debate, one that left everything as it is" (Kingwell, 2000: 9). Strenuous objection by local racial minority community members and other activists led to "civility" being dropped from the group's name in Hamilton.

As mentioned, the Working Group on Racial Equity stayed in contact with this important, high-level initiative after post-9/11 hate crimes in the community. Some WGRE members sit on the large roundtable that guides this process. During the early, formative stages of SHCI, the Working Group on Racial Equity members presented a brief outlining four key platforms to guide the process. There were informal discussions between WGRE and key SHCI participants.

A graduate of one of the *Colouring The City* trainings was a staff person at SHCI. The WGRE also encouraged its grads to volunteer to facilitate focus groups during SHCI's community consultations. WGRE was driven to this engagement to ensure that there was not any repeats of the dysfunctions that led to the slippage of similar cooperative efforts at the United Way or with ISIN on fighting racism. Clearly, there is much for the community to gain from an effective joint response.

With the promise of more than $200,000 from the Department of Canadian Heritage in January 2003, SHCI has commitments amounting to more than $1 million in cash and in-kind donations (Prete, 2003: A4). SHCI has hosted community fora and dialogues on racism, many focused on the ideas that its members had decided were central to the community. The accumulated funding is intended for use in change projects in various sites in the community, based on safety and security, addressing racism, interfaith/cultural understanding and respect, and community leadership. This has also given rise to some participants voicing fears that SCHI was playing a gatekeeping role in the community which may affect community development adversely. To date, this has not come to pass. While the funds and effort invested in SHCI are encouraging, it is crucial to allow racial minority communities and experienced anti-racism workers in the city to direct and own the work so as to ensure that these resources are used in the most productive possible way.

There is a history of resistance to anti-racist change among powerful mainstream institutions in Hamilton, some of whom are players at the SHCI table. While this engagement may be seen as positive, SHCI in its initial phases had been plagued with complaints about participants who refuse to use the word "racism", and about a local funder that had refused to fund any projects that are explicitly "anti-racist." Although there has been considerable progress on these fronts, some community members have expressed fears that new initiatives emerging from SHCI may face similar risks of resistance.

While there are clear advantages to having powerful mainstream entities at the table, as in SHCI, it is vital to have clear strategies developed for dealing with the potential for resistance. In some communities, politicised and mobilised racial minority community organisations can play an important role in ensuring accountability under such circumstances but, given the challenges in those areas faced by racial minority communities in Hamilton, it seems unlikely that accountability can be ensured in this way. The Safety Committee of SHCI, which was led by a member of the Working Group on Racial Equity, did table some far-reaching recommendations to the police. The police chief has committed to implementing them but there is speculation as to when and whether the work will continue if he retires.

Clearly, there is a role for the city to ensure that recommendations do not die on paper but that there are clear targets, goals and deadlines that will be met with tangible benefits for the affected communities. One course of needed action is to ask the media, police and other public institutions to set employment equity programs and targets voluntarily under the Ontario Human Rights Code after informing the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Guidance for specific actions was commissioned by SHCI, rather hurriedly, through *Hamilton At The Crossroads: Anti-Racism and the Future of the City*, a report by consultant Charles C. Smith (2003). Smith catalogued anti-racist change projects in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, particularly those involving partnerships between racial minority communities and mainstream institutions, and tried to import the learnings to Hamilton. It may be worth cautioning the SHCI to assess its blueprints for action before starting or commissioning any work, given the shortage of analysis as noted below.

However, the *Crossroads* report's description of the Hamilton context and of the other cities from which the examples are taken are inconclusive. They do not allow for sufficient analysis to inform local decisions. While Smith's report argues that "many of the issues and challenges in the anti-racism work reviewed for this report address circumstances that are similar to what is going on within the City of Hamilton" (Smith, 2003: 60), this is not at all clear from the content. As documented here and in *Unfurling The Flag*, the state of organisation and political mobilisation within racial minority communities in Hamilton is quite distinct from that in Toronto, and possibly from many other cities in Canada and the world. For the same reason, some of the recommendations are equally puzzling from a community developer's standpoint. For example, there is nothing in the report to remedy the gaps in ethnospecific leadership and the profile of the service sector in Hamilton. Its bland proposal for partnership-based work is problematic given the imbalance of the dynamics at play in the community.

For a best practices report, the material is also short on critical evaluations of the models listed. We limit our discussion to the United Kingdom. For example, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the 100 local equality councils in the UK to whom it provides financial support are mentioned without an assessment of their effectiveness. In the United Kingdom, the CRE replaced the Race Relations Board and a Community Relations Commission. The report does not mention that the CRE, with its powers and duties prescribed in the 1976 Race Relations Act as amended by the Race Relations

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(Amendment) Act 2000, has been criticised for dealing only with a handful of cases in the last three years, despite its vast bureaucracy (300 staff in one estimate).

Further, Smith does not mention that the local equality councils have been accused of exclusionary attitudes and, on occasion, corruption, and for the fact that they do not handle cases of Islamophobia. Ironically, there is a move in the UK to scrap the CRE in favour of the Canadian model of human rights commissions at a time when some Canadian activists, lawyers included, have in turn criticised these human rights bodies in Canada for being overly bureaucratic, slow, and biased against complainants (Saidullah, 2001: sections 4-5). Although the CRE has been given the power to monitor police, government departments and other bodies, so far it has been ineffective. It was doing what the human rights commissions in Canada have been rightly blamed for, in taking a case-by-case approach (Canadian Human Rights Act Review Panel, 2000).

The panel which conducted the first comprehensive review of the Canadian Human Rights Act since its implementation in 1977, concluded, in a report filed in 2000, that "the pressure to process individual cases and eliminate the backlog has tended to consume most of the Commission's resources and to deprive it of the capacity to choose where to direct its energies" (*ibid*: 16). The authors argue that "the record to date demonstrates the potential of broad systemic cases to change patterns of inequality. However, it also demonstrates the relative failure to achieve that potential in the past" and characterize the systemic portion of the Canadian Human Rights Act as having "limited effectiveness" (*ibid*). Even in those few systemic cases which have been pursued, there have been challenges in implementing, monitoring, and enforcing rulings (*ibid*: 17).

The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Discrimination notes that "in Great Britain, there is no legislation that formally protects rights against religious discrimination" (EUMC 2002: 9) although from October 2002, the Human Rights Act 1998 came into force which includes incorporation into domestic law some of the rights requirements of the European Convention Against Human Rights (article 9 covers religion) (2002: 9). Although the Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000) in the United Kingdom makes provisions for Sikhs and Jews, it does not do so for Muslims. There are, however, recourses to different criminal laws for protection against harassment.

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) does not operate in Northern Ireland where there is different law that covers religious discrimination. Although this law was developed to deal with the Catholic-Protestant divide, it may be used to address any form of religious discrimination. Northern Ireland has an equality body with a stream for racial discrimination, although it has very few staff. Again, there are fears that race is being pushed out of the active work of the Northern Ireland Equality Commission although there is a governing Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. This equality commission supersedes the Fair Employment Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland, the Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Disability Council. Northern Ireland does now have the equivalent of the Race Relations Act orders but not the powers of CRE given by the Race Relations Act amendments in 2000.

The functions of Fair Employment Act and the fair Employment Commission which

required affirmative action on the basis of religion largely to protect the Catholics. Fair Employment Act was quite successful in promoting equality for Catholics with its affirmative action requirements. This was brought about because of pressure from the Americans under Prime Minister Thatcher, with very effective monitoring and enforcement powers.

In Northern Ireland, complaints about workplace discrimination (including religious grounds) are adjudicated by the Fair Employment Tribunal under the Fair Employment Act 1976 as amended by the Fair Employment Act 1989 and the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 which apply only in Northern Ireland. The act includes "duties on employers, affirmative action provisions, workforce monitoring and a different investigations procedure" (EUMC, 2002: 8) although the later Order expands the scope of discrimination to housing and public authorities. There is also a separate Human Rights Commission in Northern Ireland.

As well, in England, there are other examples of joint work. There is a Race Relations Forum formed of "ethnic minority communities" (EUMC, 2002: 25) which first met in 1998 to advise the Home Secretary on issues affecting these communities, as well as other official bodies. There have been other consultations in the UK relating to the Stephen Lawrence enquiry and responses to the proposed single equality body. There is no analysis of the effectiveness of these efforts.

The Northern Ireland Council of Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) may be a pertinent example of a more effective organisation than either the CRE or the local equality councils in England. NICEM is an NGO, not a statutory organisation, which undertakes frontline service work on contract from the government, but maintains its independent political positioning well. It maintains a broad programme of work with focus on race and racism issues. Recently, it has been critical of impacts on the Race Relations Act of the EU Race Directives set to come into force in July 2003, particularly for excluding areas such as immigration and policing.

### 5.3.4 Community Coalition Against Racism
This group, named for a similar organisation that existed in the 1980s, was formed in response to media hysteria about a visitor to Hamilton from Africa who was mistakenly thought to have had Ebola. Activity by an organised white supremacist organisation which leafleted the hospital and the neighbourhood spurred the creation of CCAR. Five WGRE members attended its inaugural meeting. WGRE provided input and support in a number of different contexts, particularly during CCAR's earlier work. This included contributions to the planning of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination events, and input into a meeting between CCAR and the Hamilton Police Services Board. WGRE members continue to receive alerts and other email on local incidents of racism from CCAR.

CCAR has pursued issues with the Hamilton police, drawing community attention to incidents of racism in the school system, and in organising demonstrations and protests. It has proposed that, in the 2003, 2006, and 2009 municipal elections, three at-large seats on city council be set aside for Aboriginal candidates, racial minority candidates, and candidates with disabilities. Earlier, it proposed that municipal politicians wear a kaffiyeh or hijab in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan. According to one recent

bulletin, CCAR claims that the Hamilton police chief admitted that the police in Hamilton does racial profiling.

Recently, CCAR has been visible on international peace issues, often in cooperation with CARMA and other groups. The change from the predominantly white peace marches immediately after 9/11 to the much stronger participation from racial minority communities at recent events, particularly South and West Asian communities, may provide an opportunity for more lasting and organic connections to develop between racial minority communities and white activists in the city. Note that this does not seem to have carried over to the efforts of mainly white activists organising around the City of Hamilton's 2003 budget and the upcoming municipal elections. CCAR's web site is http://home.cogeco.ca/~ccar/home%20page.htm.

### *5.3.5 New Municipal Structures*
Interventions by WGRE at the city council that was elected in 2000 led to the creation of an Access and Equity Office in the city administration and a standalone citizen anti-racism committee at city hall.

The new Committee Against Racism, after the recruitment process, spent its energies on creating terms of reference. Its members have come from very different perspectives and a great deal of work was required to build affinity, a task that was sometimes hampered by the lack of quorum at meetings.

