

**Hand-mapped stories of ‘Canadian’ Blackness, Failed Multiculturalism, and Black
Humanity in a Predominantly White Mid-Sized City in South-Western Ontario**

by

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A thesis

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfillment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Recreation and Leisure Studies

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2022

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

The happy, upbeat narratives of multiculturalism in Canada misrepresent lived experiences of individuals who embody Canada's narrative of multiculturalism and cultural diversity (Berry, 2013; Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019). This thesis asks young Black-‘Canadian’ adults to reflect on when and how they show up as their true, authentic selves while in their predominantly white mid-sized city (PWMC), Kitchener-Waterloo. Using art-based methodologies (Betancourt, 2015) and collective reflection (Mann & Walsh, 2013), I braided (Bancroft, 2018) the discussions to race and multiculturalism literature into five moments: Racist Experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo, Coping in Predominantly White (PW) spaces, Representation: Who needs it, Negotiation to Full Humanity and Community, and Encompassing All Peoples in Communities. In collaboration with the volunteers in this project, we call on those living in Kitchener-Waterloo to address the harms contributed to by racialisation and racism in tangible ways.

Acknowledgements

This work was created with the help of many people in my community.

To the Black young adults who took part in my project, thank you for showing up and sharing your stories as a reminder of the continued work that needs to take place for Black people to thrive.

To Kim, thank you. Your guidance and constant support helped me grow into the human I am today. Thank you for always being a soft place to land. My curiosity and love of research has flourished under your mentorship, I am so thankful our paths crossed.

To Lisbeth, thank you for your encouragement to step into my power and use my voice. Your wisdom and vulnerability continue to inspire me to show up wholeheartedly for myself and in my relationships.

To Dr. Melanie-Anne Atkins, thank you for being a reader on my committee. I appreciate the opportunity to be in conversation with you and learn from you.

To my family, I could not have done it without you. Thank you for your patience as I focused on writing and your excitement through shifting research topics. The food you made, the laughter we shared, the shows we binged, all helped me engage in research close to my heart.

To my friends, thank you for being willing to reschedule all our plans and not taking my forgetfulness personally. Your never-wavering support and kindness fueled me, I have so much love for you all.

Thank you to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for supporting my graduate research.

Thank you to the University of Waterloo, especially the students, staff, and faculty in the department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. As I continue into future endeavours, I will never forget the home I had in RLS.

Dedication

To my mum, who taught me knowledge is never wasted.

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SECTION I: Initial Understandings of Race and ‘Canadian multiculturalism’

Chapter 1: Laying the Foundation

Home is part of the material environment (i.e., built by the individual) (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998) and is associated with deeply emotional meanings relating to permanence and continuity. Having a home to live, relax and grow in is important for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. According to Hage (2010), being and feeling “at home” is based on four pillars: security, familiarity, community and sense of possibility. These pillars that build a home, support an individual’s autonomy to construct their identities as individuals feel most at ease to be their true selves (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998). These pillars of feeling at home can be more difficult to attain for people who face discrimination for being different (e.g., race, ability, gender, sexuality, class, culture). Equity-seeking groups have fewer places where they feel safe, welcomed, and able to work towards their dreams (Cisneros & Bracho, 2020; McConnell et al., 2018). Canada is a strong example of a country where these four pillars are seemingly in reach for its citizens, but in practice, individuals living in bodies of difference, particularly in bodies of colour, know that it is not the case. This proposal will discuss how race is subverted by notions of Canadian multiculturalism and discuss the ways these uniquely Canadian sentiments impact the experiences of individuals living in bodies racialized to be of colour in predominantly white communities (Ku et al., 2019).

In the past 50 years since the writing of the Canadian Multicultural Act, multiculturalism has taken up many meanings in Canada and is not always clearly defined. I find it helpful to consider multiculturalism in three ways as described by Berry (1977, 2013): as a demographic fact (the presence of people identifying with diverse cultures in Canada), public policy (governmental actions in support of people identifying of diverse cultures), and as an ideology (a public desire for experiencing and embracing cultural diversity). The three definitions are

interconnected; however, I believe governmental bodies in Canada place emphasis on the first two conceptualisations of multiculturalism while ignoring the third – one that reflects the experience of persons living in the bodies that make up “the diversity”. Canada promotes itself as an inviting and welcoming country; as a cultural mosaic where cultural diversity is encouraged by the government and institutions within promotion materials (e.g., websites, pamphlets) and in popular media (Goitom, 2017; Paragg, 2015). The narratives of diversity and acceptance are prevalent on government websites (Government of Canada [GoC], 2020) and in the popularized story that new Canadians have the freedom to live as their true selves (Adam & Rangel, 2017). The GoC website has a designated section on *Canadian Identity and Society* that includes *Multiculturalism* under the heading, *Services and Information* (others headings include Indigenous peoples and cultures, Languages, Celebrate being Canadian). The purpose of this online page is to ensure “that all citizens keep their identities, take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging” (GoC, 2020). Multiculturalism is repeatedly connected to opportunity in Canada, an opportunity to learn about different practices, cultures, and beliefs.

As a nation, Canada is beginning to confront past acts of racism committed by the government (e.g., passing of Bill C-51 the Anti-terrorism Act by 2015 federal government, voting ban from 1886-1948 of Chinese Canadians). Prior to this shift in dialogue, harmful racist acts were not addressed, which itself is a form of racism (Dunn & Nelson, 2011; Kowal, 2015; van Dijk, 1999). Ladson-Billings (2006) expressed her feeling challenged by discussions that use culture instead of race. Solomos and Collins (2010) makes the clear distinction that race tends to be subsumed under ethnicity or is ignored. Race is subverted when culture is used in its place because its broad stroke and vague application depoliticizes and disempowers the argument.

Culture envelopes everyone into the discussion when, really, racism is pointing out systemic discrimination and individual bias that directly affect specific persons from marginalised groups.

Language policy is used to address concerns of a lack of national unity and control, perpetuating the exclusion of certain races while maintaining Canada as a white-settler nation (Haque & Patrick, 2015). One of many examples is the forced assimilation and genocide of Indigenous peoples, which facilitated the government in stealing Indigenous land while reducing financial obligations to Indigenous peoples (Haque & Patrick, 2015). With reference to how racism is lived in present day, Ibrahim (2015) talks about race as a “flow”, felt differently in the body when compared to social class and gender. Freire (2000) notes oppressors are usually not aware of their oppression due to extreme naturalisation and little self-reflection. When whiteness, both a racialize identity as much as Asianness or Blackness (Garner, 2007) and “the material” of an institutional body, (e.g., the nation, an organization, a neighborhood) (Ahmed, 2012), is the norm, other racialized groups are placed in a hierarchy in comparison to “conceptually-white descriptors” (Lopez, 2018, p. 84) (e.g., income, intelligence, attractiveness, education) (Ladson-Billings, 1998). For people of colour, having to engage with racism – whether through microaggressions, blatant racism, or assumption of whiteness as the default way of being – is emotionally draining. My project intends to mediate this drain by facilitating collective reflection and a supportive discussion of the subversion of race through “multiculturalism”. Through story, young adults in Kitchener-Waterloo can articulate how racialization affects their daily lives.

Race is made to be a social category of difference that, until recently, was neglected to maintain existing power imbalances but has always impacted individuals affected by racisms (Ibrahim, 2015). Dialogue in Canadian society focuses on the prioritisation of learning and speaking “proper” English while having indirect, ambiguous discussions of race through coded

language. Race (as a social category based on biological determinisms that position people with certain phenotypic characteristics as “belonging” to a particular group) in Canadian culture is being subsumed into other identity categories such as ethnicity, religion, language, customs, indigeneity, and cultural habits (Darnell et al., 2012). Fleming (2015) describes racism as “an ideological set of beliefs and attitudes that is used to justify a racially based social order” (p. 50). Being proximate to whiteness allows individuals privilege by way of legal status and rights. Varghese (2015) notes the link between race, language learning, structures, and policies, specifically language can work to normalise the process of racialisation through encouraging disclosure of racial identity and the unspoken acceptance of racial concepts (i.e., conceptual-whiteness [Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lopez, 2018]), especially in schools, workplaces, and government policies.

The term people of colour was originally taken up by the Black Panther Party and the Brown Berets to come together in solidarity across political struggles (Grady, 2020). This project will focus on the embodied experiences of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) young adults within the predominantly white mid-sized city (PWMC), Kitchener-Waterloo. Black and Indigenous peoples are highlighted to acknowledge the targeted and specific forms of racism that are not experienced by other persons of colour in the United States and Canada. There continues to be debate over the usefulness of BIPOC as a term, and whether it continues the essentialization of persons into discrete groups and/or erasure of certain individuals. While this is something I acknowledge, for the purposes of this thesis and adhering to present convention for knowledge sharing, I write with *BIPOC* in tension and hope to further the discussion on this term through this research. While racialised peoples are living with their own specific difficulties, the term BIPOC acknowledges challenges relating to racialisation.

Despite anti-discrimination policies and rights to be free from hate, racism continues to “exist in various corners of everyday life, reflecting and reinforcing racial relations of power” (Kubota, 2015, p. 3). Contemporary Canadian governments have grown the ‘acceptance over assimilate’ approach and Canada now promotes the ideology of multicultural acceptance over total cultural integration (Kusow, 2007). However, while BIPOC persons are lauded and tokenized for their contributions to “multicultural Canada” this ‘acceptance’ is not reflected in the lives of people who experience racism across the country. As reported by Bill Jackson (2021), journalist for the Waterloo Chronicle, hate crimes continue to be underreported to the police in Canada. Further, the lack of prosecution for many reported hate crimes in Ontario may add to the lack of trust people have in the justice system (Mitchell, 2021). Acts of racism in the Kitchener-Waterloo community highlights just how unwelcoming a “diverse and thriving” city can be (Region of Waterloo, 2021). Although there was a noticeable drop in reported hate crimes from 2018-2019 in Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge (i.e., from a rate of 6.7 per 100,000 to 2.5 per 100, 000) (Statistics Canada, 2021), 2020 shows a more complex picture. Of the small proportion of incidents reported, these acts included a man who yelled Xenophobic statements and wielded a knife at a couple, five youths who spat on and threw stones at two passengers on the LRT and a Waterloo family’s door being damaged and vandalized while the perpetrators left a letter containing racial slurs and death threats (Jackson, 2021; Nielson, 2020). In a heartbreaking incident in London, Ontario, another PWMC close to Kitchener-Waterloo, a deliberate hit-and-run of a Muslim family on an evening walk killed four family members and injured a nine-year-old boy (Butler, 2021). When it comes to experiences of racism, statistics fail to provide a deep understanding of the complexities present in and lasting effects of racist interactions. As tensions between the promotion of community and inclusion and acts of racism persist, this project strives

to reflect on words like diversity and multiculturalism and the effect it has on racialised young adults living in Kitchener-Waterloo.

As a settler-colonial nation guided by Eurocentric norms, Canada values individualism over interdependence. Individualism is challenged by researchers who acknowledge interdependence, each human's obligation to society and the role everyone has to play in society (Arai & Pedlar, 2003, Eckersley, 2015). The individual also is believed to be the means and the end within leisure practice (Arai & Pedlar, 2003), while connecting "humans who are in need of being connected" (Glover & Stewart, 2006, p. 325). Leisure can bring people together around a practice with shared meaning and value and allows relationships to be "maintained, enhanced or changed" (Glover & Stewart, 2006, p. 320). By creating space for leisure in my thesis, my hope is for BIPOC young adults taking part in the project to have moments of connection and understanding with other focus group members.

The theories I will take up in my thesis include critical race theory/feminism, intersectionality and genderace*. Critical race feminism aims to recognise differing experiences of BIPOC peoples as compared to white people, understand and critique how race is essentialized within current societal structures, and investigate oppressions taking place at the intersections of race, class and gender (Houh & Kalsem, 2015; Hua, 2003; Verjee, 2012). I use intersectionality as a foundational theory to engage with counter-storytelling to illuminate embodied knowing of genderacialisation processes. Through hand-mapping, collective reflection and social media-based knowledge mobilisation within a PWMC, this project will rethink multiculturalism toward possibilities for social transformation.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is used in social science and legal research to address social inequality while recognizing systems of oppression (e.g., capitalism, racism, ableism, patriarchy) (Núñez et al., 2020). As Collins (2015) explains “intersectionality references the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive identities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities” (p. 2). Intersectionality addresses the various ways race, gender and other social categories shape multiple dimensions and layers of people’s experiences (Cho et al., 2013; Collins, 2015; MacKinnon, 2013). As Verloo (2006, 2012) explains there needs to be distinction regarding inequalities to recognize how axes of social identity maintain said inequities (Núñez et al., 2020; Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006), and a person’s relation to power shifts in different contexts. Individual stories are based in political circumstances and have political consequences (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006). I will be using intersectionality to ground my understanding of the intricacies and interaction of varying axes of social identity within this project and believe intersectionality is a useful theoretical frame to highlight nuances of individual experiences, to listen and support individuals affected by multiple systemic oppressions.

Considering identity through Genderace*.

Genderacialisation as described by Lopez (2018) works to analyse how “intricate systemic processes... weave together gendering, classing, and racialising in narratives” (p. iv). Carles and Jubany-Baucells (2010) builds on Crenshaw’s work by looking at the current complexities when analysing discrimination based on gender, race and other categories of discrimination. Individuals are always living through their layered identities, genderace* both acknowledges the fluidity of embodied identity and challenges the “necessity of boundaries

between spectra of identity” (Lopez, 2018, p. 15). Due to discrimination being unspecified or taking place with more than one target of hate, genderace* explores the interwoven impact of gender, class, and race on experience (Lopez, 2018) and how it might be applied and used to create legislation relating to racial discrimination (Carles & Jubany-Baucells, 2010). Without considering the concurrent and multiple socializing processes involved in racism, sexism, classism, and other -isms and -phobias, the full nature of the discrimination may not be reflected by a specific account and other parts of self might be erased.

In this thesis, I hope to work with young adults who identify as BIPOC, between 18 and 30 years old, who live in Kitchener-Waterloo and are willing to share stories about living in a PWMC. Using hand-mapping, focus groups, and individual interviews, individuals who volunteer will be asked to narrate their embodied experiences. In this project, narrative inquiry and arts-based methods will be used to facilitate the representation of genderace* and thoughts on embodiments of the (failed) multiculturalism narrative.

Purpose and What this Project Means to me

As the child of two parents who travelled to Canada from Ghana to pursue their graduate school education, I have found myself growing up having to navigate my Canadianess and Blackness. The youngest of three, with two new Canadian parents who were navigating a settler-colonial nation with minimal support, my persistent questions of identity led me to consider how and why difference matters in Canada. I learned from a young age my existence was outside the norm, through a ranging spectrum of interactions from “innocent” inquisitions to intentional discrimination. Overtime, I recognised I had become so accustomed to uncomfortable exchanges that I had perfected how I would answer questions relating to my difference (e.g., my from-ness,

objectification through my hair and skin). I learned how to “fit” into a society in which I would never truly belong as my authentic self.

We are always already subjects with living embodiments of our experiences (Merleau-Ponty, 1965) and my project intends to collaborate with young adults to exemplify that sentiment. *The purpose of this critical race feminist narrative inquiry is to hear stories of BIPOC young adults’ experiences of wellness while navigating predominantly white institutions and mid-sized cities within a “multicultural” nation.* There is an expectation that the proportion of racialised people in Canada will continue to grow and collectively become the majority within the century (Outten et al., 2012). This growth will be reflected in the Waterloo region considering their already significant BIPOC identified population (about 100 025 people). How racism impact individuals’ lived experience matters because of the need for these challenges need to be addressed on a systemic level and injustice for some is injustice for us all.

To me, this project addresses the lack of ability for BIPOC identified people to exist as they desire, without having to “fit” into colonial ideologies and scripted by this happy, upbeat portrayal of multiculturalism. Additionally, I hope this project provides a space for embodied experiences to be acknowledged and appreciated for the messages they are. I learned the importance of listening to the non-verbal and, through this work, hope to add my voice in support of embodied ways of knowing young people’s experiences of racialisation within a PWMC.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

[A young Black woman showed up to her shift at Zara with her hair in an Afro. As soon as she was noticed by her manager, they quickly approached her.]

“You need to make sure your hair [is] presentable for your next shift. Or I’m going to have to send you home” (Jackson, 2021).

[A Muslim couple was threatened by a white woman in London, Ontario. After threatening to run over the man with her truck, the white woman falsely accused the woman in hijab of having a gun and assaulted her. This encouraged onlookers to join in with racist chants.]

“Go back to your country! Go home!” (@ONCanadaProject)

[A 37-year-old Indigenous woman went to a Quebec hospital after experiencing severe stomach pains. Instead of receiving care-full treatment she got indifference, discrimination, and racism from the healthcare staff resulting in her death.]

Nurse 1: “Are you done acting stupid? Are you done?”

Nurse 2: You made some bad choices, my dear. What are your children going to think, seeing you like this?

Nurse 1: She’s good at having sex, more than anything else” (Cecco, 2020).

This short medley of real-life events shows the layered assumptions of ability, worth, and humanity that people feel toward individuals of colour, fellow citizens in their community. The goal of this literature review is to reflect on multiculturalism and its failures in Canada, as well as the ways racialisation work to affect the health and ability to be well for young people who are BIPOC identified. This review will be start with a discussion of race, racialisation, and whiteness and PWMC, followed by a section on what race and whiteness have done and continue to do in cities. Next an overview of community influences on well-being and common young people’s

experiences of racism in community is shown. The fourth section of this review entails a conversation on multiculturalism within Canada and how it has failed BIPOC young people. The final section of this literature review looks at how well-being is portrayed in research and how this research is contributing to racism.

Race, Racialisation and Whiteness

First argued to indicate biological differences (Selod & Embrick, 2013; Turner, 1978) to justify colonialism, slavery and taking Indigenous lands, race is now understood to be a social construct used to categorise groups of people based on phenotypic identifiers (Gans, 2017; Murji & Solomos, 2005). Goitom (2017) sees race as based on skin colour, national origin, and language of origin. Racialisation, the process of categorising individuals into somatic-based groups, takes place in “discursive and institutional practices to interpret, order, and ... structure social relations” (Fox et al., 2018, p. 681). Fanon (1967) links racialisation to colonialism and European domination across the globe where through social influences of race are internalised, limiting human possibility.

As explored by Omi and Winant (1993) through racial formation theory, race has meaning beyond ethnicity or class in society. Racial formation is specific to a point in time and location but is based in history. Racial hierarchies of the past (expressed through the lawful permissibility of slavery and controlling land resources) continue to have meaning through the continued inequalities individuals experience today (Feagin & Elias, 2013). An individual’s race is often only assumed by outward appearance (e.g., skin colour, hair colour/texture) (Wallis & Singh, 2014) though other factors like nationality, religion, language, or culture may play into one’s essentialization into racial categories (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015; Grosfoguel et al., 2015) Race acts as an “autonomous field of social conflict, political organization and

cultural/ideological meaning” (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 48). Outside of an individual’s control, race continuously works on bodies while engaging in societal spaces, shaping interactions and experiences.

Whiteness is not just interwoven into Canadian systems; it *makes up* Canada’s systems. As introduced in chapter one, whiteness is a racial identity based on phenotypic characteristics (Garner, 2007), “the material” used to build institutional bodies (e.g., Canada as a nation, organizations, neighbourhoods, streets) (Ahmed, 2012), and the “transcendental norm” people are expected to align their daily practices with (Yancy, 2012, p. 7). The pervasiveness of whiteness is evident, everything is shaped by whiteness; choice of dress, manner of speaking, behaviours, and the norms we are expected to uphold. Radd and Grosland (2019) with other critical race theorists, emphasize the tenet that whiteness is property; it has procedural value and material benefit that is tangible.

Through racialisation, whiteness is normalised and used as a measure for all other races (Carr, 2008; Lindsay, 2007; Radd & Grosland, 2019; Wallis & Singh, 2014). The naturalisation and invisibilities of whiteness in all aspects of society creates a reality where European Americans and Canadians are the standard template and any other ways of living are seen as abnormal, unnatural, and less relevant (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Tatum (1997, 2017) has connected systemic racism to a moving conveyor belt where white people continue to be benefited regardless of what an individual does. The inevitability of a conveyor belt, where those closer to the standard template of whiteness (i.e., straight, middle-class, cis-gendered, male) have privileges, like a greater likelihood of accumulating wealth (Smith, 2019) and having social mobility (Connolly et al., 2019), highlights the need for structural change. As Frie notes (2020), racism does not only surface in individual bias, but it also “shapes institutions and structures of

society... [and is] in the theories we use, and the social practices we learn” (p. 278). Within Canada, current structures have been built to privilege whiteness while those who are outside the standard template are expected to prove their value or expertise. This project intends to create a space specifically for BIPOC identified individuals to hear and reflect on their own lived experiences in relation to whiteness.

Predominantly White Mid-Sized Cities (PWMC)

Living in PWMC in Canada for BIPOC individuals means facing continuous challenges affecting quality of life. This is the case in the Waterloo region where the most reported ethnic origins are Canadian, English, and German (Region of Waterloo, 2016). Looking at descriptive statistics, however, does not paint a full picture of what it means to live in the region. In 2016, BIPOC identified people made up 19% of the Waterloo region population but 26.4% of Waterloo, 21.8% of Kitchener and 15.6% of Cambridge (Statistics Canada, 2016). A map of the percentage of “visible minorities” in each neighbourhood showed communities with percentages as high as 44%, highlighting the varied concentration of BIPOC individuals living in particular spaces within the Waterloo region (Region of Waterloo, 2016). The tri-cities Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge (KWC) current population of 593 882 reflects significant growth (i.e., over 9% compared to Toronto’s growth of under 6%) in recent years (CTV News, 2021). Over the same period, similar cities such as Kingston and Hamilton reported growth of only 6% and 4.6%, respectively. This significant growth in KWC may be in part due to the increasingly high living expenses associated with larger urban centres (Markusoff, 2021) partnered with the desire for walkability (Walker, 2018).

KWC is well-known for its German roots and prominent technological and entrepreneurial culture (Spigal & Bathelt, 2019). Similar to other “town-and-gown” cities (cities

with large post-secondary institutions like Kingston, Guelph, and Hamilton) KWC has large student populations (Chuong, 2015; Massey et al., 2014). According to the Region of Waterloo website there are about 65 000 post-secondary students living in the region (Region of Waterloo, 2021). The unspoken understanding of temporariness is made clear through difficulties BIPOC identified people experience attempting to root oneself within a PWMC, from difficulty obtaining adequate rental housing (Alini, 2020), post-secondary education (Tate & Page, 2018) and permanent well-paying work with benefits (Slaughter, 2020).

Within PWMC there are notable challenges people identifying as BIPOC are required to navigate through. Outside the urban centers people are more likely to engage in conversation with people they do not know, this “friendliness” can have unanticipated effects. Speaking to another’s identity under the guise of curiosity or getting to know a person who identifies as BIPOC contributes to being othered (Baker, 2013). Feelings of loneliness can be in part due to less opportunities to engage in relatable activities/entertainment or with people with like interests (Patel & Bowden, 2020). While racism is prevalent in all parts of Canada, being around people who you know have also experienced race related discrimination can help BIPOC identified people feel less alone (Henry, 2017; Patel & Bowden, 2020). Racism related support on a systemic level can be difficult to find in PWMC (Monteiro, 2021).

What Race and Whiteness has done/does in PW Cities

Racial discrimination encompasses more than negative interpersonal encounters that people understand to be racism; it is deeply structural and infiltrates all aspects of life and ways of thinking. Radd and Grosland (2019) describe racism as a “structural, functional, and psychic phenomenon, a system of inequality and oppression” (p. 659). This section will look at ways whiteness works in society from various angles, like ways whiteness privileges white-presenting

people or people who ascribe to whitewashed ways of doing and being. One of the privileges that accompanies having white skin is not having to think about race in the ways BIPOC individuals need to consider it as part of their daily experiences. This is often a taken-for-granted inexperience for people who are white, making racisms invisible to individuals who do not experience it. According to Eddo-Lodge (2020), some white people see the current system as fair and even go so far as to resist shifts of inequitable policies (e.g., over-representation of white people in positions of power). When having discussions of injustice due to racialisation and racism, many white people increasingly refer to culture, class or other differences (Wallis & Singh, 2014), ignoring the importance placed on race in current societal structures. Further, people who experience racisms are arguably held to higher standards when navigating society (Gray, 2019). Without having the benefit of the doubt that accompanies whiteness, BIPOC identified people are pressured to make themselves more acceptable and digestible or risk facing mistreatment.

