A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay's Diversity

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Building social capital and a compassionate sense of place
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

DEDICATION

We dedicate this report to Vasant Lakhani.

He was a pioneer in this community in the area of race relations.
He was a mentor to many.
It is the wish of Diversity Thunder Bay that his many years of dedication be recognized.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The most important acknowledgement is to the over 420 people in Thunder Bay who gave the time and energy to respond to the survey or participate in interviews.

The Project Management Committee - Anne LeSage, Brenda Reimer, Walid Chahal, and Moffat Makuto - invested a great deal of time from the grant application stage through research design and proofreading the final report. Busy people tend to accomplish much and these members of the community have given considerable commitment to helping Thunder Bay become a more inclusive city.

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Chapter One
INTRODUCTION

Participant: Most of the time they just keep quiet [about racism]... I guess they’ve been taught to accept it.
Interviewer: I was just thinking this project’s called “A Community of Acceptance” That’s a whole different take on the word “acceptance.”
Participant: That could be they accept that they’re gonna be abused; that’s the way they have to treat life. (Part of an interview with Ralph)

Canada is a country with a population that encompasses a wide diversity of cultures and ethnic groups. It is a country often described as having two founding nations. Yet Aboriginal peoples predated the French and English immigrants as nations on the continent, and are a vibrant element in Canadian society. Numerous ethnic groups have also become part of what is often termed “the Canadian mosaic.”

The historical colonizing of the Canadian landmass, coupled with ethnic and cultural diversity has made race relations part of the mosaic also. However, there are competing accounts of the effects of race and racism in Canadian history, culture and society. While most people of a visible minority have experienced prejudice or discrimination on the basis of skin colour and features, many non-minority people question the existence or effects of racism in Canada. These differing perceptions make the task of studying the topic challenging and complicate the task of anti-racist advocacy and education.

A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity is a multi-method study about race relations in Thunder Bay. The purpose of the study was to investigate general awareness of race, racism and racialization in the community. The study also documented the experience of racism in order to understand the effects of race-based discrimination on the social cohesion of the community. Finally, the study is to be a source of information for Thunder Bay, through the sponsoring organization, to strategically plan its activities and public education about race relations.

THE CONTEXT

Thunder Bay is a city of approximately 120,000 in Northwest Ontario. Aboriginal peoples comprise approximately 12% of the population. According to the 1996 Census, the Aboriginal population is 8,605. However, the figure is assumed to under-represent the Aboriginal population.

1Based on 1996 Canadian Census numbers estimated upwards to address sampling errors associated with particular issues of assessing First Nations populations, such as nonparticipation, literacy and political resistance.
Thunder Bay also has a significant multicultural component with a number of European and non-European cultural societies. There were 2,680 persons who responded to the 1996 Census as members of a visible minority.

Thunder Bay was one of the important sites of the fur trade with European settlement occurring for more than 250 years. This history has implications for the political and social relations among Aboriginal peoples and Euro-Canadians. The town has since been a centre of commerce, transportation, and resource extraction, experiencing slow population and economic decline over the last two decades. Recent out-migration of Euro-Canadians has occurred in concert with increased immigration of non-European settlers and high birth rates for Aboriginal peoples. Therefore, Thunder Bay has experienced changing social demographics and racial composition. Projections into the future indicate that these trends will continue. Therefore, race relations will be increasingly important for the community.

While many of the multicultural workers and Aboriginal peoples assert the presence of racism in Thunder Bay, these affected groups and individuals have also suggested that within Thunder Bay there exists a strong denial of the presence of racism. Over the years many actions have been taken and many committees have been activated to address race relations, racism, or multicultural issues in Thunder Bay. Over the past two years, a multi-stakeholder group has formed called Diversity Thunder Bay.

The formation of Diversity Thunder Bay followed a canvass of organizations that had committees on race relations or had been involved in such issues. A general conclusion was that Thunder Bay needed a central organization to help coordinate actions and public education in this area. Diversity Thunder Bay is a coalition of representatives from various First Nations organizations, multicultural organizations, community leaders, city authorities and other interested representatives (See Appendix 1 for a list of organizations with representation in the Diversity Thunder Bay coalition). Diversity Thunder Bay aims to be a comprehensive organization focussed on race relations within the community of Thunder Bay. The organization’s first project is this study, which has been funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage under the Multiculturalism Program.

A Community of Acceptance has three purposes. First, it will understand the current status of race relations in the community. Secondly, the study will enable Diversity Thunder Bay to orient its actions to more effectively address racism and foster community development. Third, the study is designed to be a catalyst for public discussion. We do well to ask ourselves what sort of community do we want to be, and what should be done about any racism found to be present in the community?

CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Race

Scientists and social scientists have shown consistently that race is a false concept. Conferences convened by the United Nations since the late 1940s have established that there are no genuine bases to differentiate any human attributes as functions of skin colour, eye shape, forehead slope or other physical characteristics collectively associated as characteristics of “race” (Celious and Oyserman, 2001; Henry, et.al., 1995; Johnson, Rush and Feagin, 2000; Twine and Warren, 2000). Blackburn (2000) explains how the differences in DNA between humans are less than 0.6%. The
widest variation is between ethnic groups of Africans; the variation between so-called “Caucasians” and either Africans or Orientals is less. Twentieth-century classifications of humans have listed between two and thirty “different” human races by otherwise reputable scientists (Blackburn, 2000). In conclusion, “race” is not a valid biological concept. It is a concept defined and used (or not!) in particular ways by a particular society.

Sociologists have shown that race is a changeable social concept. First, categories of “race” have changed over time. For example, in Thunder Bay, Finns were once considered “black” and only later gained social acceptance and classification as “white” (Dunk, 1998). Second, any two individuals, even of the same “race” may have markedly different experiences. The personal characteristics or life history of one Aboriginal person from another Aboriginal person is as similar or different as that of any two other Canadians. Celious and Oyserman (2001) write, “majority group members treat blacks [and other visible minorities] as if they were all the same”, although being a member of a visible minority “can better be thought of as multiple experiences rather than one experiential state” (p. 150). This is especially true of those who are of mixed-race - their self-identity and the ways that they have been dealt with by the broader society vary greatly. Respondents in A Community of Acceptance often commented on how lightness of skin colour allowed greater acceptance by the white majority of mainstream society.

Racialization

People throughout time have used physical attributes to differentiate between people. Race, therefore, although it is not a biological reality, has a social reality in the form of social practices. Historically, it appears that skin colour has been among the most prevalent means of categorizing people. The process of using physical characteristics associated with the social construct of “race” is called racialization. The idea of who is part of a “race” becomes solidified in social knowledge until it is seen as objective and true. Racialized social practices can make it seem as if race is real. In some form, race then does become real - both as a way people are categorized and treated, and a way that people form a self-identity. In the following report, the term racialization will often be used. Unlike racism, racialization does not refer only to negative social processes.

Racism

When the social concept of “race” is used to negatively evaluate a person, it is called racism. Racism is a complex phenomenon with many manifestations. These manifestations are united as attitudes and behaviours that contribute to limiting opportunities of racialized individuals or racialized groups. Racism is not always visible; it may also include judgements or circumstances that give people of some races advantages that others may not have. A definition is:

Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing

The term originates from an eighteenth century scientist who thought people from the Caucasus region of Asia were good-looking (Blackburn, 2000).
Although we often consider “white” as the majority colour, the primary investigator’s child used to colour her self-portraits with “pink” to better reflect her generally rosy cheeks. It would have been interesting to notice when and why she began switching to “white”.

Three discrete components of racism are generally acknowledged - individual, systemic (or structural), and ideological or cultural racisms (Henry, et.al., 1995). **Individual racism** is the personal attitudes or actions that prejudice or discriminate on the basis of race. Studies have shown that most people are very aware of the overt, negative blatant manifestations of individual racism in violence and explicit rejection of visible minorities. These beliefs are usually characterized as fringe beliefs and rejected by most people. However, there are more subtle attitudes and actions that are also racist, or interpreted as such by people affected by these social practices or beliefs.

Limiting racism to blatant and overt actions and attitudes tends to obscure how racialization occurs in social institutions, cultural values and individual attitudes and behaviours.

“Although more whites than ever reject old-fashioned racist beliefs in response to brief questions in opinion surveys, several studies using in-depth interviews show that such survey results are inaccurate accounts that gloss over the deep-seated sentiments held by most whites” (Johnson, Rush and Feagin, 2000, p. 96).

Racism is more often subtle or unconscious; it is rarely explicit. General surveys of the Canadian populace show a small percent (around 15%) who hold conscious racist beliefs or express these in actions (Driediger & Halli, 2000). However, larger proportions hold some notions that other racial or ethnic groups are different or inferior. Individuals may consciously or unconsciously judge visible minorities. Despite their intentions such behaviours as extra looks, increased carefulness or questions such as “where did you come from?” are experienced as inferiorizing. Such actions also imply that the majority colour - white - is the norm. Remember the “flesh” coloured crayons once upon a time?[^3]

Social actions and cultural values are often unacknowledged and taken-for-granted. In the case of racism, this tacitness makes it difficult to explain, especially for majority population members who neither experience the negative effects nor hold consciously racist beliefs. Again, the term racialization better describes such a situation as it holds fewer negative connotations and is less likely to be rejected.

**Systemic racism** is manifested in policies, procedures, systems and behaviours of social institutions, “which may directly or indirectly, consciously or unwittingly, promote, sustain, or entrench differential advantage or privilege for people of certain races” (Henry, et.al., 1995, p. 47-48). This brings up the element of power - how and by whom the policies and procedures get established. Status, economic control, and political authority are a few of the ways that establish practices that disadvantage some in preference to others. Historical injustices are also systemic factors that confer advantages on some people and not others. **Structural racism** is another term sometimes used to describe how social structures can have a racialized aspect. For example, if Aboriginal youth come from isolated northern communities to continue schooling in Thunder Bay

[^3]: Although we often consider “white” as the majority colour, the primary investigator’s child used to colour her self-portraits with “pink” to better reflect her generally rosy cheeks. It would have been interesting to notice when and why she began switching to “white”.
they may face societal factors that make it hard to continue, such as lack of family and other social supports. Poor schooling affects future job prospects and a racialized cycle is created. Another form of systemic racism is a climate of racial jokes that make a job miserable. Yet another example of systemic racism includes jobs that require certain levels of education even though the work can be done by someone with less formal education. This practice discriminates against those who are less likely to have achieved the formal education levels, such as Aboriginal adults (CRRF, 2001).

Systemic racism is related to cultural or ideological racism, which is the “networks of beliefs that encourage and justify discriminatory practices” (Henry, et.al., 1995, p. 48). For example, the symbolic associations of “light” versus “darkness,” or “darkest Africa,” may affect how people are perceived. Similarly, the idea that Aboriginal culture, rather than other explanations (including systemic racism as described above), keeps Aboriginal peoples from getting and keeping certain types of jobs is an ideological manifestation of racism. So is an emphasis on individual capability to “rise above it” rather than acknowledging significant constraints that social structures and social practices can place on our lives.

Despite the separation of forms of racism described here, in practice, these manifestations are not separate. They form a complex and inextricable weave of individual activities and social forces. This complexity, as well as the rarity of overtly expressed racism, make the subject of racism a difficult one to study directly.

**Discrimination**

Discrimination is not the same as racism. **Discrimination** is actions that discriminate, or choose, between people. When done on the basis of race, with a negative judgement and for reasons that have nothing to do with the qualities of the person or needs of the situation, the discrimination would be called racism. There are many situations where people are chosen on the basis of certain characteristics required in a job situation. If a baseball coach was being hired, an excellent football coach would probably not be interviewed. Similarly, if an organization that works with people of a particular racial group is hiring, the organization may wish to have a member of that group as the employee. He or she is likely to understand the needs of the group and be able to make initial contact more easily than others. This is particularly the case where the racial group has been systematically disadvantaged. It is usually assumed that for racism to occur, the person who is racist needs to have power to put the racializing judgement into action.

**Ethnicity**

A concept related to the topic is that of ethnicity. **Ethnicity** often refers to the country of origin of a person’s ancestors, including culture, language, customs, foods, clothes, and so on. Ethnicity may be related to racialization. Although the two concepts are different in theory, they are often linked in common social practice. A fifth generation Canadian can be asked “where do you come from?” because she is Black (James & Shadd, 1994).

Canada has prided itself on its multicultural society, although the value of this diversity has sometimes been disputed. Until the 1960s, most immigrants came to the country from one of the European countries and Canadian immigration policy disallowed many potential immigrants from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Such immigrants were seen as less able to contribute or as an
inadequate “fit” with Canadian culture or society. For example, potential immigrants from Africa or Latin America were often declared “unfit for the cold.” These views are still held as several people made similar remarks during this study. Immigration rules were changed in the late 1960s. Canada’s multicultural character has expanded, which is variously seen as a positive development and a source of social tension.

The experience of immigrants in Canada is also complex. Immigrants who do not match the expectations of the white majority have sometimes experienced discrimination. However, discrimination may also be based on language, or friction from differing practices or values. For example, some immigrants have expressed frustration over not getting their religious holidays off from work in exchange for the Christian holidays. Being seen as “stupid” because their English or French is accented or uses different phrases or rhythms is another example. Differences are not a problem; how those differences become defined is the issue. Furthermore, many immigrants may have the same norms as the dominant Canadian society, but their skin colour still prevents complete acceptance. It is very difficult to extricate the effects of ethnicity when race is involved. In A Community of Acceptance there is some acknowledgment of the linked social practice of ethnicity and race.

A Note on Terms

Language has an important role in helping to form our understandings of a subject. Words have connotations and evoke images. The connotations of our language helps to form the way that we see the world. In the quest to find the most appropriate expressions, favoured terms change, which can be frustrating. The topic of racialization in a community is a sensitive topic to all members of the community. As Chapter Two will show, it is important to see all people as having an ethnicity and colour. If the term “visible minority” is used, it implies that the non-minority is not visible. If the term “coloured people” is used, it implies that whites don’t have a colour. In both these terms, there is an implication that the white majority is the “normal” type to which all other Canadians are measured.

Similar issues arise with terms such as “Indian,” “Native,” “First Nations” and Aboriginal. All these terms have connotations, and political consequences. In this document the term “Aboriginal peoples” will be used except where study participants or other primary sources use a different term. Aboriginal peoples is more inclusive. “Racialized people” will be used when there is not a more specific and appropriate term. “Non-racialized people” will sometimes be used to refer to the majority population in recognition that common social practices tend to forget that “white” is a colour and so-called “race” and not an invisible ethnicity. It also recognizes that, in North American society at least, it is this group that has generally set the standards against which those who are different than this standard are judged.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The effects of the degrading process based on physical characteristics have many consequences for individuals, racialized groups, and communities as a whole. The following study sought to describe some of these effects, the social practices involved and the consequences for the community. A sociological lens is used. As members of a community, we have similar influences,
although these influences also differ. However, we see many things in similar ways, and act in ways that are not much different from social norms. This study seeks to appreciate individual differences while also recognizing that common cultural models affect our thoughts and behaviours.

The report is broken into several chapters. It is written as an integrated whole. If a reader simply reads selected parts, he or she is likely to miss the logic of the part. Each part is based on other parts. For example, reasons for many of the recommendations in Chapter Eight are not provided, they flow from other parts of the report. The recommendations are based on the reports of interactions in the various social locations (Chapter 6), which are in turn informed by the accounts of racializing treatment and acknowledgement of the particular social knowledge that informs interpretations of racism and racialization (Chapter 5). Numerous studies have shown the effects of social structures on academic achievement and participation, job performance, ability to get a job, housing options and numerous other aspects of life. Racism also has an impact on communities as a whole. This literature provides a context for the present study and is summarized in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three describes the methods of the study. Findings will be reported in the following four chapters. Chapter Four presents the basic survey data from 392 respondents. The chapter provides a broad overview of beliefs and attitudes in the survey sample drawn from residents of Thunder Bay. Chapter Five describes the findings about experiences of racialization in Thunder Bay from the 45 people interviewed. This chapter gives a rich description of the social practices - the treatment received and the mechanisms to cope with racism. Chapter Six draws together the survey and interview data to describe certain social locations in which racialization occurs in Thunder Bay.

Finally, Chapter Seven examines the impacts of racialization on the community as described by survey and interview respondents. The Policy Research Institute defines social cohesion as “the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity” (Policy Research Initiative, 1999). The consequences of racialization on Thunder Bay will be discussed in light of the literature on social cohesion, which has been shown to be essential for community and economic development (Dayton-Johnson, 2001). The study shows that racism may be one of the “fault lines” that fractures social cohesion and limits the development of the community of Thunder Bay.

Chapter Eight presents suggestions and recommendations. Overall, it is hoped that A Community of Acceptance can be seen in a spirit of community development - the wellness check that helps tell us what is working and what could be improved. Successful communities are those that can improve the lot of all its citizens, including those who face structural barriers that prevent success (Wilms, 2001). This research aims to document social exclusion on the basis of racialization, with the intent that developing this knowledge will lead to community action in Thunder Bay to address the problem.
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Chapter Two

PLACING THE STUDY IN CONTEXT

“He would quote it like right to me, like “Nigger.” And he was always joking, but the way he was joking it wasn’t joking.” (Interview participant)

“You have to understand that racism does hurt.” (Interview participant)

Although much has been written on multiculturalism, Canadian history, Aboriginal issues and the experience of being a visible minority, there is still a need for further dialogue. A great deal of research has been done on race relations, discrimination and related subjects. However, little good research on these topics has been done in a community like Thunder Bay. How does one study racism in an entire community? The following overview will summarize the context for this project. It will briefly overview the history of race relations in Thunder Bay. It will also review some of the research that informs the present study.

Some of the research focuses on deep examinations of certain life experiences. These studies have the benefit of being rich in understanding, but of a very limited number of experiences. They are detailed, but not very useful in generalizing across a whole community. Surveys tend to be broad. Surveys enable researchers to make generalisations to a larger population, but surveys are not very good at getting richly detailed information. The methods chosen for this study attempt to gain insight into both the detailed, particular experience of racialized people in Thunder Bay and the views of race, discrimination, diversity and community across a general sample of the population.

THUNDER BAY

When the study was initially proposed by the community partners, one Aboriginal person long involved in anti-racism activity in Thunder Bay said “Another study. It’s going to show the same things that we’ve been saying for years.” Multicultural and diversity workers insist a sense of denial about racism prevents effective community action in Thunder Bay. Furthermore, several studies have been done in the specific context of Northwestern Ontario. An historical sense is necessary to appreciate the volatility of the topic of racism, particularly White-Aboriginal relations.

Thunder Bay’s diverse ethnic groups means that it has had cultural associations since late in the 1800s. French, Scottish and English settlers had followed the fur trading companies that passed through the area and built permanent trading posts such as Fort William. The first traders consisted of French, then English and Scottish. Some of them stayed, and were eventually joined by Finnish and Slovaks, Italians and Swedish, Ukrainians and Polish. Through the early part of the 1900s, some Chinese, East Indians, and Japanese began arriving. This migration increased slightly in the middle part of the century. Over time, often in the second or third generation, ethnic Europeans assimilated into the Euro-Canadian social framework.
But before all this, were the Cree and Ojibwa. A complex relationship with the fur companies had built up over the centuries of contact beginning some time in the late 1600s. The relationship included economic partnership and social interdependence, which deeply affected Aboriginal communities and lead to numerous changes to lifestyle. For example, becoming a sort of “middleman” for the French traders, the Cree were dramatically affected by the fallout of fur prices in the mid 1800s (Dunk, 1991).

Aboriginal nations signed treaties with the British, then Canadian colonial powers, exchanging one set of rights for other sets of rights. Social dependence became something of a fact of life as the economic factors and political manoeuvring reduced Aboriginal opportunity to control their destiny. Canadian government policy included “civilizing” Aboriginal peoples, which further disrupted family and social ties and existing social practices. Government policies established living sites called reserves, built houses based on Euro-Canadian family models, and included government practices that were paternalistic, domineering, and sometimes corrupt. The Indian Act of 1876 established who was an “Indian,” with rules that kept limiting the definition. Judge Murray Sinclair (1997) states “democratic procedures every citizen of Canada took for granted in the 19th century were taken away for Indian people.” The goals of governmental policies were to erase Aboriginal peoples as a culturally distinct group, a plan made explicit in the 1969 White Paper with a plan for assimilation.