The committee organised an anti-racism and anti-oppression training for its members and for other citizen committees at city hall. The committee is becoming involved in reviewing city policies related to racism. Although the sub-committee to do this work has existed for some time, the new city's policy development process only recently reached a stage where input from citizen committees was being accepted. The committee also plans to host a forum involving local anti-racism workers in Hamilton, in summer 2003, with the idea of producing recommendations to pass on to city council.

The permanent full-time position of the Access and Equity Coordinator at the city was filled in early 2002. Although city council directed that racism was the Office's first priority, all other access and equity issues are also within the mandate of the single staff person in the office. Of particular importance are relatively new provincial requirements under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act which requires accessibility of city offices and services.

The main anti-racism work at the city so far appears to be limited to policy review and development, providing consulting support to the relevant citizen participation committees, such as the Committee Against Racism. The City has formed an Aboriginal Advisory Committee to advise council and staff on Aboriginal matters. Despite a clear anti-racism focus, the Access and Equity Coordinator, in conjunction with the Human Resources Department, will be offering cultural sensitivity training to frontline city workers in summer 2002.

The Coordinator is also working with a staff access and equity support committee to develop the anti-racism strategies for city departments. At present, they are preparing an audit of all access and equity initiatives undertaken by the city that had focused on

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traditionally marginalised communities, specifically racial minority, Aboriginal, and newcomer communities. The coordinator is currently developing a community outreach plan that will target these groups.

After the audit, the work in improving accessibility and equity of the identified groups to city services will be determined for each department next year. The Coordinator is also involved in supporting various processes in the community related to access and equity such as chairing the bias-free hiring employment model for *Strengthening Hamilton Community Initiative* but a timetable for visible results has not been seen for any of these.

While all these activities are important, there is a danger that the breadth of the coordinator's mandate will result in an underresourcing of anti-racism concerns, despite anti-racism being the top priority, or in diluting the focus to diversity or cultural sensitivity. At this stage, the accountability of city managers for anti-racism programs and hiring and promoting racial minorities in city positions has yet to be ascertained. Although over a year has passed, an action plan that was due on the topic has yet to be created, although an update was supplied on the work done to-date.

## 5.4 Leadership initiatives

It is also useful to look beyond the boundaries of Hamilton, or even Canada, to find examples of organisations giving racial minorities a voice in leadership. Probably the closest match to the work done by the Working Group on Racial Equity is Operation Black Vote (OBV), a British non-governmental organisation, although its structural interventions have been more limited. It focuses on addressing barriers to political participation as experienced by African, Asian, and Caribbean Britons. OBV was formed in 1996 by Charter 88, a mainstream non-partisan, non-governmental organisation concerned with reforming government structures to make them more accessible, democratic, and equitable, and the 1990 Trust, Britain's first national organisation devoted to policy reform and public education by and for racial minorities. OBV still shares office space with Charter 88 but has separate funding and sees itself as being quite distinct from the mainstream NGO.

The web site of Operation Black Vote claims that "our comprehensive programme includes political education, participation and representation; our goal is for a fair, just and inclusive democracy, one that allows our creativity, energy and talent to fulfill it's potential and enhance British society." According to the European Network Against Racism, "Its objective is to increase the participation of the ethnic minority communities with the political process. They have been successful both in raising the issue within the national consciousness and in setting up a number of separate initiatives, including a scheme to enable ethnic minorities to shadow an MP" (2002: 14).

The organisation's objectives include raising political participation of all kinds among racial minority communities in Britain, including fostering the political power of such communities, particularly in areas where they have the potential to be a deciding factor in elections. Its mission also includes informing politicians about the meaning and experience of being a racial minority in Britain, and ensuring that politicians respond to that reality.

Many of OBV's activities focus on information and education. OBV participates in Black History Month each year. To enable newcomer communities to educate themselves, OBV's web site contains information on current and past racial minority politicians and on political and civic life in Britain. Articles on racial minority involvement in politics from other sites are regularly posted. During general elections, data are posted on the participation of racial minority candidates and on jurisdictions where racial minority voting could be a decisive factor. It is worth noting that discriminatory selection of candidature is not regulated by section 12 of the Race Relations Act 1976 and cannot be resolved in an employment tribunal in England (ENAR, 2002: 14). The ENAR report also notes a rise in racial discrimination in different aspects of British society. Others have noted a post 9/11 shift in hateful rhetoric from racial minorities to specific groups such as Muslims and asylum seekers.

Operation Black Vote also runs programs to allow racial minority participants to shadow a Member of Parliament or a magistrate. The MP-shadowing job program began in 1999. A second edition was launched in late 2002. The goal for the 2002 program was to have 25 participants shadow MPs for at least two days a month over a period of six months. Participants receive training and are reimbursed for travel, though they are not paid for their work. Of the group of 23 which graduated in 1999, four have since been municipal candidates, two have become magistrates, three have become school governors, and several more have become active in their political party of choice.

The magistrate-shadowing program was piloted in 2001. Participants were trained and then shadowed a magistrate in a program jointly designed by Operation Black Vote and the national Magistrates Association. The program is currently seeking six to eight participants in each of thirteen different areas of Britain. A revised version will be launched in 2003.

The Canadian Centre for Political Leadership (CCPL) is a Toronto-based initiative started in 2001 by Annamie Paul, a lawyer, to promote political and public participation by women, racial minorities, and Aboriginal peoples. The Centre seeks to enhance participation by these groups at the municipal level as elected officials and on agencies, boards and commissions, largely as a result of Ms. Paul's efforts. She also described the 2000 *Unfurling The Flag* report as "groundbreaking." CCPL received start-up funding from Echoing Green Foundation in New York. Its current training project is funded by the Maytree Foundation, which runs a similar leadership program called *Leaders For Change* using some of the same trainers but with a focus on immigrants and refugees

The CCPL training is case-based and is delivered by high-profile trainers. The sessions include panel discussions and site tours of agencies, boards and commissions. In addition to the 4-day training program, the Centre aims to provide continuing one-on-one support to the 30 participants who registered for the nine-month course that ends in November 2003, about the time of the next municipal elections. The current crop of 30 registrants are mostly between 30 and 40 years old (six are below 25); mostly female (21). Half are Canadians of African heritage, with an equal number with origins in the Caribbean and others in Africa. There is one Filipino Canadian and one Aboriginal person. 90% have a university degree, 60% a graduate degree, and most are program directors. All are from Toronto or from the surrounding region.

The Centre plans to produce an annual training program, ongoing workshops, and related resources such as workbooks, CD-ROMs and videos that can be used to spread the training across Canada, as well as a talent bank of racial minority, female, and Aboriginal office seekers "who are able, qualified and ready to participate in public life in high-impact positions" (conversation with Annamie Paul, May 2003). Quite how this training or the resources would translate to smaller Canadian cities is unclear where such a cadre of ready-made and highly placed "leaders" from these communities are not easily found.

Bay Area Leadership Burlington-Hamilton   (http://www.bayarealeadership.ca) is a local initiative in the tradition of the 700+ community Leadership Programs in different cities in North America. Its aim is to develop leadership and leaders within the Hamilton and Burlington communities. It does this through educating those who have already demonstrated some capacity and experience in leadership roles, giving them opportunities for one year to network in order to spur the participation of potential leaders in the community.

The pilot session was held in 2001-02. The second group of participants is currently part way through. The program begins with a weekend-long retreat to allow participants to get to know one another. After that, there is a single, one-day session per month on a variety of topics, led by community leaders from different institutions. Over the year, participants are divided into teams to undertake community-based projects that link their leadership learnings to the community. The year ends with another retreat for further reflection and feedback.

The initiative has been spearheaded by Volunteer Hamilton, and is funded by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The lead partners are the municipalities, Community Foundations, and Chambers of Commerce in Hamilton and Burlington, respectively. The extended list of contributors to the development includes many well-known for-profit and not-for-profit institutions in the area. Along with the money from the foundations, corporate donations and substantial participant fees are a source of funding.

The leadership model that is used was criticised for being corporate and exclusive. On the organisation's web site, there is not any mention of racism or equity issues, except for a very brief description (using "diversity" language) of one of the one-day sessions, to be hosted by SISO during the 2002-03 program. After its first year, the Bay Area Leadership program was criticised by a *Hamilton Spectator* columnist for its lack of attention to outreach and selection processes that would ensure a level playing field for racial minority communities. Only 2 of the 34 participants were racial minorities (Myrie, 2002a: A9).

After writing this column, Myrie was invited to meet with former Transition Board chair Marvin Ryder, who is involved in the Bay Area Leadership program (he has also declared himself a mayoralty candidate in the 2003 Hamilton elections). In a subsequent column, Myrie wrote about at this meeting where she was "reminded, in what seemed to me to be a patronising fashion, that the training program is designed for those 'at the cusp' of leadership and not for those on the 'shop floor.'" While hastening to point out

that this approach to leadership is not representative of the program's overall position, and that it did, in fact, engage in a better outreach process for the second session, she says, "It was one of the most pointless and condescending meetings I have ever attended. My colleagues and I knew that it was a useless exercise because, in our view, Ryder's definition of what constitutes leadership were passé, top-down theories of the past" (Myrie, 2002b: A11). A similar demand for a meeting was issued to the Working Group on Racial Equity after it had mentioned in the *Spectator* that the leadership potential of racial minorities in the city was not being tapped or developed through existing programs such as the Bay Area Leadership course.

There have been leadership initiatives in other Canadian cities, targeted mostly at youth, although race is not usually taken into account as a key factor. Nearby Brantford also hosted youth-focused events in the 1990s. Sudbury has started participatory action research with a group that was formed at a local high school designed to determine the needs, wants, barriers and how youth can better access civic and community organisations (Direct Consensus Democracy). Sudbury was also planning to create a youth internship program with the city. Any increase in voting as a direct result of these meetings has yet to be determined. Hamilton and Brantford, like other cities in Ontario, may mount a youth-involvement drive in the 2003 municipal elections.

## 5.5 Identity Markers and Social Participation

In Hamilton, SISO has made some notable efforts to host all-candidates meetings during municipal elections, as well as town hall meetings within different communities, to mobilise voters. There has historically been some organising in Hamilton on increasing the participation of women in politics. In 1988, the Hamilton Status of Women Subcommittee offered a day-long workshop aimed at encouraging women to become candidates for local government. Also, in 1991 a "fledgling, ad hoc committee made up of representatives from several Hamilton women's organisations" (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 6 August 1991) called the Women's Candidate Search Committee actively recruited female candidates. The group was disappointed that of the 54 candidates seeking election to Hamilton council, only five were women. Evelyn Myrie, chairperson of the city's Status of Women Subcommittee, described a culture of sexism in the city council: "That's a valid concern of women who are high-profile, who feel they don't want to have their character assassinated" ("Press candidates on women's issues, group urges," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 31 October 1991).