People who identify as BIPOC may have difficulty becoming more socially mobile due to systems privileging whiteness for example legal status (Fox et al., 2012), access to quality education (Brown, 2013), and acceptance of transferrable job experience (Guo, 2013). Research has shown that being white statistically ensures higher economic return over the short term and greater economic, political, and social security in the long run (Donnor, 2021; Harris, 1993). Over recent decades in Canada, there has been a decrease in social mobility, especially for children born into families with low incomes who have greater difficulty accessing formal mainstream education (Connolly et al., 2019; OECD, 2018). Without proper support from the government, the income gap will continue to widen, and the cycle of poverty will continue. When social mobility is improved, in collaboration with those in need, their wellness will also

flourish (Johnson, 2020). Improving social mobility requires critically looking at the material conditions that foster continued inequalities (e.g., educational achievement, housing availability/costs, job availability, income) and making equitable adjustments for individuals who are living in said conditions. In this section, I note some instances discussed in the education, health promotion, and epidemiology literature. Navigating social structures built by and for a small portion of elite society has recognizable disadvantages, particularly for people of colour. For example, in the public school system parents who have greater financial capacity and availability, can plan fundraisers, donate, and join committees (Rowe & Perry, 2020; Winton, 2016). Often these families are white. Taking up a voluntary role at their child's school, like parent council member, will increase parents' awareness of issues, provide a strong platform to voice their concerns, and increase involvement in decision-making (Liske, 2011; McKenna & Willims, 1998).

Regarding career opportunities and development, Johnson (2020) notes that there is a significant underrepresentation of Black identified individuals, greater experienced microaggressions/racism, and a lower likelihood of being hired, trained for advancement, and promoted within the field of health promotion. The daily struggle of having to put on a façade (Du Bois, 2006; Fanon, 1967; McCluney, 2019) while not feeling supported and/or committed to their jobs can take a toll on Black workers. These daily challenges navigated at work impact the (generational) wealth people of colour can build (Attell et al., 2017; Truitt & Snyder, 2020). Siddiqi and Nguyen (2010) found BIPOC adults were more likely to be in the lowest income quintiles compared with white people and less likely to be found in the top two income quintiles.

Systemic issues are reflected in people's inability to access essential resources such as paternal leave and benefits (McKay et al., 2016), cancer care (Maddison et al., 2011) and

affordable housing (Patterson et al., 2012) where access depends more on income, education, age, sex, and geographic location than need (Maddison et al., 2011). The provincial and federal governments fail to address current inequities of access, as the controlling economic and political structures benefit from systems as they are (Syed, 2016). When internal biases are not acknowledged and addressed, policies created to resolve inequities can have unintended effects, for example affirmative action policies overwhelmingly benefitting white women (Carr, 2008). The visibility of systemic issues for those on the margins, who individually lack the power to create change, has shifted within public discussions of the past few years. Within 2020, the combination of COVID-19 exposing major systemic injustices within the healthcare system and workplaces, the rise in anti-Asian racism sparked by COVID-19 (Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto, 2020), the blatant killings of Black people in the United States (such as Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd and Breonna Taylor (Dungca, et al., 2020)), and the resulting Black Lives Matter protests around the world (Dave et al., 2020) all fueled an irreversible shift in awareness of how current economic and political structures work for the benefit of a few and to the harm of many.

Systemic Racism and COVID-19.

COVID-19 has provided additional evidence of existing inequities in healthcare access, even in Canada where universal healthcare is assumed. There is an over-representation of BIPOC identified people as “essential workers” in low-wage jobs (Johnson, 2020) such as public transit operators (e.g., subway and bus drivers), ride-sharing services (e.g., Uber, Lyft) and taxi drivers (Borowiak, 2019), factory workers (Government of Canada, 2011, Steinberg et al., 2020), front-line care providers (Lopez, 2018; Muldoon, 2021), retail and grocery store staff (Thompson et al., 2021), waste management and maintenance personnel (Carlsten et al., 2021), and farm

workers (Haley et al., 2020). Folx in these positions are especially vulnerable as they do not have the ability to work from home and are not provided adequate COVID-19 protections (e.g., lack of distancing regulations/air filtration, lack of paid sick leave to get tested for COVID-19/vaccinated). This exposure to health concerns like COVID-19 is not novel to racialised communities, for example historically Black people have been required to work in areas impacted by toxins and pollutants (Evans et al., 2020; Johnson, 2020). Signs of COVID-19 continue to be based in racial bias. The pictures presenting the dermatologic effects of COVID-19 or “COVID toes” are predominantly pink or white, despite the disproportionate effect COVID-19 has had on Black populations (Evans et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted existing social and health inequities. The virus hot spots are in areas where many people identify as racialised (Iveniuk & Leon, 2021), who are doing essential work while making low wages (Stull, 2020), and live in multi-generational households in high-density areas (Ali, 2020). Not only are these hot spots plagued with disproportionate cases, but there is also a greater likelihood of COVID-19 related deaths (Yaya et al., 2020). As people in Canada continue to live through a global pandemic, these previously mentioned marginalised groups are in great need of governmental support. Ontario’s provincial government’s COVID-19 policies have repeatedly been in opposition to advice from their own science advisory table including unnecessary restrictions on outdoor recreational activities (Fox, 2021), inequitable vaccine roll-out (Iveniuk & McKenzie, 2021; Wallace, 2021), and answering a longstanding call for a paid sick leave with an inaccessible, temporary paid leave program (Nasser & Powers, 2021). Scientific evidence shows vaccination equity is promoted when focusing on hot spots (Iveniuk & McKenzie, 2021). The priorities of

the Ontario government continued to harm already vulnerable neighbourhoods during the depths of COVID's second and third wave in Ontario.

Indigenous Peoples in the Media.

Representations of BIPOC identified individuals in news stories contribute to public perception and community engagement. Examples of the impact of media attention and portrayal are taking place with coverage of conflicts between the Canadian federal government and Indigenous peoples. One past example that is telling is how Indigenous women have been portrayed in Canadian media, when compared to white Canadian women they received 3.5 times less coverage, and when their stories were covered, articles were shorter, less detailed, and less likely to be on the front page (Gilchrist, 2010). The lack of coverage in past decades created and reinforced a vicious cycle of inattention from the police and community. Initiatives like the Idle no More Movement (Tupper, 2014), REDress project (Brulé, 2018), LandBack (Murphy, 2020), resist150, Walking with our Sisters (Anderson, 2016), focus on resolving long-term drinking water advisories and the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) have brought concerns of Indigenous peoples to public attention. The TRC is the Canadian government's opportunity to "change Canada's ongoing resistance to restorative justice" as long as initiatives and policies protect present and future generations (Fee, 2012, p. 5). Media reporting on the TRC's 94 calls to action to reconcile ways the Canadian federal government harmed, abused, and traumatized Indigenous peoples has also contributed to greater public support of Indigenous peoples' initiatives (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). With only eight action items considered complete by the Yellowhead Institute (Nardi, 2021), the Federal Government of Canada has a long way to go to reconcile harm caused to Indigenous communities. Through greater public support, Indigenous ways of being are being

acknowledged and fought for, like the recent cancellation of the Keystone XL pipeline (Dangerfield, 2021) and calls to cancel Canada Day (Alam, 2021). Alongside the increasing public support for Indigenous Peoples, the media continues to report on and share their calls for justice more widely.

When I wrote these sections, I was starting to understand how race and racisms are connected to the normalisation of whiteness. I had an instinctual focus on white people instead of focusing on white supremacy. This may be in part due to society's persistent use of visible signs to determine someone's race. I assumed through having a dialogue comparing white people to racialised people, I could articulate the complexity of race. By reading works by Black Radical thinkers, I have come to understand white supremacy as a blanket protection (i.e., from emotional, mental, physical harm) of certain bodies over others.

Box 1

Influence of Community on Well-being

This section will start by identifying what contributes to feeling supported in community, then will discuss how racialised young adults experience community. Feeling supported in community stems from nurturing people's social environments (i.e., responsive health and community support services, respect and recognition, communication and information) (Cicognani et al., 2014) and physical environments (i.e., transportation, housing, accessibility, and gathering space) (Brooks-Cleator et al., 2019). People need supportive structural life conditions (e.g., education and cultural opportunities, leisure facilities) and feelings of attachment or belonging towards the conditions (Cicognani et al., 2014; Kitchen, et al., 2012). A sense of belonging stems from positive emotions an individual has as part of a group or society (Kim et al., 2020), an intimate "at-home" feeling (Antonsich, 2010, p. 4). Community belonging is important to consider in this project as there are noted connections between sense of belonging and overall health (Kitchen et al., 2012).

Feelings of belonging can be fostered through building and maintaining relational connections, (Ang, 2016), for example, how technology provides additional avenues to connect individuals with meaningful people in their lives like family and friends (James et al., 2017; Nesi, 2020). Online connections can contribute to place-belongingness by creating relations (Antonsich, 2010) and protecting against mental health issues such as loneliness and depression (Connell & Dworkin, 2012). This project hopes to create an online space where connections can be fostered.

Feeling a lack of community support can negatively impact individual's well-being (Ang, 2016). For marginalised people, feeling connected to community may be difficult at times when navigating structural challenges. Structural barriers individuals navigate on a daily basis continue to harm their well-being (Eckersley, 2015). Structural inequities such as inadequate housing (Liddell & Guiney, 2015), and long commutes on public transit (Delbosc, 2012), continue to negatively impact people's ability for essential quality sleep and time away from work (Raj, 2016). As discussed within the fields of health promotion (Gee & Ford, 2011; Trent et al., 2019), public policy (Stelkia, 2020), and education (Burke, 2020; Maton, 2018) those who identify as BIPOC are more likely to live with structural barriers. These bodies of literature have surmised that structural racism is prevalent in North America and continues to harm racialised folks.

The quality of connection young adults have with others has been found to counteract effects of structural inequities (e.g., poverty, deprivation) (Blum et al., 2002; Morgan & Kelly, 2010; Scales, 1999). Having support from others (i.e., parents, siblings, and peers) is a strong predictor of being 'well' (Currie et al., 2009). Neighbourhoods with spaces for connection and building relationships lead to increased overall well-being (Koller & Mathieson, 2008; Boyce et al., 2008) and likeliness of being physical active (Nichol et al., 2010). Research has found social

relationships and resilience to both be strong indicators of individual well-being. There is a link between positive feelings, social relationships, and social support as people with more positive affect tend to have better social relationships through choosing activities and behaviours that they enjoy while also building their relationships (Collins, Spencer & Ward, 2010; Hall-Lande et al., 2007; Kansky & Diener, 2017)

Structural racism influences where BIPOC identified persons live, study, what they have and how their rights are upheld (Jones, 2018). The social institutions individuals need to engage with (e.g., governmental organizations, schools, courts of law, banks), have patterns of both explicit and implicit discrimination (Trent et al., 2019). Through this project, I hope to provide a space for BIPOC young adults to discuss their experiences of navigating social structures.

Common experiences of racisms among young people affected by racisms.

Young people are at a significant point in their lives where they are moving from dependence to independence, have greater responsibilities, and are becoming secure in their identities (i.e., interests, relations, sexuality). Experiences of racisms, while interacting with institutions and with individuals, can have a lasting imprint on how they engage with their communities. Young people note racisms they experience are likely to be covert, ambiguous (Matheson et al., 2021), and perpetuated within their social circle through “taunts or inappropriate comments” (Hickey, 2016, p. 730). There is a tendency for young people to minimise or downplay the effects of racist experiences, which may be in part due to generational differences between discrimination as their parents reported experiencing more overt racism (Heath, 2014). Although today’s experiences are more covert, they are a significant part of young people’s life stories (Hickey, 2016).

Everyday racism is a systemic process where “multiple interactions, situations, and experiences” compile to have lasting, meaningful effects (Baker, 2013, p. 79). As compared to interactions with racist institutions, young adults note carefully navigating racist interactions with friends and family (Hickey, 2016). After experiences of everyday racism (e.g., questioned expertise, exclusion from group assignments) (Onsando & Billett, 2017), some think confronting and educating the perpetrator about the inappropriateness of their behaviour is the responsibility of the person experiencing racist actions (Hickey, 2016). Young people reported common experiences of racism when interacting with oppressive systems included a lack of ability to express the culture they identified with (Onsando & Billett, 2017), and discrimination based on their religion (Hayward & Krause, 2015; Yip & Page, 2016).

Young people expressed tensions when their identity did not align with the idea “someone has already prejudged [them] on” whether that be in their own cultural community (Beharry & Crozier, 2008, p. 269), at their workplaces (Hasford, 2016), or by their friends (Hickey, 2016). Living through daily experiences of racism and systemic barriers can cause young people to internalise feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth (Hasford, 2016).

My emphasis on well-being and community shifted to focus on people’s right to celebrate their full humanity and locating spaces where racialised people could do so. This shift came into fruition during my proposal defense when in conversation with Dr. Kimberly Lopez and Dr. Lisbeth Berbarry. By focusing on Black people’s full humanity and their (lack of) resting places to be authentic, I intended to make two critiques: 1) racialisation contributes to Black people being seen as less than fully human and, 2) narratives of Canada as a multicultural nation inaccurately promote the country as a resting place for racialised folks around the world to settle in and thrive.

Box 2

Multiculturalism and how it has failed BIPOC identified people

This section will discuss how Canada takes up multiculturalism and the ways it has failed to reflect relations of diverse peoples in Canada. Through the following conversation of Canada's values of diversity and inclusion, I hope to highlight the ongoing nature of this discussion. Especially as we continue to work to create communities where racial solidarity is prioritized (Ku et al., 2019). I will end with a brief commentary of why a critique of essentialization of race in Canadian communities is important and relevant to my project.

The federal government supports racialised communities mainly by sharing days of remembrance and celebration. In the recounting of historic events, the federal government continues its pattern of using "passive sentences to elide agency" (Gulliver, 2018, p. 74). An example of this is Asian Heritage Month which takes place every May with last year's theme being "Asian Canadians: United in Diversity" (Government of Canada [GoC], 2020). Asian Heritage Month is used to give "all Canadians an opportunity to learn more about the history of Asian Canadians and to celebrate their contributions to the growth and prosperity of Canada" (GoC, 2020). Beyond liberal acknowledgements of cultural and/or racial groups, the Government of Canada's Multiculturalism page provides information on community support, multiculturalism, and the anti-racism initiatives program. I am challenged by these initiatives, as financial support is provided through multi-step grant applications where community-run organisations are required to outline a proposed program (GoC, 2021). The organisations not only need to fit the government's approval, but they also need to be able to communicate their need for funding in the "official languages" of Canada.

With the goal of equality and tolerance, liberal multiculturalism can both give a false sense of security, and lull people into complacency by pushing dark events into the past (Lee,

2015). Liberal multiculturalism allows for a “superficial celebration” (p. 9) of cultural differences while avoiding discussions on racial and other forms of inequities within the Canadian social system (Kubota, 2015). In this sense, multiculturalism is seen to have failed, not only in Canada but many countries around the world (Vitikainen, 2013).

In response to calls to address systemic racism, the 2020 federal government developed a national strategy, *Building a Foundation for Change: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy* with three guiding principles that emphasized “demonstrating federal leadership, empowering communities, and building awareness and changing attitudes” (GoC, 2020). The Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Barhish Chagger, acknowledges that it is the responsibility of each “Canadian to stand up against all forms of discrimination and racism, wherever they are found” (GoC, 2020). In Minister Chagger’s video¹ in celebration of Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27th, 2020, she noted in response to the continued work, Canada must do to fight “systemic racism, inequality and racial injustice” we all must “listen and do better” (GoC, 2020). The government’s acknowledgement of the need for change is beneficial, however they missed the opportunity for specific recommendations for action outside of doing “better”.

The federal government offers the Community Support, Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Initiatives funding program to promote a “diverse and inclusive society”. The financial support from the Federal government contributes to the national narrative of welcoming and supporting people of all differences while not requiring any structural change to take place. In the year 2019-2020, the federal government initiatives funding program contributed a total of \$6,764,521 to 58 Ontario-based organizations to promote diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism initiatives (GoC, 2019). Funding was provided to local organizations in Kitchener (i.e., Coalition

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUi-fiA72T0&t=2s&ab_channel=CanadianHeritage

of Muslim Women, Social Development Centre Waterloo Region, Reception House) and Waterloo (i.e., African Women's Alliance of Waterloo Region, Innovate Inclusion) for Projects and Capacity Building (GoC, 2019). Each organization is still working within the region to achieve their specific mission.

The Region of Waterloo does not address multiculturalism explicitly on their website. When multiculturalism is entered into the Waterloo municipal government website's search bar, 92 results populate. The majority were documents (e.g., newsletters, bulletins) describing that Waterloo region as a multicultural society was "a strength" to be "celebrated". There is evidence of funding provided by the municipal government to the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre to create an "inclusive and safe community, where every individual, regardless of immigration status, has equitable access to opportunities and resources to prosper and thrive" through settlement services, programs and interpretation support (Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre, n.d.). There are stark similarities to the Federal government where financial support is provided to approved organisations doing community work while not making legislative changes to address inequities BIPOC identified people are forced to navigate.

Canada operates on a "white Canadian" and "non-white Cultural Other" binary (Paragg, 2015, p. 26) where Canadian-ness is associated with whiteness. To maintain white nation-state status, Canada must "(re)produce...and appropriate ideas like diversity, equity, indigenizing, and decolonizing while keeping in place all the institutions that flow from the initial and ongoing colonial condition and context" (Walcott, 2019, p. 398). The power and privilege Canada has gained by maintaining its connection to whiteness has allowed the country to continue to pursue profit (i.e., trade relationships with the United States, China and the United Kingdom, extraction of natural resources, high real estate prices and gentrification) over supporting people with

different social identities (e.g., race, gender) (Johnston, 2021). Discourses of “Canada as a redeemer of immigrant others” allow for racism and those speaking out against racialisation to be disregarded (Gulliver, 2018, p. 68). Canada has systematically stigmatized new Canadians as “dangerous and deceitful” where some forms of migration (i.e., “irregular migration”) are seen as wrongful and possibly harmful to the Canadian public (Atak, 2019).

Bannerji (2000) has found multiculturalism and diversity are used as “a coping mechanism for dealing with an actually conflicting heterogeneity, seeking to incorporate it into an ideological binary between Canadians and racialised others” (p. 37). The Canadian government’s promotion of multicultural values creates the appearance of incompatibility with racialisation, which in fact perpetuates racism (Ku et al., 2019). Additionally, multiculturalism acts to manage “visible minorities” (Goitom, 2017) and invisibilize forms of institutionalised racism (Gulliver, 2018). The rise in monoculturalism is seen through the focus on gender inequality within traditional minority cultures, mainstream media discussions have shifted from concern over ethnicity and culture to religion (i.e., Islamophobia), while emphasizing social cohesion and security (Gozdecka, Ercan & Kmak, 2014).

Kubota (2015) notes a need to move away from solely discussing ethnicity towards a comprehensive understanding of the infiltration of racism in Canadian life, beyond the understanding of racism as prejudice, bias, or discrimination of a few individuals to “a system of exclusion based on racialised bodies and ideas” (p. 8). The need to protect national identity and Canadian values has inspired the emergence of new forms of racism. Othering of new Canadians through mainstream media is used to justify “exclusion, surveillance and biosecuritization of the Canadian border” (Economou, 2019, para. 1). With Islamophobic and Xenophobic rhetoric (i.e., associations with terrorism, fanaticism, and ‘backwardness’), new Canadians from specific

countries and who have certain faiths have been categorized as threats to national security and Canadian values (Economou, 2019). Terms like “criminal” and “dangerous” are used to label both legitimate refugees and illegitimate asylum seekers who will be seen as “burdens” on Canadian resources.

Canada is often touted as a diverse and multicultural country where anyone is welcome and appreciated (GoC, 2020). The actions of those in power continue to show new Canadians they are not as welcome as they may have initially thought; there were many instances where people are not made to not feel like they belong including Quebec’s Bill 21², Prime Minister Trudeau’s blackface, and the People’s Party of Canada’s Xenophobic messaging (Batchelor, 2020). Canada’s selection process for new Canadians involves picking those with better health, more wealth and education (Adam & Rangel, 2017; Elamoshy & Feng, 2018) as individuals with better mental and physical health are more likely to consider migration and be accepted (Knowles, 2016). For example, the requirements for Canadian citizenship display BIPOC identified people’s need to assimilate into “Canadian culture” to have successful applications. The need for Canadian experience (i.e., hard skills like technical abilities and soft skills necessary for the workplace like teamwork and conflict resolution) forces new Canadians to either extensively search for a position matching their credentials or find lower-skilled work to gain Canadian experience (Sakamoto, Chin, & Young, 2010). Ambiguous but normalized job requirements (Bhuyan et al., 2017; Ku et al, 2019) without recognizing professional experience is a way to privilege those who can assimilate into Canadian (or white) spaces. Lo, Li and Yu (2019) found that the higher the education level obtained in one’s home country, the more likely racialised new Canadians’ skills are less portable in both Canada and the United States. The

² Bill 21 prohibits the display of religious symbols by public-sector workers in the workplace.

undervaluation of degrees obtained outside of Canada causes little skill transference or a mismatch between education and occupation experience (e.g., physicians) (Lo, Li & Yu, 2019; Ku et al., 2019). It is a huge disservice to Canada to welcome individuals with qualifications and experience in their home countries and allow them to struggle to find work in their fields after arriving in Canada, especially while still promoting a national narrative of diversity and inclusion. It creates false hope for new Canadians and is disingenuous.

New Canadians with higher socio-economic status appear to have the ability to assimilate more quickly and effectively (Lo, Li & Yu, 2019). The connection between financial flexibility and ease in assimilation calls into question, who is Canada willing to support in creating a home. The phrase “a better life” does not consider the lived reality of moving from one experience of hardship to another (Hackett, 2017). The intersection of oppression between anti-new Canadian and anti-Black racism in Canadian society is evident through African-Caribbean individuals being overrepresented within child welfare programs, incarceration, and in the proportion of people who have not completed high-school (Hackett, 2017). Events typically seen as individual failures (e.g., experiences of racism, education and labour exclusion) are a complex outcome of the structural racism existing in Canada (Hackett, 2017).

The Essentialization of Race and *Being* “Canadian”.

Within Western society, categorising others according to somatic identifiers is normalised and is assumed to tell the observer information about the other. After learning from a young age certain characteristics are based in racial group differences, critical awareness is needed to call out assumed genetic differences in society (Yudell et al., 2016). While I understand race is socially constructed and does not possess a unique “essence”, people within a racialised group are bonded over shared experiences of racialisation in society (Chao et al.,

2013). Recognising racialisation is an involuntary constant, BIPOC identified persons experience tension moving through society.

Belonging while living in a racialised body in Canadian culture is complex. For racialised individuals in Canada, belonging can be paradoxical or even liminal. Liminality is described as a “longitudinal experience of ambiguity and in-between-ness within a changeful context” (Beech, 2011, p. 288). Feelings of between-ness or two-ness are commonplace in the experience of persons of colour, reflected in W.E. B. Du Bois’ (1999 [1903]) description of double consciousness. A condition that used to be fixed and stable, has forcibly transitioned into an ongoing ambiguity through a multitude of meanings (Beech, 2011; Howard-Grenville et al., 2011; Joyce et al., 2021; Turner, 1979). As BIPOC identified persons continue to navigate social interactions and experiences of racisms, their understanding of their own racial identity continues to shift, leaving them in a liminal space of belonging.

Young adults noted wanting to identify as Canadian but found it difficult when people wanted to identify them based on their ethnicity (Paragg, 2015). An individual in Goitom’s (2017) project notes that identity formation is facilitated initially through parents where sense of self and initial beliefs and values are formed, then in the community and with friends. Self-identification as Canadian while also knowing others may not perceive them to be Canadian leads to simultaneously being included and excluded (Paragg, 2015). Canadians who experience racisms are repeatedly being pushed into liminal space where they are neither who they identify as nor who they are perceived to be (Joyce et al., 2021). Chariandy (2007) found significantly fewer second-generation Black Canadians than new Canadians who identify as Black expressed a sense of belonging within Canada. This drastic difference in feelings of “being welcome” and “at home” between generations sparks questions. Relations and empathetic connections can be

built based on sharing marginalised identities (Ghabrial, 2017) and act as a buffer against microaggressions and discrimination (Henry, 2017; Patel & Bowden, 2020). Through community building, young adults can connect with their identities and disrupt what it currently means to belong as a racialised individual in Canada. Community building strives to create openness which allows space for alternative structures of class, sexuality, and race to exist for marginalized peoples who were predominantly restricted by these structures (Frye, 1995). Community is more than living in close proximity, based on work by Pharr (2010) and Hall (2007), community is seen as “continually shifting groups of people that dialogue with, actively listen to, and support each other, through reciprocal responsibility and accountability” (Bettez, 2011, p. 10). Community is both a process and a goal.