These historical factors are important because they affect present conditions. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) carefully outlined the historical and systemic circumstances that have been faced by Aboriginal peoples. In Ontario, Stephen Lewis’ 1992 report to the Premier showed how pervasive the experience of being racialized was in the province. Not only are the onerous practices remembered, but so are the immediate consequences. The long term effects have been a systemic disadvantaging of Aboriginal peoples under conditions that have been labelled oppressive (RCAP, 1996; UN, 1997). However, such history and the societal structures that affect Aboriginal peoples are, in Lakehead University sociologist Thomas Dunk’s words, “abstract” and “opaque” to most people compared to the more experientially relevant observations about life in the present. This historical background is only a cursory review, but it gives perspective on circumstances around racialized people in Thunder Bay today. More Aboriginal people are moving to cities across Canada, which is dramatically affecting urban demographics and what happens there.

Studying Thunder Bay

Dunk (1991) has provided the most complete inspection of racism in Thunder Bay. Dunk’s participant-observation of white, male, working class culture in Thunder Bay highlights the degree of racism present. The study, performed between 1984-6 for a doctoral dissertation shows clear attention to the conventions of scholarly research. According to Dunk, racism is part of the “common sense” of the study participants, so called because such views seem obvious and logical to those who hold them. They are rational explanations of everyday experience, seen from a particular point of view. However, what is “common-sense” in one’s own life may not be common in another’s. “Common-sense” is similar to saying “taken-for-granted.”

According to Dunk’s observations, people often claimed that they did not hold racist views. Racist-sounding views were explained in reference to “common sense” logic, such as, “Of course, Natives are drunks - you see them on the streets that way;” “The vandalism was caused by Natives -
they live near there, and they do that sort of stuff;’” “Coloured immigrants don’t want to become like ‘real’ Canadians;’” “Nothing against immigrants, but they take our jobs, so we don’t want them here.” Dunk’s conclusion is that racism against Aboriginal peoples in Thunder Bay is, at least partially, a substituted hostility toward outside powers such as the Federal government and southern Ontario. Furthermore, white, male working class culture tends to value such traits as self-reliance and “getting on with it.” Dunk concludes that treaty rights are seen as privileged handouts, and Aboriginal complaints about injustice are seen as refusing to live in the present. This “common sense” view plays a role in race relations in Thunder Bay.

Dunk’s study is one example of an attempt to dig into the meanings of everyday social practices. Another researcher did a slightly different form of a study to look at the lived experiences of women from India in Thunder Bay. Dhiman (1997) conducted 16 interviews and explored how people saw themselves in relation to the majority society. Their experiences contained aspects of racism, and “being othered.” For example, the dominant version of who is “Canadian” did not fit these non-European women, so they found other ways to identify themselves with both their ancestry in India and their home country of Canada. They walked in two worlds, needing to be familiar with both.

These studies of groups of people are called ethnographies. Usually they require a long presence in the culture and systematic observations to gain insight. They are valuable because they make clear the social practices and taken-for-granted, “common-sense” knowledge that people use to interact with others.

Part of the motivation for this study was a sense on the part of people active on issues of community advocacy, First Nations and multiculturalism, that people in Thunder Bay were unaware or refusing to acknowledge how racism occurs in Thunder Bay. For the past fifteen years, active organizing has taken place around the March 21 UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In that time, according to Census data, Thunder Bay’s population has grown more diverse. Race Relations committees have formed, and policies have been formulated for the Thunder Bay Police, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce and others. The City of Thunder Bay’s policy says, in part,

*The City of Thunder Bay.... considers the presence of people from a wide range of racial, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds to be a source of enrichment and strength.... The purpose of the [Race Relations Advisory Committee is to raise awareness of multiculturalism, racism and the aspirations of Aboriginal peoples; to promote activities which seek to enhance and foster respect, understanding and co-operation among racial, cultural, ethnic and community groups dealing with the Corporation; and to function as a forum to enhance the responsiveness of the Corporation to the diverse needs of Thunder Bay’s multiracial and multicultural peoples.*

Lakehead University did a campus climate survey in 1994. The Regional Multicultural Youth Centre has been very active in anti-racism education with schools, youth and other organizations. But involved people felt that little improvement was occurring in terms of racism in the community.
Other Northwestern Ontario Activity

The small northern community of Sioux Lookout has had an active anti-racism committee since the mid 1980s. The committee produced a baseline survey of community attitudes in 1990 (Sioux Lookout, 1990) and a new survey in 2000 (Sioux Lookout, 2001). The 1990 survey was delivered to every postal box in Sioux Lookout and was available in a number of locations. Responses were received from 548 of the 2600 teen and adult residents. Over ninety percent indicated there were race-related problems in the community. The survey included a number of types of questions allowing open-ended and close-ended responses to questions about perceived discrimination, witnessing or hearing racist acts, and other related beliefs. The report led to widespread community discussion and some action.

The 2000 survey in Sioux Lookout was intended to analyse the work over the past ten years, determine changes in community attitudes and again assess the current state of race relations in this community. The report indicates that problems still persist. Some responses suggested that the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee was seen negatively by some community members as “stirring the pot needlessly.” Other community members saw anti-racism as fundamental to making a healthy community. The 2000 study was also delivered to every mailbox. Only 4% of those were returned; additional surveys were distributed in the schools. The low response rate, despite many people feeling that this is an issue to community well-being informed the choice of methods of delivery for the survey in A Community of Acceptance.

Two short reports on race relations in regional high schools were done by the Multicultural Association of Northwestern Ontario (MANWO) (RMYC, 1994, 1999). The 1994 report included information from a survey of over one thousand students and anecdotal evidence collected on an ad hoc basis (RMYC, 1994). Over sixty percent of the students “indicated racism was a problem in their respective schools.” Aboriginal people were clearly indicated as the most targeted population. Native students believed their responses to racial incidents often got them into trouble and felt that schools and teachers were generally insensitive and indifferent to racism. They depict discomfort in reporting incidents “because no one will understand them, believe them, or do anything.”

The 1999 report summarized consultations with twenty-seven high schools in the Thunder Bay region. The project was initiated after racial violence in one high school. A formal process was followed that included student-facilitated school visits and semi-structured interviews with school officials, teachers and students.

The results show that racial incidents are primarily between Native and non-Native people, due to low numbers of other racialized people. General comments are summarized and are similar to those described in the 1994 report. There are some racially oriented problems, with most incidents overlooked. While violence was clearly not tolerated, the process to follow for racial slurs, jokes, graffiti and other such incidents was unclear in all schools. The report cited a lack of mention of systemic racism such as Euro-centric curriculum, textbook bias and administrative structures. Minority teachers felt pressured to be the staff dealing with racial incidents. The report also highlighted a need to teach about diversity issues since this is the Canada that students will encounter. The situation in Thunder Bay was described as somewhat better than other schools in the region due to the presence of a number of multicultural groups in Thunder Bay.

The two RMYC reports clearly serve a multiple purpose as anti-racism communication and brief study of race relations in regional high schools. While the methodology is ad hoc, both RMYC
reports give impressionistic accounts that should be valued as knowledge-in-action of community members and diversity workers. Both reports note that there are problems to be addressed. RMYC staff believe little action has resulted and attribute this as denial that racism is a problem to seriously address in the region.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

There is a great deal of research on racialization in Canada. The research takes the form of national surveys, public opinion polls, experiments about discrimination, and ethnographic studies. This research will be presented as confirming some of the assertions made above, and to show how it informed the selection of methods, questions for the survey and interviews, and analysis of the data collected.

Survey Research

Numerous studies make comparisons on various measures for Aboriginal peoples, other racialized people, and the majority Euro-Canadian/white population. These studies have compared educational achievement, income levels, workforce participation, health and poverty variables and other demographic factors. (Frank, 1997; Hou and Balakrishnan, 1996; Li, 1998; Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998).

A recent report provides an excellent overview of Canadian studies done in the past five years on structural inequalities such as those noted above. Called Unequal Access: A Canadian Profile of Racial Differences in Education, Employment and Income (CRRF, 2001), the study utilizes quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to compare Aboriginal, visible minority and white peoples across various indicators. Significant racialized differences were found. For example,

- Among Aboriginal youth, high school and university completion lags far behind that of visible minorities and non-racialized groups.
- Even with post-secondary education, jobs still remain difficult to find for Aboriginal peoples.
- While only 4% of white people were looking for work, 10% of visible minorities and 16% of Aboriginal people were unemployed. This does not address under-employment, which is also considered a significant problem for both racialized groups.
- Foreign-born visible minorities experience great discrepancy between educational achievement and occupation. Lack of recognition of foreign credentials is a significant barrier.
- Visible minorities still face “polite racism” in hiring practices. This includes such situations as arriving for an interview only to find the “job has just been filled.”

Unequal Access also reports the results of seven focus groups involving 62 participants and carried out in five cities across the country. These focus groups provide additional evidence of racial discrimination in employment, and put “life” to the numbers.

Numerous other studies show those of Euro-Canadian descent are doing better on most measures than visible minorities, who are doing better than Aboriginal peoples. For example, visible minorities with identical education have lower income levels than white Canadians. The trend
remains whether the visible minority groups are Canadian-born or foreign-born and when all other individual factors are accounted for. This averaged difference in income is generally considered evidence of systemic discrimination.

Researchers have documented similar trends in the area of employment. Discrimination in employment can take place in recruitment, retention, promotion, firing, screening and on-the-job, and can be intentional or unconscious as well as either overt or subtle. An unfavourable work climate can be generated by racist jokes, cliques or undesired attention.

Studies consistently show the conditions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada to lag far behind that of other demographic groups. Jankowski, & Moazzami (1994) demonstrated the significant difference of income between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Northwestern Ontario. The difference impacts opportunities, educational achievement, recreation, housing and other aspects of everyday life. Barsh (1994) carefully documented the “existence of gross and persistent inequalities between people of Aboriginal descent and the Canadian average.” Aboriginal peoples fare worse in such areas as economic levels, health, family integrity, access to housing and other measurable social conditions. These factors were also documented in the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, recommendations of which have yet to be implemented by the Government of Canada. This condition is among those that led the UN Report of the Human Rights Committee on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to write that the situation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is “the most pressing human rights issue facing Canadians.”

These studies re-emphasize the striking racialized inequalities in Canadian society, that may be assumed as reflections of systemic or structural racism. As Unequal Access notes,

> Granted, quantitative data do not directly measure racism. Nevertheless, if racial differences in earnings still persist when all other factors such as gender, age and education are taken into consideration, it is reasonable to infer that discrimination may well contribute to inequities (CRRF, 2001, p. 14).

Other national studies and polls show attitudes toward visible minorities, racism, discrimination and related topics. Studies on attitudes have consistently shown that overt racism is deemed unacceptable. Several opinion polls corroborate that fewer than sixteen percent of the population hold overtly racist views (Driediger & Halli, 2000; Henry, et.al., 1995). However, racial stereotyping remains widespread.

> Although more whites than ever reject old-fashioned racist beliefs in response to brief questions in opinion surveys, several studies using in-depth interviews show that such survey results are inaccurate accounts that gloss over the deep-seated sentiments held by most whites (Johnson, Rush and Feagin, 2000, p. 96).

These researchers also describe how most non-racialized peoples do not believe that serious discrimination still occurs; it becomes necessary for people of colour, who have early and persistent experiences of being hampered, to explain again and again how racism persists in North American society. Johnson, Rush and Feagin (2000) also explain how this situation can lead to whites blaming people of colour for causing racialized situations by talking about such a negative topic.

Finally, most people who hold to liberal democratic opinions of themselves or the idealization of a tolerant Canada are resistant to the idea that racism may be present, as racism offends these ideals. Despite popular assumption, Canada and the United States are similar in measures of racism (Driediger & Halli, 2000). Again, since racism is often conceived in the public imagination as extreme expressions of blatantly offensive actions, words or ideas, more subtle
aspects of racialized views are often hidden, even to the holder of such views (Driediger & Halli 2000; Henry, et.al., 1995). Such studies make it clear that directly asking about racism is unlikely to generate an accurate response.

Finally, another set of national surveys attempt to account for the persistence of discrimination by investigating other attitudes that may substitute for overt racism. Given the general unacceptability of overt racism, racialized attitudes may have gone “underground” yet surface in views on immigration, employment equity or multiculturalism (Henry, et.al., 1995). Other researchers have queried beliefs about affirmative action, Canadian “character,” Aboriginal treaty rights, multiculturalism or immigration.

Such proxy assumption have been criticized. It is likely that these views reflect a complex interaction of cultural models, political views, and personal and community beliefs rather than simple reflections of racial attitudes. For example, one study found that attitudes about immigration may be reflections of economic uncertainty and fears about loss of employment rather than racialized beliefs. These studies informed the methods and question selection of A Community of Acceptance.

Studying Discrimination as Experienced

The consequences of racism are felt in individual lives. Some research has sought to find out how discrimination affects people in general. For example, a number of researchers have looked at reactions to discrimination. In some cases there is a difference between situations in which the discrimination was directed against the person or directed against a racial group. Generally, individuals often perceive discrimination against their group, although they do not necessarily attribute discrimination against themselves as strongly. This finding is known as P/GDD for “person/group discrimination difference.” Such findings led to including in A Community of Acceptance questions about self-experience of racialization, and observations of others being discriminated against.

Testing this phenomenon, Dion & Kawakami (1994) concluded, “Although perceptions of racialization do not indicate whether or not racism exists, perceptions of discrimination do, nevertheless, represent an important psychological reality for immigrants and ethnic minority group members.” Racialized minority groups may be personalizing the burden of discrimination to a greater extent than they ought.

There are several criticisms about studying racism as individual attitudes or experience. Making generalizations may be inappropriate - the effects of racism vary with some people experiencing negative effects and others relatively unaffected. Also, the individualistic approach makes it nearly impossible to address the cultural and systemic levels of racism. Furthermore, such research tends to approach everyone of the same skin colour as having the same sorts of life experiences.

Such heterogeneity cannot be captured in traditional quantitative measures that ask direct questions about views on racial issues based on the blatant racism... [T]he subtleties of racism... and the new etiquette of race mean that social relations can be understood best through intensive, participatory observation of social interaction and experiences that shape individual and collective status, self-perceptions, social relations, and workplace and institutional experiences (Allen, & Chung, 2000, p. 801).
For these reasons, the interview method was added to *A Community of Acceptance* in order to research racialization in Thunder Bay “from the inside” of those who most directly experience it (Celious, & Oyserman, 2001; Essed, 1991).

Two examples of ethnographic studies show how social norms racialize people. Nina Eliasoph (1999) investigated how two different, primarily white social groups treated visible minorities. One group was a recreational dance troupe, the other was a school board. One aspect that reinforced racialization was how people spoke to one another. Most interpersonal talk was understood as non-serious. But the subject of racism (along with other “political” topics) was conceived as serious and, as a consequence, out of place. Under the guise of “tolerance,” group members did not *publically* call each other on racial jokes, stereotypes, or innuendo. The “common sense” conventions of what you do and don’t talk about at school board meetings often led to dismissing the topics most important to visible minorities. A result was that visible minorities were uncomfortable with each group and dropout of participating. In both cases, Eliasoph states, “A racist social structure was reproduced *despite* most actor’s ambivalent intentions.” The group was more racist than were the individual members.

Philomena Essed (1991) conducted interviews with approximately 27 Black women in each of the United States and The Netherlands. Her intent was to investigate how these people understand and interpret social practices. Blacks encountered a series of situations that challenged them to interpret interactions and make decisions about whether the treatment was influenced by racism. This situations were rarely blatant cases of racism. Essed used the term “everyday racism” to indicate the regular experiences of Blacks in both countries. Essed’s analytic technique sought to get beyond individual perspective by making comparisons between interview participants and looking for shared understandings. This strategy was used also in *A Community of Acceptance*.

The racialized participants in Essed’s study used several strategies to make “judgements about racism...under circumstances of uncertainty.” First, they acknowledged the discomfort they felt. Then they judged the situation - first against norms of acceptable behaviour, then, secondly against acceptable reasons for the unacceptable behaviour. Finally, they considered it in light of past situations or their acquired knowledge of social systems and race before making the interpretation that the interaction was racially oriented. Essed concluded that specific instances were interpreted only in relation to other experiences of everyday racism. With this in mind, in *A Community of Acceptance*, the researchers probed interview participants for the reasons they felt an otherwise ambiguous incident was labelled as an incidence of racism.

These studies show the richness of such methods at conveying the subtle ways that racialization occurs. They also show how racializing social practices are more often subtle, even unintentional, rather than blatant. Such methods are better than surveys alone at clarifying the context of situations that could be interpreted in different ways. By keeping the lived experience of racialized people in mind, the “everyday racism” of social practices are clarified. Such studies informed *A Community of Acceptance* by drawing attention to subtle actions instead of focussing only on blatant racist behaviour.

**EFFECTS ON COMMUNITY**

Racialization has effects on the community as well as effects on individuals. It seems reasonable to assume that community relations are affected negatively by racialization and racism.
The social exclusion felt by racialized members of a community seems likely to place pressure on the community. As one of the purposes of this study is to lay groundwork for effective anti-racist education and contribute to a more inclusive community, the lens of social cohesion was included as a theoretical framework in *A Community of Acceptance*.

The relationship between social cohesion and the polite, “democratic” social processes of modern racialization are unclear. Little empirical literature has investigated this relationship. Even the notion of social cohesion still remains elusive. In the policy field, social cohesion is used in several different ways. For example, the European Union links social cohesion to exclusion in a way that seems useful for the present study: “not only the material deprivation of the poor [and other marginalised], but also their inability to fully exercise their social, cultural and political rights as citizens” (PRI, 2001, p. 18).

The terms social cohesion and social capital are sometimes used synonymously and sometimes infer different meanings. Any discussion of one must include the other (Dayton-Johnson, 2001). Social capital involves the networks of relationships in a community, along with trust and community norms (Portes, 1998; Wilms, 2001). It seems reasonable to assume that systemic racism hinders the utilization of social capital to build cohesion: Suspicion, pain, misunderstanding and mistrust in a racialized environment detracts from social relationships, reduces trust and undermines values of fairness and self-worth. These assumptions need careful analysis. However, given that economic and educational inequalities are racially correlated, one could presume that racialized exclusion can be a factor in *un*cohesive communities.

**CONCLUSION**

This literature has been presented to provide some background on the subject of race and research into race relations and racism. This literature also forms the groundwork for the methods used in *A Community of Acceptance*. The sociological lens assumes that each person is an individual with some control over themselves and their actions and beliefs, but that we are also influenced by our social context. Furthermore, this context is not entirely of our making but has structure and forces about which individuals are only partly aware.

The literature points out differences between Aboriginal, other racialized people and non-racialized people. These differences exist in social sectors such as employability, retention of employment, income, educational achievement, housing and more. Using large-scale data sets, it can be seen that most people do not perceive themselves as racist. Still, these racialized differences persist. This persistence points to systemic factors and subtle racializing social practices.

Studies based on individual life experience and that include the context of the community show ways that social practices can serve to differentiate among racial groups, and even discriminate. These practices may be taken-for-granted by the non-racialized minority. Such practices may be visible to some racialized people, but other people may have internalized dominant social practices and attitudes.

Based on the literature, it was decided to use several different methods - surveys and interviews - that would access different types of information about the state of race relations in Thunder Bay. The surveys would get general knowledge from a cross section of the community. Interviews would illuminate the social practices, including how people are treated and how they make judgements about situations, as well as garner more thorough information about specific social
locations where racialization occurs in Thunder Bay. This report will describe those social practices. One of the barriers for effective change to occur, was noted by Essed (1991) in the conclusion to her research:

Sensitive to the nuances of the ways dominant group members relate to each other, as opposed to the way they often relate to [racialized people], Blacks [and other racialized people] recognize racism even in its covert manifestations. Dominant group members usually lack sensitivity to racism in everyday life. They have little understanding of the problem because they are not confronted, on a regular basis, with critical views of race and ethnic relations (p. 285).

