2 Ethnicity and Race in Canada: Past and Present

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The ethnic and racial landscape of Canada in the twenty-first century is significantly different from its earliest demographic history. Aboriginal peoples, English and French settlers are the original founding pillars of Canada, but over the centuries, immigration has made Canada more diverse with arrivals from many Western, Northern, Southern and Eastern European countries. Migrants and their descendants from areas other than Europe now are transforming Canada's ethnic and racial composition again. Today, Canada includes over 200 different ethnic groups, at least 11 sub-populations defined by the state as visible minorities (non-Caucasian, non-aboriginal, and non-white), and an indigenous aboriginal population which also includes diverse sub-populations.

The ethnic composition of Canada is continually changing, not only as the result of immigration but also because of fluctuation by individuals in their choices of ethnic labels. Nonetheless, ethnicity continues to be a defining characteristic of Canada, particularly because it is related to language use among Anglophone and Francophone populations. Additionally, race is salient in discussions of "what Canada is and what it will become." Race, or rather its social construction, now is an important component of demographic change and highly correlated with socioeconomic advantages and disadvantages experienced by newcomer groups and by Aboriginal peoples. Following a brief orienting overview of Canada's geography and demography, this chapter reviews ethnic flux in Canada, English-French populations and their language origins and use, changes in immigration sources and the growth in people of color, and the demographic and socioeconomic profiles of Aboriginal groups.

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Understanding Canadian Geography and Demography

Canada is located in the northern hemisphere of the Americas, sharing a western land border with Alaska and the remainder of the United States to the south. Canada has a slightly larger land mass than the United States. As a significant percent of Canada lies in colder regions which are neither arable nor hospitable to dense settlements, most of the population lives within 100 miles of the 3,145 miles shared with the United States. There are ten provinces along this border, with the eastern Atlantic provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island having a smaller land mass. Three territories are located north of the provinces: the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

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Canada's population stands at 33.5 million in 2010 (Statistics Canada 2011a), a figure that contrasts with the 313 million estimated for the United States and 113 million for Mexico (United Nations n.d.). Demographically, the population is extremely diverse with respect to ethnic origins and race, hailed by researchers as an exception – if not an outlier – among western democracies (Kymlicka 2010). This diversity is rooted in the settlement history of Canada where from the beginning immigration has played an important role in population growth and national development (Boyd and Alboim 2012).

Starting in the 1500s, the arrival of French and English explorers altered the exclusive settlement by aboriginal peoples and reduced their numbers. By July 1, 1867, when the federal Dominion of Canada was formed, the areas now known as Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia mostly comprised those of British and French origins. Canada's westward expansion added new provinces, and in 1905, the unity of nine provinces and territories was complete; the last of the ten provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador, joined in 1949. Finally, in 1999, the area of Nunavut (which means "our land" in Inuit) became a new territory created from the original larger Northwest Territories.

The relative size and population share of the four groups – Aboriginal, British, French, and other groups – has changed between 1867 and today, but each group continues to constitute an important defining characteristic of Canada. Two groups, Aboriginals and the French, are national minorities, seeking to remain distinct societies with some political autonomy, including self-government and self-representational rights within Canada's larger political and social institutions (Kymlicka 1996).

Historically and currently, immigration is a major source of population growth and ethnic diversity. Fertility declines starting reached below replacement in 1976. Today, 1.7 children are born per woman, well below the population replacement level of 2.1. Because the aging of the post-World War II baby boom cohort means more seniors, death rates are increasing and converging with fertility levels. In this context of low levels of natural increase, immigration accounts for about 67 % of Canada's population growth and could account for 80 % by 2031 (Statistics Canada 2011a). Many recent immigrants are from Asia and other non-European areas, thereby increasing the racial diversity of Canada.

Canada's Statistical Systems

Much of the knowledge of the ethnic, racial and immigrant populations in the "Dominion of Canada" was – and still is – collected by Canada's federal statistical agency, Statistics Canada (see: Worton 1998). The 1871 census was the first after Confederation and was followed by successive censuses every 10 years; since 1976, censuses are taken every 5 years. Statistics Canada also fields surveys on various aspects of social conditions; such surveys include Canada's General Social Survey and the 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey. All forms of data collection routinely include questions on ancestry (called ethnic origins in Canada), language use, immigrant origins, and race. Federal government departments, ranging from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to Heritage Canada, along with provincial and municipal governments, are active users of such data. In short, the federal government is a major instigator of ethnic and racial data; its centrality in data collection also means that classification systems are legitimated by state action (Boyd 1999; Nagel 1997).

A new dimension of government centrality is evident with the June 2010 Federal Cabinet decision that Statistics Canada field a voluntary National Household Survey (NHS) in lieu of the long form of the mandatory census in 2011. This decision is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it indicates the growing consolidation of power at the highest level of the executive (Savoie 2010). Second, because the long form (the 2B form) is used to collect data on ancestry (ethnic origins), race, immigration, labour market, and housing characteristics, the accuracy of data may be seriously impaired by the omission of 31 % of Canadian private dwellings that did not respond to the NHS (Statistics Canada 2011b).

At the date of writing (July 2012), no estimates exist for item non-response to specific questions by the 69 % who returned the form, and no data from the National Household Survey are available. Hence, the mandatory 2006 long form census remains the most recent available source of detailed information on ethnicity and race in Canada.

Since the mid-1990s, the ethnic origin question in the Canadian census has been accompanied by a question capturing phenotypical differences among non-aboriginal groups and by several questions on aboriginal identity. Like ethnic origins, "race" and aboriginal origins are socially constructed, both by individuals and by events in the larger society. Data collection practices create and also reflect these constructions. Canada has a long history of collecting data that distinguish between individuals on the basis of their supposed genetic and physical differences, much of it reflecting the need by settler groups to create colour lines to regulate power and privilege. Elaborate descent or lineage rules exist for enumerating white, aboriginal, and other nonwhite groups in Canada from the 1900s on. The explicit use of racial origins as part of the census questions on origins between 1901 and 1941 was abruptly dropped in 1951, a decision generated by the genocide in Europe during World War II (Boyd et al. 2000). However, as discussed in this chapter, developments in federal-aboriginal relations underlie recent additions of census questions on aboriginal identity and status. In the second half of the twentieth century, the principles of equality and human rights became part of political, legislative, and data gathering initiatives, including collecting information on people of colour.

English, French, and/or Canadian? The Social Construction of Ethnicity

During the initial period of European settlement (1500–1750), people of British and French origins were the largest demographic groups inhabiting Canada. Over the centuries, high fertility rates in Québec have helped maintain the demographic share held by those of French ethnic origins, despite shifts in the ethnic composition of Canada's population away from British ethnic origins. In the 1871 census held after the 1867 Confederation Act, approximately 60 % had British origins, 31 % claimed French origins, with Aboriginals representing less than one percent of the population and those of other origins another 8 %. Compared to 100 years earlier, census data for 1971 reveal a declining share for British ethnic origin groups (45 %), a slight decline for those of French origins (29 %), a slight growth in the representation of those declaring aboriginal origins (1.5 %), and a very sharp increase in the percentages with other origins (25 %). Changes reflect immigration trends; before the 1960s, immigrants from the United Kingdom were replaced by those born in Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe, after that, by those from non-European areas. Meanwhile, the French origin population maintained high fertility rates until the 1960s, keeping this group at about 30 % (calculated by the author from Basavarajappa and Ram 1983).