The numbers of female candidates indicate that gender itself does not prevent women from making a bid for office or from being successful. In fact, the two successful candidates in the *Unfurling The Flag* sample were women, despite the absence of local role models and the under-representation of racial minority women in positions of power at the region. In terms of electoral success, an Ontario study found that "all things being equal, male candidates do not have a strictly gender-based advantage over women" (Kushner et al., 1997: 547). Three out of the four racial minority individuals who have been elected to municipal office in Hamilton-Wentworth are women, although the sample is very small. However, given how it intersects with so many other factors, gender certainly structures the experiences of how women access politics.

At least a couple of respondents in *Unfurling The Flag* talked about the compounded

jeopardy of being racial minority women. One successful trustee talked about how her youth often led to people not taking her seriously. Another talked about the sexism that is evident in municipal bodies against older women. Several female respondents made comments about people perceiving them as personally ambitious, or questioning their motives instead of seeing them as serious candidates with something to contribute.

> Clearly, ambition for higher office poses special problems for women in city politics. As the late Princeton, New Jersey, mayor and former candidate for governor Barbara Boggs Sigmund explains: "When a woman tries to move on to higher office, she risks losing the advantages of her super-volunteer status at the local level. You become perceived as personally ambitious rather than a high-minded, dedicated public servant. You're caught in the bind of your femininity (Bledsoe, 1993: 164-165).

Study respondents may not have connected such comments with their gender although some were aware of glass ceilings. None of the men made such comments or related such experiences. According to one respondent, she was was "disparagingly" labelled a lesbian as a result of her work with women.

bell hooks suggests that one reason for the gender-based double standard in certain communities is that lesbian relationships are seen to be a rejection of men whereas "male homosexuals [are]...often known,…often talked about,…often seen positively, and played important roles in the community" (1989: 121). She quotes an editorial: "No lesbian relationship can take the place of a positive love relationship between black women and black men," and calls it "an expression of homophobia ... the idea that lesbian relationships exist as a competitive response to heterosexual encounters" (1989: 123).

However, the literature is silent on interracial marriage or the race of a candidate's spouse as a barrier in politics. This factor needs further research in the Hamilton context, where intermarriages happen more than the Ontario average, according to one community source. In some cases, marriage to a White male or female may increase acceptance in some circles and inoculate against racism. However, this may lead to other forms of power and control issues based in patriarchy and myths associated with skin colour.

Some of the most powerful and deeply held beliefs about racism involve sexuality and gender, interracial marriages, "race-mixing" and myths about races and sexuality. Studies show that racial minorities may be more readily accepted by a wider group of white people in terms of issues such as employment and civil rights rather than in intimacy and intermarriage.

There is little research on safety issues for female candidates in municipal elections in Canada. One *Unfurling The Flag* respondent talked about a near-rape experience while campaigning in an apartment building. According to another respondent, elected older women, in particular, bear the brunt of sexist remarks from councillors. While campaigning, some female respondents were met with put downs about their role. In one case, a respondent talked about a voter saying that she had to speak to her husband before saying anything.

In addressing issues of racial minority political participation, mobilisation by and of racial minority women will be crucial.

> Women have organized for many different reasons. We have organized to resist our political oppression and to rebel against it. We have also organized to resist the way in which our work is marginalized and all the forms of socially sanctioned violence against us. We have organized along racial and cultural affiliations. Women have organized around our philosophical positions as well as our professional associations. To suggest there is a single women's movement is ludicrous... My definition of violence includes the effects of both racism and colonialism... Women's organizing has often also focused on an anti-violence platform (Monture-Angus, 1995: 169).

### 5.5.1 Other Markers

Age is not even mentioned in a study of determinants of electoral success in Ontario municipal elections (Kushner et al., 1997).

Bledsoe (1993) suggests that the age factor is most closely tied to political careerism and how long people stay in office or whether they move to higher office rather than as a factor in first-time electability. "Individuals between thirty-five and fifty years of age at the time of election are most likely to see a long career in office, followed by those over fifty when initially elected. The probability of someone under thirty-five when first elected to office surviving nine years or more is about half that of a middle-aged person" (*ibid*: 123). Bledsoe also suggests that "more rigid opportunity structures" such as partisan election systems at a municipal level "may lead to earlier entry into office" (*ibid*: 51). Younger candidates are often not taken seriously. A student challenge in a mayor's race in the region was seen as a "joke."

Candidates do not typically include their age in their election material, much as people do not typically include their age on a job application. However, newspaper profiles of candidates during election periods almost always mention the candidate's age. As there is no legal need for a candidate to give his/her age, the newspaper profile for one said "middle-aged." An exact age was given for other candidates.

Effective political participation can happen if people are socialised politically at a young age. Candidates over 35 are likelier to have the political experience and the work and familial stability necessary for a successful election bid. A person close to retirement age who has had a full-time job or career may decide to make politics a second career or may decide that retirement is more enjoyable than the tussles of political involvement.

Both younger women and older women may be stereotyped as being less productive. Older women are more likely not to have had a career outside of the home, and more likely to be seen as having little of value to contribute. All the candidates in the *Unfurling The Flag* study who were under the age of 35 at the time of election were male.

In politics where name recognition is so important, a candidate's name itself can be an important factor in success. It is commonly acknowledged by campaigners, for example, that short surnames are preferable (so that the size of the lettering on the signs can be larger). Although a slightly unusual name may attract some positive attention and be somewhat helpful for name recognition, a name that seems "foreign" or

unpronounceable to the majority of the electorate may pose problems for a candidate. Ward 6 incumbent Tom Jackson, "the only visible minority on the 17-member Hamilton council," felt "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" (*The Hamilton Spectator*, 17 April 1997). He grew up with the English name instead of the one that signifies his Armenian heritage. Media exposure often bridges the name-acceptance gap. This issue is also examined under incumbency.

Naming patterns also intersect with gender and with race of spouse. Research is needed for cases when a racial minority woman takes on the surname of her husband. This may have an effect on her gendered or racial identity and the levels of acceptance among the electorate.

Accent is a powerful indicator of level of acculturation. As soon as a person speaks, their accent indicates to the majority voter whether he/she "belongs." The fact that none of the respondents experienced accent as a barrier does not mean that accent is insignificant. Mostly those with assimilated "Canadian" accents enter political contests. People with what are deemed to be socially unacceptable accents or dialects may feel their accent to be such a barrier as to stop them from even offering themselves as candidates.

Not all accents are equal. An English study found that South Asian applicants with strong accents were the likeliest of all minority groups researched to be rejected for jobs for which they had applied, qualifications being equal. Again, this may have an impact on the socioeconomic standing of people who may be contemplating a bid for office. In the Canadian context, an English or French accent at different levels of politics may not be a barrier. However, in the hierarchy of accents, French or other European accents would be more socially valued higher than West Indian, Asian, or African accents.

The number of years in Canada is only a rough indicator of electability. It can be analysed with other factors such as community connectedness or migration history. For example, the two *Unfurling The Flag* respondents who had been in the Hamilton area for the shortest periods of time (5 and 6 years) were highly acculturated in terms of their community involvement. Both had lived elsewhere in Canada or the U.S. after leaving their country of birth just before settling in Hamilton-Wentworth.

One respondent was unsuccessful in a bid for office after living in the community for 6 years. Three years later, that person was successfully elected, largely through increased media exposure in the community. It is probable that municipal aspirants would be less likely to decide to run for office during their first few years in a community. New immigrants might not even think of running for office until they had lived in Canada for a minimum of several years. Some delay might be due to legal residency requirements. None of the *Unfurling The Flag* respondents made a bid for office in the first five years of living in the community.

Only one of the eleven respondents was Canadian-born. In considering the intersection of birthplace and race, a Canadian-born white person raised in the Hamilton area would have a large advantage in terms of a base of support.  However, for a Canadian-born Black person, it is possible that the fact of being Canadian-born might actually limit the base of support as the Black community in Hamilton and in Canada as a whole is now

predominantly West Indian. A Canadian-born Black person responding in *Unfurling The Flag* mentioned receiving support from members of the Canadian-born Black community but not from the wider immigrant or West Indian Canadian community.

Those respondents who were born in the Caribbean were likelier to have come directly from their country of birth to the Hamilton area. Their migration histories were, for the most part, less complex than the others'. At least two respondents spoke about the "home-country philosophy" in the Caribbean community in Hamilton.

It may be important to consider not only the number of years that the individual candidate has been in Canada but the average number of years in Canada for the immigrant community that the candidate belongs to. One respondent was born in Africa. The African-born Canadian community in Canada and Hamilton-Wentworth is a more recent immigrant community. Those who immigrated to Canada at a young age seemed to be less likely to identify with the "immigrant" community.

There seems to be some correlation between migration history and number of years in Canada before running for political office. Those with the most complex migration histories ran for political office after being in the community for ten years or less, while those who had migrated directly from their country of birth to the Hamilton area did not run for political office until they had lived in Hamilton for ten years or more. In other words, those who were more accustomed to moving to new communities were likely to make a decision to run for office within a shorter period of time of moving to Hamilton-Wentworth. The respondent who had been in Hamilton for the shortest period of time (five years) had previously been a candidate for school board trustee in another Ontario municipality.

A study of Asian women found that migration history had a powerful influence on acculturation.

> Experienced settlers, twice (that is in Britain) and thrice migrant women (in the United States context) possess considerable expertise in the management of their minority status, in the reconstruction of their ethnicities, and in the negotiation of their cultural systems... Their command of European and global bureaucratic skills and of the English language has given them considerable expertise at reproducing their cultural bases and community infrastructures in a range of countries. Such a scenario is in complete contrast to that of the less `culturally and ethnically skilled' direct migrants, who are often characterized in the early stages of settlement by home orientation and a `myth of return'... For twice and thrice migrants, however, migration is not a sojourn but a more permanent move to settle. They lack home orientation and are geared toward staying in their destination economies from the point of entry and retaining their capital and resources (Bhachu, 1996: 288-289).

Although there is a stereotype that racial minorities may not understand Canadian political systems, there seems to be some evidence that immigrants with complex migration histories adapt and integrate better as a result of their capacity for learning about new situations. By contrast, English migrants to Canada, for example, may find the new environment so similar that they are not compelled to adjust. In this theory, English immigrants would hold stronger ties to their "home" country "because the non-British confront sharper incongruities between the two systems they must adapt" (Black, 1982: 10).

Self-identifying or expressing one's identity is not merely a matter of assertion, however. Against identity expression are arrayed mainstream stereotypes and various forms of reaction. In a hostile environment, it is often an unsafe strategy for a candidate to identify oneself as a racial minority. In some cases, it would determine how racial minorities engage and negotiate with their own communities. Although most of the respondents in the *Unfurling The Flag* study identified themselves as racial minorities, very few would consider putting that or the issues their communities face on their campaign materials. That was seen as "political suicide." In many cases, there was pressure to deny their identity or to conform or to "pass" (assimilate) in order to participate or advance.