Community belonging as an avenue to wellness has been extensively evaluated within health promotion (Wallerstein et al., 2015), education (Abrica, 2020; de Jong, 2020), rural studies (Herslund, 2021), and social work (Olcoń, 2017) literature. Bettez (2011) challenges belonging being the main goal, instead highlights (1) maintaining an open web of connections, (2) active listening, and (3) commitment with accountability. For this project, Bettez’s and Hytten’s (2013) understanding of community will be taken up, as fluid, shifting, and always in process. I hope to facilitate the creation of a group of people coming together organically and working together in multiple ways (Bettez & Hytten, 2013). Through the engagement of BIPOC identified young adults, I hope to create community through the workshop while addressing opportunities for (and lack of) community in the Kitchener-Waterloo area.

This section continues to be an important part of my understanding on multiculturalism and race within Canada. Liminal spaces continued to be an important term when I was thinking through the impact of racialisation and culture always working on people.

Box 3

Well-being and Racism in Research

To gain understanding of BIPOC young adults experiences navigating PWI and social spaces, an acknowledgement of individuals' well-being is needed. This section starts with a brief overview of ways well-being are discussed in psychology and health, then will explore racialised people's experiences with well-being and ends with a critique of well-being as it is based in whiteness. The World Health Organization commission recognized social determinants of health to be "the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age" (Viner et al., 2012, p. 1). A person's wellness is shaped by their family, community, the distribution of money, power, resources at all levels (e.g., local, provincial, national) and the policy changes that shape distribution (Viner et al., 2012). Identifying the state of perceived or subjective well-being (i.e., life evaluation, positive affect and negative affect) is the first step in working through difficult experiences and towards individuals' dreams. Being well allows space and time for creativity and working towards goals. An individuals' self-reported well-being is a predictor of future physical health (e.g., fewer cardiovascular problems, faster recovery from illness, higher pain tolerance), mental health (e.g., faster recovery from stress), academic and work performance and life longevity (Danner et al., 2001; Kansky & Diener, 2017; Pressman & Cohen, 2012).

Emotions are a guide to evaluate and understand experiences (Helliwell & Barrington-Leigh, 2010), with positive affect (happiness, contentment, pleasure and excitement) signaling an enjoyable experience and negative affect (distress, hostility, irritability, anger, fear, shame, and guilt) signaling a need for caution (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2017; Partala & Kallinen, 2012).

People tend to have a positivity bias (the tendency to have positive views of their reality) where they quickly bounce back to a positive affect (Kansky & Diener, 2017)

Another way to examine well-being is through hope and hopelessness, with hope being defined as an “anticipation of a future which is good, based on mutuality, a sense of personal competence, coping ability, psychological well-being, purpose and meaning in life, and a sense of the possible” (Miller & Powers, 1988, p. 6), while hopelessness is explained as “having negative expectations for the future” (Stoddard et al., 2011, p. 296). As hope and hopelessness are two distinct concepts, individuals can have low hope and not be deemed hopeless (and vice versa) (Stoddard et al., 2011). Having supportive, reciprocal relationships with people who’ve lived similar experiences can help young adults develop hope and thrive (Kress, 2006; Mossakowski et al., 2014; Ragins et al., 2017). Through collaborating with racialised young adults, I will discern whether hope and hopelessness are factors impacting their experiences navigating predominantly white social spaces. Similar to hope, resilience, the ability to reduce the magnitude of a response while also quickly recovering after experiencing a traumatic/negative event has been found to positively impact well-being (Davydov et al., 2010; Shonkoff et al., 2021). Individuals who have an innate or learned plasticity (i.e., resilience or intellectual flexibility) tend to have greater subjective well-being (Zubrick et al., 2014) and purpose in life (Rutten et al., 2013). The need for resilience has been critiqued (Mackinnon & Derickson, 2013; Walsh-Dilley et al., 2016) as needing to survive systems of oppression tend to be the main reason for resilience to be developed.

Discrimination like racisms continue to act on racialised groups across Canada and is associated with negative health conditions (e.g., unhealthy coping behaviours, poor physical and mental health) (Marcellin et al., 2013; Paradies et al., 2015; Shonkoff et al., 2021). The presence

of social inequality, the unequal distribution of and access to resources that individuals need, is at the detriment of Indigenous peoples' social and emotional well-being (Zubrick et al., 2014). While the oppressions Indigenous peoples experience systematically and in their daily lives are unique, there are aspects that are mirrored in other racialised groups who tend to be pushed to the margins. There is a vast history of harmful practices against racialised peoples in research fields like psychology (Fernando, 2017), health (Kelaher et al., 2014), and social work (Lavalette & Penketh, 2013). To this day there is a lack of acknowledgement of past inflicted harm (and the resulting impact on generations of racialised people) (Jones, 2018) and how current systems of oppression perpetuate individual inequities (e.g., cycles of poverty, lack of social mobility) (Kelaher et al., 2014) by not recognising the impact of these inequities. As a part of systems of whiteness and Eurocentric ideas of what being well is, health, psychology, and social work research is based in oppressive and discriminatory practices and ideologies. Individuals with alternative ways of being are not recognised as valuable and have historically been objectified as dispensable. As discussions of race-based discrimination become increasingly welcomed, I hope this research will actively contribute to work aimed at eliminating exploitation (Dhai, 2017; Love & Hall, 2020) and highlight each individual's humanity.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Hearing stories from BIPOC identified young adults facilitates opportunities to hear counternarratives of what it is like to live in a ‘cultural mosaic’ like Canada, a compliment to existing dominant cultural narratives (Glover & Stewart, 2006) on multiculturalism. Through this project I will draw attention to the intersectional realities of racialised individuals. In this chapter, I outline how my project proposes to hear stories from BIPOC identified young adults living in a PWMC in Canada, a nation that prides itself on diversity and multiculturalism. The purpose of this critical narrative inquiry is to contribute to discourse on racialization, engage in critical self-reflection on personal stories in relation to multiculturalism, and facilitate the dissemination of stories in digital spaces, if desired by individuals a part of this project. As a concept grounded in critical race feminism, genderace* will be used to frame how intersectional narratives are embodied and entangled reflections of difference making in society. I will be using dialogical reflection catalysed by hand-mapping in effort to reflect on the following guiding research questions:

1. How do individuals essentialized to be BIPOC think about multiculturalism in a predominantly white mid-sized city like Kitchener-Waterloo?
2. How do young adults’ stories of reflect negotiations of whiteness? How is multiculturalism, defined by interviewees, resisted, or taken up?
 - a. How does multiculturalism discourse define interviewee experiences, if at all?
 - b. When does multiculturalism fail?
 - c. How is multiculturalism performed in social spaces and PWIs? What are some embodiments of these performances?
3. What should be reflected on or practiced as a result of these learnings?

I decided to move away from inviting dialogue from all racialised people to focusing specifically on Black young people. Through conversations at my proposal defense, I understood the discussions had more opportunity for nuanced understandings of authenticity if only Black young adults were present. My new trajectory was paved by the following updated research questions, thanks to Dr. Lisbeth Berbary:

- 1. What are the discourses of multiculturalism that participants exist within in Kitchener-Waterloo?*
- 2. How do they negotiate these discourses within their identity constructions and their navigations of institutional practices and interpersonal relations?*
- 3. Based on these lived experiences, what transformations must occur for those living under the sign of BI&POC to share in their full humanity?*

Box 4

Thinking with CRT, CRF, Intersectionality and Genderace*

In this project I will be taking up the theoretical frameworks critical race theory (CRT), critical race feminism (CRF) and intersectionality. CRT is used by activists and scholars to study and transform the relationship between race, racisms, and power for the better (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). The basic tenets of CRT that I will use in my thesis are: (1) racial and ethnic identity are social constructions and therefore are not objective, fixed, or biological in nature; (2) individuals living with racialization navigate intersectionality within groups they identify with and in relation to other groups; (3) people can have conflicting identities, loyalties and alliances; (4) social institutions are rooted in whiteness, making them inherently racist, and (5) there is transformational power in stories told by BIPOC identified people (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Few, 2007).

CRF places women of colour at the centre of dialogue, recognising their experiences are different from all men (CRT) and white women (feminist theory) (Berry, 2010). To the critiques CRF silos attention from the struggles for liberation of men of colour or white women, I refer to

an argument of James (2013) where she points to the “material global phenomenon of antiblack violence” (p. 27). I would argue James’ (2013) sentiment applies to all BIPOC identified people as all have experienced violence stemming from racisms. Although my project is not exclusively focusing on the experiences of BIPOC identified women, CRF resonates with my understanding of the interrelatedness of race, gender, and class.

Crenshaw (1989) coined the term intersectionality to draw attention to the flaws in the American legal system’s supposed colourblindness and objectivity by highlighting the “multi-dimensionality of marginalised subjects” (p. 139). Intersectionality addresses the varying, complex ways social categories shape dimensions and layers of lived experience (Cho et al., 2013; Collins, 2015; MacKinnon, 2013). Since intersectionality emerged from critical race studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the focus has been on the intersection of race and gender (Nash, 2008). To explore both the challenges and benefits of intersectionality, this project will think through the lens of intracategorical complexity which lies between rejecting discrete categories of identity and how considering such categories might be used strategically (McCall, 2005; Nash, 2008). McCall (2005) describes intracategorical intersectionality as both interrogating boundary making and boundary defining while acknowledging the unique support from relationships built based on shared social categories. Through complicating and using social categories in more critical ways, for example using finer intersections as descriptors, I want to challenge normalised categories of identity (e.g., race, class, sexuality, gender, ability). Through creating a sharing space for BIPOC identified folks to articulate their embodied experiences living in Kitchener-Waterloo, I hope to recognize the complexity of lived experiences and hear human stories of living and being within PWMC.

As McCall's (2005) framework of intersectionality exposes, many projects critiquing essentialization and social categorisation end up replicating those approaches in their work (Clarke & McCall, 2013; Nash, 2008). Recognising the critiques and limitations of intersectionality's ability to understand lived experiences, I will be taking up genderace* to fill in the gap. Genderace* is an acknowledgement of embodied racialization, gendering, and classing that considers the value of separating and essentializing identity, while challenging the need for boundaries around identity (Lopez, 2018). In a collaborative project based in Europe, genderace* "demonstrates that multiple-discrimination based on racialised identities and gender remains inadequately addressed" (Hedblom, 2010, as cited in Lopez, 2018, p. 116). As discrimination tends to take place with more than one target of hate, genderace* explores the always entwined and embodied experience. In my project, genderace* is being used to illuminate the layered oppressions that weigh on individuals daily and the potential for these oppressions to be internalised.

During my proposal defense, we discussed the use and sometimes overuse of CRT and CRF in research addressing race. The critique CRT makes does not go far enough recommend ways to lift ourselves from oppressive systems. So I turned to Black Radical thought/tradition for a guiding lens.

Box 5

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry uses stories to reflect how humans experience the world (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Narratives act as both the "phenomenon and method" (p. 2) as human beings live in stories and discuss their experiences in stories while researchers listen to these stories and write narratives about them (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Developed within the education field, narrative inquiry as a methodology recognises participants as teachers (Orenshaw & Creswell, 2002) and the power of storytelling with those who have a shared history as "other" to push for a

transformed world without racial hierarchies (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Stories can help build relationships (Tracy, 2019) by increasing understanding of experiences outside of one's own (Kim, 2015). Sharing and hearing stories, especially from those who have not been listened to, is a significant part of CRT (Parker, 2019) and CRF which centers knowledge of racisms learned through experience and the connections to history (Parker, 2015). Through story people with lived experiences can "provide counter-understandings to dominant ideologies" (Gildersleeve, 2011, p. 97), for example critiques of liberalism (Parker, 2019). This is especially true for racialised people who exist within cultures where storytelling and oral histories are passed down to share knowledge through generations (Trahar, 2013). This research project can be a space to share embodied stories often ignored, specifically, those stories by BIPOC identified young adults living in a PWMC.

Story allows for people to imagine alternatives to reality and consider what is possible (Kim, 2015). Kim (2015) notes the meaning behind an individual story becomes larger the more it is told, "larger than an individual experience or an individual life" (p. 9). Individual's stories reflect discursive understandings of different topics encompassed within varying lived experiences (Gildersleeve et al., 2011). Counternarratives (critical individual narratives that are alternatives to dominant structural narratives) have been used to challenge the status quo (Meretoja, 2020) in a multitude of fields including nursing (Wang & Geale, 2015), education (Garcia, 2015; Osorio, 2018), sociology (Harper, 2015) and journalism (Hanusch, 2019; Youngblood, 2019). As stories are always rooted in cultural influences and discourses, narrative inquiry builds understanding within and between people, based on individuals' thoughts, beliefs, decisions, and actions (Orenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Tracy, 2019). Stories have the power to shape our social realities by challenging assumptions and current power structures. Each individual narrative impacts the

overall understanding of socio-political discourse (Gallagher et al., 2017). The collaboration between participant and researcher creates a space to ponder changes and improvements to better our communities and for critical stories of the historically unheard.

Hearing BIPOC Young Adults during COVID-19

The Waterloo region has a significant BIPOC identified population with a large proportion being adults. Every BIPOC identified individual's story living in the Waterloo region is different and unique. Focusing solely on BIPOC identified young adults in Kitchener-Waterloo will allow for a facilitated discussion of systematic issues and perceptions of such challenges. The aim is to recruit between five and ten participants for this study. Recruitment material describing the research project and requesting people participate will be sent to different clubs and offices at the University of Waterloo and in the community. Those interested in participating will contact the student investigator through the email address provided on the recruitment material (see Appendix B). Everyone who agrees to participate will be asked to read and sign an informed consent form before participating to ensure they understand the project, their participation within it and that their personal information would remain confidential. To express appreciation of their participation in the study, the participants will receive a \$25 gift card.

Participants are now required to have a suitable space in their homes to be in conversation with a group, adequate Wi-Fi connection, and a device that can transmit audiovisual information. There is additional strain placed on the individual to have a private space to discuss possibly heavy conversations. With families staying home together more often there can be additional strain on Wi-Fi connection, leading to slow and disrupted connections. Participant criteria for taking part in online research has logistical restrictions. Everyone is

required to have a device that can transmit audiovisual information (e.g., cellphone/tablet/computer with a camera, a laptop) as well as be able to take pictures. This will be crucial so everyone can participate entirely in every step of the research project. If issues with transmitting arise, I will work with the individual participant so they can participate in the project as fully as possible, for example suggesting use of the public library/University of Waterloo Wi-Fi, or requesting the volunteer send images of the hand-maps and have a one-on-one discussion, having a phone-in option for the workshop. Technology continues to act as a link for to maintain familial, cultural, economic, and social ties (Kusow, 2007). This project will be relying on technology to assist in building relations with and between the racialised young adults.

Embodied Storytelling through Hand-Mapping

This research proposes to create a space for racialised young adults to connect using hand-mapping. Many people engage with the world using their hands (Betancourt, 2018); they are used to create, comfort, build and dismantle. Hand-mapping as a method was developed from body-mapping in communities within Toronto, Ontario by Betancourt (2015, 2016) with the intention of increasing the ease of use for those working in health with individuals who are faced with varying structural barriers. Hands can act as a “canvas” to explore participants’ narratives as they reflect their pasts, presents and futures (Betancourt, 2015). The lines on the hands allow for exploration of life events and trajectories of healing, while a participant’s traced fingers are an opportunity to visually represent responses to prompting questions (Betancourt, 2015, 2016). Similar to totem poles, visual representations of responses on the fingers can be best understood when related to the storyteller’s story and experience (Betancourt, 2016). The visual representation of responses allows for additional layers of themes to be pulled during data

analysis. Betancourt (2015, 2016) encourages participants to create a hashtag or slogan of/for their life relating to how their lives have been or what they want their lives to become.

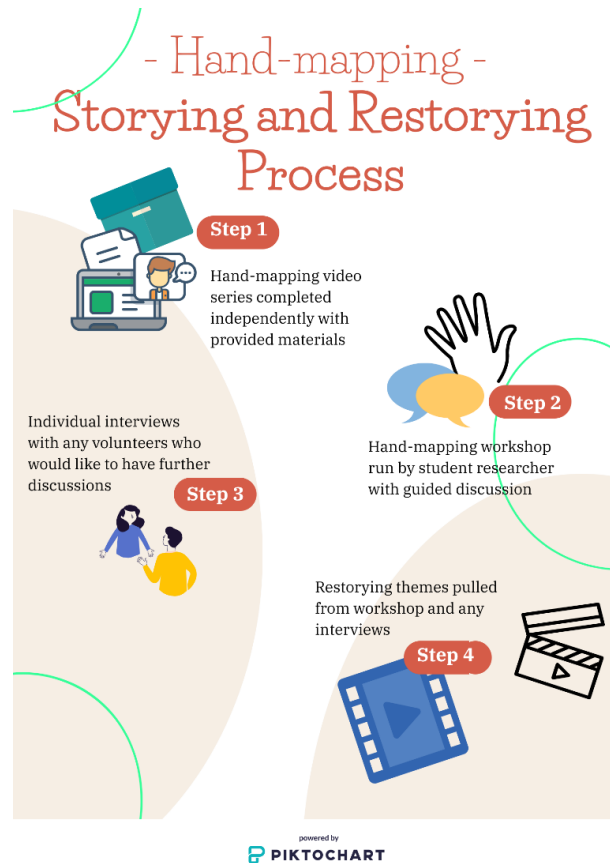
Hand-mapping allows those participating to communicate on different levels (i.e., visually through symbols, colours, drawings and short phrases) more quickly due to the ease in ability to see and understand the messages (Betancourt, 2015). Connection can be made with those who do not speak the same language or have not reflected on the topic to the same degree. Hand-mapping was developed to be done in less time and with fewer materials than body-mapping. Body-mapping was first used by Jane Solomon in South Africa with women living with HIV or AIDS so they could tell a different kind of story (Betancourt, 2015; Harris & Solomon, 2018). Body maps allow participants to both share human complexities while also maintaining anonymity through artistic expression. Hand-map and body-map storytelling explores personal stories which are rooted in national and international histories and presents that shape their lives (Betancourt, 2016; Lopez, 2018), this complexity and richness needs to be considered during data analysis and knowledge mobilization. Body-mapping (and hand-mapping) have the potential to explore important transitions in life (e.g., embodied experiences of coming out), raise awareness to social issues and draw attention to public health challenges (Betancourt, 2015). Hand-mapping is a method that creates space for the complexity and nuance of identity that genderace* favours. Hand-mapping in a group of individuals essentialized as BIPOC creates space for self-expression through drawing as they see fit apart from the expectations of being surveilled in their PWMC.

Hand-mapping is a good fit for this project which hopes to build a space to reflect with BIPOC identified young adults in Kitchener-Waterloo. The ethical considerations for hand-mapping mirror those relating to body-mapping; researchers have a responsibility to emphasize

that participants can share as much as they want and can withdraw at any time without any questions or pressure (Gastaldo et al., 2018).

Data Generation

Figure 1:



Overview of steps for data generation.

I plan for the project to take place online during the Spring-Fall term of 2021 and I see the work unfolding in four steps:

- (1) After receiving responses of interest and signed consent forms (see Appendices A and C), the following will be sent to participants:
 - a. The hand-mapping packages (i.e., markers, pencil crayons, sheets of paper) via Canada Post

- b. The set of videos for Stage 1 of the hand-mapping process (see Appendix F), and a form asking for everyone's availability via email
- (2) Once the participants have completed Stage 1 and an available day and time is found, a focus group meeting will take place online via Zoom/Microsoft Teams for a recap of the experiences creating the first hand-maps and to create the second hand-maps together (see Appendix E).
- (3) At the end of the focus group, and later in a thank you email (see Appendix D), I will ask participants to participate in individual interviews if they have any other thoughts or additional stories they wanted to share.
- (4) During the data analysis process, I will pull recurring themes, based on my guiding research questions, from the hand-maps and recorded conversations to create TikToks and anonymous storyteller threads on Twitter. The process of data analysis and dissemination will be outlined later on, in this chapter.

To gain consent from participants, I will first send the research letter and consent forms (see Appendices A and C) to interested individuals. After a week, I will follow up with each person expressing interest via email to answer any questions or concerns. If they agree to participate, I will ask for their consent by requesting pictures of the signed consent forms. After I receive the signed consent forms I will arrange for the mailing of the hand-mapping materials and email the series of hand-mapping instructional videos for stage 1. At the beginning of the hand-mapping workshop, I will remind the focus group members what they had consented to (i.e., recording of the hand-mapping workshop, hand-maps) and their right to pass on any questions or revoke their consent (and the resulting removal of their responses from the data) up until the knowledge mobilisation phase takes place.

Data analysis procedures

Personal Development through Praxis.

As I continue to be exposed to writings of multiculturalism and racialisation, I am becoming increasingly aware of how stories of multiculturalism have created appearances of invitation and security for racialised folks. Understanding my positionality and experience will always impact the perspective I contribute to dialogue on multiculturalism within Canada. This awareness, beyond my own lived experiences, has sparked my instinct to help disrupt the status quo. My intention with this thesis is to further my praxis (i.e., critical reflection, understanding of the process to raise awareness to social inequities and one's role within this process, and the aim of the process) within the recreation and leisure field (Ardovini, 2015; Glassman & Erdem, 2014; Hesse-Biber, 2011). Freire's teachings recognize praxis as actions taken by the oppressed (and by those standing with the oppressed) "in the processes of their liberation and path to freedom" (Glassman & Erdem, 2014, p. 212). Through praxis I intend to continue the work of researchers critiquing narratives of multiculturalism within Canada. By writing this proposal and thinking through the hand-mapping process I have become more comfortable leaning into the "growing pains" of shifting understandings of what can be research. Braun and Clarke (2019) argue qualitative research is about "meaning and meaning-making, and viewing these as always context-bound, positioned and situated" (p. 591). Only through immersion, reflection and thoughtfulness can final analyses be produced. Through notes taken before, during, and after the workshop, frequent listening to and reading of the workshop recording/transcripts, as well as the hand-maps themselves, I will further my knowledge of ways BIPOC identified people move through PW spaces. With each of my research questions in mind, I will highlight the parts of the data I believe will be important to consider in responding to my questions. I will go through this

process multiple times until I feel I have exhausted each data source. Using a combination of physical copies of transcriptions and computer-based organizing programs, I will group the data while keeping in mind how the data will be storied using multiple focus group members' stories (Orenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

Dialogical Meaning-Making.

Through the discussions within the focus group, this project will lean on collective and dialogical reflection and introspection. Reflection has been a way to recognise our humanity (Descartes, 1970) and learn from past actions (Edwards, 2017; Friston, 2011). Dewey is credited as one of the first scholar to argue reflection is integral for learning (Schön, 1983; Sturgill & Motley, 2014). Dewey (1993) describes reflection as “a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates; and an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity” (p. 9). Through reflection, specifically relational reflective practice (i.e., reflection through human interaction) (Mann & Walsh, 2013), I plan to facilitate learning and connection out of dialogue to promote “closer understandings” between focus group members (Mann & Walsh, 2013). Being in dialogue with fellow focus group members can introduce new perspectives and further introspection. The guiding questions written for the hand-mapping video series and workshop (see Appendix E) were created to facilitate meaningful, intentional discussion and reflection at both an individual and a group level. It is my hope that hearing stories of living as a BIPOC identified young person in Kitchener-Waterloo provides a unique awareness that they are not the only ones who face a specific problem (Ab Rashid, 2018). The process of hand-mapping intends to be a catalyst for focus group members to contemplate and inquire into their own experiences

in a PWMC (See Appendix F). Creating art together allows time for each member to consider ideas and perspectives that were introduced to them during discussion periods.

Restorying Themes from Data.

To create recommendations for community and research areas the hand-maps created by the focus group members will be analysed through a “top-down” approach (Terry et al., 2017) using the following six steps: familiarising myself with the data, creating codes through the lens of CRT, CRF, intersectionality and genderace*, constructing themes from coding, review for themes, defining and naming themes, and lastly mobilising the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Terry et al., 2017). This process will take place for both the transcripts of the focus group discussions and the hand-maps themselves. As previously mentioned, the fingers on the hand entail images, symbols, words etc. in response to questions posed prior to or during the hand-mapping process. Through the thematic analysis steps, I will generate both recommendations for research and within the community and re-story lived experiences of BIPOC identified young people. Thematic analysis is a strong fit to generate recommendations or key messages for the public, it has a unique flexibility and requires acknowledgement of assumptions and positionality (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Social Media as Social Activism

Present day uses of social media has a multitude of uses from being the “equivalent of the newspaper, poster, leaflet, or direct mail” for social movements, to spreading knowledge quickly (Gerbaudo, 2012, p. 4). Miller (2017) describes three interrelated features of communication technologies and social media that make it engaging: how easy it is for individuals to produce and distribute increasing amounts of information, ability to connect with others across distance, and increasing ability to express own ideas and converse on political issues. Due to these

strengths, I have plans to use social media platforms (i.e., TikTok and Twitter) to mobilize hand-mapped stories of racialised young adults' experiences across distance and create further engagement. I will reflect on the three features of social media and communication technologies (Miller, 2017) in this section.