Earlier censuses restrict ethnic origin responses to reports of ancestry on the father's side and permit only one response (White et al. 1993). Starting with the 1981 census, multiple responses are permitted, and ancestry refers to both maternal and paternal origins. Intermarriage along with a long history of residency in Canada for those with ancestors arriving in the 1700s and 1800s underlie multiple responses, making ethnic origin trends from 1981 non-comparable to those earlier. As well, shifts in immigration source countries add to the diversity of ethnic categorizations. Today, only 8 % of Canada's population give a single response to the ethnic origin question indicating a British origin; another 27 % indicate a British origin along with at least one other ethnic origin. Comparably, only 4 % indicate French ethnic origin, with another 12 % saying they are of French and at least one other ethnic origin (calculated from Table 2.1).

Meanwhile, ethnic origins are obtained in the 2006 census by asking each respondent the following question: "What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors?" The

Table 2.1 Canadian, British Isles and French/Québécois Ethnic Origins, Canada 2006

	All ages		Age 15 and older[b]			
	Total[a]	Percent, single reponses	Total generation status	1st generation	2nd generation	3rd generation or more
Ethnic origins	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
All of Canada[c]	31,241,030	58.6	100.0	23.9	15.6	60.5
Canadian	10,066,290	57.1	100.0	1.4	7.7	90.9
British Isles	11,098,610	23.0	100.0	9.6	18.1	72.4
French	5,000,350	25.1	100.0	4.5	7.1	88.4
Québécois	146,590	66.1	100.0	0.9	4.0	95.0
Québec[c]	7,435,905	74.1	100.0	4.3	2.2	93.5
Canadian	4,474,120	71.8	100.0	0.5	1.5	98.0
British Isles	711,960	21.9	100.0	2.7	4.6	92.7
French	2,173,835	40.1	100.0	3.1	2.6	94.3
Québécois	140,075	67.7	100.0	0.5	2.8	96.7
Rest of Canada[c,d]	23,805,125	53.8	100 0	24.3	15.9	59.7
Canadian	5,592,170	45.3	100 0	1.4	8.1	90.5
British Isles	10,386,650	23.0	100.0	9.6	18.1	72.3
French	2,826,515	13.7	100.0	4.6	7.3	88.1
Québécois	6,515	29.9	100.0	1.0	4.1	94.9

Sources: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Canada. : Data products. Topic-based tabulations: Ethnic origin and visible minorities. Table 1. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/tbt/Lp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=0&PRID=0&PTYPE=88971,97154&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2006&THEME=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=

[a]Data for the Canada, Québec and Rest of Canada rows are total population counts. However the numbers for specific groups such as Canadian or British Isles include multiple responses, and such responses may overlap. For example, a response of Canadian and British Isles appears in the Canadian counts and in the British Isles count

[b]Questions on parental birthplace, necessary for deriving generational status, were asked only for census respondents age 15 and older

[c]All ethnic origin responses for the specified geography including other ethnic origins

[d]Rest of Canada refers to areas other than Québec

accompanying census guide states: "An ancestor is someone from whom a person is descended and is usually more distant than a grandparent. Other than aboriginal persons, most people can trace their origins to their ancestors who first came to this continent. Ancestry should not be confused with citizenship or nationality" (Statistics Canada 2008d).

These contemporary statistics are not the result of demographic processes of births, deaths, and migration, although those factors were of greater importance in earlier decades; instead the proportion declaring British or French ethnicities mostly reflects the practices of data capture, the broadness of the ancestry question, and ethnic flux. In response to the census question, "what were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors?" respondents now are allowed to record up to four responses; as many as six responses are possible as a result of hyphenation (Italian-Canadian). Increasing ethnic options means that few are likely to report having only British or only French ethnicity. Further, although ancestry is emphasized, the use of a single question to elicit responses increases the likelihood of replies derived from selective knowledge or memory of ancestral origins as well as self-identifications. Also, depending how people respond, race and religion are captured by the official ethnic origin question used in the census (Boyd et al. 2000; Ryder 1955; White et al. 1993). As in previous censuses, some indicate "Jewish," others indicate "Black" or "North American Indian," and still others provide self-

categorizations that may indicate regional origins but also may convey phenotypical characteristics (such as Chinese).

Ethnic flux, sometimes labeled ethnic mobility, underlies the diminishing numbers who cite British and/or French ethnicities. Ethnic origins, ethnic identities, and racial categorizations are human creations; far from being fixed, they are constructed through social interaction, including interpersonal contact, participation in dominant social institutions (families, schools, politics, and the workplace), and exposure to ideas and ideologies (Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Lieberson 1985; Nagel 1994). As a result, people may select from many possible ethnicities and may change their selections over time or in various settings. New labels also may emerge.

In fact, a new phenomenon, the Canadian equivalent of what Lieberson (1985) terms "the un-hyphenated American," starts in the 1990s. Because the concept of ethnic origins was envisioned as reflecting ancestry, "Canadian" was strongly discouraged as a response in earlier censuses, not permitted until 1951, and not part of the published ethnic origin classifications. Less than one percent of respondents gave a "Canadian" ethnic origin in the 1981 and 1986 censuses (Thomas 2005). However, in 1991 approximately 4 % of the Canadian population declared "Canadian" as an ethnic origin, and in the 2006 census, ten million out of 31 million reported a Canadian ancestry either as a single response or in combination with other ethnic origins (Table 2.1).

Three factors underlie one-third of the Canadian population reporting Canadian as part of their ancestral repertoire: (1) changing responses to "who am I?"; (2) protocols surrounding the ethnic origins question in the census; and (3) terminology derived from Canada's history (Boyd 1999). The "Canadian" label is particularly strong among those who in earlier censuses declared British or French origins and who therefore may have family histories going back many generations in Canada (Boyd and Norris 2001). Additionally, immediately before the 1991 census, a media instigated campaign of "count" me "Canadian" influenced responses. Question protocols are important as well; following the prevailing practices of Statistics Canada, "Canadian" joined a list of ancestry examples in the census questionnaire, thereby increasing the responses in 1996 and thereafter (Boyd 1999).

A final important factor underlying increasing "Canadian" ethnic origin responses is the resonance of the French word "Canadien." The word was commonly used by the people of New France to describe themselves. Its meaning is thus imbued with over 300 years of differences in history, language, culture, and institutions. Rather than referring to membership in a pan-ethnic or national group, "Canadien" captures membership in Québec society. The label "Québécois" has similar meanings, while also emphasizing membership in the Québec nation. Table 2.1 shows that the selection of "Canadian" is extremely strong in Québec followed by reporting of a French ethnicity. Over two-thirds (70 %) of these Canadian responses in Québec are single responses. Multiple ethnic responses in general are higher in the rest of Canada (46 %) than in Québec (26 %); this also is true for those declaring Canadian (55 %), British Isles (77 %), French (86 %), and Québécois (70 %) ethnic origins (calculated from Table 2.2). Over nine out of ten of those giving a Canadian ethnic origin are members of the third-plus generation, meaning that at a minimum, they are Canadian-born with both parents Canadian-born. Third-plus generation response is highest in Québec, both for those indicating Canadian/Canadian ethnic origins and for those declaring Québécois, French, and British Isles ethnic origins (Table 2.1).