## 5.6 Community Organisation and Social Participation

Even a socially marginalised community will occasionally have chances to make its presence felt. However, a number of *Unfurling The Flag* respondents gave examples of lost opportunities and ways in which community leadership could have exerted power but did not.

Aminur Rahim, in writing of the Bangladeshi Canadian community, could have applied his observation to the nature of community organisation and leadership in Hamilton-Wentworth (quite similar to the state of racial minority leadership in Toronto in the 1960s and 1970s).

> Bangladeshis are not yet involved, directly or indirectly, in federal, provincial or municipal politics. This indifference may have arisen from their immigrant outlook, which is divided between Bangladesh and Canada. It also in part stems from their inability to organise as a cohesive ethnic group. They are instead split into groups and factions. Consequently, internal community concerns and politics in Bangladesh take precedence over local, provincial, and national politics. Bangladeshis are much more prone to participate in community-related politics that affect their own affairs. This activity revolves around personalities rather than the collective needs of the community and reflects feudal ideology and practices, such as acquiring the power to increase one's personal status. Bangladeshis have thus been isolated from mainstream politics, and they have also insulated themselves from others (Rahim, 1999: 247).

The process of developing leadership and its positioning in minority groups can be vulnerable to cooptation and the temptations of empire building.

> There is a long history of social science research which has noted the frequent marginalisation of ethnic elites or 'leaders' from their own groups. For Kurt Lewin, writing in the early 1940s, this kind of peripheral status rendered American ethnic leaders unreliable as strategists and spokesmen... More recently, Pnina Werbner has noted the 'deep suspicion' with which ethnic representatives are regarded by members of their own British Asian and Caribbean ethnic communities; their access to state patronage makes them suspect even as it functions as a primary source of their intracommunal influence and prestige (Amit-Talal, 1996: 104).

Often powerlessness can lead to groups to turn on each other, exacerbating divisions and tensions. When a community is fragmented, unorganised and lacks consensus or a common analysis of issues, it does not speak with one voice on the issue of racism. This

dynamic can take the form of community fragmentation, "two-faced" behaviour, notional rather than substantive support for projects or candidacy, and suspicion of leadership identified by the *Unfurling The Flag* study respondents as being specific to their experiences, although these obtain in every community. Through these various dynamics, community members can become isolated in factions, cliques, and camps instead of working together for the common goal of community betterment.

Community leaders in the *Unfurling The Flag* study found themselves dealing with intracommunity tensions rather than being able to develop consensus on leading the group forward in terms of social, economic or political advancement. There appears to be no magical answer to these problems. "There are no general solutions to the problems of culturally divided communities...[they] need to be custom-tailored to the features of each community" (Dahl, 1998: 193).

In his study of immigration and urban politics in Toronto, Siemiatycki makes some important observations about the nature of leadership:

> It is clear that there is no automatic relationship between a politician's identity, community and politics... only 1 of the 7 visible minority politicians elected to Toronto council had been endorsed by the Metro Network for Social Justice, the city's leading progressive political coalition of community based organizations, suggesting that the electoral system privileges conservative over progressive voices within minority communities (Siemiatycki, 1998: 9).

One *Unfurling The Flag* respondent was pessimistic about the communities changing. The general failure of the community to hold politicians accountable to them has meant that entire communities run the danger of being treated as nonentities. One respondent noted that their inputs and contributions, let alone concerns and issues, might become subject to the whims of a few gatekeepers who may or may nor carry them forward to the right political ear, depending on their interests and the turf they may be protecting. Beyond some reactive solutions, there has been little given by the municipality to support the development of community capacity. While there may be a crisis in leadership in the older communities, there is also a need for newer racial minority communities to be able to present their concerns in a way that can avoid jumping through gatekeeping, linguistic and bureaucratic hoops.

Many community activists in Hamilton have a faith-based approach or motivation and do not seem to have a critical analysis of the role that religion can play in oppression. Although antiracism work that has been influenced by the American civil rights movement often enlists the aid of the church in promoting social justice, other anticolonial/antiracist strategists see the role of religious institutions as being in opposition to their struggle.

As described in some of the sections on specific communities religion is the main avenue of organisation for some communities. In Hamilton, the absence of ethnospecific service agencies stresses the organisation of community voice through churches, mosques, temples and gurdwaras. Religion for many forms a protective organisation in a hostile community where needs are unmet and where culture needs to be valued in the face of disapprobation from the wider community.

Hamilton may be over-represented in faith-based institutions that provide educational and social services, instead of secular models for service provision. McMaster University has its roots in Baptist teaching. Equally, there are many examples of the blurred lines between government and religion in the region, such as in the annual municipal prayer breakfast, the faith-based annual opening of the courts, and the previous mayor using public money to host religious speaking events in Hamilton, despite the clear separation of the church from municipal affairs. A number of important mainstream social service providers dealing with poverty and homelessness issues are affiliated with religious organisations.

Parkin notes that

> in all industrial societies the attachment to the institutions and symbols of religion is decidedly greater among members of the dominant class than among members of the subordinate class …The suggestion is that religious beliefs and practices of any kind enable the disprivileged to adjust psychologically to the social punishments meted out to them. This enables running repairs to be meted out to the casualties, and potential casualties, of the class system, but does nothing to alter the system itself (1972: 71-2).

He mentions a study which compared two provinces in Sweden with similar economic conditions and the reasons why one gave heavy support to the Communist Party, while the province with a strong tradition of religious revivalism did not (*ibid*: 73). He also discusses the Deep South of the United States and how the church acted as a buffer against change.

In the 1830s, the Anglican Church established the Mohawk Institute in Brantford as a residential school for Aboriginal children. Across Canada, Aboriginal children were forcibly removed from their homes and made to live in such residential schools where they were deprived of their language, their culture, their religion, their families. They were often forced to live in unsuitable living conditions and suffered widespread psychological, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. These residential schools continued to operate in Canada until 1980. The Mohawk Institute was the only residential school in southern Ontario, and many Aboriginal people now living in the Hamilton area spent years in the Mohawk Institute.

Since most municipal decisions are about planning or zoning, there is friction sometimes over religious buildings. Residents who were opposed to a mosque in the Greater Toronto area made it a municipal issue. There was also the conflict involving Hamilton's oldest Sikh congregation in Dundas, noted elsewhere.

There have been several studies specific to Hamilton which have found strong relationships between political parties and religion, ethnicity, and class. In a study of a federal election in Hamilton it was found that "religious affiliation is more influential in voting behaviour than any other variable tested" (Anderson, 1966: 37). Bailey (1973) found that "voting choice in Metropolitan Hamilton during provincial elections appears to be highly related to class indicators for the Conservative and NDP parties, and related to ethnicity for the Liberals and the Conservatives" (Bailey, 1973, page 76). He explains that his data

shows strong relationships with the provincial Liberal vote and a few highly inter-related segments of the population: Eastern and Western Europeans, recent immigrants, Catholicism and low education... The provincial Conservative party, in contrast to the high ethnic relationships with the provincial Liberal vote, is highly associated with British, protestant, high education, high occupational and high income groups... The NDP, like the Conservatives, is related primarily to class variables -- in this case, production workers, low education and to some degree with the Catholic church (Bailey, 1973: 73-76).

Another study (Jacek et al., 1989) found that the most distinctive characteristic of partisan recruitment in Hamilton was religion. It concluded that party workers of Catholic-Orthodox background go into the Liberal party. The Tories can be viewed as a Protestant, especially Anglican, organisation, and the NDP recruits heavily among those with no religion:

In the case of the NDP the non-religious characteristics of their officials do not derive from recruitment among groups purposely organised along this dimension. Rather, this characteristic is found among Hamilton-area trade unionists. In this case an economic association, the labour union, provides the setting for recruitment and the materialistic-class ideology of this environment is negative toward organised religion, viewed as an instrument of the societal elite to maintain their privileged position in the status quo (Jacek et al., 1989).

Although the NDP did some have affirmative-action type of policies to encourage participation, racial minorities generally have not been recruited or retained for long in Hamilton. They do not back the Conservative parties in Hamilton, with certain exceptions. Some racial minorities in Hamilton openly backed Sheila Copps' recent bid to become the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada on a platform of equity and inclusion.

Other kinds of institutions in the community can also impact on the ability of racial minority communities to participate in and influence community life. Important among these are labour unions, the media, and other social movements.

Although Bob White is credited with making the Canadian union movement less homogeneous, a veteran Black Canadian trade unionist made the point that

Trade unions over the years have supported equality and equal opportunity for all... It is time trade unions do something in their own backyard. We have leaflets, films, policy statements but the trade union movement for the past forty years has been dominated by Anglo-Saxons... Non white people were not and are still not welcomed into the building trades. There are just a trickle of non-whites there. Unions did not create the problem, but they are part of the problem and can do something about solving the problem... So it is time the unions reached out into the non-white communities if they want to reach this new group of workers (Bromley Armstrong, quoted in Jain, Pitts, DeSantis, 1991: 489-491).

While the local labour movement has been a strong supporter of human rights in Hamilton, Canada and overseas, it has shown token, not substantive, leadership in anti-racism initiatives involving changes in its own structures and practices. It has also been challenged on sexism, and its leadership profile has been criticised for its lack of inclusion.

Most candidates who were interviewed for *Unfurling The Flag* did not seek out union support or did not see unions as key players in municipal politics. None approached unions for financing, or received any donations from unions. Even when labour support was received, it was more as a result of political party (NDP) involvement rather than support from the labour movement itself.

In municipal politics where election campaigns are often run out of the candidate's home and where political party organisation is less apparent than in provincial or federal campaigns, family support networks are always important. However, for racial minority candidates, family support networks may be of greater importance than they are for others. White Canadian candidates may be likelier to have more non-family sources of support in urban settings and may also have a philosophy of individualism rather than relying on the collective efforts of an extended family network in sharing resources.

For a racial minority candidate, then, it may be particularly difficult to be deprived of a family support network either because of immigration (the extended family is not in the country) or because of adoption (the extended family is not known). Though there are definite concerns with the new legislation governing immigration which was passed in 2001, the expansion and updating of the family class of immigration may help reduce the isolation of immigrants to Canada from their families. Common-law and same-sex partners are now included, the age for dependents to be sponsored has increased from 18 to 21, the minimum age of sponsorship has decreased from 19 to 18, the sponsorship undertaking is now for three years rather than 10 years, and having a condition that places excessive demand on health or social services will not be a basis for refusing entry to a spouse, partner, or dependent (Jimenez and Crepeau 2002: 18).

A book of tips on getting elected municipally directed at a mainstream audience suggests that, to find campaign workers, one should write seven lists of contacts, in a particular order, from most important to least important. The first list is neighbours (based in the idea of a geographic base of support), the second, friends, and the third, relatives (Moran, 1986: 20). However for most racial minority candidates, relatives may be more important than neighbours.