The literature reviewed above shows that racism exists in most communities throughout Canada. A Community of Acceptance concludes that racism exists in Thunder Bay, based on the lived experiences of racialized members of the community. This is not to say that Thunder Bay is better or worse than other places. A Community of Acceptance does not assume the extent or circumstances of racism, nor where and how it occurs. The concept of social cohesion provides an anchor for the study. It is hoped that a result will be discussion and action about enhancing “the Quality of Life [in Thunder Bay, which] will include... respect and acceptance of diversity.”

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3 From the Fast Forward vision statement for the city of Thunder Bay.
Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Chapter Three

METHODS

“I truthfully do not think anyone can stop racism. People are not usually ready to know the truth about themselves.”

(Survey respondent)

“Everyone should be treated exactly the same. Instead of putting out papers such as this that just seem to breed prejudice.”

(Survey respondent)

The methods selected for the study include a strategic community survey and in-depth interviews with 45 people. The use of multiple methods gives the effect of triangulation - multiple and different angles on the research questions gets better quality information. A nearly identical methodology has been used by other researchers to investigate taken-for-granted social norms (e.g., Kempton, Boster & Hartley, 1995). Surveys are excellent at accessing a wide variety of people and providing general information. Surveys have the disadvantage of being created beforehand. Therefore, surveys risk framing the topic in particular ways that limit the full range of respondent expression. In-depth interviews are excellent at providing greater depth and are flexible enough to allow the research to explore important but unanticipated subjects. Interviews have the disadvantage of being less representative, and of being more difficult to interpret and describe in a research report.

Specific research questions include:
1. Is racism an issue in Thunder Bay?
2. Which sectors of the population of Thunder Bay are most affected by racialization?
3. What is the level of awareness of racism in Thunder Bay among the general population?
4. How have people witnessed or experienced racism in Thunder Bay?
5. How does racialization affect social cohesion in Thunder Bay?
6. In what areas should Diversity Thunder Bay focus its education efforts?

STRATEGIC SURVEY SAMPLING

A strategic survey is an instrument delivered to specific community members or social groups rather than randomly sampling the population as a whole. This technique is intended to get minimum numbers so that subgroups of the population can be discussed. Strategic sampling is a nonprobabilistic purposive sampling technique “where cases are judged as typical of some category of cases” (deVaus, 1991, p. 78). There are a number of reasons why this form of questionnaire delivery was used for A Community of Acceptance.

- The topic of racialization is sensitive, so a low response rate for a community wide survey was anticipated.
- A great deal of information was sought, thus likely decreasing respondent motivation and survey return.
Both mail and phone surveys may also be seen as intrusive, or irrelevant. Because no overtly racist public incidents have occurred recently potential respondents may question why the topic needs to be addressed. Strategic sampling acknowledges the inability to access genuinely random data, and concerns about the usefulness of that data. Strategic sampling is particularly useful in looking at patterns of information. Strategic non-probability sampling is less expensive than probability sampling. Since the project management committee anticipated a low response rate, strategically distributing the survey was chosen as the best method.

Most importantly, the research questions drove study design. In this study, patterns of racialization were more important than population generalisability. It could be assumed that any evidence of discriminatory attitudes are cause for community attention. The study sought to describe racialization as it occurs.

There are several disadvantages to a strategic survey. The most significant limitation is that non-randomization confines the types of conclusions that can be drawn from the survey. The survey cannot be assumed to match the community; in fact, it will be impossible to know to what degree the survey represents the community. This is also a criticism of surveys in general - no matter how precise the method of sampling, caution should be made about the degree of representativeness, particularly on a sensitive subject that affects some sectors of the community more than others. All methods have flaws. For example, telephone surveys will under-represent those who do not have telephones, whose phone numbers have changed recently (such as students) or who have higher numbers of people at each telephone number. Written surveys will be problematic for those who do not generally do much writing.

These disadvantages aside, it appears that an adequate representation of the community could be achieved through the targeting of a number of sectors of the community, such as city employees, students, Aboriginal peoples and members of other potentially racialized groups, as well as a public distribution.

**Survey Design and Distribution**

A comprehensive literature review was conducted (reproduced in part in chapter 2). The literature review sought to ascertain two items. First, what research has been conducted on racialization, particularly in Canada, and how could it inform this study in terms of methods? Second, how could that research inform this study in terms of specific content of the survey.

An initial list of questions were developed. It was decided that a focus on how racialization affects the community would be built into the survey. Some questions were used from other studies, including several scales (sets of questions to measure a concept) from a similar study on prejudice and social cohesion (Michalos & Zumbo, 2001). The questions went through several rounds of review by the Project Management Committee as the research intent was clarified. Finally, a survey was prepared.

This survey was checked for face validity (Does it appear reasonable and make sense? Is it likely to get the desired information and be understood appropriately by respondents?) by several experienced researchers, including three faculty of Lakehead University and an expert in diversity research at California State University. In addition, a clear language review was conducted by the
Next, a pilot study was conducted. Surveys were distributed randomly at two locations. The pilot study indicated that the questions generally were appropriate and would result in an adequate response and good information. Some adjustments were made in question wording and question order and some questions were deleted. The final survey was eight pages, consisting of 36 closed-ended questions, 11 open-ended questions and 10 demographic questions. The closed-ended questions asked respondents to check from among the choices “Strongly agree,” “Agree,” “Neither agree nor disagree,” “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree.” The survey is available in Appendix 2.

Launch of the survey occurred with a media Conference in late September, 2001. Distribution occurred over the next month. Numerous community organizations were approached to be points of distribution. These organisations are represented in Table 1. In each organization, one person was asked to hand out the surveys. A “public” distribution was also done to increase the opportunity for general public participation. Surveys in this group were mailed; they were placed at the circulation desk of each of the four library branches; a table was set up in two malls and people were asked to fill out a survey. This public distribution provides some degree of randomness.

392 surveys of the 1029 that were distributed were returned for a 38.1% rate of return. In comparison, the Prince George study (Michalos & Zumbo, 2001), which were randomly mailed and involved far less information and time from respondents, yielded a 30% response rate. Similarly, the 2000 study conducted by the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee only generated a 4% return on the randomly mailed out surveys and finished at an 18% return rate after surveys were completed in school classes.

### Table 1. Organizations involved in survey distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboriginal groups:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Nishnawbe Aski Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ontario Native Women’s Association</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Visible minority multicultural groups:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lakehead Japanese Cultural Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Thunder Bay Chinese-Canadian Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• India-Canada Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Thunder Bay Religious Muslim Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Caribbean African Multicultural Association of Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Filipino-Canadian Association</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organizations representing other sectors:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lakehead Social Planning Council (displayed for people to pick-up and return by mail)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lakehead University (handed out in central Agora)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• City of Thunder Bay employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regional Multicultural Youth Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Thunder Bay Police Department</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Public Distribution:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Victoriaville Mall (1 day - 3 hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Intercity Mall (2 days - 16 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Randomly mailed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thunder Bay’s four libraries (displayed for people to pick-up and return by mail)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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6 Conducted by the University of Northern British Columbia, these figures included a strategic sampling component through ethnic organizations and the Prince George Indian Friendship Centre.
Quantitative Analysis

Data from the surveys were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Open-ended answers were categorized and coded, in most cases converted to numerical codes to facilitate analysis. The coding manual was developed by coding the first 70 surveys, developing categorizations for each open-ended question, then applying the categories to the entire data set. Certain questions were thematically analysed using ATLAS.ti software for qualitative data analysis. Statistical tests were performed using Excel. A multi-stage analysis was conducted to determine possible ways that the sampling method may have accidentally contributed to different results. The Public sample was compared against the complete sample. The “public” sample (223 returned) was not significantly different in responses to any questions than the complete sample (392 returned). This test provides an additional check on the reliability of the results.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews have the advantage of drawing rich detail from participants. A semi-structured interview format was followed which allowed the interview to deviate from the structure to follow important issues or concerns raised by participants. In this way, an interview can be more responsive to participant needs and allow unanticipated topics to emerge. Interviews have the disadvantage of being very time-consuming on the part of the interviewers and in the analysis. Interviews provide a tremendous amount of data, with the data taking the form of words and non-vocalized aspects of communication that must be transcribed and analysed.

An interview protocol was developed drawing upon Essed (1991) and other literature. See Appendix 3 for the protocol. The interview protocol was checked by the Project Management Committee. A research team consisting of several people of varied heritage with prior research experience, was assembled to conduct interviews. Training for the research team was conducted by the primary investigator. Periodic team meetings were held and all interviews checked by the primary investigator for consistency.

Interviews were conducted in both group and individual settings with 45 people. Two group interviews were conducted. One consisted of 10 Aboriginal people. The other group interview involved five youth of various backgrounds. One person from this latter group was asked to do a personal interview. Thirty personal interviews were conducted. One personal interview involved two participants.

The interview participants were sought through the questionnaire by asking if people would be willing to discuss their experiences further. Twenty of the individual interviewees filled out the survey. None of the fifteen people in the group interviews filled out the survey. Other interviewees were chosen to fill in missing categories. Interviewees were expected to meet the following characteristics:

- Have described experiences of racialization.
- Be able to articulate their experiences.
- Be over the age of sixteen.
- Willingly participate in an interview that would investigate their experiences and the reasons for their interpretations of their experiences as evidence of racialization.

Each interview was arranged by the research team member who had been given the name and
phone number of the potential interviewee. Interview locations ranged from the person’s office or home to donut shops or other public locations. The interviews were taped, then transcribed by the researcher who conducted the interview. Full transcriptions were produced of the initial 22 interviews; partial transcripts were produced after emerging categories become apparent and saturation of categories began (Creswell, 1998).

Tri-Council ethical guidelines were followed throughout the project. These guidelines assure that confidentiality and anonymity be assured. Consent forms were signed and withdrawal of consent was allowed. Two people chose not to have the interview taped; the researchers made a comprehensive written record. Some potentially identifying details that have no bearing on the study conclusions were obscured to protect participants.

It is important to note that interviews access the participants’ subjective perceptions. Essed (1991) insists on the importance of recognizing that those who consistently experience racialized interactions have developed accounts that are to be valued and are generally more credible than unreflective accounts or denial of racialization often done by the majority. Essed (1991) describes a careful analytic system to measure accounts of racism through careful analysis. This system was followed in the analysis of the interview data. Specifically, this involved querying the interview data for narrative conventions of explanation and argument (Fontana and Frey, 2000).

### Qualitative Analysis

Analysis took place by thematic analysis and heuristic interpretation utilizing ATLAS.ti software for qualitative data analysis. Interviews were coded top-down by a coding manual developed prior to analysis and added to during the hermeneutic cycle that followed. The Primary Investigator listened to the original tape of the interview while coding. This allowed a better appreciation of the communicated meanings as vocal inflections could also be heard. A method of constant comparison involving saturation of categories was followed utilising conventions of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Frequency counts of certain categories were also developed. Kahn (2001) describes the conventions of using a coding manual, and combining quantitative and qualitative presentation of semi-structured interview data.
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Chapter Four
SURVEY RESULTS

People don’t exactly make fun of somebody who is blind but if they were Native or Chinese or other, than they would
be made fun of. (Survey Respondent)

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE SAMPLE

The strategic sampling yielded 392 completed questionnaires. The “public” portion, meaning the portion that utilized techniques to access the general population of Thunder Bay in a random fashion yielded 221 surveys. After all the survey data were entered, the “complete sample” and “public sample” were compared. On demographic factors there were no significant differences in terms of age, education level, gender, years lived in Thunder Bay, or income. This leads one to assume that the two samples are drawn from the same population. Comparison of the responses to the questions were also made. The closed-questions were converted to a numerical value (where “Strongly agree”=1 and “Strongly disagree”=5.) A comparison of means again yielded no significant differences. The conclusion is that the complete sample is no different than the more random subsample used to check the quality. Therefore, the complete sample of 392 surveys was used as the comparison sample for all further analysis.

The demographics of the sample are provided below. They will be compared to 1996 Census data where relevant.

Gender
Respondents were overwhelmingly female (60%). This pattern was maintained at this level across all ethnic categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Race”
Respondents were asked to check their identification with a racial classification, with the option to fill-in an “other” response (See Question A4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No response</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Others” consisted of self-identified labels - Latino, “mixed race”, Middle East”, “Aboriginal and white” and “white and Asian.” If survey respondents chose to check more than one racial category, they were asked to circle the one with which they most identified. In the above cases, this was not done. In analysis, those listed as “other” were included only in the Complete Sample.

The complete sample represents well the two main groups of white and of Aboriginal peoples in Thunder Bay. Statistics Canada recorded 125,562 as the total population of Thunder Bay in its
1996 Census with 61,730 males and 63,835 females. According to this census, the Aboriginal population is 8,605 (with 7,330 recognized Indians as defined under the Indian Act). The non-Aboriginal population counted 116,995. There were 2,680 persons who responded as members of a visible minority to the 1996 Census. The participation of Black and of Asians in this survey does not respond well to the percentage of these two groups in the total population. To be compatible to their percentage in the Thunder Bay population there should be 12 Black participants and 28 Asian participants for the 392 total participants. Although strategic sampling was attempted through multicultural associations, the response rates for other racialized people was lower than expected and yielded the numbers presented above.

**Ethnicity**

Survey respondents were asked to fill-in a blank following the question “Ethnically, I am:” (Question A3). This yielded 49 different labels. There was some overlap and some unusual responses, such as “English-speaking Caucasian,” “Protestant.” In addition 103 respondents (26%) listed their ethnicity as “Canadian.” Forty eight respondents listed one of several labels that would be classifiable as Aboriginal.” (E.g., “Ojii-Cree,” “Native,” “Métis”; no one listed “Indian”). This is lower than the numbers who listed themselves as Aboriginal in the race question that followed.

No further analysis was done. The responses do show an interest in ethnicity, and the diversity of the population of Thunder Bay. It also shows some confusion about the concept. It would be interesting to analyse the “Canadian” responses, as this is a particular discourse about ethnicity that shows pride in one’s country but also usually privileges Euro-Canadian understandings of that notion.

**Age**

Median age of survey respondents was in the 31-45 age range. The survey respondents are skewed to younger age cohorts than the population figures for Thunder Bay from the 1996 Census. The distribution is listed in Figure 1.

**Education Levels**

Education levels are listed in Figure 3 (next page). They show a much more educated population than that shown in the 1996 Census. This pattern is true for the complete sample where 84% have finished high school. In the Census, the figure is 64%. The pattern also holds true with the Aboriginal subsample. The education level may have been inflated because some sampling in the complete sample was done at Lakehead University. The “public” sample, which does not include the Lakehead University students shows slightly lower education levels (on the cusp of significant difference). The public figures are still higher than one would expect if the sample was representative of Thunder Bay. Finally, the Asian respondents are also listed to show the high level of education.
among these survey respondents.

**Length of Residency**

The length of residence in Thunder Bay is listed in Figure 2. The largest number of respondents had been in Thunder Bay for more than twenty years. Aboriginal peoples showed a much different pattern, perhaps representing increasing in-migration of Aboriginal peoples to Thunder Bay. Consistent with the complete sample, ten of sixteen Asian respondents had lived in Thunder Bay more than twenty years. Black respondents, however, were over-represented in the first two categories (one year or less).

**Income**

Family income is presented in Figure 4. The median income in this sample is in the $50,000 - $100,000, compared to the mean in the 1996 Census of $26,463. Although mean and median are different measures of central tendency, this comparison gives a picture of how the sample may deviate from the general population of Thunder Bay. However, a caution must be noted. The question asked for “family income” which may have motivated some respondents to lump spouse or parent income with theirs. Therefore, the comparison with the 1996 figures may not be appropriate.

Another pattern is presented by Figure...
4. The distribution shows the strikingly different pattern of income levels between the Aboriginal subsample and the complete sample. Aboriginal peoples in this sample have much lower average income than do other respondents.

**Summary**

The complete sample in *A Community of Acceptance* varies from the 1996 Census figures for Thunder Bay. This sample population is younger, includes more women, has higher income and higher education levels than census data. However, people in this sample have lived in Thunder Bay for a long time. The sample is roughly consistent with census data on the ethnic makeup of Thunder Bay.

**OVERVIEW OF RACE RELATIONS IN THUNDER BAY**

Since there were over 50 questions asked on the survey, the following report will summarize the survey, reporting primarily on significant results. The survey is presented in Appendix 2. The full data set is available for reviewing or secondary analysis by contacting the primary investigator. In some cases, questions have had the responses reversed and been reworded so that the numerical values are consistent with other questions. This is a measure to reduce “test response bias,” the phenomenon whereby respondents just check down the column because questions are worded similarly.

**Is Racism an Issue in Thunder Bay?**

Survey respondents were asked a number of questions about whether they had experienced or observed discrimination based on race in Thunder Bay. Two questions were specific. Respondents indicated whether or not they had observed discrimination; those who replied “Yes” (as presented in Table 3) were then asked where they had observed it, how frequently and what they had observed. The same sequence was asked for whether respondents had experienced discrimination based on race (As presented in Table 2). (See Questions C15 and C16 on the survey in Appendix 2). The questions specified that the incidents were to have been in the past year. Note that is all following tables, calculations may not add to the sample total. To simplify the charts, non-responses have been dropped.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>% yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete sample (Total n=392)</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal (n=61)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other racialized (n=21)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>% yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete sample (Total n=392)</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal (n=61)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other racialized (n=21)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Whether respondent has observed discrimination in Thunder Bay in past year.

Table 3. Whether respondent has experienced discrimination in Thunder Bay in past year.
Over half the survey respondents in the complete sample and each subgroup reported witnessing discrimination based on race in the last two years in Thunder Bay. The percentage of people directly experiencing being racially discriminated against drops sharply in each category. However, in both tables, Aboriginal peoples report observing and experiencing racial discrimination at a far greater rate than do either of the other two groups. That over half of the Aboriginal respondents have experienced discrimination against themselves is a substantive figure. The frequency of discriminatory actions as reported by survey respondents will be described below.

Survey respondents answered a question that asked them whether racism was a personal issue or a community issue (Question C6). Those who answered “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” were combined to give an indication of acceptance of the statement. Similarly, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” are combined and provide a measure of the lack of acceptance. Over 60% of respondents in each sample felt that racism is a community problem rather than a personal problem. There was a relatively strong disagreement that racism is a personal problem by a majority of members from all subsamples. The results are presented in Figure 5.

This indicates that where and how racism occurs, Thunder Bay residents believe it ought to be addressed at a community level rather than only as individual attitude, actions and consequences. Comments received along with the survey included statements such as, “If it affects someone, it affects us all” and “Racism tears the community up.” It is interesting to note that although a majority of Aboriginal peoples (61%) also indicated the community nature of racism, this figure was the lowest of the various subsamples. Thirty-five percent of Aboriginal peoples surveyed said racism was a personal problem. Data from the interviews would suggest that a well-used method of coping with racialization is for the victimized person to say that it does not bother them. “I am not going to let their problem be my problem,” as a study participant said.

Life Satisfaction and Beliefs about Diversity and Community

Before discussing race-relations in detail, it is valuable to contextualize the subject and responses. Survey respondents were asked a number of questions about Life Satisfaction. The questions were “I am satisfied with my overall quality of life” (Question A5). I am satisfied with Thunder Bay as a place to live” (Question A6). “Sometimes I don’t feel I belong in the community” (Question A7). “I feel good about my future” (Question A8). In the following discussion, Question A7 has had the responses reversed. In A7, satisfaction would be indicated by disagreeing with the statement, whereas in the other three questions, satisfaction is indicated by agreeing with the
The percent agreeing with each statement is listed in Figure 6.

The results show:

- **Generally, most people were satisfied with the quality of life in Thunder Bay as agreement responses, with one exception, were over fifty percent.**

- **Overall, whites are the most satisfied, while Aboriginal peoples were the least satisfied in terms of overall satisfaction with life.** The percentage of Aboriginal peoples agreeing with these statements is lower than those of other groups in every case.

- Responses to the questions about personal quality of life were higher than to the questions on quality of community life.

- While every group, on average, felt they belong to the community, both visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples, felt less like they belonged than did whites. This was the lowest agreement rate of all four questions.

Discussion of racialization in Thunder Bay can be contextualized in this climate of a generally positive attitude to living in the community. At a later date, these measures could be correlated against the measures of experiences of racialization and provide additional data on the consequences of racialization in Thunder Bay. The measures of life satisfaction were also compared to other demographic attributes, but as they are not the main purpose of this study, they are not presented here.