Evolving Dualisms: Ethnicity and Languages

European settlement during the 1500s and 1600s did more than create two major population groups. It also created the setting for ethnic stratification and contemporary language policies. The initial British intention of transforming New France into a society with British institutions and an Anglo-majority population was thwarted

Table 2.2 Birthplace of foreign-born permanent residents, by period of immigration, Canada 2006

	Total	Before 1970	1970–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2006
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Birthplace, Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
United States of America	4	4	7	3	2	3
Other Central & S. America, Caribbean	11	4	17	17	12	10
United Kingdom	9	23	13	6	2	2
Other Europe	28	59	25	18	17	14
Africa	6	1	3	7	9	9
West Central Asia and the Middle East	6	2	6	5	7	10
Asia	35	6	27	43	51	50
Eastern Asia	15	3	10	15	23	21
Southeast Asia	9	1	9	17	11	9
Southern Asia	12	2	9	10	17	21
Oceania and other	1	1	2	1	1	1
Visible minority status, Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Not a visible minority[a]	46	91	52	32	25	25
Visible minority	54	9	48	68	75	75

Source: Customized table produced by the author especially for this volume from the 2006 Public Use Microdata File on Individuals, 2006 Census of Canada
[a]Includes persons with aboriginal identities

by slow immigration from Britain and geopolitical factors (Breton 2005). Instead, the British established control over Québec by building on the pre-existing quasi-feudal system previously established by France. Compliance and what Breton (2005) terms “indirect rule” were enhanced by the strong presence of the Catholic Church, which undertook responsibility for the spiritual well-being of its flock and for its health and education. Over the centuries, the continued use of the French language, the institutional dominance of the Catholic Church, and high fertility rates helped to maintain a distinctive society, although political and economic elites remained Anglophone. In the rest of Canada, immigration from Great Britain and later from other European countries provided workers, stimulated demand for products, and settled vast stretches of territory. English was the dominant language used by individuals, government, and business.

Not all ethnic groups have their own languages, but when they do, language becomes a powerful marker of the “ethnos.” From the Greek root for ethnic, ethnos denotes membership in a group based on shared ancestry and/or culture. Ethnic-specific languages help maintain boundaries that ethnic groups either create or have imposed on them; therefore, language assimilation – the loss of distinctive mother tongues – can be threatening because it represents a step in the assimilation of the group (Lieberson 1981, Chapter 1; Williams 1999). Ethnic-specific language maintenance also has the potential to reaffirm belief in the distinctiveness of groups. Thus, language, culture, religion, and geographic concentration of the Francophone population within Québec are the basis of a distinct identity and the concept of a “nation within” (Breton 2005; Kymlicka 2010). In such situations, any erosion of the demographic base of minority nation claims is

threatening. It is no accident that language loss within the Francophone population is viewed with concern by Québeckers and by Francophone communities outside of Québec.

By the early 1900s, the fact that Canada indeed consisted of two linguistic groups was gaining growing acceptance (Breton 2005). The 1960s Quiet Revolution in Québec was a time of rapid change that included dismantling the old order, including Anglophone control of major institutions (Breton 2005; Conrick and Regan 2007). Concerned over the growing nationalist sentiment in Québec, the Canadian federal government struck the 1963 Royal Commission on Bi-Culturalism and Bi-Lingualism to report on bilingualism and biculturalism and to make recommendations on the basis of an equal partnership between the English and French founding populations while taking into account the contribution of other groups to Canada's cultural enrichment (Conrick and Regan 2007: 37).

The federal government of Canada passed the Official Language Act in 1969, declaring English and French to have equal status as official languages. Aspects of Canada's two official languages captured in contemporary government surveys and censuses are: *mother tongue* (the first language a person learns at home in childhood and still understands); *official language knowledge* (can this person conduct a conversation in English and/or French?); *home language use* (languages used mostly in the home and additional languages used regularly); and starting with the 2001 census, *work language* (languages used most at work and other languages used regularly) (see Lachapelle and Lepage 2010: Appendix).

Despite the 1969 Act, the 1988 Official Languages Act and the encouragement of federal civil servants to become bilingual and express themselves in either language, English is used by the majority of people outside Québec, and French retains its prominence in Québec. In 2006, the Anglophone mother tongue population represented 58 % of Canada's population – 8 % of the Québec population and 73 % of the population outside Québec. Conversely, having a French mother tongue characterized one in five of Canada's population, but in Québec, 80 % had a French mother tongue, and 82 % spoke French most often at home. Only 4 % of the population outside Québec had a French mother tongue (Statistics Canada 2007b).

Percentages with English or French mother tongues are declining over time with the Francophone population most affected. At the time of the 1951 census, 59 % of Canada's population had an English mother tongue, 29 % had a French mother tongue, and 12 % had mother tongues other than English or French. By 2006, comparable percentages were 58, 22, and 20 % respectively (Statistics Canada 2008b: Figure 32). The declining share of the French mother tongue population occurs both in and outside Québec: in 1951 the French mother tongue population represented 82.5 % of Québec's population, declining to 79.6 % in 2006. Outside Québec, the French mother tongue population represented 7.1 % of Canada's population in 1951, declining to 4.1 % in 2006 (Lachapelle and Lepage 2010: Table A.1).

The more modest declines in the proportions with a French mother tongue within Québec reflect a demographic balance between massive declines over time in Francophone fertility levels, the outmigration of the Anglophone population to other areas of Canada, and recent international migration of "allophones," defined as those whose mother tongues are neither English nor French. Historically, Québec's higher fertility levels, compared to other provinces, created "the revenge of the cradle" in which the French loss to the British in the 1700s and the threat of assimilation were compensated by high levels of population growth, fueled by high fertility. But along with the rest of Canada, Québec experienced declining fertility throughout the twentieth century, plummeting to levels below those of Canada in the 1960s (Krull and Trovato 2003). Post-World War II immigrants disproportionately were going to areas outside Québec, and the numbers destined for Québec could not compensate for the declines in population size due to smaller families. Moreover, immigrants to Québec during the 1950s, and 1960s displayed a

decided preference for sending their children to English schools and for learning English rather than French. In response to fears over declining population size and the attenuation of Francophone speakers, a number of legislative bills were passed in Québec from 1969 on. These bills sought to prevent the erosion of French by regulating signage on stores and public places and by mandating the enrollment of the children of Anglophones in Francophone schools (Conrick and Regan 2007). In response, a substantial exodus of *les Anglais* (the English in Québec) occurred after 1965, particularly between 1976 and 1981 (Statistics Canada 2007b: Table 13). Because Anglophones were leaving the province, the percentages of French mother tongue only slightly declined during the final quarter of the twentieth century despite the arrival of international migrants who increasingly were allophones (Lachapelle and Lepage 2010).