### 5.6.1 The Media
The importance of the media in shaping public opinion and leadership is hard to overstate. Democracy is created by elections, through a politically free and educated population, and through independent media.

Mainstream mass media in general have an unimpressive record in terms of reflecting the realities and issues of racial minority communities in North America. Saidullah (2001: section 1) has noted ideological bias in media hiring and promotions, reportage, and in the licensing mechanisms for community media. To take another example, Ryerson University professor Frances Henry has demonstrated that reporting by the three mainstream daily newspapers in Toronto "raise[s] troubling questions about the role of the media in perpetuating and exacerbating racism in this country. Without using overtly racist terminology or language, the media by their selective and subtle use of stereotypes and generalizations nevertheless contribute to the development of a negative image of racial communities, which are then marginalized and legislated against" (1999: vii;).

In Hamilton, there is one daily newspaper, several weekly papers (all owned by the same chain), one commercial television station, and a handful of commercial radio stations. In recent years, the local media have undergone some changes: *The Hamilton Spectator* (the original newspaper of the Southam chain) is now owned by the *Toronto Star*. The Brabant newspaper chain that used to produce a wide range of weekly community newspapers was "downsized" a few years ago (eliminating several papers including the one serving west Hamilton). It now produces weekly papers for Dundas, Ancaster, Flamborough, Stoney Creek and the Hamilton Mountain.

Around that time, the independent newspaper *The Flamborough Review* merged with the Brabant chain. CHCH, the local television station, became ONTV and is now simply CH. A recent proposal by Torstar to start a second Hamilton-based television station lost out to a proposal for a second multicultural station based in Toronto, called CFMT Too, which will have a broadcast area that includes Hamilton. A 1994 study funded in part by the Mayor's Race Relations Committee found a pattern of racism and prejudice on a CHML radio talk show. It is unclear how ONTV has responded to CRTC's requirements for diversity in hirings but the *Spectator* has participated in *Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative* with a promise of looking at its hiring practices.

Hamilton's single daily newspaper, *The Hamilton Spectator,* dominates reporting on political issues.

> While the paper has no other direct newspaper competition, attention is paid to the television station CHCH and to a lesser degree area radio stations. Reporters are cognisant that they cannot compete in terms of timeliness reporting on council's meetings, so The Hamilton Spectator staff have adopted an approach of giving advance coverage to what they think are important stories. Apart from improving their stories' timeliness, this tack also affords the newspaper an opportunity to influence politicians... Most politicians complained that The Hamilton Spectator was too often in the business of making news rather than reporting it. Perhaps this was a result of its efforts to give pre-publicity to issues (Fitzpatrick, 1993: 74-76).

> The study postulated that the media have the ability to influence politicians in any of five ways. Briefly listed, these include: Agenda-setting and building; publicising decisions; controlling information; helping legitimise policy participants; and independently introducing new information….it was concluded that the media were active in helping shape decision-making in all ways except through the uncovering of new information gathered independently (although there was some evidence of this)  (*ibid*: 119).

The lack of competition for this newspaper means that political reporting in Hamilton is single-faceted. A history of conservative editorial opinion may not reflect the realities of racial minority communities in the city. As recently as the mid-1990s, a political cartoon published in the *Spectator* in response to efforts by the provincial government of the day to address issues of racism and other oppressions on university campuses was criticised as fueling an anti-equity agenda. At the time that it was committed in the *Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative* (SHCI) to address racism. In the media, *The Hamilton Spectator,* over a number of weeks, carried long excerpts from a work on a local murderer of South Asian origin.

A study on "ethnic" media in Hamilton-Wentworth undertaken for CHMR (Mohawk College radio) and CFMU (McMaster University radio) found that "Hamilton's ethnic groups face many obstacles to having their voices heard" and suggested that Hamilton's proximity to the large media market in Toronto may contribute to the difficulty to maintaining independent community media in Hamilton. The conclusion of the report is that "community radio is the ONLY viable, cost effective option for promoting ethnic identity in this area" (Deponeo, 1994). Ironically, an Assyrian Canadian student group, which hosts a community radio show at Mohawk College, claimed in 2001 that it was targeted for differential treatment by CHMR staff and other decision-makers at Mohawk College.

As is often the case in North America, those media outlets that are more open to voices excluded by the mainstream, including racial minority communities, tend to have less reach. A local, free but commercially produced weekly called *View* has shown willingness to publish news related to anti-racism, but does not sustain that attention. Hamilton also has its own "indymedia" site (hamilton.indymedia.org) on the internet, one of a host of such "open publishing" alternative media web sites that have sprung up around the world since 1999.  It is maintained by a small group of local activists, but it has yet to make itself a significant local news provider or to focus on racism.

Although there have been short-lived newspapers serving racial minority communities in Hamilton, none survives. In 1994, a monthly newspaper called *Canadian Voices* was established to focus solely on Hamilton's multicultural communities. Unfortunately, it lasted for just about two years. A new publication, *New Immigrant,* with a similar organisation, based in McMaster University, is currently starting up but has experienced funding delays.

In Toronto in the 1950s, the fact that the small Black community was contributing to an excessive number of building funds has been linked to its inability to support a community paper. Keith S. Henry refers to the last days of the publication *The Canadian Negro*, in the 1950s.  "*The Canadian Negro* cost less than $2,000 per annum to publish" (*ibid*: 33). This may be a factor in the fact that in Hamilton there has not been a sustained media publication serving racial minority communities.

Certainly, the lack of community media in Hamilton has impeded community organisation. Probably, what is most needed in a city such as Hamilton, where persons who speak out against racism are silenced, is a strong, secular, cross-community voice in the public sphere. This could be in the form of a news weekly targeting racial minority youth or a topical TV show highlighting issues and events in Hamilton-Wentworth with a similar broad-based appeal. "Organization is unlikely to occur without communication among members of a collectivity and with their actual or potential leaders... This process requires the establishment of channels of communication, such as newspapers, magazines, radio programs, and public meetings"  (Magocsi, 1999: 374).

## 5.7 Racial Minorities in Hamilton

| AREA | % increase from 1996 | Total RM % 2001 | Black | South Asian | Chinese | SE Asian | West Asian | Latin Amer. | Japa-nese | Korean | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Old City of Hamilton | 25.6 | 13.73 | 2.86 | 2.59 | 1.85 | 2.49 | 1.57 | 1.18 | 0.17 | 0.34 | 0.69 |
| Stoney Creek | 32.4 | 6.44 | 1.03 | 2.94 | 0.67 | 0.50 | 0.44 | 0.29 | 0.11 | 0.13 | 0.34 |
| Flamborough | 66.7 | 2.26 | 0.44 | 0.41 | 0.36 | 0.30 | 0.04 | 0.13 | 0.03 | 0.33 | 0.21 |
| Ancaster | 40.4 | 6.79 | 0.48 | 1.39 | 2.25 | 0.58 | 0.82 | 0.42 | 0.27 | 0.33 | 0.27 |
| Dundas | 33.5 | 5.78 | 0.79 | 1.41 | 1.19 | 0.74 | 0.53 | 0.30 | 0.28 | 0.32 | 0.15 |
| Glanbrook | 14.3 | 0.99 | 0.25 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.17 | 0.12 |
| New City of Hamilton | 27.2 | 10.88 | 2.16 | 2.27 | 1.54 | 1.83 | 1.19 | 0.87 | 0.16 | 0.31 | 0.54 |
| Canada | 24.6 | 13.44 | 2.23 | 3.09 | 3.47 | 1.71 | 1.03 | 0.73 | 0.25 | 0.34 | 0.58 |

The above table shows the breakdown of each racial minority community according to the municipalities that comprised Hamilton-Wentworth, and that now form the amalgamated city. About 85% of racial minorities who live in Hamilton live within the bounds of the old city of Hamilton, compared to about 68% of the total population. With the exception of the South Asian Canadian community in Stoney Creek, there is a higher concentration of all communities within the old city of Hamilton than within any of the other former municipalities. The percentage increase in racial minority population was larger in every area of Hamilton (other than the former Township of Glanbrook) than in Canada as a whole between 1996 and 2001. The percentage increases appear to be greater in the suburban areas of the city, although absolute numbers are still higher within the boundaries of the old city.

In a document examining poverty in the city, 1996 census data was used to show the concentration of racial minorities in different forward sortation areas, which are arbitrary pieces of geography with the first three postal-code characters in common. In five forward sortation areas, the percentage of racial minorities was above 15%, of which two were above 20%, and one near 30% (Neigh, 2002: 6). This showed the need for more detailed demographic breakdown of the geographic dispersal of racial minority communities within Hamilton using 2001 census data. However, the table indicates that, while racial minorities appear to be concentrated in the urban areas of Hamilton, they are not clustered in specific wards or areas of the city in the same way as in American cities, or even in Toronto.

This community dispersal has had an impact on past campaigns of racial minority aspirants and politicians in the city. Any specific racial minority community will not provide a significant voting bloc in any ward. Generally, all racial minorities together still form a small proportion of the electorate. This was identified as a key barrier in planning for an election campaign, at the planning session with former candidates.

A study of candidates in federal elections between 1993 and 2000 found that minority candidates were more likely to be selected in ridings with a higher concentration of minorities. Ridings in which candidates with British or French ancestry were selected averaged about one-fifth of their population having origins other than these two groups, whereas for ridings where ethnic minorities or racial minorities were chosen the average ranged from 32% to 43% (Tossutti and Najem, 2002: 102). However, running in a riding

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that was more ethnically and racially heterogeneous did not appear to affect ethnic or racial minority candidates' chances of winning (*ibid*: 104-105).

Although *Unfurling The Flag* study respondents felt that racial minority communities were not concentrated in whole wards, a few expressed hope that amalgamation might remedy that. This does not seem to have been the case.

### 5.7.1 General Racial Minority History
A notable older piece of racial minority history in the city was the housing development of Westdale, an affluent neighbourhood in ward one built between 1920 and 1951, which was another example of racial segregation in Hamilton, along with Little Africa or Chinatown. At that time, deed restrictions or social-control covenants were widespread in urban housing developments in both Canada and the United States, until Supreme Court decisions in both countries ruled them unconstitutional after the end of World War II (Doucet and Weaver, 1991: 101).

In Westdale, land deeds had racial restrictions that were more explicit than most social-control covenants.

> Social control was exercised through a single, blunt all-encompassing clause: "None of the lands described... shall be used, occupied by or let or sold to Negroes, Asiatics, Bulgarians, Austrians, Russians, Serbs, Rumanians, Turks, Armenians, whether British subjects or not, or foreign-born Italians, Greeks or Jews"... The material cited here is taken from Registered Instrument 327114, Wentworth County Registry Office. The racial clause was standard throughout Westdale (Doucet and Weaver, 1991: 122-123).