Social media platforms allow for unique engagement between users, some allowing one-to-one (e.g, direct messaging), one-to-many (e.g, posts), many-to-many, real time communication (e.g, streaming) and asynchronous communicative practices (e.g., retweets, comments) (Cammaerts, 2015). Crucial online spaces for engagement, knowledge sharing, and mobilisation include Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp (Mutsvairo, 2016) each with their own primary functions (e.g., connections within overt and covert groups, spreading information instantly) (Gerbaudo, 2012). As a newer platform, TikTok is becoming a unique place to spread awareness of social issues. Online media platforms are built to prioritize exchanges where the main purpose is acknowledgement while avoiding disruptions to social harmony (e.g., like button on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook with no dislike button) (Miller, 2017). For my project I will be monitoring views, likes, comments and shares (Effing et al., 2012; Velasquez & LaRose, 2015) on TikTok and Twitter to reflect on engagement with my online content. Using social media platforms to their advantage can give “both speed and force to ...lobbying efforts”, mobilizing change (e.g., abortion rights) (Eslen-Ziya, 2013, p. 868). My project plans to use social media's accessibility to communicate the experience of living in Canada, a country well known for acceptance of new Canadians, as a racialised young adult.

Social media allows for activist media to reach many geographic locations in cost-effective and environmentally friendly ways (Glenn, 2015), creating community and greater awareness of social issues, and motivating individuals to engage in-person (Cammaerts, 2015;

Murthy, 2018). With social media platforms, storytelling transcends geographical space where individuals can share stories about events taking place in a certain place without currently being there (Georgalou, 2015). However, connecting in online spaces require a certain amount of economic privilege, potentially disempowering those without a phone or internet plan (Mutsvairo, 2016). With the development and increased affordability of technology, the cellphone is providing ways to engage in disruption with cameras allowing people to take up digital activism (Murthy, 2018; Mutsvairo, 2016), increasing the possibility of challenging those who survey (e.g., filming and photographing police violence to expose state violence) (Cammaerts, 2015). Digital records act as a protest archive for individual feats of protest to join collective memory and encourage movement spillover (Eslen-Ziya, 2013) as exemplified by protests in Tunisia (Cammaerts, 2015), Hong Kong (Yang, 2019), and the United States (Taylor, 2020) spreading across the world. Hashtags and tweets work to amplify messages of protest and injustices, for example #SayHerName which works to fight racism and sexism through highlighting the importance of intersectionality (Brown et al., 2017).

Along with other aspects of people's lives, socially relevant narratives are shared via social media. In comparison to in-person exchanges, stories on social media platforms are told and shared differently for example with memes and song lyrics/titles (Georgalou, 2015), linking comments to paint a more detailed picture (Dillette et al., 2019), adding URLs to pages/articles with more detail (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Duffy & Ling, 2020) and in online forums (e.g., "Black Twitter") (Bigman et al., 2019; Manikonda et al., 2018). Arguably, social media has permanently changed the way stories can be told, in this project I will be creating internet-based (Cammaerts, 2015) narratives from themes in the conversations during the hand-mapping workshop and any individual interviews, to explore ways stories can be told in digital spaces.

Social media also has a temporary nature where without continuous engagement with hashtags and threads, posts will fade overtime (Murthy, 2018; Volkmer, 2013). Murthy (2018) acknowledges the possibility of social media users creating their own hierarchies and privileging certain individuals who may not fully understand the complexity of trending on social platforms (e.g., elitism and information overload on Twitter). Who is being heard within online social justice spaces and who is not? Social media platforms are controlled by companies who are primarily acting in their own interests which at times leading to the repression of posts on certain social movements when “unwanted” content is shared (Cammaerts, 2015). Businesses and governments will put their interests above those of users which incites debates about the transparency of state security and possible internet regulation (Cammaerts, 2015). While I have plans to use TikTok and Twitter for knowledge mobilisation, I am mindful of the companies’ primary pursuit being profit.

TikTok as a Social Media Platform

TikTok is described as a social media platform used to “create short dance, lip-sync, comedy, and talent videos” (Weimann & Nasri, 2020, p. 3). TikTok was created by ByteDance in 2017 and merged with Musical.ly in 2018. From being one of the most downloaded apps in 2019 and the most downloaded non-gaming app in March 2020 with 52.2 million users, TikTok has become one of the fastest growing social media platforms in the world (Medina et al., 2020; Su et al., 2020; Weimann & Masri, 2020). The predominant age range of users (i.e., 41%) is between 16 and 24 years old (Comp et al., 2020). Having a large proportion of the apps’ users be in this age range will help those engaging in this project as they are living through historic events at similar times of their lives.

TikTok's quick popularity may be in part due to the significant difference between it and other popular social media apps. Facebook and Twitter are primarily text-based platforms while Instagram is more photo-based. By using short videos as the main form of communication on the platform, TikTok has altered how information is shared online. Two main ways TikTok is shifting what social media platforms look like include, acting as a supportive space for everyday people to create videos and being largely algorithm based. TikTok allows all users to be creative, playful, casual, and authentic, increasing the relatability and genuineness of individuals (Su et al., 2020). Users can experiment with entertaining elements (e.g., popular scores, captions) to create short performances for viewers. TikTok is used by individuals, celebrities, news outlets (e.g., Toronto Star), to educate (Comp et al., 2020) and comment on current issues.

The accessibility for all people to produce videos has shifted the ways consumer culture is at work on social media platforms. There are possibilities to have unique social media interactions on TikTok. As explored by Medina Serrano and colleagues (2020), there are four possible levels of communication on TikTok: watching a video, liking and/or sharing a video, commenting and the duet function. The duet function allows for a personal interaction between the two users, it can be used to respond to the original video. Users can (1) directly compare different views, (2) showcase their creativity through support or counterarguments, and (3) debate issues publicly. As noted in an article explaining how TikTok works and functions, TikTok continuously encourages its users to consume and create short videos (Herrman, 2019). There are a multitude of filters, sounds to use as a score in the video and inspiration ideas to get started. Response and duet videos are encouraged, and hashtags are used extensively for challenges, jokes and repeating formats (Herrman, 2019). One of the hopes of this project is to

continue to have ongoing engagement with the ideas brought through these four forms of communication.

Secondly, being algorithm driven allows for a fast-paced increase in a user's audience as videos appear on other user's feeds (Anderson, 2020). An account is not needed to search and view videos on the app, however an account allows for full engagement, for example liking, commenting, and creating response videos. Most platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) rely on the user to befriend or follow other users, resulting in a user's feed consisting of posts solely from friends or those they follow. A drawback of this is the increased chance of creating echo-chambers where there is little interaction between people with different views (Medina Serrano et al., 2020). When creating a TikTok account, a user can select from a list of interests which will help curate a range of videos (e.g., animals, comedy, travel, food, etc.). The "For you" category defaults to the algorithm discerning the videos watched based on what has been watched, liked, and shared, but that can be changed to solely the feeds followed (Anderson, 2020). It is also possible to search for hashtags, sounds and watch trending videos within the "Discover" page. As Herrman (2019) notes the app's reliance on algorithmic observation makes it "more machine than man". The app learns from what you watch and engage with (i.e., like or comment). Due to the enormous library in all interest categories, there is no fear of running out of material. The user views one video at a time which plays on a loop until the user taps to pause it or swipes up for the next video. Each video is on average 15 seconds (Weimann & Masri, 2020) with the max length being 60 seconds with it being possible to include a collection of shorter clips (Medina Serrano et al., 2020).

When using the app, there are some considerations to keep in mind. TikTok must increasingly compete with other social media sites which have added similar functions (e.g.,

Instagram’s reels) possibly contributing to security issues such as a lack of referencing information sources and harmful activity. At times it is difficult to determine what a user’s sources are and whether they are credible, which is especially important when their goal to educate their audience (Comp et al., 2020). The ease for users to produce and access videos (i.e., only need to create an account) increases the likelihood of hateful comments and content existing. Weimann and Masri (2020) identified that security vulnerabilities and imposing guidelines difficulties has led to TikTok becoming a “magnet for pedophiles, profanity, crime, violence and extremism” (p. 4). Harmful behaviours (e.g., sarcastic, ridiculing comments or response videos) on the platform can shift dialogue and conversation to bullying or harassment (Medina Serrano et al., 2020). As Anderson (2020) notes TikTok needs to work on keeping up with hateful content on the site, which TikTok has committed to working on.

There are several goals I have for the content I will create using TikTok. My first goal is to reach BIPOC identified people on the platform who can connect and relate with my videos sharing experiences of living in a PWMC. I also want to generate conversation about the ways race and multiculturalism are working in PWMC in Canada. Lastly, I hope to draw attention to the ways living in a society where essentializing race is prominent and all systems are built on whiteness is affecting BIPOC identified young people.

In collaboration with my committee, I decided to remove Twitter from my data mobilization plans. The amended plan was to create a TikTok video series on surviving Kitchener-Waterloo as a Black young adult. This knowledge mobilization plan is currently in the brainstorming phase, and I am also considering a children’s book, in collaboration with my supervisor Dr. Kimberly Lopez, based on the hand-maps.

Box 6

**SECTION II: Thinking through Race and ‘Canadian’
multiculturalism Differently**

Preface

In collaboration with my supervisor, I decided to leave my initial proposal as it was to demonstrate my ever-shifting understanding of race and multiculturalism in a Canadian context. This preface articulates the ways my thinking has changed following the committee discussion at my proposal defense. It acts as a bridge between my past understandings with my current knowings and future engagements, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

At my proposal defense the following was highlighted about my work:

- My initial plan was to invite anyone who identified as Black, Indigenous, or as Person of Colour to participate in my project, but soon realized that it would be too large an undertaking for my Master's thesis. This is because the uniqueness of BI&POC's experiences (i.e., histories of oppression, present experiences of discrimination, expressions of community) that would take significant time to meaningfully analyze and think through. Additionally, individual's experiences being essentialized as BI&POC could lead to disconnected discussions during the hand-mapping session/focus group.
- I was challenged to critically consider how I am defining race and, subsequently, pick up theories other than critical race theory, critical race feminism, and intersectionality to help me better understand the politics of race. I understand race differently now than when I presented my proposal. Dr. Lisbeth Berbary shared reframed research questions and a conceptual framework (Hall's theory of articulation) to better address the complexities of race and multiculturalism in Canada.
- Thirdly, we discussed using TikTok and Twitter as platforms for knowledge mobilisation. The committee agreed that using both social media platforms would be complicated and likely less effective.

During the discussion at my proposal defense, my committee and I worked together on the following changes to refine and streamline my thesis:

- By focusing on Black Canadians, I was able to reflect on ways Black young people in KW understand their relation to whiteness, Indigeneity, colonisation, and the failures of multiculturalism. I worked through these tensions while I analysed focus group discussions and the hand-maps themselves.
- I plan to mobilise the data on surviving KW as a Black person differently than originally planned (i.e., video series, children's book), at the time of writing, knowledge mobilisation plans are in the brainstorming stage. I felt I needed to walk away from my plans to engage in Twitter or TikTok because I felt participants were not able to directly engage in these mediums first hand and expecting them to do so would require a greater commitment of their time than originally planned.
- Since my proposal discussion, I have intentionally expanded my reading material to explore Omi and Winant's racial formation theory and racial projects (1994), Hall's theory of articulation (1980), and how race is interwoven into Canada's pasts and presents (Hogarth & Fletcher, 2018; Madokoro, McKenzie & Meren, 2017). My continued learning through reading and discussions helped prepare me to facilitate focus group discussions and analyse data differently than planned originally through new conceptual frames.

Chapter 4

Stories of ‘Canadian’ Blackness, Failed multiculturalism, and Black humanity in a Predominantly White Mid-Sized City (PWMC) through Hand-mapping

Keywords: multiculturalism; hand-mapping; Black humanity; white supremacy; Black Radicalism; embodiment; Ontario

Abstract

The happy, upbeat narratives of multiculturalism in Canada misrepresent lived experiences of individuals who embody Canada’s narrative of multiculturalism and cultural diversity (Berry, 2013; Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019). This thesis asks young Black-‘Canadian’ adults to reflect on when and how they show up as their true, authentic selves while in their predominantly white mid-sized city (PWMC), Kitchener-Waterloo. Using art-based methodologies (Betancourt, 2015) and collective reflection (Mann & Walsh, 2013), I braided (Bancroft, 2018) the discussions to race and multiculturalism literature into five moments: Racist Experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo, Coping in PW spaces, Representation: Who needs it, Negotiation to Full Humanity and Community, and Encompassing All Peoples in Communities. In collaboration with the volunteers in this project, we call on those living in Kitchener-Waterloo to address the harms contributed to by racialisation and racism in tangible ways.

Introduction/Literature Review

Black people -- their struggle, joy, and magic -- have long been ignored in so-called Canada, particularly in places where they are most greatly minoritized. Systems of oppression pervade all aspects of life in ways that are more deeply subverted and disguised than forms of racism of the past (more contemporarily expressed as unlawfulness³ or ostracization), affecting Black realities. Through the liberal erasure of Blackness, tokenization of Black bodies, and white fragility in (not) addressing racial injustices, practices that maintain white supremacy persist. In predominantly white spaces, white supremacy is upheld through mechanisms like colour

³ In response to the Waterloo Catholic School Board calling the police on a 4-year-old Black child, Black and parents of colour formed a Black parent council (Ghonaim, 2022).

blindness (Tetrault et al., 2020) and the dismissal of concerns affecting communities of colour like poverty (Block et al., 2019), incarceration (Maynard, 2017), and the child welfare system (policyalternatives, 2018). Conversations about anti-Black racism have become “mainstream” in recent years in Canada, inhibiting the required actions for just communities like addressing ways continued support for Canadian multiculturalism fails Black people and other people of colour (Hogarth & Fletcher, 2018; Tetrault et al., 2020). The present research sought to describe and complicate being Black in Canada, as a living subject of “multiculturalism” in predominantly white communities, by hearing narratives of young, Black-Canadians in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario.

Multiculturalism in a Canadian Context

Canada operates on a “white Canadian” and “non-white Cultural Other” binary (Paragg, 2015, p. 26) where Canadian-ness is associated with whiteness. To maintain white nation-state status, Canada must “(re)produce...and appropriate ideas like diversity, equity, indigenizing, and decolonizing while keeping in place all the institutions that flow from the initial and ongoing colonial condition and context” (Walcott, 2019, p. 398). The power and privilege Canada has gained by maintaining its connection to whiteness allows the country to continue to pursue profit (i.e., trade relationships with the United States, China and the United Kingdom, extraction of natural resources, high real estate prices and gentrification) over supporting its citizens experiencing layered oppressions (i.e., due to race, gender, ability, etc.) (Johnston, 2021). The perception of “Canada as a redeemer of immigrant others” is an example of white saviourism (i.e., the dominant society feeling good for “helping” marginalised groups without addressing root issues) (Stevens, 2020), which allows for racism and those speaking out against racialisation to be disregarded (Gulliver, 2018, p. 68). As a result, Canada promotes itself as an equitable

cultural mosaic where ethnic diversity is encouraged in all parts of society through government materials (e.g., websites, pamphlets) (Government of Canada, 2021) and popular media (Adam & Rangel, 2017; Goitom, 2017; Paragg, 2015). Almost so much so that it has become an expectation of life in Canada (Hackett, 2017). However, Canada systematically stigmatizes new Canadians as “dangerous and deceitful” with some forms of migration (i.e., “irregular migration”) seen as wrongful and possibly harmful to the Canadian public (Atak & Simeon, 2018). Events typically seen by society as individual failures (e.g., poverty, education attainment, and labour exclusion) are a complex outcome of the structural racism existing in Canada (Hackett, 2017). The narrative of multiculturalism acts to keep “visible minorities” from speaking out about injustices (Goitom, 2017) and make forms of institutionalised racism invisible (e.g., lack of access to affordable housing in good condition) (Gulliver, 2018). Further, the Canadian government’s promotion of multicultural values creates the appearance of incompatibility with racialisation, which in fact perpetuates racism (Bannerji, 2000; Ku et al., 2019).

Over the past 50 years since the writing of the 1971 Canadian Multiculturalism Policy by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (Gozdecka et al., 2014), multiculturalism has different meanings in Canada. Berry (2013) broke down the meanings of multiculturalism in three ways: as a demographic fact (the presence of people identifying with distinct cultures in Canada), public policy (government actions supporting people identifying from different cultural groups), and as an ideology (a public desire for experiencing and embracing cultural diversity). The three definitions are interconnected; however, Canadian government places emphasis on the first two conceptualisations of multiculturalism while, by dismissing the concerns of communities of colour (e.g., poverty, clean drinking water, incarceration), ignoring the third – one that reflects

the experience of persons living in the bodies that make up “the diversity”. With the Canadian government’s goal of equality and tolerance, liberal multiculturalism – recognition of diversity that props up dominant interests without meaningful change-- can both give a false sense of security and lull people into complacency by pushing dark events into the past (Lee, 2015). Liberal multiculturalism allows for a “superficial celebration” (p. 9) of cultural differences while avoiding meaningful discussions on racial and other forms of inequities in the Canadian social system (Kubota, 2015). In this sense, multiculturalism as a veil for injustice fails all people, not only in Canada but many countries around the world (Vitikainen, 2013).

The Essentialization of Race, Being “Canadian”, and Blackness in Canada

Belonging in Canadian culture in a body of colour can be a paradoxical or even liminal experience (Beech, 2011). Feelings of between-ness or two-ness are commonplace for people of colour, reflected in W.E. B. Du Bois’ (2018) description of double consciousness. Race is a social construct that is used in society as a project to achieve political agendas (e.g., police carding) (Beech, 2011; Howard-Grenville et al., 2011; Joyce et al., 2021; Turner, 1979). Attending to the concerns of local communities is important to decenter the nation-state for the benefit of individuals historically pushed to the margins (i.e., Canada) (Madokoro et al., 2017), however the growing divide between the Canadian government and local communities (Speer & Jivani, 2017) can hide the nation-state’s responsibility for racist projects and policies including anti-Asian legislation and the internment of Japanese people during World War II in British Columbia, and Africville being presented as a Maritime issue (Hogarth & Fletcher, 2018; Madokoro et al., 2017). Further, attributes associated with Blackness (i.e., subservience, criminality, lack of intelligence, dangerousness, hyper-sexuality) have informed the treatment of Black lives throughout the nineteenth century to present times in Canada (Maynard, 2017).

Contemporary systems in Canada (e.g., child welfare, racist policing) devalue Black lives while holding them to a higher standard and enforce increased surveillance and containment (Maynard, 2017). Black young adults are more affected by systemic racism according to research from the Black Experience Project in Toronto (Neuman & Wisdom, 2019). Many Black youth born in Canada are hyper-sensitive to the impact of anti-Black racism on their communities (Neuman & Wisdom, 2019).

As Olufemi Taiwo (2020) said we need to move beyond “listening to the most affected” (para. 8). My hope through this work was to do more than listen, to “bridge” young, Black adults in Waterloo region to honour and discuss “a concrete, experiential manifestation of the vulnerability that connects [them] to most of the people on this Earth” (Taiwo, 2020, Section 6). Instead of reclaiming the narrative of what it means to be Black in Canada (Othering & Belonging Institute, 2015), I worked with young Black young people in a PWMC to create new narratives based on personal understandings of Blackness in Kitchener-Waterloo. As emphasised by Powell in discussion with bell hooks, asking “what are we giving birth to?” in Canadian society will help shift towards celebrating Black people’s full humanity (Othering & Belonging Institute, 2015).

Predominantly White Mid-sized Cities (PWMC) and Racism

Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge (KWC) is well-known for its German roots and prominent technological and entrepreneurial culture (Spigel & Bathelt, 2019). Similar to other “town-and-gown” cities (cities with large post-secondary institutions like Kingston, Guelph, and Hamilton, also in Ontario), KWC has a large student population (Chuong, 2014; Massey et al., 2014). There are about 65 000 post-secondary students living in the KWC region (Region of Waterloo, 2020). Within PWMC there are notable challenges Black people navigate. So

significant that there is an unspoken understanding of temporariness when experiencing such challenges like difficulty obtaining adequate rental housing (Alini, 2020), post-secondary education (Tate & Page, 2018) and permanent well-paying work with benefits (Slaughter, 2020). When moving outside of Canada's urban centers to PWMC, Black people reported feelings of loneliness (Patel & Bowden, 2020) and othering (Baker, 2013) while having difficulty obtaining support before and after racist events occur. (Monteiro, 2021). The reality is government systems were not created for Black people to succeed, currently relations and empathetic connections act as a buffer against microaggressions, systemic injustices and discrimination (Henry, 2017; Patel & Bowden, 2020).

The daily struggle of having to put on a mask (i.e., codeswitching) (DuBois, 2018; Fanon, 1967; McCluney et al., 2021) while not feeling supported and/or committed to their communities can take a toll on young Black-Canadians. Until recently, there were few public discussions of how current systems inhibit the thriving of racialised people in PWMC (Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation, 2021). Some Canadians saw current systems as fair and even went so far as to resist shifts towards equity making policies (e.g., over-representation of white people in positions of power) (Eddo-Lodge, 2017). Erasures also occur when speaking to racialisation and racism in ways that infer culture, class, or other differences (Wallis & Singh, 2014), dampening the impact that race has in shaping everyday experiences.

Hate-filled acts of racism in the KWC region include a man who yelled xenophobic statements and wielded a knife at a couple, five youths who spat on and threw stones at two passengers on the LRT, mass mailouts condemning mixed-race marriages, and a racist and life-threatening letter left at a Waterloo family's door that was also vandalized by the perpetrators (Jackson, 2021; Nielson, 2020). These acts of racism in the KWC community highlight just how

unwelcoming a “diverse and thriving” city can be for those experiencing racislisation (Region of Waterloo, 2020). Although there was a noticeable drop in reported hate crimes from 2018-2019 in KWC (i.e., from a rate of 6.7 per 100,000 to 2.5 per 100, 000) (Statistics Canada, 2021), statistics from 2020-2021 tell a more complex story of what is happening in the broader community. In a heartbreaking incident in London, Ontario, another PWMC close to KWC, a deliberate hit-and-run of a Muslim family on an evening walk killed four family members and injured a nine-year-old boy leaving him orphaned (Butler, 2021). When it comes to experiences of racism, statistics fail to provide a deep understanding of the lasting effects and complexities involved of racist interactions.

Purpose and methods

Black individuals’ lives in Canadian PWMC matter. Racisms, alongside other forms of oppression (e.g., sexism, classism, transphobia, homophobia), require systemic level change (Monteiro, 2021) to foster just communities for all (Maynard, 2017). The purpose of this study was to hear stories told by young Black people about what it is like to live in a PWMC, as the physical embodiment of, what Canada touts as, “multiculturalism”. To support this study’s purpose, we heard young Black people’s (counter)narratives of what it is like to live in a ‘cultural mosaic’ like Canada, an addition to existing dominant cultural narratives (Glover & Stewart, 2006) on multiculturalism.

Through personal connections, seven young adults (i.e., over 18 years old and under 32 years old) who self-identified as Black and lived in the Waterloo Region were recruited. All focus group members moved from another city or country to Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge (KWC), some with family, some for work or post-secondary education. The amount of time they

had lived in the city ranged from three years to 20+ years. most of their lives. I met with each participant to review the introduction letter and consent form and answer any questions they had.

Embodied Expressions of ‘Canadian’ Blackness through Hand-mapping

Art transforms difference and otherness into discourse; it allows the unspeakable to become speak-able (Hall, 2017). Recognising how many people interact with the world using their hands (Betancourt, 2015), this project used hand-mapping to create a space of connection for Black young people. Hand-mapping as a method was developed from body-mapping in Toronto, Ontario by Betancourt (2015) to increase access to embodied reflection for practitioners working with individuals facing structural barriers to healthcare. Using hand-tracings as a canvas, hand-mapping allowed participants to reflect on their pasts, presents and futures and to communicate on different levels (i.e., visually through symbols, colours, drawings and short phrases) more quickly due to the ease in ability to see and understand messages (Betancourt, 2015). Hand-mapping was used to build connection between the participants who have not reflected on their feelings while navigating their PWMC and the ways they cannot show up as their authentic selves. Hand-mapping creates space for the complexity and nuance of identity that genderace* favours. As the facilitator of the hand-mapping sessions, I learned the importance of listening to the non-verbal and, through this work, hoped to add my voice in support of embodied ways of knowing young Black people’s experiences within PWMC. Hand-mapping in a group of individuals essentialized as Black created space for self-expression through drawing as they see fit, apart from the expectations of being surveiled in their PWMC.