Mother tongue (the language one first learns in childhood and still understands) is an indicator of linguistic origin, while language use measures current behaviour. From the 1950s on, increasing percentages in Canada indicate they know French in response to the official language question. However, this reflects trends occurring within Québec where the population is becoming increasingly bi-lingual, up from 26 % of the population in 1951 to 41 % in 2006. Over two-thirds of the Québec English mother tongue population reports being bilingual in the 2006 census as does half of the allophone population (Lachapelle and Lepage 2010). Outside Québec, the acquisition of French is less robust. Over the 10 year period between 1996 and 2006, the percentages knowing French declines among the English mother tongue population aged 15–19. Further, if cohorts are tracked, the retention of French declines over the life course for Anglophones who knew French in their late teenage years. Language transfer from French to English is substantial for the population living outside Québec; for this French mother tongue population, those speaking English most often at home rose from 30 % in 1971 to 35 % in 1991 to 39 % in 2006 (Statistics Canada 2008b). Overall, it appears that the use of French is being maintained in Québec but flagging elsewhere in Canada.

Immigration, New Source Regions, and Race

The 1963 Royal Commission on Bi-Culturalism and Bi-Lingualism proposed a two nation conceptualization of the country, where English and French Canada were recognized as equal founding nations with majority status in their respective domains. But from the beginning, immigration was and remains an important part of Canada's nation-building endeavours and non-British and non-French ethnic groups lobbied to be included in any federal policy developments. As a result, a policy of official multiculturalism in a bilingual framework was announced by the federal government in 1971 followed by: (1) the Constitution Act 1982 which officially incorporated the commitment to multiculturalism in Section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and (2) the 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act which had as its objectives to assist in the preservation of culture and language, to reduce discrimination and eradicate racism as ways of fulfilling Canada's human rights obligations, and to enhance cultural awareness and understanding. Following a major policy review, the program was renewed in 1997. Although the policy refers to federal jurisdictions, a number of provinces have adopted multiculturalism policies (Dewing 2009; Kymlicka 2010).

Much has been written about Canada's multiculturalism policy, comparing it with policies of other countries and asking if it goes beyond the three Fs of fun, food, and folk dancing. Symbolically, it has a huge presence in Canadian discourse and law for it emphasizes the right of groups to maintain their cultures, beliefs, and languages (so long as they are not in opposition to laws and human rights), the rights of groups to have full participation in society, and the accommodation of difference by Canadian institutions. The timing of the policy's birth in the early 1970s also is instructive, for it occurs precisely at the start of seismic shifts in the origins of Canada's newcomers.

Given Canada's 400-year history of immigration, regulating who shall enter Canada is fairly

recent. The early legislation of the twentieth century essentially prohibited migration from places other than Europe although workers from China and Japan were grudgingly admitted in small numbers from the mid-1800s to build railways and supply manual labor. As is true for the United States, legislated immigration restrictions began in the late 1880s, with major acts passed in 1910, 1927, and 1952. These acts permitted only the entry of immigrants from the United States or Europe, making nationality the criterion of admissibility. By the 1950s and early 1960s, the blatant racial discrimination associated with nationality restrictions became problematic for the federal government which sought leadership roles within the Commonwealth. During the 1960s, regulations replaced the nationality criterion with family and economic contribution, and the 1976 Immigration Act formalized the criterion of humanitarian concerns. As reaffirmed in the recent 2002 Immigration and Reform Act, there are three main principles of admissibility under which most immigrants enter Canada: family reunification, humanitarian criteria, and economic contribution. Increasingly, migrants are entering Canada on the basis of labour market contributions. Additionally, rising numbers come to study or to take up temporary employment (Boyd and Alboim 2012; Picot and Sweetman 2012). According to the 2006 census, out of a population of 31 million, nearly 6.5 million (or 20 %) are foreign-born (Chui et al. 2007).

With the regulatory and legislative changes from the 1960s on, persons from all over the world can settle in Canada if they meet admissibility criteria. As a result, the origins of migrants and the ethnic/racial composition of Canada are dramatically changing. Table 2.2 shows birthplace regions of the immigrant (permanent resident status) population enumerated in the 2006 census by period of arrival. Those entering Canada before 1971 mostly are born in the United States, the United Kingdom, or Europe. In contrast, of those arriving between 2001 and 2006, only one-quarter (28 %) are born in those areas. Nearly half come from Asia, particularly from the People's Republic of China, India, and the Philippines. Unlike the United States, the population from Mexico is very small; less than 1 % of the immigrant population is born in Mexico.

Changing source regions diversify more than just ancestral origins. To the extent that phenotypical differences vary by geographical areas around the world, they also carry the potential to alter the colour composition of a society and to be used in the social construction of race. Table 2.2 shows the increasing percentages of persons of colour by period of immigration. After shunning the collection of "race" data in the aftermath of World War II, the Canadian federal government now collects data on persons of colour, using the term "visible minorities."

This data collection change reflects the development of human rights legislation paralleled by concerns over discrimination. The incorporation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom in the 1982 Constitution Act spelled out a number of fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, equality rights, official language rights, and minority language educational rights (see Canada. Department of Justice 1982). Section 15(1) on equality rights stipulates: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability." In 1983, the federal government struck a Royal Commission on Employment Equity to study how to achieve equality in the Canadian workplace and correct the conditions of disadvantage experienced by four groups: women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minority groups. These four groups remained the target populations in the 1985 Employment Equity Act and its successor in 1995. The Acts cover private sector employers under federal jurisdiction as well as almost all employees of the federal government (Department of Justice 1995; Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2010). In 2009, the federal legislation covered 14 % of Canada's 2009 employed population. All employers must submit an annual report in which they review the representation of designated groups in their

workforce, analyze any underrepresentation of groups, review their employment practices, and develop plans to remove barriers.

"Visible minority" was first used in the early 1980s to denote groups distinctive by virtue of their race, colour, or "visibility." The term is socially constructed in that its origins rest on discussions and then legislation on employment equity and program requirements. A (federal) intergovernmental committee ultimately drafted a list of groups, albeit with different degrees of specificity; rather than following a narrow definition of "race," the list rests on dimensions of race, ethnicity, and culture. Before the 1996 census, visible minorities were identified by combining data on birthplace, religion, and mother tongue. From 1996 on, the following question is found in the censuses and surveys fielded by Statistics Canada: "Is this person …..?" Pre-coded response categories include (in order of listing): White; Chinese; South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.); Black; Filipino; Latin American; Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian, etc.); Arab; West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.); Korean; Japanese; Other (to be specified by the respondent). Respondents who place themselves in one or more category other than white are considered members of Canada's "visible minority" groups. Multiple responses are permitted. When white and one of the designated visible minority groups are both selected, the response is treated as indicating visible minority status. However, when a response is White-Arab or White-West Asian, or White-Latin American, it is placed in the non-visible minority group. This procedure partially follows the United States census practice of considering Arabs and West Asians to be "white." But it also suggests gradations, if not ambiguity or inconsistencies, in how "colour" is defined. Other criticisms include the use of broad categories such as Black, South Asian, or Chinese that homogenize groups with different geographical origins, cultures, languages, and discriminatory experiences.