Next, survey respondents were asked a number of questions about community sectors. Questions about sense of *personally* being treated fairly in five different common social locations - police services, health services, social services, retail establishments and schools - were asked (Questions B1 to B5). A measure of fair treatment to *all* people were also asked for the same five sectors (Questions B6 to B10). These questions replicate a Quality of Life study done in Prince George (Michalos and Zumbo, 2001) and give a measure of construct and instrument validity as well as providing data on these particular social sectors. Questions about these sectors were also asked specifically in the context of race-relations later in the survey. The data from each of these questions are presented in the relevant social location in Chapter Six.

Finally, survey respondents were asked a variety of questions about beliefs about race and diversity in the context of community quality of life, decision-making and desirability. Respondents were asked for their level of agreement to the statements “Having people from many ethnic
backgrounds and races makes Thunder Bay a better place to live” (Question B12). “Problems related to race make Thunder Bay a less desirable place to live” (Question B13). “Racial diversity makes it more difficult to make community decisions in Thunder Bay” (Question B14). The second and third questions are reversed to more easily compare the responses - so that the shorter the bar the more positive a respondent felt racial and ethnic diversity was to Thunder Bay. The results are presented in Figure 7.,

The results show:

- **Respondents believed that ethnic diversity made Thunder Bay a much better place to live.** Whites and non-Aboriginal racialized peoples strongly agreed that diversity made Thunder Bay a better place to live. Aboriginal peoples also agreed but to a lesser degree (67% compared to 85% and 83%). In addition, although not graphed in this figure, many Aboriginal peoples chose to “neither agree nor disagree.” Therefore, a conclusion is that Aboriginal peoples show a greater ambivalence about the outcomes to quality of living in Thunder Bay of racial and ethnic diversity.

- Respondents did believe that race-related problems made Thunder Bay less desirable. As shown in the figure, less than half of each sample disagreed that race-related problems made the city less desirable; the agreement level (not shown) was over fifty percent in each subsample. Again, Aboriginal peoples felt most strongly about the reduced desirability of race-related problems on life in Thunder Bay (64% compared to 48% for the other two subsamples.). It is interesting to note that the few Black respondents also tended to agree that race-related problems made living in Thunder Bay less desirable, while respondents of Asian descent strongly disagreed. These two racialized subsamples are too small to do more than note a trend, and confirm that overgeneralizing about an amalgamated label (i.e., visible minorities) can miss potentially important distinctions in lived experience.

- Respondents generally did not feel that race-related problems made it harder to make community decisions. Over half of most respondents felt race was not a factor in increasing the difficulty of community decision-making again. However, the chart shows that Aboriginal peoples differed significantly, seeing more problems with race in the community. 43% of Aboriginal peoples felt race did make community decisions more difficult, with another 28% taking a neutral stance.
To summarize, the subsample averages generally saw diversity in a positive light. There were important differences in levels of agreement. Aboriginal peoples were significantly less in agreement about the positive contribution of race relations and ethnic diversity to Thunder Bay. The survey can lead us to suggest that the negative experience of Aboriginal peoples in relation to the majority culture and government may have had its consequences. Combined with other elements of this study, more discussion of these results will be presented in Chapter Seven.

Summary of the Overview

A summary of the results of this section sets the stage for contextualizing further analysis of racialization in Thunder Bay. The data shows that discrimination based on race occurs in Thunder Bay. Residents of Thunder Bay are more satisfied than not. They feel that ethnic and racial diversity makes it a better community in which to live, but that race-related problems are associated with some community-level concerns. Decision-making may be one area that is affected, as well as desirability of the community. Also important in terms of community life, as well as their personal lives, is the finding that Aboriginal peoples reported a generally lower satisfaction with life in Thunder Bay and their lives in general. Aboriginal peoples also disagreed more that diversity made Thunder Bay a better place, as well as being more of the opinion that race-relations may affect the community in potentially negative ways. Finally, residents strongly emphasized that racism is a community problem rather than a problem on an individual level and should be addressed in the context of the community. These findings will be addressed again later, as they have implications for addressing issues of racism. They are also measures of social cohesion in a heterogeneous community, such as Thunder Bay, and have implications for future community development.

EXTENT OF RACISM IN THUNDER BAY

As noted in the overview of research presented in Chapter Two, it is difficult or impossible to get a measurement of levels of racism and racialization as there are many forms that occur on different conceptual levels, and individuals may not even be aware of their own racializing behaviour. Specific information about the overall shape of racialism in Thunder Bay as experienced or observed and reported by survey respondents is presented in this section. These questions about “Where,” “For whom,” and “How” racialization is occurring are the core of this study.

Who encounters racialization?

Three questions asked whether people thought there was “little,” “some,” or “widespread” discrimination against Aboriginal peoples (Question C17), visible minorities (Question C18), or white people (Question C19). Each response was converted into numerical form (little= 0; some= 1; widespread= 2), so that a comparative measure of the extent of discrimination of groups could be constructed. Figure 8 shows the results.

As this figure shows, every group thinks Aboriginal peoples face the most discrimination - with a level nearly midway between “some” and “widespread” discrimination. The measure is consistent across all subgroups. Discrimination against “visible minorities” was perceived as just less
than “some” discrimination on average. Finally discrimination against whites is close to “little.” Aboriginal peoples felt that there was more discrimination against whites than whites perceived there was.

A second way of gauging the extent of discrimination is to compare people’s perception of discrimination against themselves and against other people. Two questions that sought to measure this asked people to respond to “I am sure that people generally do not use my race or ethnic background to decide how they treat me” (Question B11), and “People of my race have been discriminated against” (Question C5). The latter question has been reversed for more straightforward comparison with the other statement. Agreement responses to these two questions are presented in Figure 9. The results show:

- Aboriginal peoples indicated that they have been discriminated against on the basis of race at a far greater rate than others. (The figure shows the percent that feel they have not been discriminated against.

- More visible minorities than Aboriginal peoples indicated that they had not been discriminated against, but still significantly fewer than whites.

- Two-thirds of whites felt their race was never used to judge them., with another 13% neutral on the question.

- All three groups felt discrimination against themselves was lower than felt discrimination against the respondents’ own group. These results are consistent with the researched differences in perceptions of discrimination against one’s self and against one’s group (see page 15 for more on research on this P/GDD).
Aboriginal peoples felt very strongly that people of their race have been discriminated against. This finding is even more clear when one compares the actual strength of agreement. A very high 72.4% of the Aboriginal respondents to the survey “strongly disagreed” with the statement that “People of my race have not been discriminated against.” From these results, Aboriginal peoples strongly perceive discrimination against themselves, and are particularly certain that discrimination occurs against Aboriginal peoples generally in Thunder Bay. These findings are particularly robust. Data from open-ended questions in the survey support the conclusion that racism is seen as a problem in Thunder Bay, and that it is substantially directed at Aboriginal people. For example, one question asked “To what extent do you feel racism is a problem in Thunder Bay?” (Question C3). Responses were grouped according to commonality of the comments. Only 21 of the 392 survey respondents said that racism was not a problem., while another 26 said it was minimal or not significant. This totals 12% of the survey respondents. Of the 140 respondents who indicated target groups, 108 referred to Aboriginal peoples (77%), while another 26 referred to both Aboriginal and other racialized people (19%).

Conclusion of Who Experiences Racialization?

This data suggests that Aboriginal peoples are clearly recipients of negative racializing treatment, and that it happens to a considerable extent. What is less clear is the extent of discrimination against other racialized people. The evidence suggests that discrimination against Blacks, Asians, and other racialized peoples is less in Thunder Bay than against Aboriginal peoples. The following section on beliefs about racism will contribute to understanding the racializing of Blacks and Asians. It has been suggested that economic status plays a part. This is represented by a comment from one of the interview participants,

ʻBecause the funny thing is, if you're a minority like me, and you walk into society in Thunder Bay, as a medical doctor, or specialist in the health care profession, you're fine you're readily accepted. You try any other profession you're a friggin' intruder. I don't know how to explain that.ʻ (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

Even more relevant is discrimination due to poor economic status, or class-based factors. Another element in discrimination may also be length of time the person has been in Canada. There is evidence from the interviews that suggests that those who are immigrants, or those who speak accented English or speak English less well face more discrimination.

Unfortunately, although visible minorities were strategically sampled through the relevant multicultural groups, the response rate was too low to do more than suggest a few explanations. As permission was being secured from one of the groups’ executive officer, he said “I have talked with my members, and they don’t feel like there is a problem. Like we do ok, there is no racism against us, so we don’t see a need to fill out surveys about something that is not about us or does not affect us.” (Identity withheld). On the other hand, an executive of another visible minority organization said, “I’ll hand them out, but I can’t promise anything. Like we know there is racism out there. We face it everyday, so lot’s of us do not want to fill out papers. Spend the money on doing something.” (Identity withheld).

Finally, the same data suggests that some white people feel discriminated against on the basis
of their race. Although white is usually considered the “norm” and therefore, not considered to be racialized, this data suggests that some white people do assert that they are facing race-based treatment. The rate of reported discrimination against whites is far lower than that of other racialized groups. Beliefs about racism will be presented below. That data will give more information about racializing in Thunder Bay.

This data, and the comments presented immediately above, suggest that the complexity around race in Thunder Bay will not be completely understood without much more research. The remainder of this chapter and the following chapters flesh out this complexity even further. However, the data presented so far indicates that there is racialization occurring.

Where does Racialization occur in Thunder Bay?

Figures 10 and 11 show the numbers of survey respondents who reported observing or experiencing discrimination based on race. Over half of all respondents reported observing discrimination. Respondents were then asked to check off social locations in which incidents they observed or experienced occurred, to describe what happened in further detail and to estimate the frequency.

Of the 212 people who indicated they observed discrimination, a total of 383 social locations were noted (respondents could mark as many locations as applicable). In addition, many people who said yes to the entry question, did not fill out the remainder of the question. Figure 10 shows the frequency of mention of observing race-based discrimination for the locations listed on the survey. Locations that fell into the “Other” category were added by respondents and included police, personal residences, newspapers and more.

Figure 11 presents the reports of occasions in which respondents indicated they had experienced discrimination based on race. The same format is used for comparative purposes. Of the 56 respondents who indicated they experienced discrimination, a total of 139 social locations were noted.
In both tallies, stores and restaurants are the most frequent site of discrimination based on race. One hundred and nine people mentioned observing discrimination in those locations; thirty survey respondents indicated they had personally experienced discrimination in retail establishments, which is 8% of the total survey population. In other words, 8% of all the people surveyed had experienced racism in local businesses; the percentage is, of course, much higher if just Aboriginal and other racialized people are tallied. Work and educational settings were also mentioned as the more frequent sites of discrimination based on race. Specific details of each of these settings will be discussed in Chapter Six.

The relative proportion of the charts show some interesting patterns. Certain social settings are more visible than others. For example, patrons at a restaurant can see anything that happens in the room, while patients at a health care setting are often screened privately. In the two charts, government services were cited as sites by 27 of the 212 people (12.7%) who observed discrimination. At the same time, of those who personally experienced discrimination, 15 of 56 people (26.8%) referred to government services. The discrepancy is fourteen percentage points, with those observing discrimination severely under-recognizing the experiencing of discrimination in this particular location. Table 4 compares these ratios in order of decreasing discrepancy.

The pattern is that those observing discrimination generally observe less of the discrimination that others report experiencing. There are a number of possible reasons for this pattern. First, discrimination may be hidden and occurring without public witness. Second, those who are racialized may interpret situations as more racially oriented than do outside observers. Third, outside observers may not recognize the discrimination that does occur. Many of the interview participants said they did not think those who did not experience racializing social interactions could understand what it feels like. We shall return to such topics in later sections.

![Figure 11](image.png)

**Figure 11.** Social locations of race-based discrimination experienced by survey respondents.
Table 4. Comparison of reports of those who observe discrimination and those who experience discrimination in specific locations.

The relative frequency of racialization needs recognition. Racial incidents are negative, but if they are rare, the implications for both public attention and the quality of individual’s lives are different. Figure 12 shows the frequency of racial discrimination reported by those respondents who indicated they had observed discrimination. The graph shows that “occasional” discrimination is the most commonly reported by all groups. However, Aboriginal respondents report discrimination happening “Frequently” at almost the same rate, and “extremely frequently” also significantly more often than do other respondents. This would imply that Aboriginal peoples perceive or face discrimination more often than do other respondents. Figure 13 (next page) shows the frequency of discrimination by Aboriginal peoples who indicated that they have experienced discrimination.

There is no reliable way to determine the accuracy of the perception of discrimination. Victims vary in their views of what constitutes racialization, and perpetrators will not usually admit that they were discriminatory. Some may even be unaware of the consequences of their actions or certain practices that inhibit full participation of racialized people. This is one aspect of
Beliefs about Racism

Information was sought about the beliefs and knowledge of racism in Thunder Bay. This information will help Diversity Thunder Bay in its efforts to communicate with the public. The information also provides insight into the structure of racialization in Thunder Bay.

What is Racism?

An open-ended question specifically asked this question (Question C1). Responses were grouped according to commonality of the comments. Responses could have several ideas in them, therefore, might be coded into multiple thematic categories. Conversely, some responses (or non-responses) had nothing in common with other responses, so were not categorized. The seven categories are presented in Table 5: the number of comments coded into each category is given and provides a gauge of the relative strength of the idea across the survey population. As there is overlap in the categories and comments may fit more or less well into specific categories, the figures should be taken as approximations only. Representative examples of each theme include:

Negative Judgement  “Hatred due to colour/different look; I think usually based on fear or passed-on from generation.”
  “Disliking someone simply because of colour, not looking at who they are underneath the skin.”

Negative Treatment  “Treating a certain group of people unfairly or differently from everyone else because of their race.”

Systemic  “A product of bad feelings between cultures that began in the early 1800’s.”
  “Racism is when someone does not like you because the colour of skin is different and being a status Indian, people think we get handed everything to us (Not so).”
“When one group of people think they are better (do better) than another.”
“Fear of an unknown other.”
“Narrow-minded & an insecure stance. It stifles growth and harmony.”

“When one race has a belief it is better than another race.”
“‘It is ignorance towards all that are different from yourself or generally those who appear different.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: What do you think Racism is?</th>
<th>Number of codes in category</th>
<th>Percent of total codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgement - negative attitudes, labelling.</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment - negative action, includes “discrimination.”</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic - explanations that include societal/structural aspects.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morals - explanations that involve values, includes stereotypes.</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference - “different than the norm” is explicitly mentioned</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any comments about other than race or ethnicity (e.g., disability, gender).</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Codes</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Responses by thematic category to question asking what is racism?

The two themes with the largest representation are views of racism as individual-level judgements or actions. There is little surprise there. Racism as a value issue is also frequently mentioned. Given the significant place of systemic aspects of racialization, this category is poorly represented. Furthermore, as the quotes selected show, even those noting social structures tended to do so at a minimalist level. Aboriginal peoples noted a systemic aspect 8% of the time, compared to 1% for white people. The only other significant difference by racial background is that Aboriginal peoples referred to negative judgement (41%) more than negative treatment (27%) compared to whites (31% and 43%, respectively). Finally, numerous people referred to other aspects of discrimination other than just race (or ethnicity) in their definition of “racism.” This suggests that people link various forms of discrimination.

Why does Discrimination Happen?

Responses to this question inform, to some degree, the public understanding of racism’s causes. It also informs future public education. Responses were grouped according to commonality of the comments. Responses could have several ideas in them, therefore, might be coded into multiple thematic categories. The six categories are presented in Table 6; the number of comments coded into each category is given and provides a gauge of the relative strength of the idea across the
survey population. As there is overlap in the categories and comments may fit more or less well into specific categories, the figures should be taken as approximations only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Why does discrimination based on race happen?</th>
<th>Number of codes in category</th>
<th>Percent of total codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge/Experience is lacking, includes “ignorance” (unless reason to believe referring to a negative personal quality).</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotyping or lumping together of all members of an affected group.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal/Structural - various reasons that have this component.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superiority - of one race (includes “attitude” and “difference”).</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Qualities - explanation having to do with individual learning, or deficiencies in personal character. Includes “fear”.</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family - when the family, family’s values, or upbringing are implicated</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Responses by thematic category to open-ended question of Why discrimination happens?

The most prevalent reason given for discrimination was categorized a “personal qualities.” It became apparent eventually that this code actually included two subthemes: A) Personal Qualities and B) Learned behaviour/bad experiences. This code was not further broken down, however. The second most common theme was “lack of knowledge,” which is considerably different than bad experiences. Lack of knowledge may be addressed by engaging programs and experiential education, whereas bad experiences or personal characteristics require considerable effort to challenge the reconstruction of existing views and “common-sense” knowledge formed by the person.

Examples of each theme include:

**Knowledge/Experience lacking**

“Many people have not travelled outside their environment or have not experienced people's customs other than their own (lack of informed education).”

“Ignorance and lack of education.”

“Bad ideas perpetuated because of lack of education. Nobody ever says the prejudiced are wrong. Stupidity.”

**Stereotyping**

“Because we tend to generalize and stereotype.”

“When they think that - They then think everything that group does is wrong.”

“Overall race generalization based on usually small group of bad people of a given race.”
Systemic

“Because the dominant culture in Canada (read thunder bay) is racist.”
“A fear embedded deep in our culture causes us to mistrust people different than us in appearance.”
“Stereotyping prejudice, systematic racism (i.e. look at employment no upper management - government. No firemen, very little police Native.”

Superiority

“Simple belief that in the natural hierarchy of society is that white folks are at the top.”
“When there are norms set to a certain race and it conflicts with their opinions about that group of people.”

Personal Qualities

“People usually fear others who are not like them.”
“Discrimination based on race happens because people are narrow-minded and unwilling to accept people’s differences.”
“If people have had bad experience with people of a certain race, or have been exposed to negative information about them.”

Family

“This is usually results in the person’s upbringing from early childhood.”
“Parents are teaching to their children what was taught to them. Which in most cases is prejudicial.”

The family was implicated by 11% of the people. In many cases this was correlated with “personal qualities” as if people believe that upbringing sets people’s values and character for life. Finally, societal structures were also mentioned by 12% of respondents. Proportions were slightly higher for both Aboriginal peoples and Blacks than for whites or Asians.

Conclusions About Beliefs

Beliefs about racism strongly recognize negative personal attitudes and negative treatment of racialized people. There is frequent reference to racism on the basis of individualized expression, and explanations discrimination refer to personal characteristics and the lacking of personalized knowledge or experience. However, racism as systemic elements that give advantages to certain people on their basis of their race and disadvantage others on the basis of their race is considerably less acknowledged, at least in the cursory way that surveys are usually filled out. The was considerable consistency among both racialized and non-racialized people.
Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Chapter Five
INTERVIEW DATA: SOCIAL PRACTICES

What is it like to be Native in Thunder Bay? Well, it is all right as long as no one knows! (Laughs) It is like riding a Honda when you should be riding a Harley Davidson. It is OK as long as no one sees you. (Interview participant)

Interviews are particularly suited to access the common-sense knowledge of informants as generated through everyday experiences. Interviews are better than survey techniques at understanding the personal experiences, social practices and interpretation schemas that make up social interaction and daily life. The interviews were conducted with 45 participants through two focus groups and 30 individual interviews. The intent of the interviews was to describe the details of racialized incidents, and the knowledge-in-action that citizens use to manoeuvre through everyday living. Quotations chosen below to highlight a concept represent comments made by numerous people. No quotation selected from interview participants or survey respondents represents a comment unique to one person. All names and some identifying characteristics have been changed.

Although the focus of interviews was on experiences in the last two years, interview participants often described events from their past. As will be shown, these events from personal history have very significant roles in race relations within Thunder Bay despite their hearsay or long-past character. As analysis of the qualitative data took place, it was interesting to note that there were very few incidents described by interview participants that were unambiguously racist. Interview participants then explained why they interpreted the incidents to be racializing.

This development necessitates describing the social practices that occur in Thunder Bay. These social practices include the ways people are treated and the interpretation of that treatment as racializing. Study participants mentioned incidents of overt racism, but also described less blatant social practices that contribute to a feeling of being racialized and differentiated.