The hand-mapping packages (i.e., markers, pencil crayons and sheets of paper) were delivered to each participant along with a collection of videos for participants to independently create their first hand-map of two hand-maps. The two hand-maps were created to compare

participants' emotions and experiences as their genuine, authentic selves to their emotions and experiences navigating the PWMC they live in. We suspected within KWC, similar to PWMC across Canada, Black people feel it necessary to suppress their whole, human selves. To encourage reflections on how individuals feel when embracing their full humanity, I asked participants including: when do you feel the most yourself? Why did you pick that hand position? What about your hands tell us about the life you've lived? After participants created the first hand-map and to best suit busy schedules, I met with participants in two virtual focus groups, both one hour and 45 minutes, to collectively reflect on the experience of creating the first hand-map and to create the second hand-map. Some questions asked during these discussions included: what experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo have shaped you? How do the spaces you navigate encourage you to present yourself as you do? Six young adults volunteered to have further discussions in individual interviews, which ranged from 30 minutes to an hour and a half. Questions asked included: if you were to think about the messages you hope to communicate to others via your hand-map, what would those messages be? Regarding discourse of multiculturalism, what do you hope for the KW community, if anything at all? To express appreciation of their participation in the study, the participations received a \$25 Visa gift card. I used dialogical reflection (Mann & Walsh, 2013) catalysed by hand-mapping in to better understand the following:

1. What discourses of multiculturalism in Kitchener-Waterloo do participants face daily?
2. How do they negotiate multiculturalism discourses within their identity constructions and navigate institutional practices and interpersonal relations?

3. Based on these lived experiences, what transformations must occur for those living under the sign of Black to live in their full humanity in PWMCs?

As stories are always rooted in cultural influences and discourses (Gildersleeve et al., 2011), narrative inquiry builds understanding within and between people, based on individuals' thoughts, beliefs, decisions, and actions (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Tracy, 2020).

Counternarratives (critical individual narratives that are alternatives to dominant structural narratives) have been used in many fields to challenge the status quo (Meretoja, 2020). Through challenging assumptions and current power structures, each individual narrative impacts the overall understanding of socio-political discourse (Gallagher et al., 2017). The stories shared using art-based methodologies facilitated other modes of expressing living narratives of being Black in a PWMC in Canada.

At the beginning of my journey, my understanding of the relationship between a body and the social and material world was informed by Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Intersectionality. The tenants of CRT that were useful in my initial thinking were: (1) racial and ethnic identity are social constructions and therefore are not objective, fixed, or biological in nature; (2) individuals living with racialisation navigate intersectionality within groups they identify with and in relation to other groups; (3) people can have conflicting identities, loyalties and alliances; (4) social institutions are rooted in whiteness, making them inherently racist, and (5) there is transformational power in stories told by BI&POC identified people (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Few, 2007). However, the critiques CRT make do not go far enough to recommend ways to lift ourselves from oppressive systems, so I began to read through Black radical thought and abolition to inform this work specifically Stuart Hall, Rinaldo Walcott, Desmond Cole, and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. Through many conversations with my supervisor

and committee member on Black radical thought, abolition, and liberation, I learned that in Canadian society race continues to be used to uphold hierarchies of worth. Black radical tradition recognises the “constant struggle for freedom against the forms of oppression that converted humanity and earth into objects of radically different value to be accumulated and owned” (Johnson & Lubin, 2017, p. 12). Not only does Black Radical Tradition focus on resisting structures rooted in imperialism and capitalism, Robinson emphasised a “maintenance of an ontology (cultural traditions, beliefs, values)” (Thomas, 2019, para. 2). Strategic action and intentional upholding of traditions are used to obtain and maintain the humanity of Black people across the diaspora. Abolition, “the destruction of racial regimes and racial capitalism”, requires the end of racial evaluations of worth and destruction of the ‘capitalist order’ (Johnson & Lubin, 2017, p. 12).

As Cornel West emphasized in the documentary *Black is...Black Ain't*, within white supremacist, Eurocentric societies like Canada and the United States, Blackness is associated with fear and disgust, which restricts Black people’s ability to be authentic and embrace their full humanity (Riggs, 1994). The concept of human life has been engulfed by “the European man-human conception or dismissed as not relevant” (Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019, p. 24). Non-European understandings of humanity continues to hold little influence in political and scholarly discourses (Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019). By connecting the lived experiences of Black young people to the work of Black radical scholars, I intended to reflect on the continued struggle of challenging contemporary systemic issues. This project was a space to encourage continued discussions of Canadian racialisation for Black folks without the emotional labour that comes with explaining the Black experience (Eddo-Lodge, 2017).

In addition to CRT, I initially took up Crenshaw's notion of intersectionality, addressing the varying, complex ways social categories shape dimensions and layers of lived experience (Collins, 2015). To explore both the challenges and benefits of intersectionality, this project used the lens of intracategorical complexity by interrogating boundary making and boundary defining while acknowledging the unique support from relationships built based on shared social categories (McCall, 2005; Nash, 2008). Recognising the limitations of intersectionality's ability to understand lived experiences, I took up genderace* to fill in the gap. Genderace* is an acknowledgement of embodied racialization, gendering, and classing that considers the value of separating and essentializing identity, while challenging the need for boundaries around identity (Lopez, 2018). In a collaborative project based in Europe, genderace* "demonstrates that multiple-discrimination based on racialised identities and gender remains inadequately addressed" (Hedblom, 2010, as cited in Lopez, 2018, p. 116). As discrimination tends to take place with more than one target of hate, genderace* explores the always entwined and embodied experience. In my project, genderace* reflects interconnected internalised oppressions that weigh on individuals daily.

A significant part of Black radical thought and genderace* is sharing and hearing one another's' stories, especially of those who have been historically ignored. Through story, people with lived experiences of Blackness can "provide counter-understandings to dominant ideologies" (Gildersleeve et al., 2011, p. 97), like upbeat narratives of multiculturalism, for example. This is especially true for people who exist within cultures where storytelling and oral histories are passed down to share knowledge through generations (Trahar, 2013). This research project sought to be a space where often unacknowledged embodied stories were shared, specifically stories by Black identified young adults living in a PWMC. Together, we underwent

the process of hand mapping to reflect on these deeply embodied experiences of historical and present-day oppression as persons living in minoritized bodies.

Findings and Discussion

The process of hand-mapping intended to spark young Black people contemplation into personal experiences in a PWMC. Creating art together (see hand-maps included in Appendix H) allowed time for each focus group member to consider ideas and perspectives introduced to them during the focus group discussion (Mann & Walsh, 2013). Due to its unique flexibility and required acknowledgement of assumptions and positionality (Braun & Clarke, 2019), I used thematic analysis to restory and ‘braid’ narratives. Braided narratives are powered by the weaving together of individual strands (i.e., individual stories) based on theoretical frames, qualitative research strategies and contextualizing purposes (Quiñones, 2016). In a braided narrative, everyone’s perspective overlaps one another (Bancroft, 2018) to create deeper meaning of individual experiences of racialisation as ‘multicultural’ bodies. I found the metaphor of the braid useful when visualising and working with the data. Also, I found thematic analysis complimented the braided narratives as readers can get a sense of the complexity of individual experiences, how they relate to other shared stories, Black Radical Traditions and Canadian multiculturalism literature (Bancroft, 2018).

Through immersion and reflection, I mobilised the data into the following braids. I first started my analysis by looking for standout themes until I realised I was finding comfort in distancing myself from the, at times, heavy stories shared with me by not deeply reflecting on certain thoughts from participants. I placed the conversations into objective categories like the location of or age during a racist experience instead of leaning into the fact I was the tool curating the braids from the transcripts. After feeling discontent with the objective categories I

was creating, I realised I was not honouring the rich conversations and individual insights that took place in the focus groups and interviews. This work is saturated with feelings, experiences, and emotions and I felt I needed to embrace the discomfort to best mobilise my research. After this realisation, my analysis became more free-flowing and emotion-based. I re-started my analysis by printing out the focus group transcripts and cutting sections I felt drawn to (i.e., following a curiosity, a feeling of wanting to know more). I then went through all the cuttings and started sectioning (as you would section detangled hair in preparation for braiding). With the sections prepared, I wove together the quotes from the focus groups and individual interviews, creating braids from our moments of conversation. What follows is a view into conversations that flowed through the focus groups and individual interviews. Five moments of conversation were contextualised and connected to the literature as a reflection of the present: Racist Experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo, Coping in PW spaces, Representation: Who needs it, Negotiation to Full Humanity and Community, and Discourses of Multiculturalism.

Racist experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo

In the focus group discussions and interviews, each focus group member shared recent, racist experiences they found impactful. The conversations showcase the contemporary issue of racism in Canada (Neuman & Wisdom, 2019). Imani⁴ spoke to being tokenized (i.e., using an individual from an oppressed group as a visual sign of diversity/acceptance) (Harris, 2020) by her white friends to get the attention of a Black guy: “they wanted me to be their Black friend. I could be like, the Black bait I guess”. By articulating the desire to be friends with her primarily because of her race put Imani securely in a liminal space of inclusion and exclusion (Paragg, 2015). She was valued for her race as a tool to gain favour with another Black person, not

⁴ Pseudonyms are used throughout this paper

because of who she was. There is also an underlying assumption that Black people would be more willing to be friends with a person just because they had Black ‘friends’ regardless the quality of the relationship. This racist experience hindered this Black young person’s ability to bond and build trusting relationships with her peers.

Blatantly racist experiences seep into Black people’s bodies, leading to lasting fear and lack of safety. Tanisha shared how her right for feeling secure and safe was taken away:

I used to go to the library like every night like it was like a running joke...I was like three months into my streak. And I was walking home I remember hearing on campus, like somebody's yelling nigger out the window. And they just kept yelling it and ... it's dark. It's pitch black... I'm like, literally shaking. I start running to my apartment it's only like, three minutes away... I felt comfortable on campus at night, and safe until then, I was like, never doing that again.

This violent instance of racism sparked immense fear and sadness within her, so much so she did not tell anyone other than her roommate. Tanisha felt, to be safe, she should “let it be” and not report the violence to campus police. This violent act had a lasting effect on her body that she stopped feeling safe in her community alone at night. A poignant point to highlight is she felt not reporting the racist event to campus police would better maintain her safety, even though it would be “very easy” to find out who the individual was based on which residence building the yelling was coming from. In her, and many Black people’s, mind, the police do not provide the safety and security they promise (Maynard, 2017).

Black students who moved to KW from another country, shared experiences at the intersection of racism and Xenophobia. Joseph recounted a traumatic experience he had at work:

So I work for a telecommunication company you know, so I call this guy and then he was so angry and I was like, “oh don't worry sir” - because he had a bad experience in the past - I was like, “yeah, I'm here to understand your concerns and see what we could do to help”. [he said] “So I have two concerns”. I was like, “alright, that's fine”. So he told me the first one is the price is too expensive and he's looking at how to cut down costs. So I looked at things, I put things together, I requested some credits and adjustments, and they

were able to slash down his monthly payment by like, 20 bucks. He was happy, very happy. When he finished, and I was like, “so at the beginning, you mentioned you had two concerns. So this is the first one what was the second one?” ... The second one, and he said, “Go back to your F-ing country..., go F yourself!” [And] then he hung up. Because he had heard like, my accent and I was like, “no”, but so as soon as he said that he just hung up the call. [And] I froze for like, a minute...And I was really mad, like I was mad... Immediately I took my break I went away from there. Then I ...I felt really bad. First I was like, Okay, I get it. People will always be people right, ...it was a little traumatic at the time I just couldn't believe that people would be so mean [especially] right after I helped you like you did not deserve that help but I gave it to you on a silver platter...I [sometimes wondered] I should have even come to Canada and like in my country I would not experience this things life would be okay, ... I would be held in higher esteem.

This was not the only time a focus group volunteer was unexpectedly told to go back to their “F-ing country”. What surprised Benjamin was he “didn’t even talk to him, [he didn’t] know him from anywhere”. As Ta-Nehisi Coates emphasizes, “racism is not merely a simplistic hatred. It is, more often, broad sympathy toward some and broader skepticism toward others” (Cole, 2020). In these racist interactions the focus groups members were labelled the “non-white Cultural other” (Paragg, 2015, p. 26) and therefore, deserving of abuse in the minds of the offender. Ideological and policy shifts need to take place for Black people to thrive in their communities (Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019), particularly in predominantly white mid-sized cities (PWMC) where there are fewer people of colour

Coping in Predominantly White Spaces

Focus group members collectively came to the realization their responses to racist interactions do not always need to be peaceful. Patricia shared a striking conversation with the group:

Someone told me after my PhD, I don’t need to go to my country. They are killing people, there’s war. The country’s poor, I won’t have a good life. And I’m like, if all these things happened, I would have been dead! Why am I here? She thinks because Canadians trained me like – I got trained from childhood until like 27 years. There’s just

three or four years to top up. All my knowledge and things I have is from back home, not here.

As new arrivants from a predominantly Black country, there is a perceived hierarchy sprouted from racial capitalism where Eurocentric countries are thought to be safer and provide a better life than predominantly Black countries (Johnson & Lubin, 2017). As Cedric Robinson articulated, capitalism depends on race and racial hierarchies to “justify unequal power relationships, making them appear natural” (Maynard, 2017). Any movements Black people make are subject to uninvited surveillance, judgement, and interrogation. In this storying, there was an underlying assumption that African countries lack wealth, are uneducated, and dangerous. Not only is this false, this ignores the centuries of colonialist harm and resource extraction inflicted on African countries by European countries (Johnson & Lubin, 2017). Mowatt (2021) calls this extractivism, “extraction of people for the purpose of wealth accumulation and extraction of resources from the lands that the people once inhabited” (p. 61). As continued from the previous section, it is interesting to consider who is being told to go back to their country and who assumed able to stay. The two events noted earlier were made at the member’s customer service job and when walking through the city. These events, as well as others, sparked the discussion whether responding while giving the other individual the benefit of the doubt honours them. Patricia noted sometimes “you have to put them in the right place and then let them know certain things”. By not addressing racist behaviour she felt she may have co-signed the behaviour as acceptable.

While coping with the everyday experience of PW spaces, we discussed there at times being “a need for survivor mode, being polished, be poised”. Imani emphasized there is an inevitable need to transform self-doubt into confidence; the hyper-awareness or “hypermode” is “almost like this wall [where] you’re crossing every T and dotted every I”. The negative

attributes Black people experience (e.g., subservience, criminality, lack of intelligence, dangerousness, hyper-sexuality) are a constant reminder to act in ‘acceptable’ and ‘appropriate’ ways (Maynard, 2017). Black people know the best way to cope within white spaces is to act in ways closer to naturalised displays of whiteness, so as not to be seen as abnormal, unnatural and irrelevant (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Despite this unjust countermeasure, Black lives continue to be worth less (Maynard, 2017). As Kendi (2019) makes clear, the behaviour of individuals does not shape the success of a group, anti-racist policies do. Even as we feel pressured to put in more work than those who benefit from whiteness, the resulting success will only be ‘rewarded’ to the individual. This also does not consider the community of folks who contribute to each individual’s success.

To succeed in her PW workplace, Tanisha feels required to code switch [i.e., a “temporary ‘switching on’ or adjustment of behaviors to optimize the comfort of others in exchange for a desired outcome” (McCluney et al., 2021, p. 1)] while doing her job and is her authentic self outside of work. “I definitely have to code switch like it’s definitely like that Family Guy meme, the people zip out of their white suit and it’s like a Black person inside. That’s definitely like me after work at the end of the day”. Tanisha found leaning into double consciousness (DuBois, 2018) to be helpful to her well-being as she navigates her workplace; within her are parts of herself that she feels she needs to keep private to ‘fit in’ while at her PW workplace.

Representation: Who needs it?

The focus group conversations sparked reflection on what representation means as Black people – during childhood and now as adults. For those that did grow up in the KW region, how did this PW city inform how they navigated race and racism? In the following dialogue, we

established ways representation is important for the well-being of Black people. Imani is a supply teacher and shared an uplifting experience with a student:

I remember one time I was doing a lunch duty and this one little Black girl, she just looks at me – she’s like, oh hi! She just looked at me really excited. And then she was kind of like, oh gosh that was awkward...but I just gave her as big of a smile as I could behind my mask and I just started talking to her. I just knew that she doesn’t see Black teachers all the time, and she doesn’t see a Black female teacher all the time. It’s nice being that person. It may not be common seeing a Black female teacher, but it’s like hey, there are other people like you around here.

There is a need for Black teachers who have a lived understanding of how Black children feel at school, for “more Black female teachers in positions of power”. We need Black teachers so Black students feel safe and welcomed in their classrooms. Also self-aware, authentic representations of Black adults are needed to shift the popular ideologies of Black people (e.g., lazy, angry, hypersexual, etc.) (Maynard, 2017). All students need support and encouragement and having Black mentors with a drive for solidarity and compassion for Black students is integral. We need more mentors who unapologetically challenge racist assumptions students have learned. Childhood is a pivotal time where your understanding of self is shaped by those you trust and are in relation with.

We discussed representation beyond the scope of Black bodies in positions of power to accessing basic supplies used mainly by Black people. In major grocery stores like Walmart and Zehrs there is “no real section for like Africa food”. To get African food “you have to go to like A to Z,... like how many shops even sell African food?”. When asked where the beauty supply stores are, Imani replied, “they’re in Brampton”. They had “to make do with what [was there], very little selection”. If the products do not work well with their hair, they had few alternative options. Isaiah noted, “even in the multiculturalism, there are ranks, so there are some cultures that are like, like animal farm where we say all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others”. These ideas contradict the federal government’s celebration of diversity and acceptance

of various expressions of humanity (Government of Canada, 2021). We would argue to be seen in our full humanity, we need access to ingredients to cook food from our homelands and hair products so our hair can thrive. Basic necessities like familiar food and personal care products are needed to be acknowledged as fully human.

Negotiation to Full Humanity and Community

All focus group members expressed how their journey to embracing themselves and their Blackness took time and intention. A recurring reminder brought up in discussions is Blackness is not monolithic (Maynard, 2017), however this sentiment was not explicitly acknowledged when these Black adults were growing up. They had to come to these realizations on their own after learning how to cope and survive in PW spaces. Tanisha felt more secure in herself to not keep up “that complete, hard exterior” to “let people know not [to] mess with [her]” and now wears “nail polish and jewelry”. She created space to be herself without worrying about how the world perceives them.

For Tanisha, accepting her Blackness led to an acceptance of her queerness. She found bringing her “full self to the table” gave her a new found freedom. She noted “I feel for a long time I didn’t present myself with how I felt and [now] I want to present myself the way I feel genuinely and be authentic”. We came to the conclusion, to embrace our own full humanity, Black people need to acknowledge and reject mainstream Canadian pressures like inaccurate media portrayals and monolithic assumptions (Maynard, 2017; Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019).

There is also a negotiation towards community that takes effort and patience. Joseph reflected on why they drew calluses and scars on their hand: they “made me think about the time I’ve been on Earth...like the time I’ve existed. How much we’ve been through as a community and how it kind of ages us and we bring that trauma along with us throughout our whole lives”.

So much energy needs to go into creating a safe, just world for the undervalued to thrive (Maynard, 2017). Today's collective struggle is part of a long histories of struggle (Johnson & Lubin, 2017) and this focus group member wanted to pay respect to the efforts of those who fought for a better tomorrow.

By going through the negotiation to their own humanity, members found ways to contribute to their communities. They noted always desiring “an open and safe space” to be their full selves. Imani noted “sometimes, like, you have to be willing to do that for somebody, like be that space, like create that space...yeah I guess that's a change that could come just being the first one to be vulnerable, so that more opportunities like that can happen”. Being open and vulnerable (Taiwo, 2020) is necessary for connection and relationship building. Through vulnerable, trusting relations we can build a more caring community and world for one another.

Encompassing All Peoples in Communities

In the individual interviews each member was asked what their hopes were for the shifting discourses of multiculturalism in their community, Kitchener-Waterloo. The happy, upbeat portrayal of multiculturalism does not reflect the lived reality of those, due to their racialised bodies, are unable to live as their authentic selves. We need to “start seeing one another” as human beings with unique dreams and aspirations first because policy changes will not change individual behaviour. To address these issues on a systemic level, a suggestion was made “for us to be more practical”. Real, honest conversation about the origin and repercussions of multicultural policymaking was introduced as a solution: “let's have symposiums, let's have like education, let's even have real, multicultural discussions and dialogues in our textbooks, in our classrooms. So that examples we give to kids, they can see these things from the beginning” said Joseph. These actions intend to spark growth in a society resistant to change beyond

“superficial celebration” of a diversity of cultures (Kubota, 2015, p. 9). Introducing the true history of events on this land is vital to communicating the need for organizing cohesive community supports.

Imani wanted better support systems for refugees. There is a continued welcoming of refugees and

the city itself just becoming more diverse, but at the same time, there aren't - the system in place right now is not suitable for, you know, racialized people. So I want to see more. Like ... more action, more policy changes, more support systems in place for them. Am I hopeful that that's gonna happen? Honestly, I don't see it happening anytime soon.

Again there is an explicit desire for action, in this context specifically for individuals arriving as refugees, beyond the existing pamphlets and websites (Government of Canada, 2021). The continued disparity in health, finances and well-being across races shows policy changes need to take place. Individual success does not take away the need for essential policy changes (Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019). As Kendi (2019) notes, “behaviour is something humans do, not races do” (p. 105).

Patricia addressed the ideological shift needed around those essentialized as BI&POC and especially refugees to be seen as human. She notes that many people have an

essence in their mind that all of us are here, and we need their help. Right? So then we're robbing their resources, or whatever it is, in terms of the attitude that they present... if you don't speak perfect English, then you must be a refugee. And even if you're a refugee, then you must be trying to get the easy way and it's just like, [they don't] realize just the traumatic [experiences refugees go through] ... The stuff that I hear thrown around when they realize [I'm] Canadian [perplexes my mind]. So we can talk her face off about immigrants and refugees, [because she holds] the privilege of being here as a Canadian?

White supremacist thought requires new arrivants to have ‘accent-free’, ‘perfect’ English or are otherwise seen as ‘lazy’ or trying to abuse the system (which is itself built on the abuse of groups of people), perpetuating dangerous ideologies. White supremacy normalises and measures all

other races against whiteness (Radd & Grosland, 2019). To this end, humanity is not afforded to certain non-white bodies due to their distance from whiteness, particularly as they work through great stressors.

Benjamin wanted people to “be enlightened” and “open up to accepting people from other races or other cultures”. There was a desire for characteristics of family: people being “accepting” and not having “a certain idea or perception about the people from different places”. He found an “accommodating” community who was “always ready to listen to you, always ready to accept you” at church. Looking for “down-to-Earth” people who are “accepting” of different ways of being seems to be a way Black people have found safety within PW spaces. Although many blatantly racist interactions happen daily, there are people who wish to be in community and build strong relationships. All essentialized people need a safe place to be vulnerable and build lasting connections (Taiwo, 2020).

Tanisha noted discourse will not change without “research like this” because “one of the biggest things is that they don’t see a problem until it’s labeled, and it has evidenced-based stuff”. She notes, “they need a publication and multiple at that, to come out to say, like, the sky is blue.” Although the academy is becoming more tolerant of alternative ways of doing research, education and research remains necessary to make clear that these ideologies are present among the global minority and dangerous to marginalised bodies. As Megan Ming Francis argues, asking how do we solve this problem of racial injustice is the wrong question (Ming Francis, 2016). Attending to the root causes of the current social environment, like systemic discrimination, will provide tools for moving forward. While education is one of many places to start, we need to think beyond simply prescribing education to cure all issues of racial injustice taking place in Canada (Ming Francis, 2016).

Conclusion and Suggestions to Extrapolate Research for Future Projects

Through hand-mapping (Betancourt, 2015) and collective reflection (Mann & Walsh, 2013), Black young adults were able to share their experiences of racialisation and racism while living in KW. How race was discussed (and ignored) in childhood had a great impact on the ways focus group members see race in relation to themselves as well as those around them. The meaning of race continues to shift, hopefully to become a “marker of the infinity of variations we humans hold as a common heritage and hope for the future” (Winant, 2000, p. 10). Throughout this project, the hope-filled, critical conversations were at times heavy, saddening and infuriating but also laughter-inducing and connection-building. The inexplicable feeling of creating space for one another and being understood was invaluable. Like a feed-in braid, the stories shared and created will inform our futures as Black people but will not be our futures.