Data on the visible minority composition of Canada's population serve both specific and general functions. The specific raison d'etre for the officially mandated collection of data is the need to calculate appropriate levels of representation within the workplace to comply with Employment Equity programs established by the federal government. This is accomplished by first establishing the "Labour Market Agreement" (LMA) availability, or the share of designated group members in the workforce from which employers can hire. The LMA is calculated from data on visible minorities collected in each quinquennial census. For example, based on the 2006 census, the overall LMA used for visible minorities is 14.5, indicating that approximately 14.5 % of the workforce are visible minorities that can be hired in federally regulated public and private sectors. In 2009, visible minorities are 14.1 % of the actual workforce in these sectors. Although representation is only slightly below availability, there are large sector variations. In private sector businesses, including banks and transportation firms, 17 % of the workforce are visible minorities (with an LMA of 15.3), whereas in the public sector (including the federal public service) only 8.3 % are visible minorities compared to an LMA of 13 (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2010: Table 7.1).

In addition to being an essential component of compliance with employment equity legislation, data on visible minorities offer two insights: (1) they speak to fundamental changes in Canada's demographic profile; (2) they show the well-being of groups defined by colour relative to the white majority, thereby indicating where inequalities exist. With respect to the first topic, the removal of the national origins criterion from immigration regulations underlies the growth of Canada's visible minority population. Percentages that are members of visible minority groups rise from 4.7 % in 1981 to 16.2 % of Canada's population in 2006. Almost all reside in cities of 100,000 or more (96 % in 2006) compared with slightly over two-thirds (68 %) of the country's total population. As gateway cities for migrants, Toronto and Vancouver attract a substantial number of visible minority groups. In 2006, two out of five residents in Toronto (43 %) and Vancouver (42 %) are visible minorities (Statistics Canada 2008c).

The Chinese, South Asian, and Black groups are the largest visible minority populations in Canada (Table 2.3). Unlike the white population where only one in ten is a foreign-born permanent resident, immigrants are the majority in most visible minority groups. The Japanese visible minority is an exception; many arrived before the 1920s, and immigration from Japan did not resume when restrictions were lifted in the 1960s. Visible minority groups also are recent arrivals, with over half of the Arab, West Asian, and Korean visible minority immigrants arriving between 2001 and 2006. Consistent with their immigration histories, most visible minority groups in Canada are allophones, where the mother tongue first spoken and currently understood is neither English nor French. The sole exception is the Black population, which includes migrants from Caribbean and African countries. Groups with higher percentages of immigrants and with high percentages who are allophones also are most likely to be using languages other than English or French most often in the home (Table 2.3).

In terms of their socio-economic status, how do visible minority groups in Canada compare with the white population? One in five (19 %) of the white population age 25 and older have a university or higher degree. This is also the case for the Black and Southeast Asian visible minority groups in Canada, but educational attainments are higher for the remaining visible minorities. Over half of those who belong to the Korean visible minority group have university degrees or higher, followed by over one third for the Chinese, South Asian, Filipino, Arab, West Asian, and Japanese visible minorities. At the same time, however, census data indicate that labour force participation rates among visible minority groups are slightly lower, and for most visible minority groups, unemployment rates are higher than those for the white population.

In stratification research, income is considered an important indicator of the well-being of groups, in part because in monetized societies, income is highly associated with what Max Weber calls "life chances," including access to education, health, and housing. Despite higher percentages having university degrees or above, many of the visible minority groups have lower average or median employment earnings (wages, salaries, and self-employment income) than the white population. Further, all visible minority groups have higher percentages of their populations living in households considered poor[1] given the proportion of income spent on basic necessities of food, shelter, and clothing. The incidence of being poor takes on additional importance given the higher percentages of children under the age of 15 in visible minority groups. Table 2.3 shows that fewer than one in ten white children reside in low income families, compared with approximately one-fourth of those who are Chinese, South Asian, and Southeast Asian visible minorities. Between one-third and one half of children who are members of Black, Latin American Arab, West Asian, and Korean visible minorities reside in low income families.

Many of these indicators of socio-economic characteristics are correlated with immigration status. Recent arrivals need time to become established, and the shift in origin countries implies that many new arrivals will not necessarily have the same English or French language skills as the Canadian-born (Derwing and Waugh 2012). Nor do groups share similar characteristics, particularly with respect to human capital related skills such as education and training. However, recent studies show: (1) lower earnings for visible minorities compared to whites with Black and South Asian visible minorities having lowest earnings; (2) the persistence of this gap during the past 15 years (1996–2006); (3) small differences between visible minorities and whites in the public sector but larger in the private sector where black men and women are particularly

[1] The definition of "poor" is derived from a Statistics Canada measure called low income cut-offs (LICOs). Statistics Canada does not officially call this measure a poverty indicator, but it is used by many researchers as an indicator of economic deprivation. Low income cut-offs are calculated for individuals living in economic families, defined as a group of individuals related by blood, marriage, or adopted and living in the same dwelling, or persons living alone or not in a household where they are related to others in that dwelling. These cut-offs are specific to the size of the city or town in which people reside and to the size of family, for those living in families.

Table 2.3 Demographic, social and economic characteristics of the white and visible minority populations, Canada 2006

	Single responses												
	White	Chinese	South Asian	Black	Filipino	Latin American	South east Asian	Arab	West Asian	Korean	Japanese	Visible minority. n.i.e.	Multiple responses
Characteristics	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Total size, in '000s	24,772	1,165	1,232	694	389	301	231	265	156	138	60	71	458
Percent of total population[a]	79.7	3.7	4.0	2.2	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	1.5
Percent allophone	10	86	71	25	65	87	79	75	90	90	61	19	26
Percent with no knowledge of English and/or French	1	16	8	1	1	7	9	4	8	10	4	2	2
Percent with English or French not spoken mostly at home	4	67	50	11	32	55	58	42	65	73	30	12	15
Nativity and residence status	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Canadian[b]	89	23	28	39	22	21	29	27	15	13	53	34	67
Immigrants[c]	11	74	70	58	74	72	69	69	83	72	34	64	32
Non-permanent residents[d]	0	3	2	4	4	7	2	4	3	15	14	2	2
Percent of immigrants[c] who arrived between 1996–2006	17	41	49	36	44	40	21	53	61	60	43	29	38
Percent aged 25-plus with bachelors degree or higher	19	37	34	19	39	23	19	41	39	52	36	15	35
Age 25–54													
Labour Force Participation rate	87	80	82	84	89	82	81	74	75	68	76	83	85
Unemployment rate	5	7	7	9	4	8	7	13	9	7	5	7	7
Average employment income in 2005	44,692	37,465	34,894	31,857	32,326	29,682	32,572	33,032	30,479	30,253	50,559	35,102	38,784
Median employment income in 2005	36,081	28,929	27,691	27,898	29,476	25,073	27,393	22,892	21,254	19,752	36,364	30,665	31,266

Ratio, Average employment income in 2005	100	84	93	91	101	92	110	101	92	99	167	69	110
Ratio, Median employment income in 2005	100	80	96	101	106	85	109	84	93	93	184	84	102
Percent in low income (after tax) all economic family members 2005	6	20	16	24	8	21	19	33	32	38	9	16	15
Percent in low income (after tax) for persons not in economic families	26	54	44	44	42	51	49	56	55	70	41	42	38
Age 0–14													
Percent of total population under age 15	16	16	23	25	19	19	21	26	20	17	7	20	44
Percent in low income (after tax) economic families, 2005	9	23	23	36	12	31	26	43	44	48	18	24	17