Although the Canadian Supreme Court decision of *Noble and Wolf v. Alley* (1950) set a legal precedent for invalidating racial covenants in housing (Walker, 1997), many house owners in Westdale still have property deeds with the racial exclusion clause. This ward, which encompasses McMaster University, has changed since. There are two synagogues in Westdale, where Jews were once excluded. In the 1994 municipal elections, a Black Canadian woman was defeated for an aldermanic post in Ward One (includes Westdale) by a man of the Jewish faith. The candidate who lost also finished second in the West Hamilton nomination for the Ontario New Democratic Party in 2003.

### 5.7.2 Black Canadian History in Hamilton
According to the 2001 census, there are 10,455 Black Canadians who live in the City of Hamilton, which accounts for 2.16% of the population.

There are four sociological studies on Black Canadians in Hamilton, all unpublished theses (Henry, 1965; Cole, 1967; Tavernier, 1976; and Etoroma, 1992), a history of Black people in Hamilton produced by the Afro-Canadian Caribbean Association of Hamilton and District (Toby, 1991), and two recent biographies of Black people in Hamilton (Strecker and Washington, 1996; Cooper, 1999). Several other sources include historical information about Black Canadians in Hamilton, but in general the community is under-researched, and was not included, for example, in a study of Black communities in Canada (Torcyzner, 1997). "Given the paucity of social research on the Black community in Hamilton... There is a vast area of research on this community which could be undertaken" (Etoroma, 1992: 72). Etoroma recommends several areas of further

research, including politics, on the Black Canadian community in Hamilton.

Hamilton's first non-Aboriginal resident was Sophia Pooley, a Black woman who was brought here by Aboginal people in 1773 (Drew, 1856: 192). The land that Hamilton-Wentworth is on was "bought" from the Mississauga people by the British Crown (Smith, 1987; Rogers and Smith, 1994) in 1784, the year that one of the first White "settlers" in the region, Robert Land, paddled into Hamilton Harbour (Elliott, 1999). Increased numbers of escaped slaves began to arrive in Hamilton by the 1830s. The city had two Black churches by the 1840s (Freeman 2001: 21). A Black Abolitionist Society existed in Hamilton, which celebrated the abolition of slavery in the British Empire every August 1 (*ibid*: 46).

One of the earlier accounts of Black Canadian community's political activism in the Hamilton area was over the barring of children from local schools in the early 1840s at a time when probably nobody in that community could vote. Electors were restricted to those with "relatively high property qualifications" (Weaver, 1982: 15). "In October 1843, Negro residents of Hamilton petitioned the governor-general to confirm their right of access. Although they had paid their taxes, they were denied use of the schools even after an appeal to the local board of police for help" (Winks, 1997: 367).

Benjamin Drew visited Central School in Hamilton in 1854. He noted that "there were present but seven colored children, and six of them were girls" (Drew 1856: 118). Drew regretted that more Black children did not attend school but thought it unsurprising "when we consider that prejudice against them prevails to too great an extent in Hamilton" (ibid).

The parade celebrating Confederation on 1 July 1867 was headed by a group called the "Friendly Brothers Union", described in a local newspaper as "a society of 'coloured' men." In the 1870s and 1880s, the Knights of Labour (probably the most important continent-wide workers' organisation of the era) had, in Hamilton, its first lodges in Canada for Black workers (Freeman, 2001: 72).

In the 1800s, Blacks in Hamilton lived in two areas: "Little Africa: on the mountain brow, and the northern section of the downtown core, stretching from the Dundurn Castle area to Wentworth Street North" (Toby, 1991: 24, and Etoroma, 1991). In fact, at the time, Little Africa was not even part of the city of Hamilton, as that part of the mountain was not annexed until at least 1929 (Weaver, 1982: 144). In the 1800s, Little Africa would have been part of the Township of Barton. Today, the area is in ward 7 in the city of Hamilton.

"By the early 1900s most of its inhabitants abandoned the community and moved down the mountain" (Toby, 1991: 27). Etoroma links the demise of Little Africa to the decline in the Black population:

> As a result of the continuing emigration of Blacks to the United States – for reasons which included racial discrimination, unemployment, and the desire to return to the U.S. after slavery was abolished there in 1865 – the Black population of Hamilton declined from about 800 in 1852 to about 700 at the turn of the century and to between 200 and 250 in 1937 (1991: 100-101).

It would seem that the likelihood of electing a Black Canadian representative to local government might have been higher in the nineteenth century when the population was concentrated in Little Africa than it is now. The fact that no Black politician was elected during this time period could lead to historians pointing to a failure of the Black Canadian community to organise politically. However, such organisation was not absent. In 1889, Black citizens of Hamilton petitioned the Market, Fire and Police Committee over the lack of representation in "positions of public trust and usefulness in the city" and specifically in the fire department (Toby, 1991: 33). (It was another 94 years until the fire department hired a Black fire fighter, in 1983, and local police hired a Black police officer for the first time in 1974).

Also, it is during this time (in 1894) that William Peyton Hubbard, a Black Canadian, was first elected municipally in Toronto. Rob Davis, a current member of Toronto city council, notes that this happened "106 years ago-and today there are only two African Canadian members of Council. That's a very, very slow rate of growth" (*Pride News Magazine*, 24 February 2000). Hamilton-Wentworth, by comparison, has yet to elect a single Black politician to council, despite the very long history of the Black community in the region.

The politics of the early Black Canadians took on the conservative flavour of the period. "The black Loyalists did not, however, refrain from political activity, for they regularly petitioned for their individual rights, for the abolition of slavery, and for recognition of their status as Loyalists" (Walker, 1999: 164). "In Upper Canada the fugitives tended to favour Conservative candidates, associating Reformers with an American-style democracy which had kept them enslaved. The political status quo in Canada was what preserved their freedom, making them suspicious of any political change and overwhelmingly opposed to radical reform" (*ibid*).

During the Rebellion of 1837, Black Canadians formed volunteer units throughout Upper Canada. They

> were eager to serve in defense of the Crown... Indeed, William Lyon Mackenzie, writing to the American Slavery Society on January 30, 1837, reported: That nearly all of them [Upper Canada's Blacks] are opposed to every species of reform in the civil institutions of the colony – they are so extravagantly loyal to the Executive that to the utmost of their power they uphold all the abuses of government and support those who profit by them (Hill, 1981: 77).

That, to some extent, may explain the absence of early radical Black leadership and could be part of a trend that continues to this day. Certainly, the current Black political leadership profile in Hamilton-Wentworth would largely be middle-class, West Indian, and college- or university-educated although a Black proletariat group participated in May Day celebrations at the Ontario Workers' Arts and Heritage Centre in Hamilton in the 1990s.

Although the evidence is anecdotal, the established Canadian-born Black community in the Hamilton area seems to be strongly Conservative. Etoroma notes that the descendants of such early Blacks, termed old-line Black Canadians, "tend to be similar to members of the larger society in terms of their worldviews" (1992: 10). The first Black person elected to the Canadian Parliament, Lincoln Alexander in 1968, was Canadian-

born from a long-established Canadian Black family. He is a member of the Conservative Party. Ray Johnson was a Conservative candidate in the riding of Hamilton Wentworth, and Ray Lewis was chauffeur to George Kerr, Conservative MPP (and cabinet minister) for Burlington (Cooper, 1999) before his own bid for political office for the Tories.

Though Alexander remains the only Black Canadian MP from Hamilton, a number have been elected elsewhere in Canada. The next Black person to be elected to the Canadian Parliament after Alexander was Howard McCurdy in 1984 for the NDP in Windsor. It was not until 1993 that any Caribbean-born Blacks were elected to Parliament, when three, all Liberals, were elected at once (Jean Augustine, Hedy Fry and Ovid Jackson).

Keith S. Henry notes that in the Black Canadian community in 1950s Toronto, "there were no fewer than thirty-five organizations struggling to maintain their own building funds" (Henry, 1981: 30-31). The community in Hamilton is even smaller and still today is similarly characterised by many different groups and organisations. Not enough funds have yet been raised to build community centres.

> ACCA [Afro-Canadian Caribbean Association], through the hard work of their membership and public support, grew to be a respectable organization in Hamilton, and acquired a piece of land on Stonechurch Road in 1984, for the purpose of raising a structure in the shape of a community centre. This venture has met some opposition since the original proposition, and until today there are still some in disagreement to its purchase. Nonetheless, twenty years later, those in opposition are still working to destroy rather than build. In recent times, ACCA found itself in a dilemma. The membership felt it was right for the rebuilding of the organization, picking up the pieces, and to redirect our energies for the purpose of constructing that centre for the preservation of our people in the city of Hamilton" (ACCA newsletter, 1999).

In 1995, the *Ujima* Report was released. The *Ujima* research project was "based on the recognition of the systematic exclusion and consequent lack of involvement of the African Heritage Community in the economic growth of the Hamilton-Wentworth region" (Stewart and Stewart, 1995: 4). The report stated that a top priority for the Black community is a community centre.

In the Black community in Hamilton, the one organisation that acts as a hub for Canadian-born Black people is Stewart Memorial Church.Changes in immigration brought in more people from the Caribbean, which had a dramatic impact on the established Canadian Black community.

> The long historical roots of Black Canadians notwithstanding, the phenomenal growth of the Black communities in the past quarter-century is a result of increased immigration and higher birth rates. Indeed, almost half (44.2%) of all Black persons in Canada immigrated in the past twenty years... Seven out of ten Black immigrants in Canada were born in the Caribbean. In fact, a higher percentage of Black persons in Canada are Caribbean born than are Canadian born (Torcyzner, 1997: 25).

Immigration from the Caribbean has included both Black Canadians and Canadians of Indo-Caribbean origin. "Immigration policy and practices, it should be said, were in those days quite remarkably offensive. The humiliation of the relatives of West Indians seeking

admission for any purposes was an inescapably consciousness-raising issue for members of immigrant families" (Henry, 1981: 24).

Men and women from the Caribbean can be found in a number of professions in Hamilton. The school boards had hired many teachers earlier from the islands through a recruitment program. In 1956, due to a shortage of European domestic workers, unmarried young women without children were encouraged to apply to come from the Caribbean to work in a Canadian home for one year, in return for permanent resident status. Women from the Caribbean, for example, formed the single largest group of racial minority domestics until the 1980s.

Racial discrimination in city-licensed businesses in Hamilton usually took the form of refusal of service, admission or in employment. In 1948, a Black veteran was denied admission to the dance pavilion at Dundurn Park (licensed by the Parks Board). A motion at city council that same year to take steps "so that refusal of admission on the grounds of race, colour or creed will be impermissible at public amusements, entertainments and dance halls" was voted down as Communist propaganda.

In 1951, the famous Canadian pianist Oscar Peterson was refused service at a barber shop in Hamilton. Although it was learned that a city by-law passed in 1947 said that every licence issued to a barber shop was subject to an anti-discrimination condition, Mayor Lloyd Jackson was still against any overall bylaw to protect citizens from discrimination.