Some of the focus group members recommended ways for the KW community to work towards better futures. There was a recurring call to “be more action-oriented” by having dialogues taking place at “community groups” and “community councils” to collaborate on the unique needs of the community. The KW community can investigate “expanding the already existing structures that are there to get all people involved.” There is work to be done moving from individual “silos” or “outlets” and coming together as a collective. Suggested possibilities include, more practical community sessions, town halls, and leisure events (e.g., team-based events/competitions) to come together and connect that are mindful to not further perpetuate racism, classism, sexism and more. They also discussed the possibility for mutual aid, having “community funds towards specific bodies” (e.g., “Black and Indigenous groups of people”) and scholarships for Black people who want to pursue certain school opportunities. There should be

“funding for Black entrepreneurs” to be able to access opportunities. We need more than supportive words; we need meaningful actions from institutions and the community.

As hope was a pillar of many conversations, I will articulate my hopes for future research projects. I hope for research to be a place of respite and leisure for those whose histories are full of exploitation and harm. I hope for more leisure research to challenge common ideologies of race, whiteness, and racialisation in Canada. Although, this work used *genderace**, the always embodied entanglements of gender, race, class, etc. should be addressed more explicitly in future works. I also hope research will weave in community building and connection for Black people. Through community, we can create futures where we thrive. We need to lean into emotion-based understandings of the world around us, to create space to listen to what our emotions (e.g., anger, joy, peace) tell us about the current unjust world we live in and help us find ways to resist the status quo (e.g., showing up steadfast in our politics, recognizing our own power and acting, just existing). We all deserve to live to a world free of the struggles resulting from racial capitalism (Johnson & Lubin, 2017; Maynard, 2017). Taking small radical steps will help create the collaborative, supportive PWMC we need.

Black people need freedom from all kinds of racial violence, we need arsenal to tear down racist systems and ideologies built by white supremacy in Canada. By remaining silent about the changes needing to take place, Canadians are complicit in “creating environments where Black bodies are not seen as humans” (Ming Francis, 2016). As a collective, we need to pay closer attention to the way Black people – and other peoples pushed to the margins – are treated (Ming Francis, 2016), to challenge the status quo.

Chapter 5

This chapter showcases impactful learnings from the literature and focus group discussions that I did not include in the manuscript. From these knowings, I will continue to read, learn, and grow. Similar to the conversations created in this project, this chapter is a snapshot of my thinking at the end of my Master's program. I address three areas in this chapter: first I elaborate on my current understanding of Blackness and Black Radical Thought. Then I included created conversations from quotes that resonated with me in both focus group discussions and individual interviews. I end the chapter with unanswered questions that interest me and will continue to challenge my thinking moving forward.

Theoretical Shifts

As I touched on previously, the theoretical frameworks I initially used (i.e., CRT and CRF) as a lens in this project changed after the pivotal discussion at my proposal defense. While writing the proposal, I instinctively focused on the body over the politic and did not consider how systems, institutions, and ideologies continue to perpetuate white supremacy. Dr. Lisbeth Berbarry's recommendation to consider Hall's theory of articulation provided a foundation for my lens to change. Articulation requires attending to the existence of specific conditions as well as the practice that went into creating and "sustaining specific articulations" (Clarke, 2015, p. 277). Within articulation, Hall asks us to think about "how an ideology empowers people" while considering the history of said ideology (Clarke, 2015). We are in a pivotal moment, due to the COVID-19 pandemic's magnification of racial injustices (Lau, 2021), of re-articulation of the understanding of race and racism in a Canadian context.

Black Radicalism and Black Radical Traditions combine philosophies and practices used to "articulate deep level social transformations in the lives of Black people" (Brewer, 2003, p.

109). To dismantle systems of oppression and build anew, the heteronormative, race-based make-up of society needs to be noted and articulated (Reddy, 2019). Only explicit articulation will lead to the dignity and humanity Black people deserve. Cedric Robinson, the author of *Black Marxism* and a major thinker on Black Radicalism, broke Black Radicalism down into racial capitalism and Black Radical Tradition. As understood by Ruth Wilson Gilmore, racial capitalism is “a death-dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies that organize relations within and between the planet’s sovereign political territories” (Gilmore, 2002, p. 16). Race is used as a mechanism to perpetuate society’s capitalistic structure, to the detriment of the global majority. Black Radical Tradition centers culture and spirituality from Africa, where Black people prepare “themselves through obeah, voodoo, Islam, and Black Christianity” (Al-Bulushi, 2020, p. 9).

In the 19th century, Black Radicalism integrated anti-capitalist tenets after Black Americans freed themselves from slavery and entered the workforce (Cha-Jua, 1998). Today’s Black radicalism includes Black feminism and Black queer liberation, using “grassroots community organizing, unionization drives and mass direct action” (Cha-Jua, 1998, p. 12). Thinkers like Angela Davis, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, and Robin D. G. Kelley encourage using racial capitalism to draw connections between liberatory struggles across the globe (e.g., Palestine, South Africa).

Race connects to all facets of society, making it a critical frame to understand Canadian society’s history and current inner workings (Hall, 1983). In a recorded lecture, Hall emphasized race has a “certain sliding of meaning” (thepostarchive, 2021) where the impact of race is never fully articulated. While race remained an active trait in our thinking, whether biologically, physiologically and/or genetically (thepostarchive, 2021), present day race discussions in Canada

have become more explicit. The ideological understanding behind racist institutions and internalised discrimination were created to better the lives of the global minority (Johnson & Lubin, 2017); wealthy, white, cis-gender males. To change this prominent power imbalance, there is both spoken and unspoken understanding that having money gives you value and, due to colonisation and imperialism, those who are more likely to have money are people from Eurocentric nations (Maynard, 2017). The responsibility remains placed on the individual to make their own life liveable (Walcott & Abdillahi, 2019). We still need the Black Lives Matter movement, but I wonder, when will Black lives be celebrated? The performed acknowledgement and celebration of “diverse” peoples is a way for Canada to use multiculturalism to disguise its settler colonial customs and further financial gain (i.e., through immigration) (Walcott, 2016). It does not include transferring power to racialised peoples, even though race remains a significant part of Canadian citizenship (Walcott, 2016). There continues to be exploitation of certain peoples and the planet. Both racial capitalism and Black Radical Traditions can be used to prioritize the liberation of all marginalised people. Liberation requires a reimagining of our “ontological relationality”, a reimagining where “we define ourselves and desires in infinite multiplicities” (Martin et al., 2019, p. 47). Reading the liberatory works of Mariame Kaba, Rinaldo Walcott and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor has inspired me to lean into questioning what is and imagining what our community and world could be.

In addition to the political changes that need to occur, Canadian society needs ideological shifts. As racialised people, we engage in our own minoritisation and discrimination. As race is a part of us, prescribed to us using biological markers (Kendi, 2019), we are constantly thinking about ways race, gender, class and other forms of oppression are embodied. Genderace* emphasises embodied oppression, how our own engagement with the world is filtered through

gender, race and other frames (Lopez, 2018). The acceptance of current structures does not make life easier, rather acceptance is at the detriment of most people living on Earth. Engaging with the world while internally discriminating allows these frames to persist and reproduce. The ideological shifts necessary for flourishing require a coming back to the body to reflect on our own embodied experiences.

Additional Conversations

Outside of my guiding research questions, the three following conversations resonated with me. They were created from recurring thoughts and ideas shared in the focus group discussions and the individual interviews. The first being a reminder to intentionally choose who to be in relation with, the second contextualising how events in one's home country can inform their every day experiences, and third looking at the experience of participating in an anti-racist taskforce/committee as a Black person.

“Protect yourself, protect your spirit”: Consider who hears your story.

Patricia: “The first one I was alone - the hand-mapping – I was alone. That was just a reflection of my life - who I am but this one I have like I'm really chatting with family”

Imani: I agree, it feels like “I'm talking to family, like people who really understands me”

Tanisha: Creating the first hand-map was “reflective” and “isolating”, but now I can “critically think” about my “experiences” along with everyone else's. I “went from isolation to community, it feels less alone and that helped me process a lot... and reflect on a deeper level”.

Joseph: I found this process reflective as well. “Thinking about how, in that moment at that time, not really noticing it as much - like a little bit - but then as I got older, kind of really looking back and thinking like okay...this was a different experience for me than it was a child who was white in this city.”

Imani: “It feels great to be understood by like everyone here”

Benjamin: Even to “talk about these different issues and all our different experiences, it feels like a good connection”.

Patricia: Yes, yes.

Tanisha: “I think there is a level of heaviness that my heart felt hearing the stories...even the different thoughts of like questioning ourselves...makes me feel sad inside as well. But then just being able to see different faces and you know share that collective feeling or you know, that feeling of frustration...but also then knowing that you’re here surviving and doing the best that you can also gives me incredible warmth”.

Patricia: Oh wow, like “I will be connected to you forever (laughter). Empathy”.

Tanisha: Right, because unfortunately, we “may have our families and friends and stuff like that” but “in society we’re by ourselves and even when we see other folks... you never know if they’ve internalized anti-Black racism”.

Benjamin: Like “do you want to be friends? Do you want talk together about this? Or do you-are you gonna shun me? Because I’m Black and you’re Black? And you don’t want too much Blackness? You’re right, you never know”.

As Desmond Cole advises, when sharing heavy and at times traumatic experiences in our pasts, we need to consider who we are speaking with. We don’t have to bleed in front of people for the things we deal with to be valid (The Agenda with Steve Paikin, 2020). I wanted this group to be a supportive space so all the Black people involved could pause and contemplate. However, I did not consider the potential isolation they would feel creating the first hand-map on their own. I better understand there is a specific experience when reflecting alone without even a virtual connection. Coming together virtually to both discuss the experience of creating the first hand-map and creating the second was both relieving and bonding. From being strangers at the beginning of the focus group to at the end suggesting collaboration on race-related research projects, the focus group members were able to connect and be vulnerable with one another. As a facilitator, I was overjoyed to see the connections form over the course of the focus group session in real time.

Experiences back home informing our everyday.

Tanisha: KW is a very unique space. “They dance around things kind of”.

Benjamin: There is a lot of work to be done. “Even how I drew my hand, it showed like calluses on [my hand-map], a lot of vein work, just to show that it wasn’t necessarily – there’s a lot of work that had to go into actualizing whatever goals or visions that I had in my mind”.

Patricia: “I also think sometimes the background counts. You know back in Ghana like, unlike the white community here, you are trained to speak up. So back home from where I come from, hardly do – I wasn’t actually natured into that. Unless you’re called. And during classes, most of the professors do the talking it’s not like a discussion, like here.”

Tanisha: “I’m originally from the GTA, [so] it added the next level and that at the fingertips. I had ...those dreams and those things I was thinking about, they’re just kind of like hanging on by the edge” I drew my hand “openhand like this cause it’s kind of like you’re taking what you kind of get and then making the best of it”.

Benjamin: “When I moved here I remember the first place [we visited] was St. Jacob’s farmer’s market. And I just saw Mennonites...it was just a complete culture shock. [After moving here] I remember – I don’t know, I’ve never fit in here. Like to be completely honest, and I noticed it as soon as I moved here.”

In this conversation, the participants used their hand-maps to further explain the experience of moving from “back home” to KW: their hand acquired new callouses due to the additional work required for survival as a Black person, their dreams are expressed at their fingertips (almost out of reach) and an open hand position shows a requirement to take what is offered. There is additional labour taking place when moving from a home city or country, with certain expectations and normalities, to a PWMC where you are expected to adapt to better fit into the PW culture. As one participant noted, even moving to another city in Ontario is a major change. Survival is so pressing that Black people’s dreams are more likely placed aside to meet their basic needs for survival.

Popularity of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), anti-racism committees, and taskforces.

Imani: On my hand here “the afro-based colours like the red, green and like the black. I put it like at this corner of the hand to show that that’s literally the space that they provide

here in the region. And even the spaces here, it's only like this because of you know, the whole George Floyd and the EDI that are going around." So if it wasn't "this climate right now [the colours] just probably would have been beyond the hand, there's no, there's no space it. They've made absolutely no provision or space for that."

Isiah: "Even though we've been there here from time, right."

Patricia: "So for me, I feel like racism stuff, might be reduced...it might die down a bit but I'm not sure if it can stop completely."

Isiah: "I agree with you there...I remember learning [about] generational change...When you give humanity generations to change, yeah...I'm hopeful for that".

Joseph: "The reality of like, how we really haven't progressed that much...it's hard to stay hopeful".

Patricia: "The one question that kept coming to was, should we have even gotten to this point?... Should we even be so desperate, that it is only hope that's the way out for me?"

Benjamin: "When did we did even create this mess? Like when did we get here?"

Imani: It's all very tiring. "I served on the committee for anti-Black and anti-racism, whatever, for my department. And one of the concerns we raised was the ratio of Black students to non-Black students, and also Black faculty to non-Black faculty. And you think about it like in the whole [department], there's no single Black faculty, like predominantly white males, you know, things like that."

Patricia: The committee I'm on "they do pretty, like they're now doing good stuff. I think we're just - like the part where I was. And I think we talked a lot. And I didn't feel like I was doing much besides just talking. But you know, as conversations are important too, so I don't want to belittle like they're doing great work."

Isiah: But "a lot of action is missing".

Joseph: In my department's anti-Black racism task force, I was one of two Black people and "I will say that that was the only time I had an active conversation on racism against Black people. [But unfortunately] it's more like the bureaucratic kind of things that are done. You have these meetings, upon meetings upon meetings, you present your policy documents, and nothing really changes because it's not to the department, as these policies have to go to the faculty level."

Imani: We still are "all part of this systemic and bureaucratic, capitalist and hegemonic white supremacist framework, which is called academia".

This conversation was very telling; committees and taskforces were created in response to the demand for racial justice in 2020. While KW-based institutions expressed a desire to create just communities, how much has changed because of these committees? How do we move beyond the conversations? Participants expressed a dissatisfaction about the amount of time spent on conversation and the lack of action. It felt like most of the time spent in these groups did not lead to action or if it did, significant time will pass before change takes place. Waiting for policy changes is tiring, especially after investing energy into having heavy conversations and collaborating on tangible solutions. These Black young adults find all they can do now is hope, hope for material conditions to improve for those pushed to the margins.

Questions Left Unanswered

These questions are a combination of questions for future research as well as reflective questions I continued to ask myself as I was writing the manuscript:

1. How can genderace* be used as a conceptual frame to critique multiculturalism in a Canadian context?
2. How did the recent monumental shifts in race discussions create material changes for Black people, if at all? For all folks who identify as racialised?
3. How can PW spaces in Canada better celebrate individuals who are essentialized as BI&POC?
4. How can hand-mapping and body-mapping be used to challenge the “peace” that comes with the status quo?
 - a. How have we unconsciously made ourselves smaller (i.e., internalised discrimination) to accommodate the dominant way of being?
5. What could happen if I was (and we were) less afraid to name racism as racism?

6. What am I holding back that may have been silenced in the past and may continue to silence me in this moment? What am I fearful of being judged for?
7. What would I write challenging current societal systems if I knew nobody would read it?

Moving forward I am taking these questions, as well as others, into my future research endeavours. This project was a step outside my comfort zone; a way to trouble my own understanding of race, racialisation and racism(s) in a uniquely Canadian context. The call to come back to our own bodies to identify what is not working in community is powerful. I found hand-mapping to be the perfect tool to reflect on experienced held deep within the body. As a Black person excited by this research process, I will continue to illuminate and challenge what currently is with the hope of creating space for strong relationships and mutuality. Whatever my next endeavors, I will take my learnings and new perspectives with me. I am so appreciative of the young Black-Canadian adults who were willing to share their time, energy, and stories with me.

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Appendix A – Research Information Letter and Consent Form

Title of the study: Living "multiculturalism" in predominantly white spaces: Mapping racialisation in Kitchener-Waterloo through Genderace*

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Kimberly Lopez, Assistant Professor, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo. Email: kjlopez@uwaterloo.ca

Student Investigator: Akua Kwarko-Fosu, MA Student, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo. Email: akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca

To help you make an informed decision regarding your participation, this letter will explain what the study is about, the possible risks and benefits, and your rights as a research participant. If you do not understand something in the letter, please ask one of the investigators prior to consenting to the study. You will be provided with a copy of the information and consent form if you choose to participate in the study.

What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a research study about critiquing Canada's identity as a multicultural nation by exploring Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) young adults' embodied experiences of living in predominantly white mid-sized cities (PWMSC). The purpose of the study is to contribute to greater understanding of BIPOC young adults' embodied experiences as their authentic selves and while living in Kitchener-Waterloo. Past research has shown Canada's position on multiculturalism have not necessarily supported individuals who identify as BIPOC living in PWMSC, potentially affecting well-being.

This study is taking place as part of my (Akua Kwarko-Fosu) MA thesis research. I plan to host a workshop featuring a hand-mapping exercise and create theme-based stories in short videos and/or anonymous storyteller twitter threads.

I. Your responsibilities as a participant

What does participation involve?

Participation in the study will consist of independently following the series of short pre-recorded videos I provide to create a hand-map and, following this, attend a group discussion and hand-mapping workshop that is expected to last between 1.5-2 hours. You will need to provide your mailing address which will only be used to send you the hand-mapping material package. You will have about two weeks to go through the videos, create the first hand-map and take notes (written or audio-recorded) based on the reflection questions. An email survey to schedule the workshop will be sent out at the beginning of the two-week period. During the workshop, you will be asked to participate in discussions of topics of identity, experiences of leisure, sense of belonging, and thoughts on race in community. The types of questions I will ask include:

What experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo have shaped you?

What do your hands tell us about the life you've lived?

What do your hand positions tell us about you?

The workshop session will be conducted over an online platform, Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Teams has implemented technical, administrative, and physical safeguards to protect the information provided via the Services from loss, misuse, and unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, or destruction. However, no Internet transmission is ever fully secure or error free. Given the group format of this session we will ask you to keep in confidence information that identifies or could potentially identify a participant and/or his/her comments.

Who may participate in the study?

The study will involve up to seven participants and in order to participate in the study you must identify as Black, Indigenous, or a person of colour, be between 18 and 30 years of age and live in the Waterloo region.

II. Your rights as a participant

Is participation in the study voluntary?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide to leave the study at any time by communicating this to me, Akua. You may decline to answer any question(s) you prefer not to answer (e.g., by requesting to skip the question). You can request your data be removed from the study up until October 2021 as it is not possible to withdraw your data once the thesis has been submitted to the University of Waterloo. Please note that due to the group workshop format it may be difficult to remove all your data.

Will I receive anything for participating in the study?

In appreciation of your time, you will receive a \$25 gift card. If you decide to not complete the study, you will still receive the gift card.

What are the possible benefits of the study?

Your participation may contribute to the development of a shared space to discuss personal lived experiences and feelings relating to racialisation in Kitchener-Waterloo with people who may have had similar experiences. As well, the discussions may have scholarly benefits by contributing deeper insights into potential tensions with individual positionality and PWMSC. Additionally, the knowledge translation of discussions into TikTok videos and anonymous storyteller threads on Twitter will enable for further discussions of the hand maps and shared experiences of racialisation in predominantly white spaces.

What are the risks associated with the study?

There may be risks and harms associated with this study such as psychological or emotional risks (i.e., feeling distressed, embarrassed, worried, upset, regret, loss of confidence, disruption). Please remember if a question or discussion makes you uncomfortable, you can choose not to

answer. During the study, I will provide mental health resources to ensure you are able to speak to a professional, if needed.

Will my identity be known?

The research team and the other participants in the workshop will know what you said. To ensure confidentiality, you will be given the opportunity to choose a pseudonym.

Will my information be kept confidential?

Your identity will be kept confidential by removing identifying information from the transcripts and deleting the audio recordings after I defend my thesis (expected to be December 2021). All information you provide will be considered confidential and grouped with responses from other participants. Research data (i.e., hand-map drawings, transcripts, photographs, other electronic data) will be retained for minimum of 7 years at which time it will be confidentially shredded or destroyed. All electronic data will be securely stored in an encrypted file on my password-protected computer. Unless approved, no identifying information will be used in my thesis, or any presentations or publications based on this research. Given the group format of this session we will ask you to keep information that identifies or could potentially identify a participant and/or his/her/their comments confidential.

III. Questions, comments, or concerns

Who is sponsoring/funding this study?

This study is supported by the University of Waterloo and a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council scholarship.

Has the study received ethics clearance?

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE# 43269). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

Who should I contact if I have questions regarding my participation in the study?

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact Akua Kwarko-Fosu by email at akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca.

Akua Kwarko-Fosu, BA
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo
akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca

Or

Dr. Kimberly Lopez, Assistant Professor
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo
kjlopez@uwaterloo.ca

Consent Form

By providing your consent, you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

Title of the study: Living "multiculturalism" in predominantly white spaces: Mapping racialisation in Kitchener-Waterloo through Genderace*

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study conducted by Akua Kwarko-Fosu, under the supervision of Dr. Kimberly Lopez (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo). I have had the opportunity to ask questions related to the study and have received satisfactory answers to my questions and any additional details.

I was informed that participation in the study is voluntary and that I can withdraw this consent by informing the researcher.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE# 43269). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions contact Akua Kwarko-Fosu at akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca.

- ◆ I am aware the focus group will be recorded to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.
- ◆ I give permission for the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes from this research.

I agree of my own free will to participate in the study.

Participant's name: _____

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's/Witness' signature _____ Date: _____

Appendix B – Recruitment Poster



PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH IN: BIPOC young adults' experiences of well-being, multiculturalism, and whiteness

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of ***lived experiences of BIPOC young adults.***

To take part in this study, volunteers must:

- Identify as a Black, Indigenous or person of colour/racialised person
- Be an adult, between the ages of 18 and 30
- Currently live in the Waterloo region

If you volunteer to be in this study, your participation will consist of:

- Creating artistic representations of lived experiences
- Discussing lived experiences as a BIPOC young adult
- Providing recommendations for wellness for BIPOC people

Participation will involve approximately **2 hours** of your time:

- Completing a series of instructional videos independently (approx. 30 minutes)
- One virtual arts-based workshop and group discussion (1-2 hours)

In appreciation for your time, you will receive ***a \$25 gift card.***

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

Akua Kwarko-Fosu

Department of Recreation & Leisure Studies

Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo

at Email: natkwark@uwaterloo.ca

This study has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance from a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Board.

Appendix C – Video/image Consent Form

Consent Form (video/image representation)

Consent to Use Video and/or [Digital Images or Photographs] in Teaching, Presentations, and Publications

(Note: If you are using a digital camera, select “Digital Images”. If you are using photography film e.g., 35 mm, use “Photographs”)

Sometimes a certain *[image or photograph]* and/or part of a videotape clearly show a particular feature or detail that would be helpful in data representation or when presenting the study results at a scientific presentation or in a publication.

I agree to allow video and/or *[digital images or photographs]* in which I appear to be used in data representation on social media platforms (i.e., TikTok and Twitter), scientific presentations and/or publications with the understanding that I will not be identified by name. I am aware that I may withdraw this consent at any time without penalty.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE# 43269). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions contact Akua Kwarko-Fosu at akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca.

Print Name: _____

Signature of Participant _____

Dated at Waterloo, Ontario: _____

Witnessed _____

Appendix D – Letter of Appreciation

University of Waterloo

Date

Dear *[Insert Name of Participant]*,

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study entitled “Living "multiculturalism" in predominantly white spaces: Mapping racialisation in Kitchener-Waterloo through Genderace*”. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to critique Canada’s national narrative of multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion by hearing stories of lived experiences from BIPOC young adults.

The data collected during from the series of videos and hand-mapping workshop will contribute to a better understanding of the embodied experiences of BIPOC young adults as they navigate predominately white social spaces. Also, to how stories shared in the discussions can spark further engagement on social media platforms (i.e., TikTok, Twitter)

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE# 43269). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions contact Akua Kwarko-Fosu at akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca.

As previously mentioned, your individual identity will be kept confidential. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, I plan on sharing this information with the research community through seminars, conferences, presentations, and journal articles. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or would like a summary of the results, please provide your email address, and when the study is completed, anticipated by December 2021, I will send you the information. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me by email as noted below.