Source: Calculated for this chapter from: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population. Data Products. Topic-based tabulations: Ethnic origin and visible minorities. Table 14 – Population Groups, Age Groups, Sex and Selected Demographic, Cultural, Labour Force, Educational and Income Characteristics, for the Total Population of Canada. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/tbt/Lp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK0&GRP=1&PID=0&PRID=0&PTYPE=88971,97154&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2006&THEME=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=

[a]When the 3.7 % of Canada's population who declare aboriginal identity are included, columns sum to 100 %

[b]Includes a small fraction that were born outside Canada but are Canadian by birth

[c]Immigrants are defined as those foreign born persons who have been legally admitted to Canada and have permanent resident status

[d]Non-permanent residents are those legally admitted on a temporary basis for studying, for work or as refugee claimants awaiting adjudication of their claims

disadvantaged; and (4) no gaps or positive differences between the Chinese and white workers (Hou and Coulombe 2010; Pendakur and Pendakur 2011). Occupational segregation, location in the bottom of firm hierarchies and the existence of a glass ceiling not only exist for visible minorities but, at least in firm based studies, explain a great deal of the earnings gaps compared to white workers (Fearon and Wald 2011; Yap 2010; Yap and Konrad 2009).

The question of how well various visible minority groups are doing is important not only because answers provide insight into Canada's ethnic and racial stratification, but also because the visible minority population will substantially increase in the near future. Recent estimates say that within 20 years (2031) three in ten Canadians will be a member of a visible minority group. This expected growth is related to immigration trends; at least one-quarter of Canada's population in 2031 is likely to be foreign-born. Labor force changes also will occur with approximately one-quarter expected to be visible minorities by 2031 (Martel et al. 2011). By 2031, close to three-quarters of the foreign born (71 %) will belong to a visible minority group; nearly half (47.5 %) of the second generation, who are the Canadian born children of immigrants, will be visible minorities. These changes will be more intense in Canada's large cities where many visible minorities (and immigrants) reside. In 20 years, approximately three persons in five in Toronto and Vancouver could belong to visible minority groups. At that point, these groups will no longer be a demographic minority (Malenfant and Morency 2011).

Canada's First Peoples: A Changing World

Within the Canadian discussions on race, stratification and disadvantage, the situation of the Aboriginal population is the most troublesome. The narration of Canada's demographic history foregrounds the arrival of French explorers in the early 1500s, quickly followed by the arrival of the British Hudson Bay Company. The fact that Canada's aboriginal peoples preceded the arrival of Europeans by thousands of years is lost in this saga of French and British settlement. Yet from the 1500s, aboriginal-non-aboriginal relations have been important in how Canada has developed politically and economically. Without the early assistance of Aboriginals, French and British explorations, settlement endeavours, and fur trade development would have been far more problematic (Dickason and Newbigging 2010; Frideres and Gadacz 2008).

However, the initial influence and centrality of the aboriginal populations in the settlement by Europeans were not to be maintained for demographic and political reasons. New diseases, particularly smallpox, accompanied European traders and decimated large numbers of Aboriginals with no previous exposure or immunity. The size of the aboriginal population before the 1400 and 1500s is estimated at approximately 500,000, arguably a conservative number. In the aftermath of population declines, slightly over 100,000 Aboriginals in Canada were recorded in the 1871 census (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996: volume 1, chapter 2).

The population has rebounded since then. By 2006, approximately 1.7 million persons indicated at least one aboriginal ethnic origin, representing 3.8 % of the total Canadian population, in contrast to Australia and the United States where indigenous peoples make up approximately 2 % of the respective populations (Statistics Canada 2008a). In just under 100 years, from 1911 to 2006, the ethnically defined aboriginal population increased 11 times, compared to the total Canadian population's four and a half-fold increase. The faster growth rate of the former reflects higher fertility levels, increased life expectancy, improved enumeration, and a greater propensity to report aboriginal ancestry and/or aboriginal identity, partly in response to a growing awareness of aboriginal issues as a result of judicial decisions. This "ethnic mobility" component of growth is particularly strong for the Métis, who are of mixed European and aboriginal ancestry. This group grew by 33 % between 2001 and 2006; some of the growth is attributed to a court decision which provided an expanded definition

of Métis (O'Donnell and Wallace 2011; Newhouse and Belanger 2010; Statistics Canada 2008a).

With growing European settlement from the 1600s on, the aboriginal population rapidly became a minority vulnerable to the models of governance used by the French and British. The victory of the British over the French at the end of the Seven Years War began the process in which aboriginal communities gradually became wards of the state. The stance adopted by the British was twofold: first, Aboriginals under their dominion would become extinct, a real demographic possibility given the rapid declines in population; second, those who did not disappear would be assimilated. However, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 recognized aboriginal interest in, and use of, ancestral lands, stipulating that no lands could be bought or infringed upon without treaties or consent and that such treaties involved both the British government and the aboriginal population (Dickason and Newbigging 2010: 104; Frideres 2011: 9). Numerous treaties involving land followed these stipulations, with most diminishing the area under aboriginal stewardship (see Dickason and Newbigging 2010). These treaties were accompanied by domiciling increasing numbers of Aboriginals on reserves. As Newhouse and Belanger (2010:341) cogently observe, the history of the aboriginal peoples became shaped by a dual paradigm of the "Indian problem" in which the federal government saw assimilation and absorption as the solution and the "Canada problem," which from the aboriginal perspective meant establishing sovereignty over a territory that would permit them to retain their culture and to have decision-making powers.

The British North American Act of 1867 (sometimes called the Confederation Act) recognized the special relationship of Canada's Aboriginals within the Confederation, declaring them and their lands federal responsibility. The Indian Act of 1876 made the aboriginal population living on reserves legal wards of the state and stipulated who was deemed Indian (a discussion of terminology follows). Metis, then described as "half-breed," were not considered to have Indian status. White women who married males considered "status" or "registered" Indians acquired Indian status; however, Indian women who married white men were considered full participants in Canadian society and to have lost their Indian status. The 1985 amendment to the Indian Act removed the patrilineal definition of status Indian, leaving it up to the bands to determine their membership lists. As a result, although women who lost their status have been legally reinstated as Status Indians, bands are not required to include them and they do not necessarily have access to band resources. Most recently, the Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act (Bill C-3), enforced on January 31, 2011, makes possible the acquisition of registered Indian status for approximately 45,000 grandchildren of women who lost status as a result of marrying non-Indian men.

These definitional changes are partly responsible for changes in the size of the status Indian population in recent times. Other groups fall under the more generic "aboriginal" terminology. The 1982 patriation of Canada's constitution from the United Kingdom gives Canada sole power to amend its constitution and to determine its laws. Within the Constitution Act 1982, Part II Section 35 spelled out the rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada, defined as the Indian, Inuit, and Metis of Canada. Indian has both a general and specific meaning; registered Indian (most commonly referred to as status Indians) refers to those registered under the Indian Act who can prove their band signed a treaty. But because bands are now allowed to determine membership, some band members are not necessarily registered Indians. Inuit refers to those inhabiting the uppermost Northern and Arctic regions.