Understanding how racialized people interpret social situations is necessary background knowledge for grasping the circumstances in the social locations that will be presented later. For this reason, most of this section will focus on the words and experience of Aboriginal peoples and other racialized people in Thunder Bay.

HOW PEOPLE ARE TREATED

The various ways that interview participants described being treated have been divided into the categories of blatant racism, subtle racializing, marginalizing behaviour, and societal structures. Figure 14 (next page) summarizes the frequency in which the forms of treatment were volunteered during each of the 32 interviews.
Blatant Racism

Blatant racism includes obvious racial slurs, the potential or actuality of violence and concerns about safety. Negative comments made about someone’s race were reported by nearly every interview participant. In some cases the comments were explicit.

Yeah, I’m walking down the street. Especially down this street. It always seems to happen here. I’m always getting called names, “wagon burner” and all that other stuff. Somebody’s gotta yell at me It happens a lot. (Charles, Aboriginal youth)

Many interview participant reported comments being part of the regular routine at places like their job, the University or even jogging down the street.

That comment at work it probably was one of the strongest things that I have heard.... [Two co-workers] were talking about different things and the thing that stood out was he said that he was getting really sick of Indians whining and complaining and they should do what they did in Newfoundland and go out and shoot them all. I didn’t really even know how to react to that. I wanted to just get off the phone and just say, “You know what, that would be like me and my mom.”... But I ended up not saying anything. I didn’t really know how to deal with it. (Rachel, mid-20s, Métis)

It happens in my lunchroom. On the table the words "kill all indians" is scratched into it in a few places. When there are newspapers on the table and a Native happens to be in it, they write profanities beside the picture. (Survey Respondent)

Negative comments contribute to a feeling of being unsafe.

Like I was catching a bus on River Street by Grandview Mall, some whites in a car pulled up and they go yelling at you "Hey Indian" and that stuff. You want to yell back "Hey, leave

Figure 14. Forms of treatment perceived as racializing as volunteered by interview participants.
me alone." You want to be careful, you know, cause I was all by myself. Then another car pulls up, and they yell at me "Hey Indian, how many herpes do you got?" I was getting really pissed off. All I wanted to do was go home, but I didn't want to miss my bus. But I was standing all alone... (Focus Group 1, Female, late teens, Aboriginal)

Not only did this young woman have to contend with fears for safety because of her gender, but the problem was compounded because of fears about how others treated her because of race.

Concerns for safety were also mentioned by several other interview participants who are visible minorities.

At–[deleted], a couple of black children were surrounded by a bunch of white children: they wanted to beat them up, they hated them. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

Other interview participants told of running for home, getting in fights, or being afraid in a bar or other public places unless in a group. Because blatantly racist incidents are so recognizable, it is sufficient to say they exist in Thunder Bay and not list more examples.

Subtle Racializing

Far more common forms of treatment are actions that are subtle, and could be unconscious on the part of the person involved. These actions include being ignored, stared at, treated as a stereotype. Many Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities found such subtle forms of treatment disconcerting. Suzanne points out the hidden character of such interaction.

Some of the circumstances are definitely overt. They're very clear - there's no way to misinterpret the situation as something else. But I think there's also lots of situations, more situations perhaps, that are sort of covert situations where, um, things are implied. They're not necessarily being spoken - non-verbal communication, gestures, eye contact, tone of voice, sarcastic comments. All the ways we communicate with each other. (Suzanne, late 30s, white, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

Being Ignored

Sometimes people ignore you because of your colour. I'm not saying everyone, but some people. (Selena, late 40s, Latina, office cleaner)

Everywhere I walk I will come upon a person, and that person will walk away from me. (Survey respondent)

Rebecca told about her mostly Native curling team never getting invited out for drinks after a match as was league custom. Carol, as a Native person going to a mostly white school, felt no one wanted to “hang around with me.” Interview participants frequently reported a pattern of waiting in lines - in store checkout lines, at medical clinics, for a table at a restaurant - and being passed over for others, or not being told this was the wrong line. Being ignored can make one feel like they do
not belong or disrespected as a person.

**Being Watched**

Several people mentioned being watched more closely. This can range from being stared at - like on the bus, which several people mentioned - to being watched by store staff. The following exchange, from Focus Group 1, shows both being watched and being ignored.

Lucille: *What about sitting on a bus too. They stare at you.* (Aaron laughs) Lori: *We have to go through that every day when I come to school. I sit with a whole bunch of native, black, people and just sit there and stare at them too.* (Everyone laughs, as if knowingly). *I don't care what they do, it's my town too.*

Beth: *I don't like this staring (seems like consensus that this is an issue - people gave quick responses, and nods of heads)*

Interviewer: *When you say people staring - what do you mean?*

Beth: *Like they look at you. And you'll be looking somewhere else and you'll look and they'll look away. And you'll be like, “What's your problem, haven't you seen a native person before on the bus?”*

Oscar: *I don't know why that bugs me. I mean, it shouldn't bug me.*

Lori: *Especially when they don't share a seat.*

Lucille: *Yeah.*

Lori: *Like there'll be a whole bunch of people on the bus - like, this lady, she was sitting there and she had an extra seat and she just put her purse on the seat. I said,’Can I sit there’ and she looked away. I said, ‘OK, fine’ and I walked away. I didn't really appreciate that. She had an extra seat and she wouldn't have anything to do with me.*

(Focus Group 1)

Other interview participants mention the effects of being watched more closely.

*Some of the stores, you know you're being watched cause of who you are, eh? Just being watched closely, kinda, kinda makes you feel uneasy. ’Cause they think that you're actually there to, to take something.* (David, 40s, Aboriginal, University student)

David is not there to steal, but the store employees’ actions create an uncomfortable situation. David’s account also includes aspects of being treated as a stereotype.

**Treated as a Stereotype**

Accusations often conformed to stereotypic assumptions. Several Aboriginal interview participants mentioned being accused of being drunk.

*I saw an elderly Indian fellow get asked to leave –[deleted] restaurant because he looked intoxicated and I know for a fact this man hasn't drunk or anything in 30 years.* (Survey Respondent)

*If it is a restaurant I have seen a lot of people turned away and told that they were drunk.*
But I have seen a lot of times too where a white guy comes in and he is obviously drunk yet he will get served, but not a native person. (Richie, White, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

Being treated as a stereotype does not recognize people as individuals or allow them to be treated for who they really are. White interview participants reported that generalizations are often made about White people in the context of race relations. One Aboriginal participant even alluded to that.

I was walkin' through one of the local malls here. And ah, I looked at [the survey distribution booth]. It said: “Fill out this survey and you get a free coffee”... Then I started looking at the survey and I'm talkin' to the guy there, and he's lookin' at me and he's ah, respectfully; he's, you know - from the Western civilization I call it. And he's talkin' to me about, this survey. And that kind of felt odd at first. Like, what, what's he doing? Like, what, what does he know, you know? (Arthur, 30s, Aboriginal, seasonal firefighter)

The guy “from Western civilization” in this case is the primary investigator of this report. Although such generalizing happens, the consequences for members of racialized groups are more significant - being refused service, housing, or jobs. Also, the repeated negative stereotyping can also be internalized or affect self-image. Several parents acknowledged this concern for their own children.

They said “Mommy, they said we live off welfare” and I said, “Well, do we live off welfare?” I did in the past and I am not ashamed of it but I said “Do we live on welfare?” “No, you got a good job.” I said, “Well, just tell them 'no we don't live on welfare.' Just try to ignore them you know.” (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

I do not know how to explain to my daughter that there is racism and to tell her how to brush it off. I think they should teach it in parenting classes... I was embarrassed of who I was, you know, and I do not want my kids to feel like that because I feel that if they don't feel like that they can probably accomplish more without being worried they are going to be put down. I want it to be better for them now. (Tamara, late 20s, Aboriginal, mother)

Another stereotype often reported was the association of both Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities to a lesser extent, with being poor.

It may be the way that people look to you. Like if I do not get my hair all fixed up, have my best clothes on they will be OK but if I go into a place with my sloppy clothes on and my hair not well combed there is a difference too. They paint you as a poor native. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)

They see the Aboriginal person who lives on welfare and lives on Simpson Street and then there is me who does not live on Simpson Street and does not live on welfare. I have an education and they distinguish that as being white. I think a lot of people when they think of Aboriginal peoples they see that stereotypical not working, poor, Indian person. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)
Luis, who volunteers to help new immigrants, stated that immigrants and refugees are expected to take whatever they can get even if the pay cannot provide for their entire family. He said if they refuse to take such second rate jobs they are considered lazy. Being treated as a stereotype extends to attitudes about people and their presumed perks.

> **You'll get subtle comments about, well, "The Natives, they've been given so much. When do we stop giving to them? We, as a government," sort of.... Because it seems to me that each Aboriginal person that I know, needs to be taken as an individual case. And some of them get certain breaks and others don't qualify, and they have their own struggles to try and qualify for funding and so on and so forth.** (Roger, 40s, White, teacher)

Both Aboriginal peoples and people of colour commented that being treated as someone else’s stereotype does not acknowledge them as a person, nor as an individual with unique qualities and value. In addition to the personal effects of being treated as a stereotype, it reduces opportunities and leads to differential treatment, accusations and other social practices.

**Accusations made**

Interview participants described many occasions when accusations, often stereotyped, were made. One very common pattern was going into a store, and staff following the person. The clear assumption - most of the interview participants asserted - was that the store staff felt they were more likely to steal. Brian described the rather common occurrence of picking an item out of a discount bin although the item should not have been there, and felt that the Aboriginal person was unjustly accused of planting the item.

> I have seen a couple of times where I thought Natives weren't treated as well at the till. People look at them with suspicion. There's no give whatsoever. Mistakes with white people are assumed as native people trying to take advantage. Its just the way they're treated unfortunately. (Brian, White, professional)

White customers would be treated nicer, not accused, and a compromise solution worked out, he maintained. Such conclusions were echoed by other people in their reports of numerous similar incidents.

> A security guard in a T-Bay mall grabbed a fellow I knew and said he had just done something illegal - it was not him - the guard just grabbed an Indian that fit the build. (Survey respondent)

Another common situation reported was being hassled by police. Several people described being pulled over as they walked or biked on the street and accused of doing something. Several other interview participants reported that other interactions with police included accusations about the honesty of the person of colour.

**Don't belong**
Some participants also described a cumulative effect of not feeling like they belonged in the community. This was true even of residents who had been in Thunder Bay for many years. Both Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities described occasional feelings of not belonging in certain places or situations. However, Aboriginal peoples did not mention a sense of being unwelcome or not belonging in the same way as did other racialized peoples. This is interesting, and probably relates to an identification as First Nations.

Some whites say “Go back where you came from.” Huh? (everyone starts laughing) (She continues, enthusiastically) - We ARE where we came from!! (Lucille, Focus Group 1, Aboriginal)

Visible minority interview participants regularly described feelings of not belonging to the community. This sense of not belonging can happen in many ways. It may be an underlying belief in the majority population. For example, Richie commented,

I think that most of the coloured people are from the University either working or going to school. Why else would you want to live up here? (Richie, White, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

And this other one [store] I walked into and I asked this sales person. I said, “Do you sell some black person's hair products?” and she said “No we don't, we don't expect them to be in Thunder Bay, we just have the Natives because it's too cold here and you don't expect Black people here.” (Themba, Sudanese, five years in Thunder Bay, mother)

Such a sentiment gets picked up:

I think that...they don't see that people of colour are regular members of the community, but we're imports. [They think] we're students, or we're faculty, or we're researchers, but this is not really where we live. We're just here temporarily. For whatever the reason might be. (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)

Trivedi told about going to the school to address bullying and racial name-calling in school. The Vice-Principal rationalized it, unsatisfactorily in Trivedi’s perspective.

Trivedi: They go on their explanation and their basic assumptions, and then say, “Well this is Thunder Bay, what do you expect?!”

Interviewer: They say that?

Trivedi: Yes, a Vice-Principal told me that, to my face. And that's kind of like, “Okay, this is Thunder Bay, this is how we are. You take us or you leave us.” You know. And I'm going, “Maybe I shouldn't be here.” [chuckles]. (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

Selena implied that she, her family and other Caribbean immigrants she knew were not accepted and other Thunder Bay residents let her know “It's not just me.... Because we don't belong
to here, but we live here.” Similarly, Luis said, “It makes us feel unwelcome.” One wonders at the consequences for individual lives and the community as a whole with such a feeling being present. On the one hand, survey participants felt that community diversity made Thunder Bay a better place in which to live (see Figure 7, p. 31). On the other hand, there was a feeling of not belonging to the community when racialized.

**Marginalizing Behaviour**

As the last form of treatment shows, racialization has an effect of putting some people on the margins of the community. The forms of treatment that have this effect are often ambiguous and cumulative.

**Stereotypic comments**

Negative comments in this section refer to taken-for-granted details about Aboriginal peoples, or Arabs, or Japanese, or African-Canadians. Such comments usually put racialized people in the awkward position of needing to interpret the comments, defend themselves or explain.

*It is just a form of racism right there. If I show you my status card to purchase something... they have no business questioning my status card and if there is a question there, then it is not my responsibility as an Aboriginal person who is purchasing something to train you as the clerk on what questions you should be asking. That is the manager’s job or the corporation that you are working for. That is their job to train you about what I can and cannot do with my status card... And I find that more and more [I am explaining].* (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

As another example, Mary recounted the following story,

*I had a chronic lateness problem in grade 9 and grade 10... I got called into the office, [the vice-principal] finally came up to me and said, along the lines of ‘I thought all Japanese were punctual.’* (Mary, late 40s, lifelong Thunder Bay resident, Japanese)

A similar situation is that of being made fun of. Interview participants suggest that, while sometimes funny, jokes about race were still painful. Moreover, they create discomfort, and social practices can accuse the person discomforted of “being a spoil-sport.”

**Differential Treatment**

The bus driver kicked a native off because he had been drinking, but a white man had also been drinking and the bus driver did not say anything. (Survey Respondent)

This category refers to situations in which people perceive different treatment is provided an Aboriginal or visible minority than is provided a white person. These situations are often ambiguous. Interview participants’ accounts often make an argument for why the situation was perceived as racist. This accounting” (Essed, 1991), is sometimes only implied in the terse comments of
respondents to the survey, but much more apparent in the interviews. The interview participants described differential treatment occurring in situations that include walking on the street, encountering the police, calling for police help, in organized recreation, in media newscasts, schools, housing, getting a job and advancing in a job, restaurants, stores and more.

For example, Trivedi referred to what he felt was differential treatment in schools.

In my kids' school my kids are the only non-white kids in the school. Okay, there's a general perception if something goes wrong, it's gotta be the brown child's fault, regardless of what. If my child is bullied, see - if my child is bullied, okay, he's asking for it. That's the interpretation. If another child is bullied, then it needs investigating. (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

White people may not even be aware of how the treatment differs, as Roger noticed,

I think, you have to be highly sensitive to even pick up on them. Because they're subtle things like um, you know ah, a cashier might engage in conversation with me, whereas the next person, ah, of a minority or of colour, is kind of swept through and no eye contact is made. They're very subtle things but, I've seen them, I'm sensitive to them. (Roger, 40s, White, teacher)

Figure 14 on page 44 shows that this form of treatment was the most commonly mentioned form of racializing treatment. More will be described in specific social locations.

Systematic Discrimination
Actions characterized as systematic discrimination differ from the previous category by being perceived as regular and re-occurring practices that negatively judge racialized people and favour Whites. It is important to note that these practices are not necessarily blatant or overt; however, racialized people witness or experience some practices with sufficient regularity to label such practices as systematic discrimination.

Systematic discrimination is perceived to occur in many ways in Thunder Bay. For example, when the interviewer asked Luis how he could be sure it was the colour of their skin and not other reasons that kept immigrants with whom he worked from getting good jobs, he explained that his clients continue to search for work,

But the only jobs that they are ever offered are labour jobs such as a chambermaid or washing floors. They are told that the position is filled or there is no work available and yet the employer continues to collect resumes and hire other light skinned people. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

Similarly, several people noticed that one rarely sees Aboriginal peoples working in retail establishments.

You hardly see any Nishnawbe's working or, I mean in general [that is, in retail-type jobs]. I hate to say that but you know, you do notice that. You hardly see any Nishnawbe's working
anywhere around here. And it's really hard. I don't think it's our fault. (Charles, Aboriginal youth)

Many survey respondents and interview participants commented upon what seems like systematic discrimination by certain restaurants, bars and stores. Several specific establishments were named repeatedly. In these places, Aboriginal peoples or people of colour are not provided service or even asked to leave. Systematic discrimination was also ascribed to the police by numerous survey and interview participants. For example,

They treat them differently. If [the police] have to go pick up an intoxicated non-native against an intoxicated native person they are treated differently (emphasis). It is assumed that the native has no where to go, no phone, they throw him in jail for a night, to sober up. They make efforts to find out where that non-native person lives so that instead of holding them over for the night they can bring them home. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Other regularly occurring situations - systematic discrimination - that surfaced in survey comments and interviews included:

- Store policies and practices to discourage use of status cards;
- Media reports that specify the race of members of racialized groups;
- Teachers giving lower grades or not giving out assignments to persons of racialized groups;
- Frequent extra attention from police;
- Workplaces being made uncomfortable;
- Extra attention from floorwalkers in stores;
- Racial jokes and teasing ignored in schools or workplaces;
- Misinformed on the job;
- Promotions denied on the job;
- Given the miserable work duties.

Finally, some segregation was mentioned. Systematic discrimination and structural factors along with racialized peoples’ own mechanisms for coping tend to distance racial groups from each other. Several interview participants pointed out that there are bars known as Aboriginal bars and others known as White bars in Thunder Bay. Segregation was rarely as blatant as Arthur reported.

I walked into the bar.... And as soon as we walked in they said they can't serve us. And I said okay, you know, and I asked them nicely, why eh. And he says, ‘Well you guys are, you guys are too intoxicated.’ And I said you know, ‘I never touched a bottle at all.’ ... None of us had a drink, eh?.... And as we were walking out we see this sign. It said ‘No colours allowed in the bar.’ And it's still there today, that sign. (Arthur, 30s, Aboriginal, seasonal firefighter)

Proof beyond doubt that these incidents are racist might be difficult. There could also be an element of misunderstanding or misinterpretation. However, it would be a mistake to question whether systematic discrimination really occurs - the “balance of probability” points to it happening, particularly against Aboriginal peoples. More detail on systematic discrimination will be provided in the sections on relevant social locations below.

Racialized people feel marginalised. Negative comments, differential treatment, and
systematic discrimination add to the subtle forms of interaction and the blatant racism. It is unlikely that all these stories about racialized treatment are false. Furthermore, the stories get passed around and discussed, leading to a less cohesive social climate. The stories become part of the interactive mix that racialized people live with.

**Societal Structures**

Contrary to the majority of forms of treatment in the preceding section, this category is a melange of social forces in which individuals have little leeway. Many interview participants referred to racializing factors that can only be categorized as part of the social structure of Thunder Bay. These factors include historical factors that affect current practices, laws about immigration, systemic racism in the form of effects of residential school, the sense of being beaten down so much that one no longer tries, and school textbooks that mostly ignore Aboriginal peoples except during the earliest days of Canadian history.

**Systemic racism**

Systemic racism differs from systematic discrimination in that the later includes the choices of individuals, whereas systemic racism is about social structures over which individuals have little or no control. These include the ways that cultural values have shaped individuals.

_They're living in their own little subculture in these poverty-stricken neighbourhoods where, really what else can they do? They can't get the jobs because nobody wants to hire a Native kid. So when they got nothing else to do they're going out and they're doing stupid things._ (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

A few interview participants talked about laws:

_David: People are still being kept in certain areas, like we're not really citizens of the state. Interviewer: When you say “we” you mean—_  
_David: The Aboriginal peoples. It's those broad policies that are right across the country that don't really help us, like the Indian Act and all those other. There's not too many places where you can take those kind of grievances. Even if you go to court, you need money, and most people don't have that, eh?_ (David, 40s, Aboriginal, University student)

_In Ontario it is very segregated or they like to divide people up and put you into little groups. It is the only province in Canada that has treaty areas [for Aboriginal hunting]. And I don’t know if a lot of people know that, but I can go out to Manitoba and hunt anywhere as long as I tell the government where I am hunting, what I am hunting and what I am going to take. That is recognized under federal jurisdiction. What I am doing [in a court case] is challenging the provincial government in regards to hunting and fishing rights. If it is fair in every other province why is it different in Ontario? Why is federal law different here? So when I challenged in regards to this that particular judge said that._ (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)
The judge had told Mike he “was going to make an example of him” for all other Aboriginal peoples. Mike commented that this had a negative effect on the way that he viewed the legal institution and its legitimacy. A few other people were able to recognize social forces and their effects.