Akua Kwarko-Fosu

University of Waterloo
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Health
akua.kwarkofosu@uwaterloo.ca

Dr. Kimberly Lopez
kjlopez@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix E – Hand-Mapping Scripts

Introduction Video (2 minutes)

Hi! As you know, my name is Akua and I am a masters student at the University of Waterloo in the Recreation and Leisure Studies department. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my thesis. My project's goal is to get at the feelings of Black young people living in the Waterloo region, specifically Kitchener-Waterloo a predominantly white mid-sized city. Around the globe Canada is known as a multicultural, inviting, and welcoming nation for all people. However, this doesn't always reflect the actual experiences of BI&POC communities living in Canada, especially those outside of heavily populated cities – Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. I wanted to create a space where Black folks can come together and reflect on how our bodies feel when we are essentialized and tokenized. Throughout this project, we will be engaging in hand-mapping and hand-mapping allows us to use our hands as our canvas to create visual representations of lived experiences. In this video series we will be making the first of two hand-maps, which we will compare to a second hand-map created during our group discussion. You will be asked to periodically take pictures of your hand-map in progress for analysis and publication purposes. As previously mentioned, with your consent, our discussions and your hand-maps will be reviewed to create TikTok videos with the goal of sparking conversation about the actual experiences of folks living in KW as a Black young person. Examples of these were included in the information letter. The first hand-map will be created in the other two videos in this series, where we will explore how we act and exist when we are in the world as our genuine selves, authentic selves. The second hand-map, that we will be creating together during the discussion group, will explore how we are currently existing while living in Kitchener-Waterloo and navigating systems of whiteness. Thank you for your willingness to be here and participate in this research project.

Hand-Tracing Video (3 minutes)

So our first map will explore how we act and exist when we are in the world as our genuine selves, authentic selves.

We use our hands all the time. They are an extension of our identities. They connect us to objects and other people. They are what we use to care and provide for ourselves. They can also be

representations of ourselves, they are covered by skin with a particular colour associated with a race - that in itself has meaning. They can have particular scars or callouses, broken nails or manicured nails – it all contributes to our identity.

First we will start with tracing our hands. When do you feel the most yourself? What are you doing? Are you with other people or alone? As you're reflecting on those times, consider what emojis you use, feel connected to, what positions do your hands take up? Let's use hand emojis - what emojis do you feel most represent you? It could be a peace sign, A-Ok, the middle finger, stop, wave, or high five, the fist or power sign to name a few (sharing pictures of each on the screen). Now take some time to choose a hand position and please trace that position on the paper. After you are done, please take a picture of your hand tracing. Think about, jot down or voice record thoughts or stories about why you've picked this hand position to represent you. When we meet online, we will discuss these stories with one another.

Adding Details Video (1 minute)

In this video you will be adding detail to your hand-maps. What about your hands tell us about the life you've lived? What jewelry do you wear? Do you have any scars or marks that are meaningful to you? Take some time to add details to your hand using the materials I sent you... Can you think of a time when a symbol, word or image was really meaningful for you in your life? Please add anything that comes to mind to your hand-map. After you are done, again please take a picture. Do you believe your hands are a reflection of the life you want to live or not? Take some time to reflect on the questions and take notes/voice record to contribute to discussions at our upcoming focus group meeting.

Hand-Mapping Workshop (1-2 hours)

Online: using Microsoft Teams or Zoom

Welcome and verbal consent, and introduction

- Review information about the study process
- Participants will introduce themselves by answering ice-breaker questions:

Hi everyone, welcome to our hand-mapping workshop and reflection session! Thank you again for taking the time to participate in this research, your time and efforts are so appreciated. As a reminder I will be recording our discussion both the audio and video recording and I will be

deleting the video recording after transcription. So I will start recording now **[start recording]**. I ask you to keep in confidence information that identifies or could potentially identify a participant and/or their comments. If need be you can pass on any questions or stop participating at any time during our discussion. So as I mentioned in my emails to all of you, information letter and at the beginning of the video series that I sent you, our first map explored how we act and exist when we are in the world as our genuine selves, authentic selves. The second hand-map, that we will be creating together today, will explore feelings that arise for while living in KW and navigating systems of whiteness.

To get comfortable and a little familiar with each other, I wanted us to go around and introduce ourselves by sharing something that fuels or energizes us and something that helps us find peace. I'll go first, something that energizes me is working out and one thing that helps me find peace is listening to music while driving or being in nature.

Reflect on creating the first hand-map: Thank you all for sharing. Now before this meeting, all of you created your first hand-maps to represent your embodied experience as your authentic, genuine selves. I thought it would be helpful to talk about what stories or emotions came to mind for folks as they were drawing their hand-maps, as we get to know each other a little bit. Would anyone like to go first? [If no one volunteers, I will go first – go through questions asked in the hand-mapping series]

- Ask prompting questions, did anyone else have a similar experience?
- What questions stood out to you when you were creating your first hand-maps?
 - o When do you feel the most yourself? What are you doing? Are you with others or alone?
 - o Why did you pick that hand position? What stories come to mind?
 - o Do you believe your hands are a reflection of the life you want to live or not? What does that life look like?

Second hand map: Let's think about ourselves in relation to the spaces we are in. Canada describes itself as a multicultural, diverse country that is accepting of all people. Do you see that narrative reflected in your experiences living in Kitchener-Waterloo? Let's reflect how it feels

living in KW. What type of hand gestures are you taking up in KW spaces? Take some time to reflect and decide on the hand gesture you most take up while living in KW. Here are the hand emojis to inspire you [Share screen]. Once you have decided, trace your hand in that position, and take a photo... What experiences in Kitchener-Waterloo have shaped you? What hand positions best represent you? What do your hand positions tell us about you?

Let's add some detail to your hand-maps, how do your hands represent you when you are moving through Kitchener-Waterloo? Would you add the same meaningful jewelry or marks? Do you present yourself differently? Take some time to add those details now... Are there any symbols, words or images you would add to represent this hand map – please add them now. After you are done, again please take a picture. ... Do you see yourself reflected in this hand-map and if yes, in what ways? How do the spaces you navigate encourage you to present yourself as you do? Tell us a story that reflects why your hand is decorated in that way.

Now let's talk about What is your personal slogan for your hand-map? What are your hopes? How do you feel when you hope? What symbols, words or images represent hope for you? Please add that to your first hand-map.

Comparing the two hand-maps

- Thinking back to the details you added to the first hand-map – have you added the same details?
- Now look at both of the maps to compare, do you see the hand gestures as complimentary? Why or why not?
- How is being a Black young adult in Canada part of your identity, if at all? How do these hand-maps represent your identity?

Connect hand to our body: think about difference between maps,

Are the gestures different, if they are why? how does your body feel and react after seeing that difference on paper? When you think about those differences how does it show up in your bodies? For me it shows up as... Where does it show up for you? What would it feel like if these hand-maps were exactly the same? Could they ever be?

We've discussed the differences, let's look at the similarities now. What similarities do you see in this space? Are your hands doing similar things? Is there something you can connect over the maps or in other people's maps?

Thank you all for your participation, vulnerability and openness. You were willing to try something new and I really appreciate you showing up to discuss with me and each other. If there are any questions or comments you'd like to add, you have my email. Also I will be meeting with each of you over the next week, so you can bring any concerns there. Thanks again folks and have a great rest of your evening!

Appendix F – Video Series and Workshop Plan

Phase One (Series of Videos)		Time	Content
Given about two weeks to complete first map and respond to email scheduling online workshop	Introduction and Going over Consent	5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce myself and explain the purpose of the project • Show appreciation for volunteering to participate • Go over what is in the hand-mapping package (see appendices) • Read over and sign the consent form • Remind of knowledge translation (i.e., TikTok videos and Twitter threads)
	What is Hand-Mapping?	1 -2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how hand-mapping is adapted from body-mapping to understand embodied experiences • Benefits of tuning into embodied experiences • Show pictures of hand-maps and body-maps to spark inspiration
	Tracing the Hand	2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize this hand-map’s purpose is to explore our authentic selves • Decide on position for hand-map will take up (i.e., give visual examples of emojis) • Reminder to take picture of hand
	Adding details and accessories to the Hand	3 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage addition of detail and accessories using provided markers and pencil crayons • Reminder to take picture of hand
Phase Two (Online Hand-mapping Workshop)	Embodied experiences navigating colonized spaces	1.5-3 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and introduce self, reminder this meeting will be recorded • Reminder of consent?? • short ice-breaker (to ensure sound is working and get everyone used to talking in the online space) • Discussion based on authentic selves hand-maps (show questions) • Remind if they can contact me for an individual interview if they wish to discuss further

*Plans subject to change through the planning process of the research project

Appendix G

A: What racist experiences in KW have stuck with you?

Imani: "I've definitely recognized throughout all of my life, [especially] middle school and like high school. [The white girls wanted Black guys] so they wanted me to be their Black friend. I could be like, the Black bait I guess."

Tanisha: That reminds me, me and my "friends who were also Black, we had like friends in our class that were white. And my one friend had a party and invited them to the party. And it was fine or whatever. And then this group of white friends had a party and me and my other friend went alone. So we were the only two Black people there. And this guy – the same guy who was supposed to be our friend was like to us...now you know how I felt at your event."

Patricia: "My workplace, I know, I'm Black. I'm the only Black person at the front. And sometimes, like people are very rude. I had one guest actually come asking me, do I do we wash our hair? Like, do we wash our head? That's not a question to ask like. So my manger, I have a manager who is also Black. And she came and I told her that and she was like, Yeah, you are too tolerant. Because that's really - you should have answered head on... I'm there with white people. And the rudeness I get is different from what the white people get. Yeah, so sometimes I work with people and I'm trying to solve their problems. They're like, is there no one [else] to talk to?"

Joseph: "So I work for a telecommunication company you know, so I call this guy and then he was so angry and I was like oh don't worry sir - because he had a bad experience in the past - I was like, Yeah, I'm here to understand your concerns and see what we could do to help. [he said] So I have two concerns. I was like, alright, that's fine. So he told me the first one is the price is too expensive and he's looking at how to cut down costs. So I looked at things, I put things together, I requested some credits and adjustments, and they were able to slash down his monthly payment by like, 20 bucks. He was happy, very happy. When he finished, and I was like, so at the beginning, you mentioned you had two concerns. So this is the first one what was the second one? ... The second one, and he said, Go back to your F-ing country..., go F yourself! [And] then he hung up. Because he had heard like, my accent and I was like, no, but so as soon as he said that he just hung on the call. [And] I froze for like, a minute...And I was really mad, like I was mad... Immediately I took my break I went away from there. Then I ...I felt really bad. First I was like, Okay, I get it. People will always be people right, ...it was a little traumatic at the time I just couldn't believe that people would be so mean [especially] right after I helped you like you did not deserve that help but I gave it to you on a silver platter...I [sometimes wondered] I should have even come to Canada and like in my country I would not experience this things life would be okay, ... I would be held in higher esteem."

Tanisha: “I used to go to the library like every night like it was like a running joke. Cause I had a streak going for like three months straight, like every day I'd walk back from the library at midnight, but it was campus like so I felt safe until one night... I was like three months into my streak. And I was walking home I remember hearing on campus, like somebody's yelling nigger out the window. And they just kept yelling it and ... it's dark. It's pitch black. And walking home I'm like, literally shaking I start running to my apartment it's only like, three minutes away. But like, I stopped going after that, yeah [that] was the core experience... Second year, I felt comfortable on campus at night, and safe until then, I was like, never doing that again.”

Benjamin: So I have the peace sign and what I was thinking about - me and my friends “we’re just walking. And there was this white guy that actually walked to us and then just told us to go back to our country, just like that. Like you know, we didn’t even talk to him. We don’t know him from anywhere...I was a bit surprised.”

Joseph: I “get on the bus and nobody will want to sit next to me, like people would be standing and some other people are sitting next to each other. But like I have empty seats in front of me and behind me and beside me and nobody will sit. People rather want to stand.”

Imani: “It’s like the white people smile, that’s one thing because my grandma moved up here as well recently and like that’s something she talks about to this day. It’s just like... a struggle to get a hello out of people sometimes like me. It’s just like this [imitates smile], barely smile...many times like just going on a walk and like people, like you say good morning and they just look you in your face and keep walking”.

Patricia: “I think few months ago, I was passing by one apartment, and was this white woman behind me? She just I just heard [whisper sound], but no one is. I'm not an animal. So I didn't respond. So I kept hearing [whisper sound] and I'm like, Okay, let me turn, I turned and the woman was like, Can you move to that side for me to pass? First thing that came to mind was maybe because of COVID. Or maybe she has a disease or something. So let me just stand aside for her to pass. So I stood aside and she passed but there are some white people in front, and she actually worked through them. So I'm like, because I'm black. That's why she asked me to go and stand there because she easily passed through some people right in front of me.”

Tanisha: “People are in their ways...”

How to Cope in PW Spaces

Patricia: Generally I “think I behave like I want to naturally but depending on the circumstances...I think I pretend because I don’t want to retaliate. So I just, I just maintain calmness”.

A: So you ignore...?

Patricia: So I just try to as much as possible to swallow everything. And just be nice...like my work for instance – customer service and stuff. I actually have to swallow stuff. And just be nice”.

Benjamin: Hmmm you see, “I don’t think we always have to pick peace. Some intentionally want to be rude, and some they know, but they are trying to be ignorant...I’m sure they’ve heard of this and this and this but...they just try to pick fights”.

Patricia: “Someone told me after my PhD, I don’t need to go to my country. They are killing people, there’s war. The country’s poor, I won’t have a good life. And I’m like, if all these things happened, I would have been dead! Why am I here? She thinks because Canadians trained me like – I got trained from childhood until like 27 years. There’s just three or four years to top up. All my knowledge and things I have is from back home, not here.”

Benjamin: Exactly, that’s it right there. “You don’t have to always pick the peace sign, no. The peace sign. Other than that, they will just be walking on you like a doormat”.

Joseph: “I actually met someone,...and we were talking and she asked where I was from originally. Like Ghana, okay and then she asked “is it big? Like Waterloo? I wanted to respond...hey just go and search on the internet. But the person was old and my culture is like, I can’t be rude to an elder. Yeah so I just swallowed, I’m like yes it’s bigger than Waterloo, are you serious – I just wanted to add that. Are you fucking kidding me? Like, how can you even ask me that question?”.

Patricia: “What you’ve said kinda like, hit me a little bit because sometimes, yeah we don’t have to choose peace.” For my second hand-map I picked the peace sign and what you said stood out to me because sometimes “I think you have to put them in the right place and then, you know, try and let them know certain things”.

Benjamin: “I have this always at the back of my mind. This colour actually sells you out.”

Patricia: “I definitely have to code switch like it’s definitely like Family Guy meme, the people zip out of their white suit and it’s like a Black person inside like that’s definitely like me after work at the end of the day”

Benjamin: “If you don’t have a certain level of confidence, that people will try to tear you down...add in the whole stereotypes...you’re gonna have to flex on a next level”.

Joseph: “I think I’ve turned my initial imposter syndrome into like, a better heightened area...it’s almost like this wall [where] you’re crossing every T and dotted every I”.

Benjamin: “The only thing you can beat them with is your knowledge, your brains.”

Patricia: “There’s almost like a need for “survivor mode”, being polished, be poised and stuff like that, right?”

Focus on your goals, you’re not here for them. You’re here for a purpose.

What does representation mean for Black people when we know so much more needs to change?
What does it mean as a child in this city and as a young adult?

Imani: “I remember one time I was doing a lunch duty and this one little Black girl, she just looks at me – she’s like, oh hi! She just looked at me really excited. And then she was kind of like, oh gosh that was awkward...but I just gave her as big of a smile as I could behind my mask and I just starting talking to her.” I just knew that she doesn’t see Black teachers all the time, and she doesn’t see a Black female teacher all the time”. It’s nice being that person. It may not be common seeing a Black female teacher, but it’s like hey, there are other people like you around here”.

Joseph: “you are in a position of privilege, power, authority. And the things you see carry so much worth, right, the number of people students that will pass through your tutelage will. I’m just thinking about the impact that your voice carries”.

Patricia: “Oh, this is also like a representation of power, authority and things like that.”

Representation is having Black people in positions of power and influence, but also includes access to specific supplies to (i.e., African food, Black hair products).

Joseph: “If Canada is really multicultural, then we should not have sections where you find like sections for like Indian food and then sections for like Chinese food but there’s no real section for like African food.” To get African food “you have to go to like A to Z, like how many shops even sell African food? But it is very easy for an Indian to walk to Walmart ...to get stuff, it’s very easy for Chinese people. It’s very easy for non-white bodies to get things they want.”

A: “Access to like hair and beauty products..., where are the beauty supply stores?”

Imani: “Yeah, they’re in Brampton”.

Patricia: “There’s like one or two...So I had to make do. Yeah it wasn’t the best...so I have to make do with what I had here, very little selection”.

A: “And that’s so hard, like what if the things don’t work well with your hair? That’s all you got.”

Joseph: “Even in the multiculturalism, there are ranks, so there are some cultures that are like, like animal farm where we say all animals are equal but some are more equal than others”.

Patricia: “There’s very little representation of Black bodies.”

Being unapologetically yourself to support others

Imani: Right now I'm "adding like nail polish and jewelry. Because...I like rings, nails and stuff". It kinda connects to "when I first moved here, like I said I was angry [and] felt like I had to be super hard. And couldn't be like, gentle...I had to be tough in order to like, let people know not mess with me. [Now] I'm acting like I always have been. I'm confident in who I am like – I can just be that and I don't have that complete, hard exterior that I used to have".

Benjamin: "I found that it's best to just like, you know, bring my full self to the table when I'm working with people and I'm in collaboration with people in order to not just hide my identity. I feel for a long time I didn't present myself with how I felt and didn't line up for a really long time."

A: So you're leaning into who you are?

Benjamin: "Yeah, that really resonated with me and like I want to present myself the way I feel genuinely and be authentic".

Joseph: "You don't you don't pay for dreaming. You don't pay for it. If you dream big set dream as big as the ocean, you don't pay for it. If you dream and it doesn't come through, nobody will charge you. Right? They don't pay you for your dream. If it doesn't come true just dream another dream, you know, don't worry so much about that, like it's just keep dreaming. And who knows it might work out right?"

Tanisha: "I guess I could change, I can start in KW, like being completely confident in who I am. And being an example to other Black people."

Imani: The calluses and scars you drew on your hand "made me think about the time I've been on Earth...like the time I've existed. How much we've been through as a community and how it kind of ages us and we bring that trauma along with us throughout our whole lives".

Benjamin: "I feel like we always want like an open and safe space".

Tanisha: "But sometimes, like, you have to be willing to do that for somebody, like be that space, like create that space...yeah I guess that's a change that could come just being the first one to be vulnerable, so that more opportunities like that can happen".

Joseph: "A shoulder to lean on or a listening ear to those around. And being willing to share my story with people so they know they're not alone."

What are your hopes for shifting discourses of multiculturalism in KW?

Benjamin: “I'm hoping a lot of people will be enlightened. A lot of people open up to accepting people from other race or other cultures. I'm hoping you know, we would all become Oh, that's weird to say, but like a big family (laughing). Which I know it's impossible [maybe] not become a family. But ... people open up, like people would be accepting and people wouldn't [have] a certain idea or perception about the people from different places. So essentially, that's what I'm hoping for. Yeah. People be accommodating as well. [Like the church I joined], Waterloo Pentecostals - they are so accommodating and they are like always ready to listen to you, always ready to accept you. Always ready to talk to you to approach you and to have a conversation with you and stuff like that”.

Tanisha: “What I think shifted that this course is gonna come from research like this, right? That's what it's gonna be. Because one of the biggest things is that they don't see a problem until it's labeled, and it has evidence based stuff. Yeah, right. So they're gonna be like, well, who says that? And you're like, Well, here's the facts hunny (laughter). And so I think, you know, it's gonna really come from things like this, because they know it is there. But as I said, they kind of wanna make sure they're deflecting from all that energy. So they need a publication and multiple at that, to come out to say, like, the sky is blue.”

Joseph: “One of the products [of this project] is at least opening up conversation or providing discourse and research about things of about Black people that are not stereotypical, right. And allowing Black to come in all different forms”.

Patricia: “I feel like this this community is, is kind of multicultural because of the institutions like the universities here, because I've heard stories of other places where, like, if you go there as a Black person, geez, you're on your own. Because everyone will know there is a Black person in our community. And it's solely white. Like, I've had friends who want to do their research in places ... So I think this place is kind of cool. At least I find Black people like when I'm walking, I find one or two. Yeah. And I know Black people here you know like, yeah, so this this area is kind of very cool, because of the universities and the universities actually frown upon racism stuff. You will get some... definitely. But I think it's kind of cool here than other places.”

Joseph: “And I think my department is also part because if I had come that's actually the reason why I came here. If I come in the department wasn't so accommodating and accepting or having a different story, but when I come like, geez, the professors are nice. Very cool, down to Earth.”

Imani: “So government policies are there to tackle these concerns, but we still see a lot happening, right? That's why I think that it comes down to actions, individual actions like it, like all, all the currents have to have a change of heart some way somehow, like, you know, there has

to be some shift because it is difficult tackling an issue, so delicate as race, at the macro level, and not looking at it, right from like, the micro level.

Tanisha: The policies are there, like we're saying the policies are there basically, to check the boxes at school boards have like lots of really nice, anti-Black- anti-racist, you know, clauses in the policy statements and things like that, like, but we don't have funding for some of these things to be executed, we don't have personnel for people to be in charge of business. So they are there as part of the development plans.

Isaiah: And so, for me, I hope that I hope that it has to start from individuals, we have to start to complement individuals have to start to complement what is at the macro level and, and that means that not only Black people, but also white people and non-white and non-Black bodies, people get involved and we have to start seeing one another” as humans.

Patricia: Once we have the social constructs as the basis for identifying people, these things will continue to happen. But we have to move away from those constructs and seeing one another as brothers and sisters like we just all human, we have same characteristics. What we have two noses, they are one blood, people have one, the color of our blood is not blue. It's it's rare.

Benjamin: Everybody has grand plan. So I think I think that if we rely on government, it's not going to change if we rely on policy. So much at the macro level, some kind of change goes to have that that guy in, in downtown Kitchener Now yell at me and say go back to your F***ing country, you know that thing, right? If policy will not change that behavior? You know, because we say that there's freedom of speech. So like, somebody can yell at me and say go back to wherever you come from... But like, can he be arrested for saying that? No, I don't think so.

Joseph: “So can we have like, kW day of cultures where we have like a huge, a huge forum like a huge kind of Fair..., let's have symposiums. Let's have like education, let's even have real, multicultural discussions and dialogues in our textbooks in our classrooms. So that examples we give to kids, they can see these things from the beginning, let's have representations in government portfolios and things like that. Let's have access to loans and mortgage to everybody like not just like banks suppressing setting groups of people and keeping [supressing] certain groups you know, let's let's see real actions in Kitchener Waterloo let's start seeing gentrified communities and neighborhoods given back to the people who own them, you know and not giving all the places to this big corporations that have the money you know.”

Tanisha: “I think, especially for the KW community, I'd like to see I guess more resources, especially because of the big influx of like refugees, and. But I feel like, even though things are moving slowly, I feel like we're kind of moving in the right direction...like the far future”.

Joseph: For us to show up in our full humanity “there would have to be a complete do over and just a lot of different structures completely, broken down and rebuilt from scratch”.

Benjamin: And I feel like you’re not saying “things cannot change slowly, or in different little parts or groups of things”.

Patricia: Exactly, “but there’s just too many pillars that are up that are deeply rooted in things that even when we do stuff and you’re like what oh my gosh, that’s from white supremacy, right?”