In addition to surveys that bands may sponsor, data also are collected by the department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AAND) for the reserve population and by Statistics Canada through Aboriginal specific surveys and through quinquennial censuses. The census offers the most comprehensive count because it enumerates aboriginal populations in and outside reserves. However, some reserves refuse to be enumerated; in others, only partial data are available (Statistics Canada 2008a);

finally, undercounts remain a concern both on and off reserves (Statistics Canada 2010). The 2006 Canadian census collects information on *aboriginal ancestry* through its ethnic origin question on ancestry; data on *aboriginal identity* are collected by asking respondents if they are North American Indian, Metis, or Inuit. Additional information is collected on *Band* or *First Nation membership* and whether the respondent is a *Treaty Indian* or a *Registered Indian* as defined by the Indian Act of Canada (Statistics Canada 2007a). Not only do the counts for the registered Indians differ between Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development and Statistics Canada, but numbers fluctuate depending on the definitions used in the census. In 2006 1,678,200 persons reported aboriginal ancestry (ethnic origins); 1,172,790 reported an aboriginal identity; 620,340 reported band or First Nation membership; 623,780 reported having registered Indian status (Statistics Canada 2010). Among the groups declaring an aboriginal identity in the past 20 years, the Metis are the fastest growing; their 33 % growth contrasts with 12 % for the Inuit population, 15 % for North American Indians, and 12 % for those with registered Indian status (Statistics Canada n.d.).

The "status" or "registered" Indian concept that governs past and present relations between First Nations aboriginals and the Canadian federal government remains thorny. On the one hand, it permits sovereignty rights to Aboriginals living on reserves within Canada. For these persons, the federal government through Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (also known as the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) provides funds for housing, elementary and secondary education, health services, and social assistance, mostly delivered by bands or tribal councils. They may also benefit from various treaty entitlements and from eligibility for post-secondary schooling assistance (Frideres 2011; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995).

On the other hand, from the many legacies of the pre- and post-Confederation policies that Aboriginals are wards of the state and should be assimilated, two capture the systematic and systemic disadvantages experienced by Aboriginals at the hands of the federal government. First, despite the expectations of Indians that schools would be established within their communities, off-reserve residential educational institutions were created during the nineteenth century; they were only dismantled starting in the 1970s, with the last school closing in 1996. Children were removed from their families and communities and placed in boarding schools that forbade the use of native languages and the practice of traditional religions and other cultural customs such as boys wearing long hair. As well, mental and physical abuse occurred, resulting in thousands of lawsuits by victims in the early millennium, formal apologies by churches running the schools, and the Residential Schools Settlement Agreement in 2007 in which the federal government compensated an estimated 80,000 survivors of specific schools. The Prime Minister made a formal apology on behalf of the Canadian government in June 2008 (Dickason and Newbigging 2010; Frideres 2011: Chapter 4).

A second consequence of the historical treatment of Aboriginals is the persisting low standard of living. Some reserves such as the Attawapiskat First Nation lack adequate housing, electricity, water, and schooling. In fact, poor living conditions, along with high poverty rates, food security, and health, describe a number of aboriginal populations, both on and off reserves.

The existence of 22 incompletely enumerated reserves in the 2006 census (down from 30 in 2001 and 77 in 1996) limits the available information on the reserve population and affects the measurement of temporal changes. However, it appears that the status Indian population increasingly is not living on reserves.[2] According to the 1981 census, 41 % lived off reserves; in 2006, 52 % lived off reserves (O'Donnell and Wallace 2011: Tables 3 and 5). In the census, a broader concept, "First Nations," includes those

[2] "On-reserve" refers to "legally defined Indian reserves, Indian settlements, other land types created by the ratification of Self-Government Agreements and other northern communities affiliated with First Nations according to the criteria established by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada" (Statistics Canada 2010).

identifying themselves as North American Indian; 60 % of this group lives off reserves (Statistics Canada 2008a).

Aboriginal groups also differ in geographical distribution. As shown in Table 2.4, those reporting they are aboriginal in the 2006 census are concentrated in the prairie provinces, British Columbia, and Ontario. Nearly four out of ten declaring as North American Indian or Registered Indian and over half of those identifying as Métis reside in the three western provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta. In contrast, over half of those reporting themselves Inuit live in Northern Canada and in the northern regions of Newfoundland and Labrador and Québec. Altogether, over three quarters of the Inuit population resides in "Inuit Nunaat" or the "Inuit homeland," a northern region representing about one third of Canada's land mass (Statistics Canada 2008a: Tables 6, 13, and 17).

Table 2.4 also shows the impoverished conditions of the Aboriginal population compared to non-Aboriginals. At least one in three in aboriginal groups is a child under the age of 15, with the Inuit having the youngest population. Compared to the non-aboriginal population, these children are more likely to be living in common-law families or in single-parent families; with the exception of Inuit children, they also are likely to be living with more than one family. Household and dwelling characteristics for the aboriginal population confirm the concerns over poverty and housing quality. All groups are more likely than the non-aboriginal population to have higher average household size and higher percentages of households below Canada's LICOs that frequently serve as indicators of poverty. The percentages living in crowded conditions, using the measure of more than one person per room (excluding halls, bathrooms, entrance ways), is higher for all aboriginal groups as are the percentages residing in dwellings that require minimum or maximum repairs (based on the census question, "Is this dwelling in need of repairs?").

Labour market indicators also confirm the economically disadvantaged circumstances of aboriginal populations. Compared to the non-aboriginal population, labour force rates are lower, and unemployment rates are higher for North American Indians, Registered Indians, and the Inuit. Approximately one in five of those in the labour force is unemployed in the week before the census (May 16, 2006). Of those working at least a week in 2005 and thus reporting earnings, aboriginal populations are more likely to work part-time, especially those with Inuit identity, and the average number of weeks worked is lower than for the non-aboriginal population. Average earnings range from 59 to 77 % of the 2005 earnings of the non-aboriginal population.

The next generations appear likely to continue the saga of economic disadvantage, poverty, and poor housing. Of the population aged 20–24 in 2006, nearly half of those identifying as North American Indian, Inuit, or Registered Indian have not yet graduated from high school compared to one in ten of non-Aboriginals (Table 2.4). The Canadian census does not collect data on student grade level, complicating the calculation of accurate drop-out rates. A measure used in the past is to calculate the percentage of the population age 20–24 who do not have high school diplomas and who were not attending schooling in the previous year. This measure, shown in Table 2.4, suggests that approximately four out of ten young adults who identify themselves as North American Indian, Inuit, or registered Indians have permanently dropped out of high school. Another measure of economic marginality is the percentage who are not employed and not in school; compared to one in ten white young adults, North American Indian, Inuit or registered Indians are three to four times more likely to be in this category.