But on the other hand, when I see what government policies, federal government policies have done to the Aboriginal communities, the First Nations communities in our region. And, you know the whole process of genocide, the whole process of killing the communities. And these poor buggers are having to move into the cities. I see it worsening. (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)

This category also includes institutional practices that noone questions.

Even in Thunder Bay, Port Arthur Collegiate were the Red Men. Well we do not have a team like the Black Men or the Yellow Men, but it was OK to have the Red Men. It was around the time when Dennis Cromarty school – when they were talking about mascots in the media, and I remember thinking PACI had the Red Men. Well wouldn't it be funny if Cromarty had (laughs) a mascot. He [was] all gold chains and you dressed him up like the stereotypical Italian person. And ah and call them the Fighting Wops which would have been terrible but it would it would have got the point across that why is this OK to do it for Aboriginal people? (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Interview participants occasionally mentioned various elements of systemic forces. However, throughout the study, there was less attention to these issues than to the forms of treatment that people received through social interaction with other people. Still, societal structures do have a role in shaping these interactions, although often at the taken-for-granted level.

They petitioned and they wanted the road name changed but the campers on that road said we have been living here for a hundred years and its always been Bay Road and we do not want it changed. And they just didn't understand the negative portrayal of the name. And they were so determined that it was called that for one hundred years and Aboriginal peoples did not mind that one hundred years ago. But they didn't realise that it probably was not an Aboriginal person that came up with the name Squaw Bay Road or whatever. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

And that could be where a lot of the racial discrimination comes from, because usually the groups discriminated against are the poorer groups, the less powerful, socially. (Krista, 50s, Japanese, longtime Thunder Bay resident)

One of the guys I've been to the gym with, he says a guard out at the jail says its basically thirty white guys watching over three hundred Indians. I said is that your perception, or is that the way things are? He said, no that's the way things really are. I said that's really scary. Why is it all them? Why do all the natives end up in jail? (Brian, 30s, White, professional)
Brian, with a graduate degree in sociology, has little concept of possible reasons that Aboriginal peoples are more heavily represented in the prison population. Similarly, in one of the focus groups this over-representation was mentioned, but no reasons were suggested. Unless one is willing to say that Aboriginal peoples are more criminally inclined, systemic factors must be included in the reasons for this over-representation. A conclusion is that increasing public awareness of how social structures influence personal lives may contribute to more awareness of the effects on race relations.

Historical Factors

In some of the systemic aspects noted above a sense of the effects of past history plays a role in current social structures. When history was mentioned by interview participants, it was always in the context of Aboriginal peoples rather than as an influence on other racialized people. An awareness of history can inform reasons behind some policies or practices.

For example, residential schools dramatically affected Aboriginal communities, destroyed families and forced native people to “internalize their own oppression” in the form of beliefs about white authorities, the church the deficiency taught about native language and culture. The implications are far-reaching, as several people mentioned.

*With residential schools there was a time there when Aboriginal peoples were taught not to speak, not to voice their opinion not to-- you just go with the flow of what is asked of you, you do. And um, you know the next generation was learnt the same thing, was taught the same thing – it wasn't good to stand up for yourself. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)*

*They were slapped, my dad and his brothers and he seen one of his brothers be raped and he saw one of his brothers be whipped and he seen his sister, you know, carted off in the middle of the night. So he has no respect for the whole system itself. And that was the Education Act that took him out of his home. (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)*

*When my daughter worked up north she told me that a father of a student was always really quiet and the student told her he went to residential school and hated teachers. So his dad taught him that, and [now] is learning that teachers are OK. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)*

Several people talked about how having to deal over and over with various elements of history, or historical misrepresentation, or other people’s lack of awareness of history was wearying.

*And my kids coming home and talking to me about history and I'll say no it didn't happen that way, your grandfather, your grandmother, your uncle, your aunt, your mom, your dad, you, your dog your cat, everything got raped when they went through the land. There was stories of people who watched their baby being slammed across the wall and then dead. Like how many people in one life time have to deal with that? Or like in how many centuries? how many generations have to hear that? This is like a burden it is like a weight because society does not wake up. (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)*

*I guess it has just come to a point were I have just got sick and tired of hearing the same old
arguments over and over again. Even though so many people have been giving them the answers why they don't pay the tax or why there school is paid for we are giving them the answers we are telling them but the same argument comes up and up over and over again.

(Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

The consequences of historical forces are played out in individual lives directly, and indirectly through how social structures have come to be. A better awareness of these factors would likely help both racialized and non-racialized individuals.

INTERPRETING SOCIAL INTERACTION

As has become clear in the description of some of the forms of treatment above, interpreting interactions plays an important role in determining whether racism has occurred. This is a regular part of social life. For a person who has experienced racism, an extra element in the understanding of social interactions is added. As Gail explained,

"But I do get my guard up right away. And that is too bad because somebody might be treating me for some other reason then being native. Right away that is what you think, so I really have to stop and think is that [racism] really what it is?" (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)

People interact with each other. Some of the interaction is negative. They wonder, what is this interaction telling me - is it something I did? Self-questioning occurs, and eventually comes a realisation that at least some of the interactions are simply because of outward physical characteristics - the social construction and individual attitudes about race.

To show the cumulative effects of the experiencing of racialization, a sequence of quotations has been drawn from the interview with Themba.

"At the University there’s quite a lot that happens... Some of the instructors are not sensitive at times when they talk in the classroom. Like when there's some minority people in there, they tend to just say whatever they want to say, without thinking that it does hurt somebody else in the classroom...."

"My daughter now, she's started JK and she's having a lot of trouble because there's —. I don’t know whether the kids, it’s their family or their background, they keep on telling her, “Oh you’re black, you're gross,” and all that kind of a thing and she's just four years old and it's disturbing her. She's stressed out. She tells me her feelings are hurt and you don't know how you could actually approach the issue that there's a little girl that is psychologically damaged by, you know, what she is being told...."

"And materials too. My girl had came home from the Library with a book. And I was reading the book with this story about this kid that doesn’t want to eat and the mother says, “You know, you better eat it because kids are starving in Africa.”.... How could they keep material like that in school?... My daughter and other kids are Black and they can come across this.... Like, most of your self-esteem comes from where you came from....[It] is not true, because not every kid in Africa is starving.... So those kind of material, where it fosters
stereotypes about each of us and we think we want to really get rid of these ideas of racism – We still carry those kind of materials in schools or even in Libraries. It tends to hurt....

This... irritates me all the time. When I walk into the Superstore – or any grocery store or any retail store – everybody is going around doing their thing and the sales people will always be following me. “Can I help you?” and I say, “No,” and after while they say, “Are you sure?” I can’t understand that, you know? Like if I want something I will ask. I consider it to be pesterling. Like, you are trying to read the label but the idea is maybe, you are black and you don’t know English or, you know, you don’t know anything. And it’s very disturbing because I can’t shop in peace.... so it’s like, am I not supposed to just go around and look at the things I want?... At times [when I go with some of my friends], they say “Oh goodness I can now understand why you feel that way. Because you’re not relaxed to do whatever you want to do, all the time you’re being hassled.”

Interviewer: Do you feel that it is happening more to you than other customers in the store? Yes, yes definitely....

[I think some people do it] because they assume... automatically, because of my colour of skin it sounds like I don’t know anything. Not only those people thinking that way, but even students in University, most of them go up to me and say “Oh how did you find that?” and I’d say “Oh, it was hard.” [They say] “Oh yeah, it should be hard for you because English is not your first language.” I said, “I would not be here in the University [if it was too hard], you know?” And if there are other people too who find it hard, it doesn’t mean that English is their second language for them”....

A couple of my friends have just walked in [to my home] and said “Oh wow, we thought your place was going to be dirty and dusty.” .... I grew up in Africa whereby I don’t face this kind of discrimination on the basis of my colour. You know, that somebody just doesn’t like me, gives all these kind of looks because I am Black.... Walking around sometimes I just feel kind of an uncomfortable feeling. I don’t know, it’s just a feeling that makes you feel out of place.... (Themba, Sudanese, five years in Thunder Bay, mother)

While Themba also spoke of more overt incidents, this sequence demonstrates how many interactions may have a racializing aspect. It also shows the ambiguity and the emotional burden. Another element is added to the interpretive mix, which adds additional stress to the already complicated task of interpreting social interactions.

The interview participants spoke of the challenge of interpreting treatment they took as racializing. For every “It just felt like it [racism],” they spoke of “but, you don’t know.” Mary said, “You know in your gut...[by] experience” what someone means. Carol spoke of “when you have experienced it before, you can kind of sense it.” “It is not something I can really put a finger on but you can feel it,” said Lana. The ambiguity never goes away, many members of racialized groups alluded. Usually they gave explanation for their interpretation, but acknowledged the uncertainty.

I don’t know that, because I never said a word. But I just observed the behaviour and made my own conclusions.... It’s a matter of perspective. This was my interpretation at the time. (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)
As Essed (1991) discovered in her study of racialized Black women professionals in The Netherlands, and the United States, accounts of racialization often followed a pattern. Racialized people generally utilized understanding of socially acceptable behaviour, or acceptable reasons for socially unacceptable behaviour to make a case for racism. For example, Korinna told about wanting to make a complaint against a police officer the week before the interview. She prefaced it, then gave an explanation for her interpretation.

This story really I do not know if it has anything to do with racism but I said this is Mrs. — [deleted] and I want to [make a complaint]. And — is a very popular Aboriginal name in Thunder Bay. I never received a call back. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Rebecca organized a curling rink for the municipal league, went to meetings, paid the entry money and never received a call back. Her money was returned by the organizer.

I felt like they discriminated against us. They know... we are Indians and they did not want us sliding into the curling realm or whatever. That is how I felt any way. That was a piece of rejection and I felt that was very racist. (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Rachel, a Metis woman with light skin who is rarely perceived as Aboriginal, told about being refused a table at a restaurant with a group.

I really didn't think of it as racist until my mom said, “Oh they are probably just racist.” When I look at my mom I guess I forget that she is part native... so I wouldn't have thought that. (Rachel, mid-20s, Métis)

Her mother had a different set of experiences with which to interpret the situation and came to different conclusions.

Interview participants sometimes said something in overt instances, but not during more uncertain situations. Why not?

I don't know. Because I could be wrong. It may not be that at all and I am just assuming it -- and then I will look like an ass. (Tamara, late 20s, Aboriginal, mother)

I could be totally out to lunch in my interpretation of what's happening. But this is how I feel. About what's in my face. (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

Many interview participants felt whites did not understand. Not experiencing racialization, it is little understood except in more blatant forms. Mary referred to this several times, with others echoing these sentiments.

White people, they don't understand – like they don't understand that people will stop you or question you just because of the way you look. (Mary, late 40s, lifelong Thunder Bay resident, Japanese)
As the only visible minority throughout my life in Thunder Bay my friends are always amazed at the stories I have to tell them when I have been slurred. It is beyond their comprehension. (Mary)

As if to confirm Mary’s point of view, other comments show the lack of comprehension.

So other than that I haven’t seen a whole lot of racism with native Americans (sic). Other than it seems that they are bitter against white people. Maybe we’ve given them too much. (Brian, 30s, White, professional)

Similarly, Janene described a situation in which a white person did not understand the interaction they both had experienced.

[I] do [my] laundry at —.... The new attendant looks Italian.... And a man came in that morning, we were just talking, I think I was folding laundry and she was stuffing laundry into a machine.... He said something I can’t remember... but obviously [he thought] I should have paid attention to him because I was the laundry attendant. He was quite sharp.... And it crossed my mind that the stereotype is, Chinese launderers right? And so here’s a Chinese woman folding laundry in a Laundromat. She must be the attendant.... [The attendant] was surprised that he was talking to me.... but how was he to know that she was the attendant... You know, there was no way of knowing because we both had jeans on. So we looked the same except that I had this face and she doesn’t. (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)

Janene has to interpret why the man is interacting with her in this way. She described the incident’s impact as “horrible. That made me very, very, very angry.” Along with all the other social practices that go into the complexity of interaction between people, racism and racialization adds an additional burden that contributes to stress. It is appropriate to conclude with a comment by Charles, who’s wife is an Aboriginal woman,

I don’t know if you can really say, for sure that it’s all racism. But you know it just seems uncanny that these things are happening. (Charles, Aboriginal youth)

SUMMARY

Through the preceding pages the interview participants described a number of forms of treatment that contribute to being racialized. These social practices, and the role of interpreting them through interpersonal interaction, are crucial to understanding the discussion of racialization in the social locations that follow. Racialization takes many forms, as the interview participants have stated.

The forms of treatment described as racializing have been categorized as blatant racism, subtle racializing, marginalizing and societal effects. As is apparent from Figure 44, all these categories are prevalent in Thunder Bay. Blatant racism includes racial slurs, violence and concerns for safety. Subtle racializing includes being ignored or watched, treated as a stereotype, accused and feeling unwelcome or that one does not belong. Marginalizing behaviour includes comments, being made fun of, differential treatment and systematic discrimination. Finally, structural factors are
societal elements such as systemic barriers and past history.

As can be seen, many of these forms of treatment are not overt. They are interpretations made by the people involved in the interactions. Interpretation is a fundamental part of all encounters between two people. Racialized people have built a body of knowledge from personal past experiences, discussion with others and understanding of history and society that assists the interpretation process. This body of knowledge is often not part of the interpretation schemes that non-racialized members of the majority use in their interpretations. This leads to clashes in awareness of racialization. However, racialized interview participants often explained why they made the interpretations that they did. Their accounts matched those that Essed (1991) outlined in her studies of black women professionals in both The Netherlands and the United States. The accounts are based on deviations from acceptable social behaviour, or acceptable reasons for unacceptable behaviour to argue for a racializing event.

Through the course of this study, numerous white people have commented “I’m not racist, but sometimes I get treated as if I am.” I hope the above description of social practices can help people understand the everyday experiences of racialized people. Racialization can be unconscious. As will be seen in the social locations in the next section, racializing interactions accumulate as racism.
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Chapter Six
INTERVIEW DATA: SOCIAL LOCATIONS

The good thing about living in Thunder Bay is that there is more cultural awareness. Where I come from you don’t see it much. There’s more here. It helps me appreciate who I am. But sometimes you have to deal with racial things. (Interview participant)

Social locations are the settings of interaction in Thunder Bay. Social locations include non-geographical sites of interaction such as encounters about status cards or language. Information about social locations in which racialization occurs was accessed by questions on the survey, and in the interviews.

Two parallel sets of questions were asked that are based upon a reliable measure developed by the Institute for Social Research and Evaluation at the University of Northern British Columbia (Michalos and Zumbo, 2001). The first five questions were part of a series called the “Personal Fair Treatment Index.” Each question asks the respondent to agree or disagree if people in a specific social location “are usually helpful and treat me fairly.” The second set replaces “me” with “all people.” The second set is called the “General Fair Treatment Index.” (See Questions B1-B5 and B6-B10 in Appendix 2). Table 7 (next page) presents the means of the responses for each question. Means of the items in the Personal Fair Treatment Index are presented above the means for the General Fair Treatment Index questions. The table also presents the change between the two means. A lower mean represents more agreement about helpful and fair treatment. A score of 3.00 would be the neutral point were an equal amount of disagreement and agreement is occurring. The lowest mean on each question is italicized. The highest mean is bolded.

In all circumstances, the change from personal treatment to general treatment declines to less fairness and helpfulness. This is a familiar pattern. We know our own experiences; we interact with many people throughout the days, if we hear of any poor treatment it will lower the score. These figures will again be presented under each social location, with comparison to the questions that specifically asked about race-based treatments.

Several patterns in the data are worth noting. In all cases except one, Aboriginal peoples responded with the lowest scores, indicating they felt both personal and general treatment to be less helpful and fair than did others. In all cases except two, other racialized people felt both personal and general treatment to be more helpful and fair than did others. Both of these cases were the treatment by the police.

What conclusions can be drawn from this? First of all, Aboriginal peoples feel treated more poorly than others in Thunder Bay. From data presented above Aboriginal peoples report a lower satisfaction with life in Thunder Bay, and a greater frequency of encountering racialization. The three of these are correlated.

A second conclusion is that other racialized people do not report the poor treatment that one would expect if racially-based discrimination in these social locations were a simple and clear issue.
The exception is police services, which in the interview data is one of the more frequently and severely remarked locations of racialization. However, patterns within this small sample show marked differences between Blacks and people of Asian descent. This suggests treating these results with caution as a small sample increases the chance of sampling error. Furthermore, it also suggests that the decision to lump all non-Aboriginal racialized people into one category may have been in error. Although such a procedure is often done, it tends to ignore the very real differences among non-Aboriginal racialized people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the questions below, in the place of __ add either “me” or “all people.”</th>
<th>Complete Sample</th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Other racialized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police in my neighbourhood are usually helpful and treat __ fairly.</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors and nurses in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat __ fairly.</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social service workers in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat __ fairly.</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who work in stores in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat __ fairly.</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and school staff in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat __ fairly.</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7.** The means of responses for the Personal Fair Treatment and General Fair Treatment Indices and a calculation of the average change between the two indices.

**SPECIFIC LOCATIONS**

Interview participants were not asked specifically about particular social locations. However, they volunteered information about interactions and locations. A summary of this information is presented in Figure 15 (next page). It is important to recognize that this information is gleaned from the accounts of racialized incidents. It is not intended to be comprehensive. The incidents and their associated locations were strong enough in interview participant’s recollections to be recalled. They play a part in person’s attitudes toward the institution mentioned or future interactions in the location. The interviews provide a great deal of information about the interactions that occur in particular social locations. This information is supported by data drawn from the surveys. The various settings of social interaction are divided into several categories as follows.

*Interactions with institutions* include interactions with police, schools, government services
and health care. Being part of Thunder Bay include job-related interactions, shopping, restaurants and other retail establishments, using status cards or language-related encounters. The Stuff of Life are those interactions that happen in many places and situations. In this category are drive-by situations on the street, concerns for safety, interactions on the bus, in recreation, in housing with landlords or fellow tenants.

Interaction with Institutions

Government Services

Government services operate at several levels and for many purposes. The survey did not distinguish specific agencies or services other than questions about health care, police services and social services. Social services will be included in this section while health, police and public transit will be addressed separately.

As noted in Chapter Four there is a discrepancy between the rate of observation of discrimination and the rate of experiencing of discrimination at government services. Twenty-seven people reported observing discrimination at government services, while fifteen people reported experiencing it. Interpretation of the degree of concern about racism in government services depends upon whether one measures these reports of discrimination as percentages of the entire survey response (7% and 4%), or of those who answered that they had indeed witnessed or experienced discrimination (13% and 27%). Reaction to racism and discrimination in government services was mixed among interview participants. Many people reported no problem, while others highlighted particular issues, particularly regarding the justice system, social service agencies, and government policies, including immigration.

A number of interview participants felt that the court system treats both Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities different from white Canadians.

In Kenora, this Caucasian beat up this native guy... kicked the shit out of him until he died, then he was let go on bail, because he was a Caucasian. What’s this? If I murdered someone like that I would never get to see the outside. Just the way it is. If it were a native he would be in jail. (Focus Group 1, Aboriginal male)

Although the incident did not take place in Thunder Bay the participant used it as an example of the
court system treating Aboriginal peoples differently than white people. Another interview participants expressed the same view regarding people of colour.

The basic assumption is... if something went to court or the law had to deal with something. When we’re involved- if any people of visible minority like myself is involved (and they call us black, they call us brown, it doesn’t matter), but if one of us is involved the opening assumption is: we’re wrong, we’re the ones who made the mistake. (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

Rebecca, who works in the court system, also feels it treats Aboriginal peoples different from white people. She expressed concern about the Aboriginal alternative justice program, and the possibility for judges in the system to circumvent it because they resent it. As a result of such treatment Rebecca concludes, “And they wonder why our kids do not want to show up for court. Well they are scared and intimidated terribly.” Rebecca was one of several people who felt that those who were white tended to get off easier and for more serious charges than members of racialized groups.