In the aftermath of the Peterson incident, Rabbi Baskin suggested the formation of a "mayor's committee" to deal with racial discrimination, as has been employed in some 100 American cities. The suggestion was not to become reality for another 34 years, when a Mayor's Race Relations Committee was finally formed in Hamilton in 1985.

In 1959, the YWCA petitioned the city to pass anti-discrimination legislation, focusing on recreation. In 1961, the Legislation and Reception Committee unanimously endorsed a brief calling for prohibition of racial discrimination in housing. That year, a Black Hamiltonian seeking an apartment in the city filed the first complaint in Hamilton under the Fair Accommodation Practices Act. Of course, experiences of racism by the Black Canadian community in Hamilton have continued. Many recent incidents have received some media attention.

There was controversy in 1991 over funding for the seven-year-old Cari Can Festival. The festival chairman "is suing *The Spectator* in connection with news stories on the festival's financial accountability and concerns about the festival's location, parade route and litter problems."  ("Councillors upset by 'racist' overtones to funding for Cari Can," *The Hamilton Spectator*, undated news clipping). Both aldermen Dave Wilson and Bill McCulloch took a stand that "festival organisers presented unsatisfactory financial statements for the $17,390 the festival received in 1990," and stated that they resented accusations of racism.

In October 1991, a racial incident at a school on the west mountain (Sir Allan MacNab Secondary School) made headlines and caused great concern in the community. After a fight between two students (one White, one Black), racist graffiti was found on the wall of

the school, and a black doll was found hanging from a tree.

Some years ago, The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton-Wentworth was criticised for its handling of a case in the Somali community. There were community allegations of racism that led to meetings between the two parties. The Children's Aid Society is currently undergoing a process of anti-racism organisational change.

In October 2002 a man was arrested and charged with a hate crime after a knife assault on two Black Canadian men ("Briefly" 2002: A6).

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**THE TILLIE JOHNSON CASE**

The Mayor's Race Relations Committee also dealt with the issue of racial discrimination against Tillie Johnson, a Black woman who had opened a stall at the Hamilton Farmer's Market in 1971. She had faced discrimination in the allocation of stall locations. Other stall-owners had hurled racial abuse at her and at one point had thrown a bucket of urine over her produce.

Ms Johnson filed a complaint with both the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Mayor's Race Relations Committee. In 1985, "she received an apology from Mayor Bob Morrow, $500 from two vendors and $1,000 from the city for her loss of business and legal fees" ("From shame to a scholarship: Tillie had to fight discrimination," The Hamilton Spectator, May 24, 1997).

As in the Yellow Cab case, the settlement was not made public at the time, as it was not a Board of Inquiry decision. The applicant, Ms. Johnson, "asked for and was given two days to decide whether to accept the settlement" (Ontario Human Rights Commission decision, Ethilda Johnson vs. The Corporation of the City of Hamilton, 1991).

After the settlement, Ms Johnson apparently requested a Board of Inquiry. The Board of Inquiry was not granted. Although the legal decision not to convene the Board of Inquiry became a public document, details of Tillie Johnson's settlement were never made publicly available until they were printed in the 1997 Spectator article quoted above.

The 1991 decision stated that:

"The second consideration should have been whether the evidence warrants an inquiry. That would have required some analysis of the evidence. This was never done. Accordingly, they prematurely came to a decision for the wrong reason and used that decision to try to coerce a settlement. However, sitting in judicial review of decisions of the Commission, we are limited in what we can do. We could set aside the decision approving the settlement. We could also set aside the decision not to ask the minister to appoint a board of inquiry. To do this, many years after the agreement has been executed by all parties and implemented, would accomplish nothing. I reluctantly agree that the application for judicial review should be dismissed" (ibid).

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### 5.7.3 South Asian Canadian History in Hamilton

According to the 2001 census, there are 11,000 South Asian Canadians who live in the City of Hamilton, or 2.27% of the population. In the period between the 1996 and 2001 censuses, this community has become the largest racial minority community in the city,

slightly larger than the Black Canadian community, with a sizeable Canadian-born element.

In contrast with the early Black Canadian settlers (Empire Loyalists for the most part) who had sought refuge from slavery supposedly under the British Crown, the first South Asian Canadians came from India, a region which was struggling against British imperialism.

South Asians have faced a legacy of racist riots and attacks particularly since their early history in western Canada. To contain anti-Britiish sentiments, Canadian legislation was developed containing what was known as the "continuous journey clause," which stated that a ship could not break its journey between India and Canada if its passengers were to be accepted on shore. This device helped prevent migrants from South Asia from legally coming to Canada as British subjects. At various times and places before the second World War, South Asian Canadians were disenfranchised before their civic and political rights were finally restored. Some again may be under threat from "anti-terrorist" measures recently introduced in Canada.

Unfortunately, there is virtually no documentation of the history of South Asian migrants and workers in the Hamilton area. No more than 5% of the South Asian Canadians living in the city in 1996 immigrated prior to 1970. During the 1970s, there was an influx of migrants from the Asian subcontinent, which has continued. South Asian newcomers who arrived in Hamilton from East Africa were often the targets of vicious racist assaults and abuse. There were reports of a progressive East Indian workers' group being active in the region but most of the cultural and "national" organisations, specifically in the Indo-Canadian community, are run by the elite from the community.

Although the India-Canada Society of Hamilton was founded in 1973 "as a non-denominational organisation for East Indians of various regions and religions" ("India-Canada group's future goal to foster racial understanding," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 13 September 1993), there has been a trend towards faith-based community organisation. "With a large influx of immigrants in the early 1980s, there was a move away from the secular culture of the society to groups based on religion or regional identity" (*ibid*). In this period, the first community organisations in Hamilton for the Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities were formed.

> Until the rise of Asian immigration in the 1960's the only religions allowed full institutional status across Canada were Christianity and Judaism. In most provinces, for example, an individual could not officially become married in a Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist ceremony. These religions were not automatically recognised as such for tax and zoning purposes. Many of the earlier South Asian religious organisations were therefore incorporated as non-profit associations rather than charities (Buchignani and Indra, 1985: 219).

In Hamilton, the Sikh Society was registered in 1974 and the Hindu Samaj was incorporated in 1976. The Hamilton Muslim community established an association at about the same time. There was evidence of the existence of a South Asian council in the 1990s. In 1993, the India-Canada Society formed a networking committee in hopes of developing a federation among the faith-based and regional and cultural groups. What impact this has had on inter-community or cross-community work has yet to be

determined, though recently new attempts at organising the South Asian Canadian communities in the city were noted.

In 1976, South Asian business owners, most of whom who had fled Eastern Africa, were the victims of several violent hate crimes in the region. As a result, the India-Canada society formed a human rights committee, the HRO (Human Rights Organization of Hamilton and District). In December 1976, the Hamilton Anti-Racism Committee was given $12,750 to set up a 24-hour phone line, which operated from January to June of 1977. "Prejudice against South Asians rose steadily, apparently reaching a peak in 1977-78, a period characterised by a rash of violent attacks against South Asians and their property" (Buchignani and Indra, 1985: 205).

The HRO received funding from the federal Department of the Secretary of State to hold workshops with regional police. "'If it's successful, it could become a model for other communities across Canada,' said Dr. Harish Jain, a professor in the faculty of business at McMaster University" ("Pilot project helping police span ethnic gap," *The Hamilton Spectator*, undated news clipping).

"The India Canada Society is playing a key role in the long-term cooperative effort by Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police to solve the matter of racial incidents within the region" (Combating racism: Indian Society take leading role," *Journal West of Westdale and West Hamilton*, 4 August 1977).

The transportation sector has been the focus for some anti-racism work for the South Asian Canadian community in Hamilton over the years. The India-Canada Society's Human Rights Committee re-convened in 1984 in order to take action about discrimination towards South Asian taxi drivers with the Yellow Cab Company. They also found that there was a large increase in complaints to the Ontario Human Rights Commission that year. "'We've been dormant for a few years but the recent increase in complaints from this area to the Human Rights Commission have gotten us active again,' said Mr. Jain" ("Race relations body urged by rights group," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 7 January 1985).

The Yellow Cab complaint was filed with the Ontario Human Rights Commission. An early settlement was reached, largely through the intervention of some of the leading South Asians in the community. Although the settlement was never made public, the Human Rights Committee "urged that licence committee hearings into complaints of discrimination registered with the Ontario Human Rights Commission against Hamilton taxi company Yellow Cab be public" (*ibid*). Despite the settlement, efforts to improve working conditions at Yellow Cab continued. Yellow Cab became Hamilton's only unionised taxi company for a period of ten years.

> Drivers at the cab company began unionizing efforts in 1985, but the union was not certified until early in 1989... Dissatisfied drivers complain of preferential treatment, with lucrative runs meted out unfairly. Some drivers, including the union's former unit chairman Mansoor Khan and former secretary-treasurer Jagtar Singh Chahal, have left Yellow Cab to drive for Blue Line Taxi, the city's biggest cab company ("Taxi drivers' union decertified," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 19 March 1994).

During the process of resolving the Yellow Cab issue, the Human Rights Committee of the India-Canada Society also met with Mayor Bob Morrow, who had been elected Mayor of Hamilton in 1982, and urged the Mayor to form a race relations committee. The Mayor's Race Relations Committee was established in 1985.

From 1982 to 1984, "The Hamilton bus drivers, led by S. Jagtar Singh approached the city of Hamilton Transportation Committee and, after a hard and well-contested struggle, won the right for drivers to wear turbans while on duty.  As a result, we can see many bus drivers in Hamilton proudly driving buses in complete Sikh uniform, turban and uncut hair"  (*Sikh Sangat*, 1992: 4).

In 2002, many South Asian Canadian drivers for Blue Line Taxi protested because they felt they were not being given an opportunity to lease plates that came on to the market. Later in the year, a number of them left Blue Line to form Co-op Taxi, an organisation with a non-profit structure to allow profit sharing amongst the drivers (Wilson, 2002: A3).

In June 1993, a serious racial incident occurred at Orchard Park secondary school in Stoney Creek, when four Sikh students were violently assaulted by a large mob of White students chanting "White power." One of the outcomes of this incident was that the Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police devoted a police officer full-time to be a liaison to the ten high schools in Stoney Creek and the east end of Hamilton. Every school in Hamilton-Wentworth is later said to have had access to a School Liaison Officer.

In October 1999, a South Asian awards dinner was held, with members of more than 20 South Asian organisations joining the coalition. "20 groups out of a possible 27 have already committed to monthly meetings to build strategies for integrating the communities"  ("South Asian community stands united," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 25 October 1999). This event was not repeated.