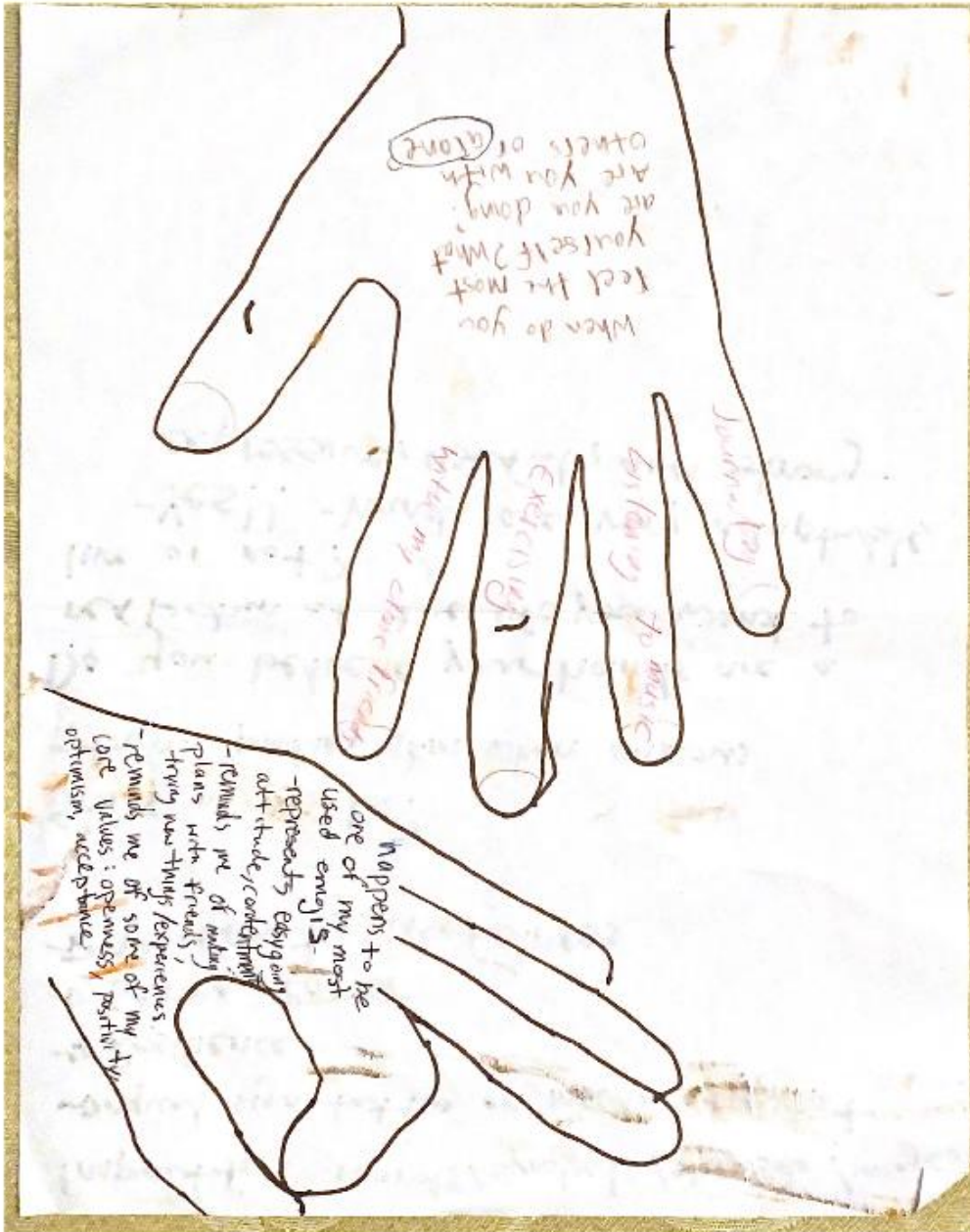
Tanisha: “White supremacy is so clever, that you don’t even need, you know, in-your-face racism, or certain dynamics anymore, right?”

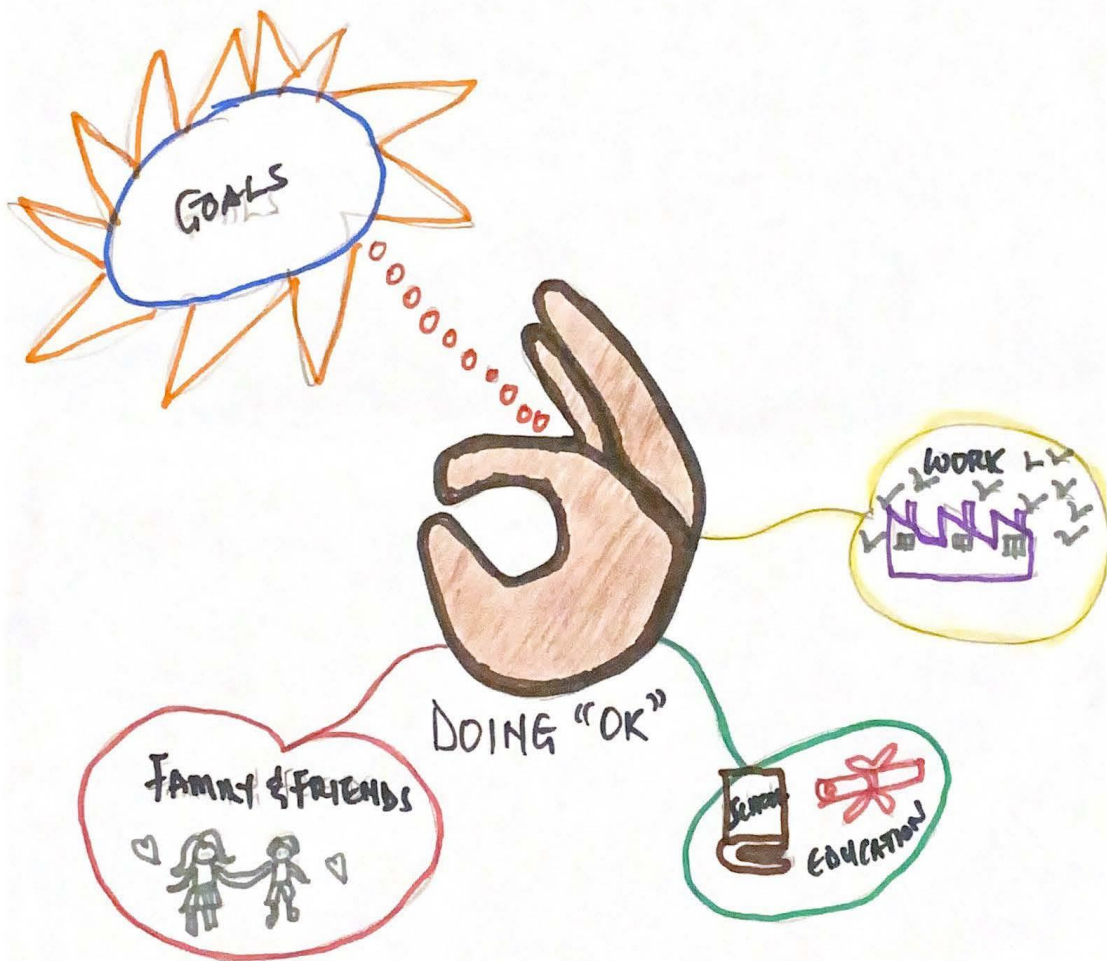
Benjamin: “We ourselves as Black folks and other non-white folks are maintaining the system for them”.

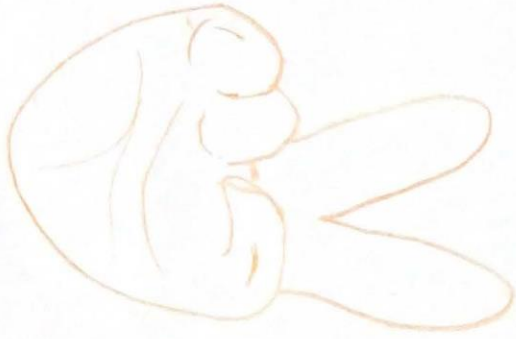
Tanisha: Right and “because of the awareness...people may not know different things or have different experiences even coming from a predominantly Black country. And you come here and just like oh is it because I don’t have money? Or is it because I’m Black? [I remember having a conversation with my husband] like what you don’t see this? But even in your country, there’s things that are from white supremacy embedded in that culture”.

Joseph: “I wish I could say [I never experienced racism until I moved to Canada] like coming from the Caribbean...like everybody around me and our family in Barbados is Black. We still dealt with colourism. So I think it’s so much bigger than KW.”

Appendix H – The Hand-maps







Peace

was it worked
for me,
was it always
worked.

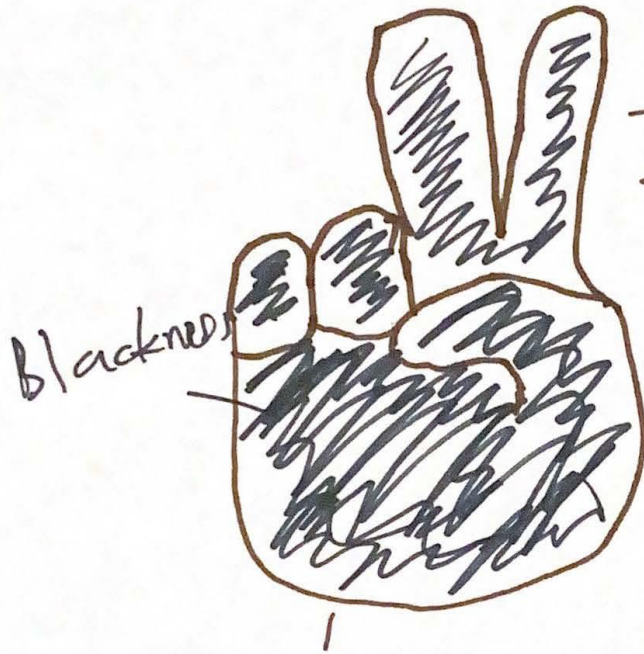


-
- collaboration / working together
 - teamwork
 - future goal
 - solution -> community
 - ↳ optimism



- It's going to be alright
- Just believe
- Hope
- Have courage
- Resilience

Thumbs Up



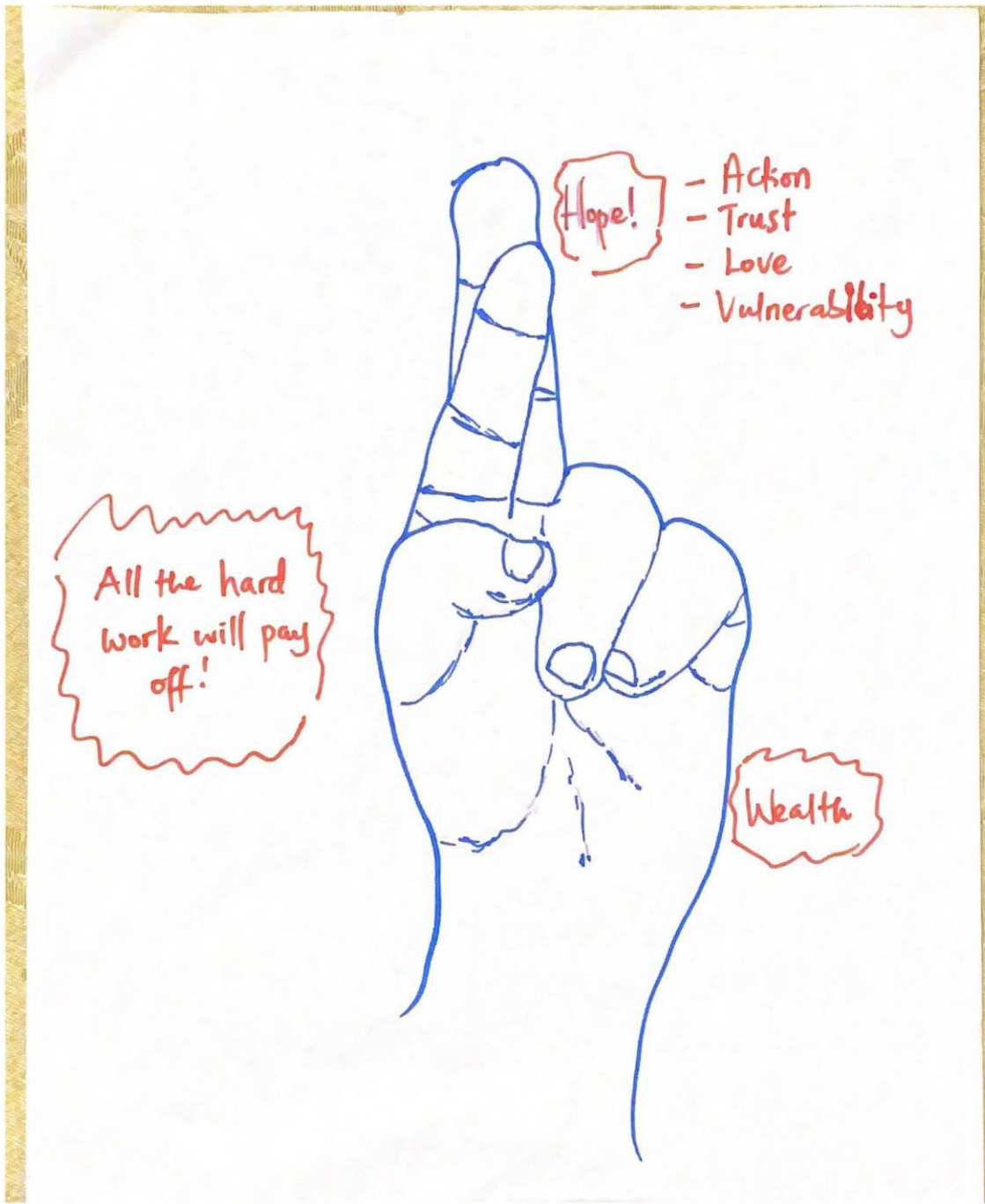
Blackness

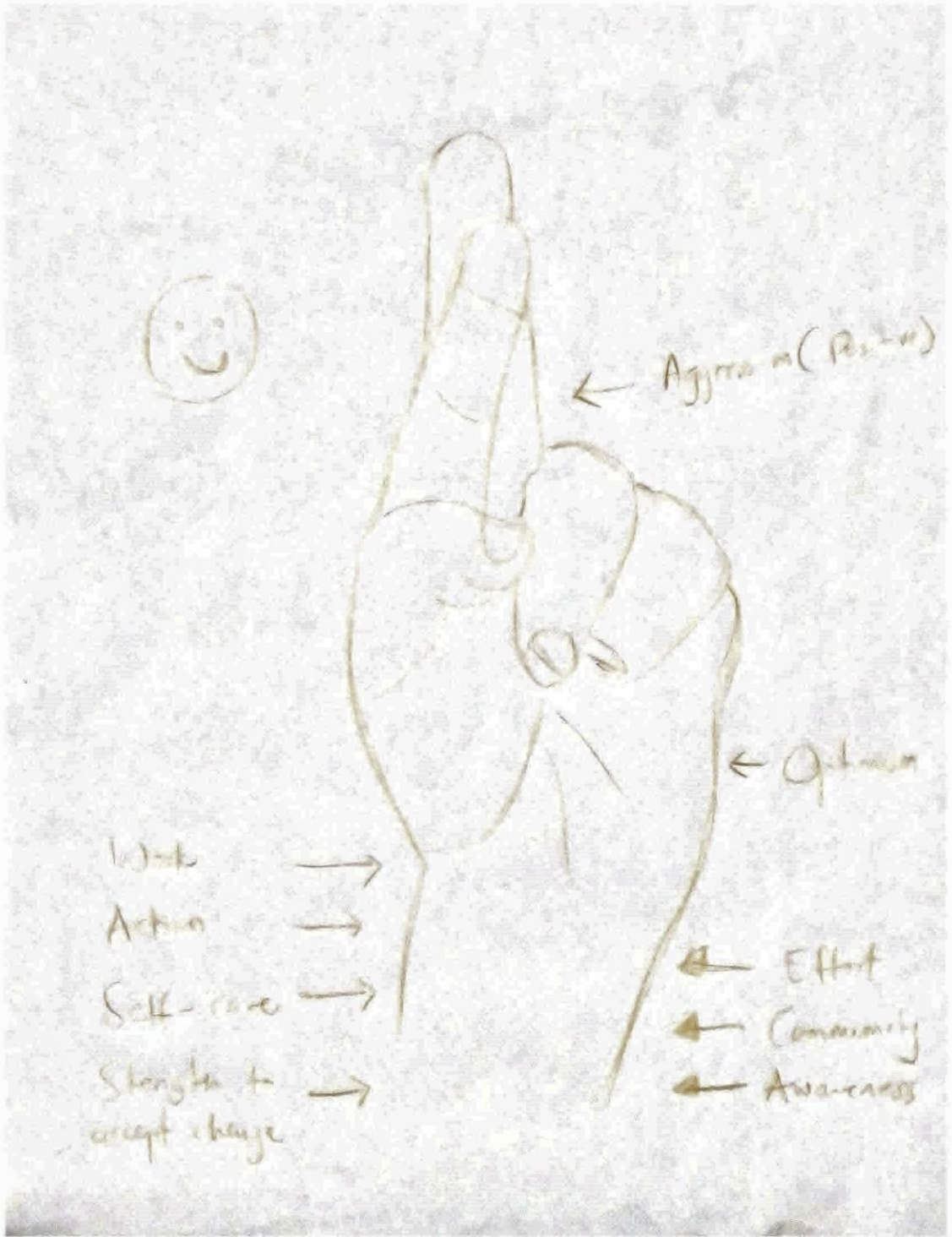
- A white man
- walking to me to
say go back to your country
- Peace sign
 - Ignore the haters
 - No need to argue
 - Haters are only going hate.

- * present yourself as you truly are.
- * Don't copy others just to please people
- *









I've picked this hand position b/c it is the most relaxed position my hand is in and what I first think of. I've often traced my hand like this or my students' hand in this position as part of my career as a teacher



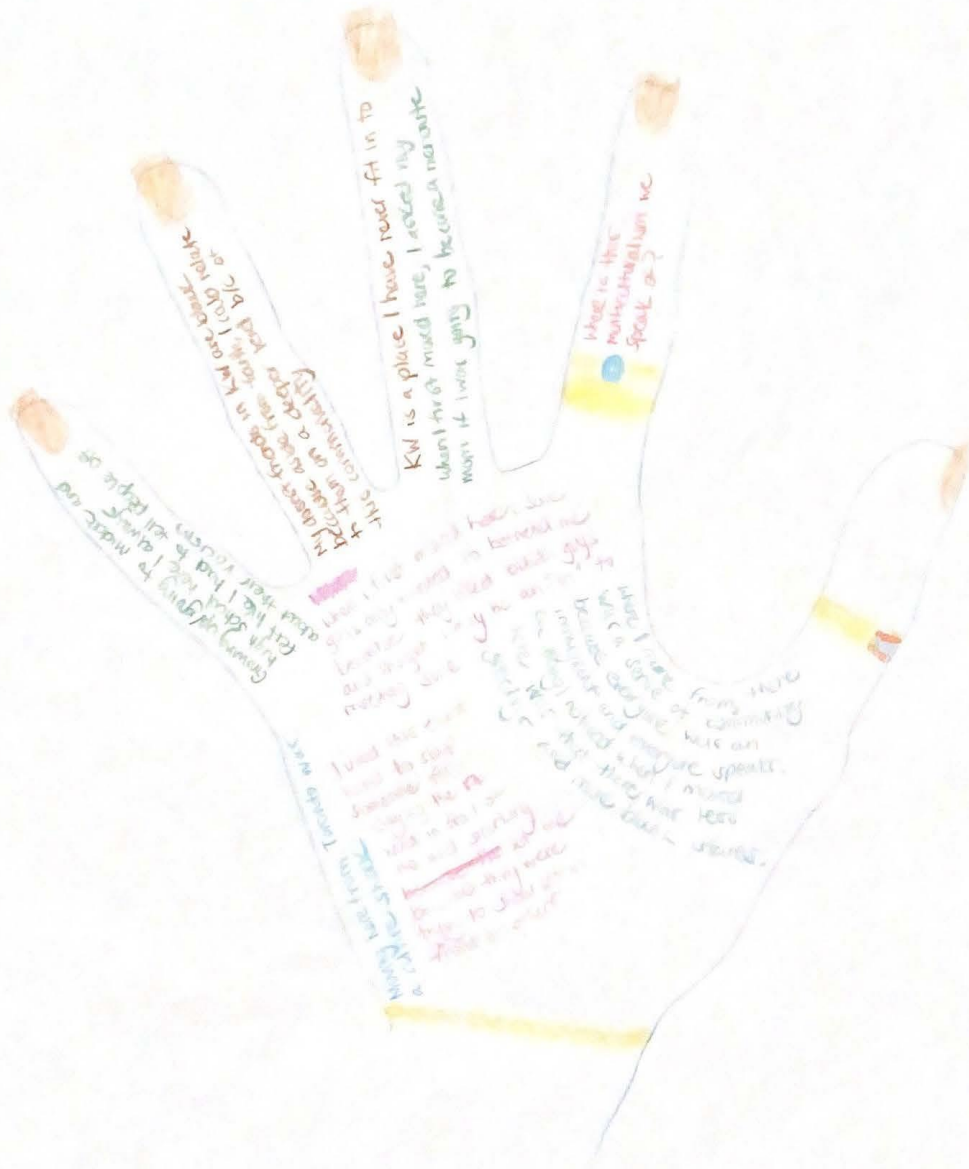
VOICE

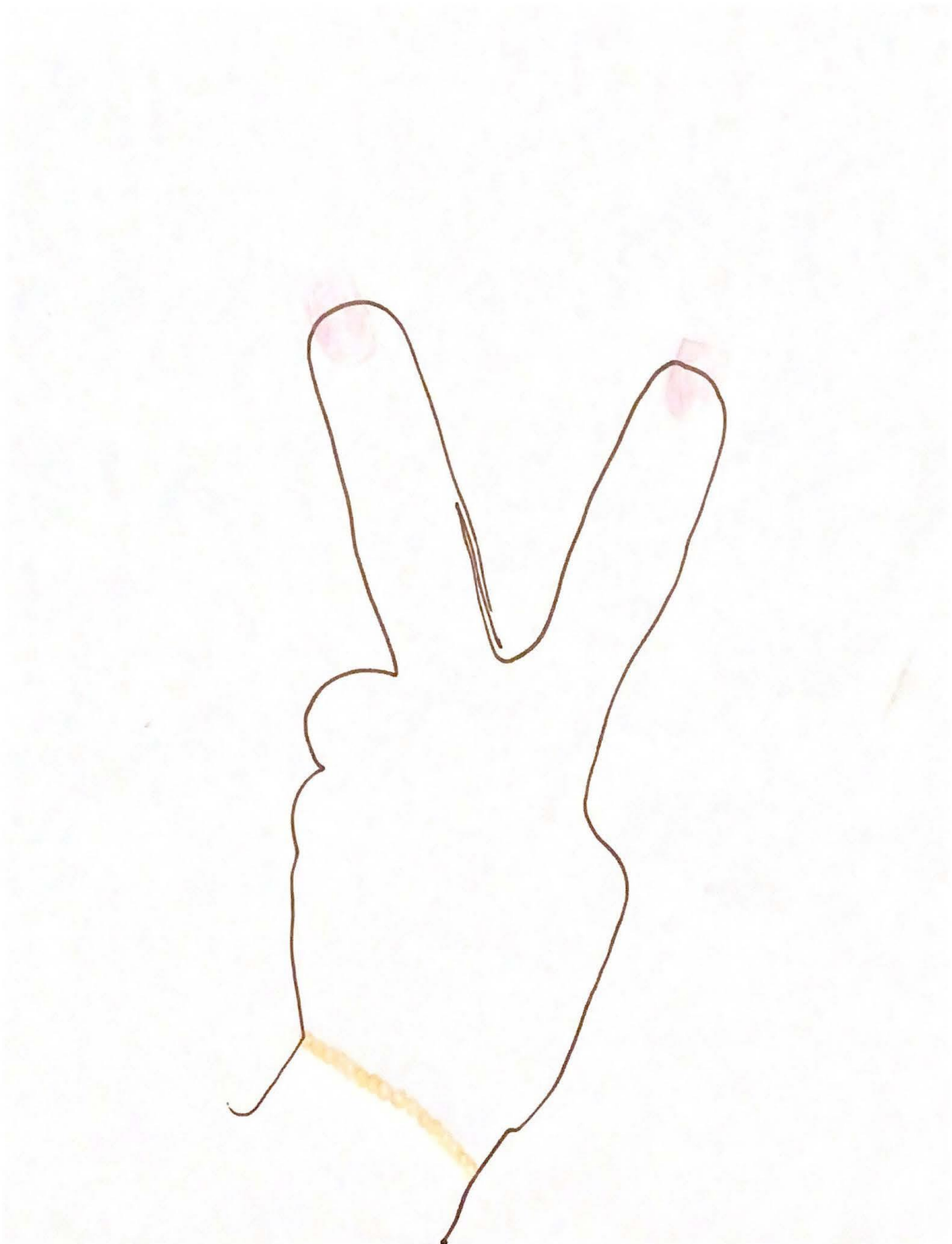


SPEAK

ADVOCATE

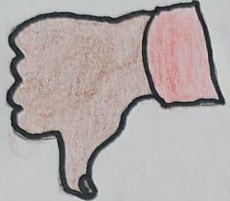
- I feel the most myself when I am with my family
- I am currently doing this with my roommate
- I picked this because none of these represent me specifically and the position is not clear





You have a goal to achieve

I am not a virus



"Our true nationality is Mankind" - H.G. Wells