Funding education is the constitutionally mandated responsibility of provinces. However, treaties and the Constitution Act 1867 give federal authority for providing education to the registered Indian population, and services are now provided by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Since 1996, a cap of 2 % annually is placed on funding increases even though school age populations on reserves are rapidly growing in response to high fertility levels. In

Table 2.4 Selected demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the non-aboriginal and aboriginal populations, Canada, 2006

	Single response					
	Non-aboriginal	Total aboriginal identity[a]	North American Indian	Metis	Inuit	Registered Indian[b]
Characteristics	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Region	100	100	100	100	100	100
Northern Canada	0	5	3	1	57	3
Nova Scotia and Labrador	2	2	1	2	9	1
Other maritime provinces[c]	6	3	4	3	1	4
Québec	24	9	9	7	22	9
Ontario	39	21	23	19	5	20
Western provinces[d]	16	43	42	53	5	46
British Columbia	13	17	19	15	1	18
Population age 0–14						
Percent of total population	17	30	32	25	36	32
Type of household	100	100	100	100	100	100
One family, married couple	65	36	32	47	33	30
One family, common-law couple	14	22	23	18	30	23
One family, lone parent family	16	31	32	30	18	32
More than one family	5	11	13	6	19	14
Two or more persons not in census families	0	1	1	0	0	1
Household characteristics, all ages						
Average number of persons in household	3	4	4	3	5	4
Percentages						
Of households below poverty line (LICO)	15	32	38	22	18	39
Of household below poverty line (LICO) after taxes	11	24	29	16	12	30
Of population living in crowded dwellings	3	9	12	3	25	13
Of population in dwellings requiring minimum repairs[e]	28	33	32	35	32	32

(continued)

Table 2.4 (continued)

	Single response					
	Non-aboriginal	Total aboriginal identity[a]	North American Indian	Metis	Inuit	Registered Indian[b]
Characteristics	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Of population in dwellings requiring maximum repairs[e]	7	24	29	15	28	30
Employment profile, ages 25–54						
Not in the labour force	15	26	29	19	28	30
In the labour force	85	74	71	81	72	70
In labour force but unemployed in reference week	6	15	18	10	19	19
Employment activity, ages 25–54 (worked at least 1 week in 2005)						
Percent working mainly part time in 2005	17	19	18	19	27	18
Average number of weeks worked in 2005	45	41	39	43	37	39
Average market income[f]	$41,898	$28,570	$25,612	$32,387	$30,883	$24,845
Ratio of market income to non-aboriginal income	(RG)	68	61	77	74	59
Education, ages 20–24						
Percent with less than high school diploma	12	39	48	25	50	49
Percent high school dropout[g]	10	30	36	19	44	37
Percent not in school, not employed	9	27	34	16	38	35

Source: Customized table produced by the author especially for this volume from the 2006 Public Use Microdata File on Individuals, 2006 Census of Canada

[a]Reponses to the census question: "Is this person an Aboriginal person, that is, North American Indian, Metis or Inuit (Eskimo)?" Approximately 2.8 % of Aboriginal responses were multiple aboriginal responses or aboriginal responses not covered by the three main categories. These replies are included in the total Aboriginal counts of this table (column 2)

[b]Persons who answered in the affirmative to the census question: "Is this person a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the Indian Act of Canada?"

[c]Provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick

[d]Provinces of Saskatewan, Manitoba and Alberta

[e]Examples of minor repairs are missing or loose floor tiles, bricks or shingles, defective steps, railing or siding, etc. Examples of major repairs are defective plumbing or electrical wiring, structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings, etc

[f]Market income refers to wage, salary and self-employment income

[g]Calculated as the proportion of those age 20–24 who have not completed high school and who were not attending school in the 12 months prior to the census

addition to woefully underfunded education, critics charge that on-reserve schools are run by inexperienced teachers who are paid less than those in public schools, the physical structures are inadequate, and schools lack computers or libraries. Not surprisingly, pressure is mounting to legislate a First Nations education system, with a First Nations Education Act expected sometime in 2012 or 2013 (Harper 2012; Ibbitson 2012; Library of Parliament n.d.).

The aboriginal population of Canada will continue to grow; projections estimate totals between 1,682,000 and 2,220,000 within two decades, causing the aboriginal share of the Canadian population to rise from 3.8 % in 2006 to between 4 and 5.3 % in 2031 (Malenfant and Morency 2011). These increases reflect ethnic mobility factors and demographic factors. Numbers are expected to increase not only because of strong identity retention among aboriginal groups, but also because of the greater tendency of respondents in surveys to change or augment their selection of aboriginal identities or aboriginal ancestry. Demographically, the aboriginal populations have higher levels of natural increase, a term that refers to the positive gains when increases due to fertility are higher than the losses caused by mortality. Numerous studies show that mortality levels are higher for aboriginal peoples than for non-aboriginals, often substantially higher. But fertility is even higher. The total fertility rate in 2005/2007 is estimated as 1.6 for the non-aboriginal population compared to 2.7, 2.4, and 1.7 for women who respectively identify themselves as Inuit, North American Indian, and Métis (Malenfant and Morency 2011).

The projected growth of aboriginal populations means that the median age will rise from 27 years in 2006 to 35–37 in 2031. Even so, overall, the population will still be younger than the non-aboriginal population, with the Inuit substantially younger than North American Indians and Métis. The concentration of Inuit in Canada's northern region, particularly in Nunavut, will persist, but the numerical growth of the North American Indian and Métis populations means increased concentration in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Estimates suggest that minimally one in five of the inhabitants of these provinces will identify as American Indian or Métis. In the context of historical and contemporary disadvantages, the impending demographic changes make socio-economic improvements for Canada's aboriginal peoples imperative.

Conclusion

Canada is distinctive among European and Australasian democracies (Kymlicka 2010) because racial and ethnic diversity and equity and human rights based discourse both derive from and continually reshape the country's demographic, social, and political landscape. In response to Canada's ethnic and racial diversity and to issues of inequality, federal action includes: (1) policies of official bilingualism and multiculturalism; (2) policies that promotes equality particularly with respect to minority groups, including groups of color; and (3) numerous reports that call for the eradication of extreme disadvantage and emphasize the rights of aboriginal people to self-government.

The first arises from the legacy of English-French settlements, and the geographical concentration of the French in one province, Québec. The attentiveness to multi-culturalism as opposed to bi-culturalism also reflects the growth in ethnically diverse populations as a result of continued immigration throughout Canada's history. The second recognizes – and affects – new immigrant groups of color. The third also rests on the earliest of Canada's settlements and acknowledges persistent economic disadvantage over hundreds of years. This chapter presents data on language, changing immigration patterns, and on the socio-economic characteristics of visible minority groups and the Aboriginal populations.

Data on each of the target populations – French language groups, visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples – is collected by state agencies, in particular Statistics Canada. As a result, the definition of each group is constructed, resting on particular policy objectives and decisions. This chapter inventories how data are collected

and what dimensions are collected for ethnic and racially defined groups.

Definitions, however, are never static as shown in the changing measurement of ethnic origins and in the increasing questions asked about Aboriginal background, identity and band membership. Furthermore, ethnic flux often underlies shifts in ethnic and racial composition. Since the 1990s, people increasingly are selecting "Canadian" as an option although the meaning of the term differs for those in Québec compared to those living elsewhere. Among the Aboriginal populations, variations also exist, fueled in part by changes in legal eligibility to acquire labels. A third contribution of the chapter lies in showing how ethnicity and race are dynamic and changing in response to social content and social interaction.

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