Several people also felt that government policies of the past and present discriminate against Aboriginal peoples and lend a hand to reproducing systemic racism. Mike a professional and Aboriginal male in his early fifties, feels that the provincial government’s hunting and fishing laws in Ontario are unjust since they are different and more constrictive than the rest of the country. He also feels that one of the reasons so many Aboriginal peoples have problems using their status card is because the provincial government pressures businesses “to tell the native communities that if they want to use that they have to pay the tax up front and apply to the provincial government to get the money back...It is not supposed to be that way.”

Immigration also arose as a point of concern. Luis, a Latin-American immigrant, explains his experience:

Not all people come here on purpose or because they wanted to, circumstances of life bring them here. Let me tell you, the whole system is against us starting from immigration. I was treated like a criminal when I arrived. They assumed that I lied on my papers although they had no proof. They just assumed I lied and treated me like a liar and a criminal. I felt like I was not welcome. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

Perceptions of discrimination were considerably more mixed at the level of direct service delivery. Many of the interview participants responded as did Selena, “Social service workers treat everyone the same, not look at race.” Similarly, Tamara, when asked, commented “In government services? You mean welfare and that? You know I have never experienced racism through welfare.” On the other hand, Roger, a white teacher who has lived around the North as well as Thunder Bay responded, “When you’re filling out forms you might not be given as much help if you’re part of a minority, possibly. I’ve seen evidence of it.”

Survey respondents added valuable comments. One explained a belief that Aboriginal peoples experience discrimination in Thunder Bay by referring to specific services in a municipal agency,
I have noticed they have eaten in the café in – [deleted] a few times, but not constantly. I feel they are not made welcome. (Survey Respondent)

Two other people made comments about social survey delivery from different viewpoints:

I work with Aboriginal peoples in a social service agency. I frequently hear derogatory comments or misconceptions from people I encounter about Aboriginal peoples. Clients tell me stories about personal experiences. (Survey Respondent)

An owner of a women’s clothing store told me she basically had no use for native women coming into her store, and how her daughter who works for social services says they are all lazy, ignorant people. (Survey Respondent)

While the latter comment refers to a retail establishment, the woman in charge is using talk by a government agent as “expert authority” to support her views. Social service workers likely see many negative situations which may build or reinforce stereotypes. This quote shows that they must be careful not to treat people like stereotypes (see page 46), or to relate stories from their work that may help create stereotypes or be taken for “fact.”

From Table 7 above, fair treatment scores show that social services garnered the highest scores of any social locations listed (high scores equal poorer treatment), regarding the treatment received from social services. In other words, Aboriginal peoples are reporting that they feel treated unfairly by social workers more than by people in the other four social locations - police, school staff, store employees and health care professionals.

Survey respondents were also asked to agree/disagree to “I believe social service workers treat everyone the same regardless of race.” Figure 16 shows the distribution of responses to this question. Aboriginal peoples were slightly more likely than other groups to think that social workers allowed race to negatively affect services. Other racialized people were more likely to be neutral or agree that social workers treat all the same. School teachers were asked a parallel question to that presented in Figure 16 (see Figure 18, page 74), and were seen as less racially partial than social services workers.

**Figure 16.** Distribution of responses to the statement.
Police Services

Of all the social locations, police in Thunder Bay\(^7\) received the most vigorous references from interview participants as a site of racializing action. This is shown in Figure 15, where Police are cited the third most of any category by interview participants. Unlike other top categories such as schools, stores, restaurants, and employment, which are regular parts of the everyday life of most people, one does not expect so much contact with police services. Three inferences arise from these reports. First, the police are still dealing with negative images owing from past racist incidents and stories. Second, reports of encounters get passed from person to person, growing in power and remaining in the interpretive mix that racialized people use to understand interactions. Third, there is a racializing element present within the police services.

If only the first two inferences are valid, police services still have to address these concerns in order to effectively serve the community. Otherwise, the police will remain distrusted and unable to effectively do their job. Scores for the police on the Fair Treatment indices are already among the lower scores of any of the five social locations. Such a situation adds risk to the job of policing, and creates additional tensions in the community, besides negatively affecting racialized people. A recent survey showed that over 30% of Canadians believe that police officers discriminate on the basis of race (National Post, 2002). More importantly, the weight of so many reports from interviews and surveys indicate that the third inference has relevance. The data suggests Thunder Bay police services should address racism occurring in its operations.

Most of the various forms of racializing treatment - blatant racism, subtle racializing, marginalizing interactions, and structural aspects - occur in the reports of study participants in regards to the police. Interview participants are particularly emphatic in describing being treated as a negative stereotype. Due to the nature of their job - dealing with trouble - police officers may have direct experience with such typifications of the stereotype (i.e, drunks, thieves, etc.). However, racialized individuals report with distaste that the stereotyping overflows into the direct way that they experience being treated by the police. Furthermore, there is evidence that there are strongly racialized views within the police force. This evidence will be presented in the rest of this section through the eyes of study participants.

The following subsections will cover each of the four broad categories of social practices as the interview participants and survey respondents describe their experiences and perceptions of interactions. It should be noted that several of the interview participants were fearful of describing such interactions. There was a sense among some racialized people that the police hold a great deal of power compared to an individual citizen. This power could be abused. The power could also be expressed if an individual comes into contact with police services. For these reasons, in the following section, some identities of interview participants will be withheld. It should also be emphasized that police officers are in difficult and stressful situations, sometimes at physical risk and given multiple and conflicting tasks. This is recognized, as one Aboriginal man noted,

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\(^7\) Police services in Thunder Bay include Thunder Bay Police, Ontario Provincial Police and RCMP. No attempt was made to determine which of the three police forces each study participant may have been referring to.
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I do know a lot of police officers and I think that there is a feeling there because they do deal with a lot of natives in alcohol and drug abuse and there is an old saying that my garbage doesn't fight back when you put it in the truck. And that has to do with issues and it is tough when you have to deal with the same people time after time. (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

Furthermore, the actions of individuals are not the actions of the police as a whole. Yet institutional culture can have an influence on individual behaviour. This may even occur because silence or a code of “tolerance” of one’s peers does nothing to inhibit expression of racial attitudes. As described on page 15, researchers have found that group norms is to make the group more racist than the individual members (Dunk, 1991; Eliasoph, 1999). Institutional culture further influences individual attitudes in a cycle of reproduction.

Overview of Police Services and Race

Members of the Aboriginal and black communities in Thunder Bay expressed frustration with police services. On the other hand, negative interactions between people of Asian descent and the police were not observed nor experienced by survey or interview participants. Aboriginal peoples perceive that most of the police racism is directed at them, including, occasionally, a sense that the police are to serve the white community, not Aboriginal peoples. Blacks also expressed a sense that they were more targeted than others, excepting Aboriginal peoples. Farouk summarized the view of his community of recent immigrants,

And most of the people here, they are happy, except when we think about this, the police involvement, incidents and something like that. We are not happy with the police. The only place we are not happy now is the police. We can forgive the schools and something like that, but the only place we are not happy is the police. So as a group we would like this [study] to give big consideration to police. (Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

Luis expressed the attitude that many Black and Aboriginal peoples seemed to have, “The police are a problem. If you are not white, tall and good-looking they do not like you.”

Several people were careful to note that they were not referring to all police officers. Even an Aboriginal in his late teens who has had a number of encounters with the police although he does not have a record, commented, “‘Cause not all cops are bad. But the cops that I've run into, over half.” Carol made a similar comment after describing some negative encounters she had heard from clients, “I don't believe all police officers are like that, I don't want to believe all police officers are like that. I mean, I am sure there are all lot of nice ones and I have met a lot of nice ones and they were nice to me.” However, Carol continued in a way that shows the effects of stereotyping on police practices.

Maybe if I was drunk on Simpson Street they wouldn't be so nice to me, that same officer, I

8 Note that the study did not single out any institutions or social locations for special attention.
don’t know. But I’ve met some very nice, very kind very helpful officers, and I do believe that there are some who are very racist and who are - um, I am not sure if it is the stereotyping that is causing them to be. You know what I mean. Like, “It’s so typical, this is how we [police] expect them [Native people] to be and it is typical if they behave that way.” (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

_Blatant Racism_

Blatant racism is the overt and unequivocal negative racializing in social interactions. It is difficult to know how to classify such actions as unnecessary roughness or racial profiling. Often, both interview participants and survey respondents classified such actions as racist. Both rough treatment and “hassling” will be further addressed in the subsection on marginalizing interactions (page 70). Calling something unequivocally racist is difficult to prove, as any human rights commission will attest. However, a number of study participants made such claims about Thunder Bay police services. As a former civilian employee, one interview participant said, “I am not saying this from the outside. I am saying this: police officers get away with a lot of things. Um, and there is way too much racism in the Thunder Bay police force.”

A number of respondents mentioned racial comments, safety concerns and violence associated with being a racialized person in contact with police services. The history of Thunder Bay police and interaction with both the Aboriginal and black community have an impact on these interactions. Reports of past and possibly present beatings, forced undressing, and other incidents of abuse still circulate. The accounts are complicated, and are mixed with rough treatment and a reciprocal animosity - that is, if expected to respond violently, a subject may be treated rougher, likely generating a more aggressive response.

_I think they are more rough with natives. Maybe it is because we already think that they are going to be racist so right away you put up that guard. And you put on that attitude like you can not be racist with me or I will be racist with you and it just gets rougher. I think that is what happened to me. I thought “Fuck you, pig.”_ (Aboriginal young woman)

Interview participants who mentioned serious incidents like beatings that required hospitalization, rape or sexual abuse seemed to be talking about events that took place more than eight years before. One woman told about when her husband was beaten up an unspecified number of years ago.

_Interviewer: And you think that was based on race?_
_----: Um, well at the time we thought so. They were kind of rough guys too, but I mean, they were already stereotyped too as being bad guys and a lot of Indian people were beat up by police in those days too. I do not know if it is still happening._

However, these reports affect present race relations in Thunder Bay. There were also reports of roughness and minor beatings that still occur.9

9 The intent of _A Community of Acceptance_ was not to prove such allegations. It is to report on race relations and document the experiences of racialized people in Thunder Bay.
The accounts are also permeated with power relations. One Aboriginal counsellor said, “The guys were telling me that they would get beat up, the girlfriend would be let go and the guy would be picked up on a breach.” Complaints about the police are reduced because to complain means getting associated with the police system and people are concerned about their safety. Another Aboriginal counsellor said that women who tell her about allegations also say, “I am not going to tell on them because they are going to hunt me down and they are going to do something to me. And charge me with anything that they want to charge me with just to get me back in there.” Furthermore, racialized people report their belief that complaints do not get followed up as reported on page 58.

Racial names and comments were also reported. The following two accounts show racist comments, the power relationship and responses. Note the derogatory comment made by the police officer in the first narrative and the learned passivity of the response.

I had a young girl just come and tell me, two weeks ago she was stopped by the police. Her and her boyfriend had been arguing outside a 7-11 store.... When [the police] got there, one officer told her... “I hate it when you fucking little Indian girls do this kind of stuff.” I said, “Do you know who this officer is?” and she said no. “Did you ask him his name?” She said “I am not going to ask him anything because he already threaten to throw me in jail...” “Well did you look up his name because sometimes they have their badge name on their shirt. It will say on there.” She said “Oh I did not even want to look up.” She said “If I look up I am scared that they are going to throw me in jail and I didn’t want to.” (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

Roger: I’ve been with friends that have come down from the north... and we’ve got mixed up with other violent situations at or after the bar... and I felt that it was strong racism directed at my Aboriginal friends from police officers in this community. So I’ve been kind of on the sidelines, but involved in that way.

Interviewer: ...What leads you to think that they would be of a racist biassed nature?

Roger: The whole, well the whole tone and manner in which they were being treated. And uh, comments were made that made it clear that the police officer was in the position of power and that, “Right now you’re not in trouble but you could be”.... It [the racism] was just very obvious to me. I was shocked actually; I’ve been shocked witnessing it a few times. I never really, you know, you never really believe that it happens until you, you’re actually seeing, witnessing it. (Roger, 40s, White, teacher)

The power relations, blatantly racist comments and circulating stories about safety concerns are among the forms of treatment that lead racialized people to be concerned about interactions with the police.

Subtle Racializing

Subtle forms of treatment that occur in regards to police services include ignoring of racialized people and their calls for help, treatment as a stereotype, and accusations. Many Aboriginal peoples reported that police officers treated them as if they were all drunks, dishonest, or troublemakers. This leads to treatment that differs from the treatment that white people receive. Blacks reported that they are treated like thieves, drug dealers or other stereotypic images.
I was stopped by a police officer. She asked me if I had been drinking. I stated “No, I've not had a drink for 10 years, since I was 18.” She didn't believe and asked me to step outside the car and asked me to touch my nose, etc. I repeated what I stated but to no avail. She then asked me to breath on her. I finally told her that I know — [deleted, a person in authority] very well and if she continued to “harass me” I will report her “directly to the police services board.” She stopped and told me to have a “good evening.” (Survey Respondent)

Several Aboriginal men told of being stopped and questioned about stealing the bike that they were riding, which was their own. One commented, “I got buddies… white buddies that always bike around all the time, they never get hassled. Because we talked about that before. Like I was telling them, “You know what happened to me”…[They say] “That doesn't happen to me.” Two interview participants commented that when they have called the police about incidents, the police act as if they were the ones who did the dishonest action (busted window and theft, in these two cases). “They think ‘He’s an Indian he’s bad,’ you know?” Luis felt the police “pick on people because of their colour.”

Yeah, like walking up in P.A.[Port Arthur], I get in my car and automatically police follow you because they see he has dread locks and they think maybe he smokes marijuana. He smokes crack. Or whatever. They've followed me home, or they've pulled me over for no reason and they want to search my car. And you kindly tell them, you can't search my car. They don't really say its your colour but you know they hint at it. You know they really want to say it, but they, they don't. (Focus Group 2, Black young person)

Several people reported feeling ignored.

One of the main things that we are concerned about with the police whenever we call police for something that happen to our kids, police come, they don't do anything. They don't do anything, total....They just take the report then they go, that's it. (Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

So I am not sure if, you know there is something in the police system, you know, that they don't tend to, you know, take seriously cause there is fighting or whatever between minority groups, you know. I am not sure about that. (Themba, Sudanese, five years in Thunder Bay, mother)

Lack of follow-up was also reported from Aboriginal peoples following complaints.

Marginalizing Interactions

Many comments were received about different treatment for Aboriginal or blacks compared to whites. The common perception is that a systematic process of discrimination is occurring. Of course, the police services in Thunder Bay have race relations policies, but racialized people point to numerous accounts that lead them to this conclusion of regular inferior treatment.

They treat them differently, if you have to go pick up an intoxicated non-native against an
intoxicated native person they are treated differently (emphasis). It is assumed that the native has no where to go, no phone, they throw him in jail for a night, to sober up. They make efforts to find out where that non-native person lives so that instead of holding them over for the night they can bring them home. (civilian police employee)

Ernie: I was coming from [a store] one time. I was going through the back alley towards the other – This cop pulls up and told me I was bugging children at the school grounds. I told him I was on the other street down by the Beer Store. He told me “Well, someone told us you walked by the school ground and you were bugging children.” I said, nope. He told me “You have any IDs?” So they pulled my IDs and they phoned in my name, and wherever they check your record. I just don’t do that. They must have seen this native and just pulled him over.

Interviewer: Is that the feeling you got?
Ernie: Yeah., the stereotype - I was bad, I’m an Indian. I didn’t like that. I told them I’m not, nothing, I’m not on probation. I got nothing to do like that. When they phoned in, they said, “Alright you can go” …. I was pissed off. They had no reason to pull me over and check me out. (Focus Group 1, Aboriginal male, late 20s)

I can tell a story. My friend who’s native was walking down the street, like walking home or something. It was like 10 at nite. And she had a packsack and the cops pulled her over and demanded to search through her packsack, and all this stuff. And so, she didn’t have anything with her, they didn’t have the right to do that. And people are driving by and they see, oh look, there’s a native”. And it just reinforces a stereotype. Like you and me. We walked down the street a million times with our packsacks, never been stopped. But she’s just walking home from somewhere close to her house. And they searched her. (Focus Group 2, White youth, female)

If a group of young people are stopped by the police and native youngsters are involved they’re the ones the police focus on. (Survey Respondent)

Such “hassling” as several racialized people have described here and the subsections above, occurs often enough to be more than simply annoying and is interpreted as racially oriented. This is racial profiling. It has an effect on the racialized person, their community and their willingness to respect the authority of the police. Such profiling implies that the police are primarily protecting the majority population.

Many interview participants commented on charges laid by the police.

Because of the job I have some of the charges that come to our program have been “Well, I was walking home from the party” or “I was walking home from the bar.” They have not even been doing anything they are just walking home, they get pulled over by the police and they get charged ‘cause they smell booze on them. They are not assaulting anyone, they are not damaging anything they are just walking home. And because it is two o’clock in the morning, you know. (Aboriginal counsellor)
Several people mentioned that they perceived the police as more likely to jail an Aboriginal involved in a fight than the white co-combatant. Other study participants believe police are rougher with racialized people than with whites. A number of comments are quoted above.

The police treat native people with a different attitude. (Survey Respondent, Aboriginal)

Same with police officers - they are more rougher on a native - words and physical both - than they are on white kids. (Survey Respondent, Aboriginal)

Aboriginal man sitting on bench. Police officer saw him from car... spoke to him. Man got up. Officer hit him. Man tried to walk away. Officer grabbed him, forced him over to the police car. Threw him hard against the hood of the car. I stepped in, asked officer why mistreating him. The man replied “Because I am Indian.” Man had lots of blood on forehead and nose... I told the office that I saw him strike this man, throw him against car without any provocation. I will report him, police officer laughed. (Survey Respondent, white)

Finally, two interview participants with connections to the police force described negative comments and racial jokes, and a climate that made it an uncomfortable place to work. “We hear comments all the time...like, ‘I had to go pick up this drunken Indian...’” The email message with graphic photos that was in the news during the Summer of 2001 also adds to the burden against police services; it was mentioned by several people as “typical” of their expectations of police attitudes. A former civilian employee believed that Aboriginal officers would be less willing to work in both the OPP and Thunder Bay Police environments, and that police officers do not particularly want Aboriginal co-officers, unless they were willing to be “less Native.” At the same time, Aboriginal interview participants said that more native officers would be good.

The appearance or actuality of differential treatment given to racialized people compared to dominantly coloured people leads to a perception of systematic discrimination against Blacks and Aboriginal peoples. Figure 17 reproduces the Fair Treatment indices as they relate to the police. Again, Aboriginal peoples have the lowest agreement rate that police treat them fairly as individuals or a group. The difference between whites and both racialized groups is significant. There is also a large drop between Personal Fair Treatment and General Fair Treatment, with just over half the whites and less than half of both racialized
groups indicating a belief that the police treat all people fairly. Such findings have implications for acceptance of police authority and community level trust.

**Societal Structures**

Systemic racism has already been mentioned in the police encounters with stereotyped individuals who then act as they are treated tends to reproduce some of the very reactions that perpetuate stereotypes. Systemic racism is also present in the lower numbers of Aboriginal officers than in the overall population. One union representative interviewed referred to resistance to employment equity rules within the police force. These and other systemic elements reproduce a racialized environment in the interactions of police officers, predominantly white, and members of racialized groups.

Finally, several interview participants mentioned a number of racialized comments or attitudes that may indicate an organizational culture that accepts and does not question such attitudes. An example would be tolerance of comments about “drunk Indians” as several interview participants noted they had overheard.

Societal structures are also represented in the historical (yet recent) accounts of abuses perpetrated by police services on racialized people. One story still with considerable currency is the account of First Nations representatives being shown around the Thunder Bay police station and seeing, in equipment storage, a nightstick with the label “Hold here for Indians.” Presumably this took place in the beginning of the 1990s during the Clare Lewis investigation (Lewis, 1991). It still appears to affect Aboriginal-police relations, based on the number of people who recounted the story during the course of this study.