In 1999, the Sikh community proposed the building of an addition to the temple in Dundas, topped with an ornamental dome, to a total height of 121 feet. Approval of the proposal was recommended by both the planning staff and the town lawyer as the zoning bylaw specifically states that ornamental domes are exempt from height limitations. However, on November 10th, town council voted against the proposal, saying that the building was too large. On November 22, town council reversed its decision, approving the building to allow for a maximum height of 85 feet. The limit of 85 feet was seen by the Sikh Canadian community as arbitrary, given the bylaw, and the community took the matter to the Ontario Municipal Board and won, and the dome has since been built. However, the issue is not over. There have been at least half a dozen attacks on the gurdwara in the first few months of 2003. These incidents have included the breaking of windows and throwing bottles at the building. The police suggest that these may have some connection to community resentment over the victory on the issue of the dome ("Vandals launch a string of attacks on Sikh temple," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 2003: A3).

A 1999 study of the health-related issues of South Asian immigrant women in Hamilton related the importance of experiences of racism as a source of stress, and a detriment to access to employment, resources, and health care in Hamilton (Kohli and Hajdukowski-Ahmed: 22). It also emphasised the diversity found amongst South Asian Canadian women in the city, and reported that Punjabi, Urdu, Gujurati, and Hindi were the most

common South Asian languages in the region at the time (*ibid*: 21).

There continue to be incidents of racism directed at the South Asian Canadian community in Hamilton, including a recent incident of an unprovoked violent assault on a male on Hess Street and the post-9/11 reprisals. The police recorded 82 hate crimes in the first three months following 9/11 (Stepan, 2002a: A7), up from 59 in all of 2000 (Fazari, 2003: A13). All the 82 incidents were against West and South Asians, particularly against Muslims with those and other heritages. No anti-Muslim incidents had been reported in 2001 before 9/11. According to Stepan, the police were not tracking the reported incidents between 11 September and 19 September 2001, so this figure does include the week that is most likely the densest period of hate crime activity in the city's history (2002: A7). As well, the Canadian Arab Federation has estimated that only 10% of hate crimes in the aftermath of 9/11 were ever reported to the police, let alone those incidents which would not qualify for police intervention (Macafee, 2002: 8). The most severe incidents included the burning of the city's Hindu temple, vandalism of the Hamilton Mosque through an arson attack on Hamilton mountain, and a number of assaults. The charges against the prime suspect in the burning of the temple have been dropped, though the police claim that they are still investigating (Brown, 2003: A1).

### 5.7.4 East Asian Canadian History in Hamilton
According to the 2001 census there are 7,470 Chinese Canadians (1.54%), 760 Japanese Canadians (0.16%), and 1,485 Korean Canadians (0.31%) living in Hamilton.

The Japanese Canadian population is the only racial minority community whose numbers as part of the overall population are lower in 2001 than in 1996. The first Japanese Canadians came to Canada in 1877 (Thompson, 1979: 1), with significant immigration between 1896 and 1901 and after (Morikawa 1958: 2). In 1907, White Canadians in British Columbia organised riots in Japanese and Chinese neighbourhoods (*ibid*: 3). Japanese Canadians fought for Canada in World War One, but were interned in concentration camps during World War Two, often without charges (*ibid*: 5; Saidullah, 2001: section 3). Approximately 1000 Japanese Canadian families moved to Hamilton after the end of the internment. A United Church and a Buddhist Church were formed to serve the Japanese Canadian community in the city (Mullins, 1984: 146). In 2003, the National Association of Japanese Canadians mounted an exhibition from British Columbia of the history of Japanese Canadians, including the internment period, in Jackson Square, a downtown Hamilton shopping mall.

Most of what has been documented about East Asian Canadians in the city is about Chinese Canadians. In the early 1900s, a racially segregated area was established in Hamilton known as Chinatown. It was on the north side of King William Street between Hughson and James streets, consisting mainly of bachelor apartments. "In many respects the Chinatowns were ethnic ghettos. Living conditions were unsanitary and overcrowded" (Li, 1988: 79). The Chinese were accepted as workers but not as permanent immigrants, and very few Chinese women entered Canada before the Second World War. Li notes that "the absence of Chinese women had further implications for the Chinese community in Canada. Among other things, it inhibited the growth of a second generation of Chinese-Canadians... The absence of a sizeable native-born population also explains why the Chinese had relatively little political influence in Canada" (Li, 1988: 68).

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The immigrants faced extreme hostility in Canada. "Few minority groups in Canada attracted so much public reaction as the Chinese, and no other immigrant group was subjected to the same legislative controls" (Li, 1988: 27). "Elements of restriction, first directed towards the Chinese in 1885 and subsequently towards all immigrants of colour, began appearing in immigration legislation from the 1880s onward" (Jakubowski, 1997: 13). A head tax on Chinese immigrants was imposed in 1885. In 1910, the Immigration Act excluded 'any race unsuitable to the harshness of our climate.' In 1923, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. Also, in most provinces in Canada, Chinese Canadians were denied the right to vote until the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1947. Recent attempts to get redress for the headtax have failed in the courts, despite some sympathetic judgments in Ontario.

However, the tiny Chinese community in Hamilton survived through all the long years of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The early 1900s saw the first political organisation of the Chinese community in Hamilton. "The Chinese National League has been active in Hamilton since it was first formed in 1913. The league is associated with the Chinese Nationalist government on Taiwan" ("Pagoda dragon `scares devils' from Chinese league location," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 6 August 1971). One of the mainstays of this organisation was Howard Lee, who arrived in Canada nine years after the league was founded.

> Howard Lee is a leader in the Chinese community or at least a segment of that community. An immigrant to Canada in 1922... For the past 37 years, he has headed the Kuo Min Tang, a political organisation that supports the Nationalist Chinese, but which has become more of a social agency over the years. Mr. Lee is also a director of the Shing Wah Daily News, a Chinese language newspaper that is printed in Toronto ("Hamilton's Chinatown," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 6 July 1974).

In 1981, *The Hamilton Spectator* wrote about the new Chinese Canadian Society (CCS), which was encouraging the Chinese community to get involved in Canadian politics. "The CCS was born during the federal election last year, when local politicians such as Lincoln Alexander and John Munro spoke to meetings of Chinese immigrants" ("Modern immigrants loosen Chinatown ties," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 4 August 1981). Attempts to contact CCS for the *Unfurling The Flag* study failed.

> The president of the fledgling Chinese Canadian Society, 40-year-old Dr. Phang Yong, says it's time the traditionally insular, self-contained Chinese immigrant community woke up. And that means politics. Chinese immigrants often blindly support the Liberal party, he says, since it is perceived as having the most benevolent attitude towards immigrants. 'We're trying to say, 'Look at the party policies, look at what the different parties say about the issues, their policies that will affect our children.'

In 1993, an employee of St. Joseph's Hospital complained to the Ontario Ministry of Labour and the Ontario Human Rights Commission about "discrimination, intimidation and harassment" related to her being a Chinese Canadian woman (Sumi, 1994: B3.) Her employment classification was that of a technologist, despite the fact that the work she did was that of a research scientist, a higher paying position. Some racial minority community organisations, anti-racism groups, and women's movement formations from both Hamilton and Toronto supported her efforts, including in a high-profile fundraising

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dinner which was noted in the *Hamilton Spectator* for the lack of attendance by any local politicians (Davison, 1994: A6.) Protests were also organised in Hamilton for her support by the Chinese community in Toronto. After a long process, the employee in question won a sizeable severance package and favourable letters of recommendation (Boase,1997: A1).

A violent incident occurred at a west mountain high school (Westmount) in December 1997, which resulted in a 17-year-old student going to hospital with a stab wound. A headline in *The Hamilton Spectator* alleging that "Racial slurs triggered stabbing" (4 December 1997). Police did not find sufficient evidence to lay any charges in an incident that was a retaliation to racial taunts. That did not stop the school board from taking disciplinary action against several East Asian Canadian students. Four were suspended for 20 days, three expelled from the school, and one removed from the local public school system altogether.

According to the 2001 census there are 8,972 Southeast Asian Canadians living in Hamilton, or 1.83% of the population. No work could be found on the history of Southeast Asian Canadians in Hamilton. There is a concentration of programs for Southeast Asian Canadian, particularly Vietnamese, students at schools such as Sir John A. MacDonald. It is worth noting that in 2002 the principal of that school claimed that the Working Group on Racial Equity's training program on civic leadership was racist because it was reserved for "racial minority youth." It is also worth noting that that the Working Group was approached some months later by a teacher at the same school for help with anti-racism work over some incidents.

### 5.7.5 West Asian Canadian History in Hamilton
According to the 2001 census there are 5,765 West Asian Canadians living in Hamilton, or 1.19% of the population. Immigrants arrived in Hamilton from West Asia before World War One, in particular from Lebanon (Freeman, 2001: 90). According to Morteza Jafarpour, Executive Director of SISO, a settlement agency, one of the fastest growing West Asian populations in the city is Iraqi Canadians, whose numbers have been estimated as being in excess of 4000 (Bourret, 2003: M7). There is a growing Assyrian Canadian community and a sizeable Palestinian Canadian population as well.

Very little work has been done on the history of West Asian Canadians in the city. One relatively recent circumstance of note is the upsurge in hate crime activity directed towards West Asian Canadians since the World Trade Centre attack on 11 September 2001. A number of the incidents that impacted on both South and West Asian Canadians in Hamilton are noted in the South Asian Canadian section.

Only a few of the incidents have been reported in the local media. An Iraqi Canadian man was the victim of a racist assault in May 2001 (Brown, 2003b: A1). There were tensions between some parts of the Portuguese and Assyrian communities in a part of Hamilton in the 1990s. At a high school on Hamilton Mountain, a youth was charged after parading in front of the building with a sign insulting Assyrian people, and then assaulting a Muslim student (Prete, 2002: A5). At the end of December 2001 there was a break-in at the Hamilton Mosque, which police chose not to treat as a hate crime ("Briefly," 2001: A2). In October 2001, a 12-year-old and a 13-year-old were arrested for assaulting a 13-year-old fellow student who had been in Canada for only seven weeks.

The assailants made reference to the Middle Eastern origin of their target (Burman, 2001: A1).  In September 2002, there was a racist attack on an Afghan youth, recently arrived in Canada as a refugee (Stepan, 2002b: A2). In early 2003, during the U.S. invasion of Iraq, an Iraqi Canadian man in Hamilton was shot. Though the relationship between the racial background of the victim and the crime is unclear from the official records, community accounts validate the link (Clairmont, 2003: A4).

### 5.7.6 Latino/a Canadian History in Hamilton

According to the 2001 census, there are 4,250 Latin American Canadians living in Hamilton, or 0.87% of the population. The study could not find references to the history of Latin American Canadians or to other communities in Hamilton. The Working Group on Racial Equity's *Colouring the City* program trained some Central and Latin American Canadian youth and women on political leadership skills in 2002.