That Aboriginal peoples, and to a lesser extent Blacks, exhibit fear of reporting criminal activities to the police is a systemic problem. This fear was expressed by respondents who have police records, those who don’t, and even some people who hold professional employment adjacent to the criminal system. Finally, differences in culture, can occur. Two interview participants reported being aggressively questioned about the sweetgrass used in some Aboriginal practices (the smoke smells somewhat like marijuana for those unused to it). Farouk told a long narrative of a fourteen year old boy in his community being picked up by the police and the long struggle to affect the court outcome. He attributed part of the problem to culturally different understandings; even the neighbourhood officer said the boy was not supposed to have been charged. Furthermore, the role of police in other countries can vary, sometimes, for example, being community mediators rather than the “force of law” as typical in Canada. Such differences can negatively affect certain groups’ interactions with the police through mutual misunderstanding.

Racialized interview participants felt that the culture of policing in Thunder Bay needed to change in ways that would reduce racializing. They recognized that this would be difficult for individuals.

*Even if I was a officer and I had an officer that was calling down an Indian and I had to work in a place like that would I say anything? I do not know. I honestly couldn't answer if I say anything or not. For fear of losing my job or fear of being ostracized by my fellow police officers. I have heard Aboriginal police officers in the police force say that there is racism in the Thunder Bay Police Force. – So these are people that are supposed to protect and serve our community.* (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)
As the last line of the above quote shows, the perception of racism in the police reduces belief in the legitimacy of police as service and authority. This would make the job of the police more difficult, lessen cooperation and involvement, and increase animosity and resistance. The police could be seen as a repressive force misusing their power against certain sectors of Thunder Bay’s population, rather than as a legitimate community service. In fact, as noted throughout this section of *A Community of Acceptance* such results were apparent in comments by study participants.

School

Schools were also a significant social locations in which racialization occurred. If ever there was the thought that education alone can deal with a social problem such as racism, this information should change that idea. Schools were the second most frequently mentioned place in which interview participants had experiences of racialization. It was also one of the most commonly cited locations in which survey respondents observed or experienced discrimination based on race. As shown in Table 4, 27% of the survey respondents who had experienced race-based discrimination had such experiences in schools; the comparable figure in university or college is 23%. Of those who indicated that they had observed discrimination based on race, 27% indicated it occurred in schools, while 14% indicated observations in university or college. School staff scored better than most social locations on the Fair Treatment indices. Aboriginal peoples reported them as better than the other two groups in terms of poorer treatment.

Two other questions regarding schools were asked on the survey. One question asked about whether people had heard negative comments about race at school or work. It will be treated under *Being part of Thunder Bay* (page 84). The other question was “I believe teachers and school staff treat everyone the same regardless of race” (Question C14). The distribution of responses is shown in Figure 18. The graph shows a markedly different pattern of agreement between racialized groups and whites. Racialized individuals are less likely to agree that school staff do not treat people differently because of race. More would disagree with the statement than would agree with it.

In a positive light, as noted above, school staff fared better than workers in other social institutions. They also scored more favourable than social workers on a parallel question to that presented in Figure 18 (See Figure 16, page 65). Yet the raw numbers before comparison would suggest that racialization in the school system and higher education in Thunder Bay should be addressed. This is clearly evidenced by data from the interviews.

Racialization was experienced primarily by students and parents (rather than school
employees), and described from Junior Kindergarten through post-secondary education. One interview participant was an employee of one of the school boards and said she had never experienced discriminatory treatment in that role. However, two interview participants taught in the post secondary institutions on a part-time basis. One did not want to talk about his experience, while the other said,

*I taught — [a specialized, professional course]. And there was no coloured people in those classes. And the students for that fourth year, when I first interacted, or when I first met them, I walked in the room to introduce myself. Totally blown away. “Holy shit. The little brown guy? Coming in as a sessional?”* [laughs]. (Identity withheld)

Study participants reported school system racialization in the form of blatant racism, usually on the part of other students, but generally not addressed by school authorities. Some study participants felt that there was marginalizing in the form of systematic discrimination and differential treatment. Subtle racializing was more common, often taking place as racialized people were generally ignored or left to themselves. Finally, examples of systemic racism was noted by both Aboriginal and other racialized people. The following will be presented in two parts, first, what is done by students; second, what is done by the school system and its representatives.

**Students**

Racialized people experience racialization from other students primarily in two forms - blatant racism that could be racial slurs and other distinctly denigrating comments, and subtle ignoring that marginalises and produces a feeling of not belonging in the school.

The comments below represent a sample of racial slurring that study participants or their children had experienced.

*Everyday. My child comes home from school. Sometimes crying because she’s teased a lot about being “Indian.” They call her names - in grade 3 - eight years old.* (Survey Respondent)

*Grade 7 and 8. Other children in school were quite cruel. My sister was beat up on several occasions as she was smaller in size.* (Survey Respondent)

*“Natives are a waste of space” is a common phrase used in high schools in Thunder Bay. My high school does not have many native students.* (Survey Respondent)

*There is a black boy in my school who receives racial slurs everyday directly to his face.* (Survey Respondent)

Many Aboriginal peoples commented on the derogatory term “bogan.”

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10Pronounced “Bô-gun” most Aboriginal peoples did not know where the name came from. One Aboriginal person said it meant “to pass gas (fart)” in Oji-cree. Another person thought it was shortened from “toboggan.”
Galen said, “Lots of kids liked to call me nigger. For some reason. For no reason at all. All through high school kids were saying things.” The youth in focus groups implied that the really bad slurs leading to fights and violence occurs at the bus terminals and off school grounds, although it often starts in school.

Other forms of denigrating comments may also contribute to a racialized atmosphere, such as the “woo-oo-oo” hand-waving-the-mouth “Indian” war dance. Incidents may start at an early grade. Three interview participants spoke of junior kindergarten. Refer to Themba’s quote on page 56 where the kids were telling her daughter, “Oh you're black, you're gross.”

Because relatively few violent racial incidents occur during school time, race relations policies and practices may not give school staff the skills to deal with other forms of racial incidents. Some people reported that racial teasing or jokes were not dealt with by school staff.

Sometimes you get the teacher that will handle it, but a lot of the time I see it where, if they make a comment to the principal, teachers, guidance counsellors, they're all - whatever, superior - that they're talking to, they usually shrug it off: “You know what, we can’t do anything about it, it's just gonna happen.” You know and that really disgusts me. Because it doesn’t have to just happen in schools you know. (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

Tamara thought aloud as she explained why she did not report incidents to the school,

I did not know. I could go and say, “Can you keep an eye on what is going on.” What are they going to do? Kids are kids. [The teachers] cannot sit there and be there every time that girls blurt out something mean. That will probably create more problems, they will think she is teacher’s pet. I really feel for her. There are times were I just want to take her and go let her live with her dad and go to school on the reserve. (Tamara, late 20s, Aboriginal, mother)

Therefore, for a number of reasons, some people noted that most racially-oriented incidents might not be reported. A consequence is that school staff likely underestimate the extent of race-related issues present in the school. Numerous interview participants mentioned that kids will do such name-calling or can be cruel. They also felt that more should be done in home and school to change such behaviour. School staff, however, may feel they already have too much to do for the allotted time in the school day.

Besides the blatant forms of racism, subtle racializing and marginalizing interactions take place in schools. Being ignored is one such form of treatment. This can often happen when teams in physical education or study teams are picked. While it may not be intentional, it has a negative effect on racialized people that adds to the interpretive mix by which they understand their lives.

I have experienced racism personally growing up in Thunder Bay, I came here for school, it started in public school for me. No one wanted to hang around with me and things like that. I always felt that I didn't belong in the school setting. (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

Like, one of the biggest effects of racism is there's all this separation. Like in my school I don’t see the native and the white kids mixing very much. And just that in itself shows that there's a separation. So its' something even bigger than what we just defined as racism. (Focus Group 2, teen, female, white)
I'm thinking about my English class - like there's only one, there's one native girl, she sits in the back of the class. By herself. She won’t work in partners. It seems we all partner up and she’s left out. One day I was late and got partnered up with her. I felt so bad, because I didn’t know her name. I knew everyone else in the class and I talk to them. I didn’t talk to her and she only sat behind me. I didn't know her name and I felt bad. (Focus Group 2, teen, female, white)

The teen switches from the idea that the student to which she refers won’t work with others to referring to the situation as something that the other students do to that student, albeit unconsciously. The student is still ignored, separated and racialized, despite lack of conscious intent.

You see a lot of native kids in school and they're always walking in groups. Our teacher mentioned that when we were talking about native history. She said "How many of you in the class have talked with any of the native kids in this school?" I knew [2 students], but I don’t know too many of them at all. Pretty sad that in a class of 25 nobody had talked to them. (Focus Group 2, teen, female, white)

Interview participants reported effects of a racialized school environment. In two of the following quotes, one can see the effects of having lighter skin or a “white” appearance. Mike spoke of his daughter being “ashamed” to tell people, including boyfriends that she was Aboriginal. When asked where that shame came from, he said,

Probably because if the people that she hung out with at school. One friend who spoke to everyone about Native people, and she did not want to be an outcast from that group and so suppressed that information.

Like my daughter experienced racism a lot right from the day one when we moved here. In high school they called her “bogan” and the kids were calling her names. So like that it has an effect on her, its low self esteem, no matter how much we encouraged her to do well it just made it worse, worse for her, harder for her. And yet we have our other daughter who didn’t seem to experience that kind of problem. And when she told her friends she even told me this she said her friends did not even know that she was Indian. She told them and they said “NO way, you are not Indian.” She said, “ya.” (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

Other Sudanese in the community with their kids are having problems in school too because of the way that other kids talk to them. So I'm worried actually for the kids. Not us [adults] very much because we can handle it, you know. (Themba, Sudanese, five years in Thunder Bay, mother)

[Are other kids affected by racism?] - Ya, They don't go to school anymore a couple of them they just dropped out they couldn’t handle it anymore. Some of them snapped and they were getting in too many fights in school and some of them they just. Just said, "forget it" They are not going to school. They are tired of they way they are treated. (Galen, early 20s, Black)

On the other hand, parents can make a difference. Several parents mentioned that they talked about
racism with their kids. Others said they checked with their kids about teasing that had a racial aspect and found that their kids were not experiencing it, or at least not telling their parents. One interview participant thought how to deal with racism ought to be taught in parenting classes.

_School staff and school system_

Although most overtly racial behaviour came from other students, study participants also referred to racializing actions on the part of school staff and the school system in general. Study participants were clear that they were not generalizing from particular experiences to the entire school system. Several, in particular, made a point to show balance. For example, Rebecca said “The teachers were not racist. I had one teacher that was racist with my daughter the last year.”

Rebecca went on to describe the situation, ending by stating that “Come graduation she could not even show her face at the graduation because she had not only native but non-native parents after her for saying bad things and doing bad things in class.” She explained what had happened,

*My kid told me that they would give them homework and wouldn't give the Indian kids homework. And her [the teacher’s] cry was “They didn't complete this, they didn't complete that”... If it wasn't for the kids taking their own action plan and asking the other kids what did she give you for homework? they wouldn't have had the things done. But she wasn't marking them in the book either as done. So what I would have to do is go home with my daughter and collect all the things that she didn't have marked in her book that she marked but not entered in the book her book. And I took them all back. Those are the types of things that she would do.*  (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Rebecca used this example to explain why she felt a need to be vigilant - as a parent and, more so, as an Aboriginal person.

Some parents chose to just deal with incidents directly with their children, others went directly to the school. Parents felt a need to be active in protecting their children. But even in this school staff could dismiss the concerns of parents. For example, Farouk told about a series of incidents and meetings with the principal at a particular school. The result was unsatisfying.

*He said, he told me that I [the principal] am here just to, I supposed to teach these students, I'm not supposed to do anything about racism or something like that. He accepted that there are a lot of problems, that the other kids create that problem, like calling names or something like that. Our community, we are very sensitive about being discriminated, you know, naturally. So if somebody, if we feel somebody is discriminating us, we cannot accept.*  (Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

See also Trivedi’s comments on page 51 and 49. Interview participants had some concern that if harassment is not addressed, it tends to perpetuate racialized situations and systems. This is particularly a concern regarding stereotypes, and other subtle forms of treatment, which, as has been noted throughout this report, are more pervasive forms of racializing than are blatant racist acts. Even school staff are not immune to treating children according to stereotypes. Similarly, school staff may provide differential treatment. The extent to which it is unconscious or unaware it is an hint of the extent of systemic racism that is part of Canadian or Thunder Bay society.
One example of racism that happened to my daughter – she switched schools. She used to go to a school [where] the majority of the students there were Aboriginal. It was a lower income area.... So now she goes to a school where a majority of the families own their own businesses.... the families that go there, they have a lot of money. My daughter, like I said, she is not a visual minority I guess so she was picked on because her clothes were not brand names and things like that... When I approached the teacher about it... her teacher said. “Well, what school did she go to?” And I explained that she went to — [deleted]. And her teacher said “Oh, well, we have nice students here.”.... She said something like the students that she had now because they have money they were better or some thing. And I said “No, no, no. She is being teased here with her nice rich students.”... In her comment because she did not know that — [the daughter] was Aboriginal... she said that “I used to teach at that school they have a lot of Indian students.”... I said, “Janey is an Indian student”... and the teacher went “Oh, oh,” and then she started telling me how good Jane was in class and that. And it still did not address the problem that Jane was being teased at this nice new school. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

I've watched fights and I've told the principal, "You know what? That kid didn't start the fight, the other kid did." You know, "Why blame him?" you know if you want to suspend both of them, suspend them at least for the same amount of time. I've seen Native kids that got suspended for two, three times as long as the white kid that got into the same fight. And even if the white kid did instigate the fight. (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

I have been told that the principal at – [deleted] is discriminating against natives. Example, chasing only the native kids out of school. (Survey Respondent)

The above two quotes may have a correlation. Sometimes, treating people in certain ways may create the reality. If a child is often getting treated as if she caused the fights, school staff may perceive her according to that reputation and give more credence to such allegations. Therefore, the student with the reputation may be disbelieved, get in increasingly more trouble and end up punished, suspended and increasingly behind in any studies she may still be trying to do. Such cycles can reproduce stereotypes. Mike explained the long-term effects of schooling on himself as he internalized a negative view of Aboriginal peoples, including himself.

I was never taught that. I learnt it.... I picked it up in school. Elementary school and you know, day school, whatever like ah, public school or high school. You know it's, it's like I was always, “Oh there's a dirty Indian.” Then you know like, as I got older, I understand that it's not me. It's not me. (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

Schools are places where children spend a great deal of their lives and learn much about functioning as citizens in Canadian society. Many of the older Aboriginal interview participants referred to residential schools as places that have affected themselves and their parents in a number of debilitating ways. Whether school should be actively teaching about racism or related ideas such as multiculturalism is often debated. Some of the various views on this issue will be taken up in a Chapter 8. However, many interview participants did comment on other aspects of systemic racism in the school system.
School texts and how they reinforced certain views, or neglected alternative perspectives, was one such topic. Themba described how school library books may imply that all Africa is full of starvation (see page 56). There are other examples:

My other daughter is in kindergarten and they sent home the papers teaching them the letters and I guess Angel is learning the letter “I” right now. And she brought home the paper and there was an igloo and there was an insect and there was this picture of this ugly man. He did not have a feather or anything in his hair, he was just a not an attractive picture of a man. And I said to Angel, “So what is this? I understood igloo and insect” and I said “Well, what is that?” And she said “That's an Indian, mom” (chuckling)... You wouldn't use an Oriental face and say this is C for Chinese.” (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

In our history textbooks, there is like nothing about residential schools. And that bothers me so much because they happened from like, 1890 to 1960 [a long time]... and it isn't even mentioned in our history books. Meanwhile we are learning history and the most disgraceful thing the Canadian government - the most inhumane, awful thing they ever did isn't even mentioned. And that really bothers me, because the only way we can change the future is we have to know what went wrong in our past. And if the kids in schools don’t even know what happened, then they can't even be more sensitive to the issues, they can't even understand how deeply rooted the issues are. They's more deeply rooted than people think they are. (Focus Group 2, Female, late teens, White)

Well I think, again, it takes a very discerning eye to see subtle, subtle racial issues that are written within curriculum and written within textbooks. I think actually, there's, there's room for some optimism. (Roger, 40s, White, teacher)

Textbooks can portray racialized groups in certain ways. As has been noted, school staff can also reproduce dominant societal attitudes.

An attitude in some schools by isolated staff members that it is no use putting too much effort into the development of some children’s skills because they don't have the ambition due to race (very subtle, more of a belief than outright racist comments). (Survey Respondent)

One parent described an incident which caused her to think about these issues.

My four year old son is in JK. And I had a talk with his teacher last week. She was saying, Joshua had been making a kid cry just about everyday. That kind of upset me - I don't want him to be like that. But I was thinking the other day - he goes to daycare, like every other day, when he's not in school. And the daycare said they notice he only retaliates when someone else is picking on him. And I took a look at the other kids in his class and he's the only native boy in his class. There's one native girl. And I figure - he told me the other day. “My teacher told me to 'Get out of here - I'm busy.'” And I kind of thought to myself, what is this? Is she picking on my son, because he's native? And I didn't appreciate that. (Focus Group 1, Female, late 20s, Aboriginal)
As any good parent would, she wants to do what is best for her child and needs to analyse the child’s behaviour. Is he becoming aggressive? Or is he responding to aggression? Is there bias in the observation made by the school teacher? This narrative is another example of how a racialized person’s interpretation of social interaction is more complicated.

University & College
Many of the same forms of treatment were present in Thunder Bay’s post-secondary institutions. Some blatant racism was reported.

A guy was beaten in residence by 3 white guys. Because he was black, even the police failed to press charges against the perpetrators, because to them the victim cannot go to court because he did not have any money. And the school authorities also did not take any action on the case. (Survey Respondent)

An exchange student I know has been outright discriminated against because of his race and difficulty to speak or understand the English language. As a result, this student had his head stuck between two doors by a room-mate. (Survey Respondent)

Such cases were the exception. Most interview participants reported more subtle actions. Some study participants also reported overhearing comments made by staff. For instance, one person, whose husband is from an Asian country overheard University staff making derogatory comments about students who’s English is hard to understand.

Another person reported an experience about eight years ago that she labelled as systematic discrimination. It is worth reporting because of its severe consequences.

So we were OK then it was just ah later on in life when I started going to college and that, that is how I felt. That some teachers were prejudiced and didn’t want to see us succeed and so all the grades were lower than other students and even the students who were non-native would say, “I noticed that too.” And I’d say Ok I am not crazy you know but I noticed that, you know. So, ah, I felt bad there. (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Most interview participants who commented on their university experience referred primarily to subtle racializing and unintentionally marginalizing comments. These include other students questioning Thembas’s ability to take a test in English, or Janene’s experiences with people thinking she is not really part of the community because she is of a visible minority (and therefore must be transient).

At the same time, others said they had positive experiences in college.

I had a good experience in college most of the time. The odd bad apple, you know .... The professors are, they were really good. And they were used to, diverse people you know, a lot of different people in their classrooms. (Charles, Aboriginal youth)

According to both survey respondents and interview participants, racialization and racism are present in the schools in Thunder Bay. Participants described blatant racism from other students
as well as a sense of being ignored or not belonging. From the school staff and system, study participants referred to subtle racializing, differential treatment that was marginalizing and structural racism. Interview participants were clear that racialization was a part of the school experience but that there were ways for the schools to address the situation to make it better for racialized people.

Some of these findings are consistent with the surveys done with students in the last few years by the Regional Multicultural Youth Centre, (RMYC, 1994, 1999). These surveys have found that students think racism is a problem in schools, and that teachers do not address incidents when they occur. Recommendations for schools are to consider the learning environment and develop practices that can address racialization in all the ways it occurs. Schools should not simply rely on policies that generally cannot attend to subtle or structural manifestations of racialization.

Health Care

Survey participants were asked three questions about medical care. The first two were the Fair Treatment indices, while the third asked, “I believe I have had trouble in the past year getting medical help because of discrimination based on race” (Question C13). This question has been reversed in the analysis so that a high agreement indicates best, fairest and least racially linked treatment. The responses to these statements are presented in Figure 19. Once again, in all three questions, Aboriginal peoples show the lowest level of agreement about medical treatment that is fair and not affected by race. The difference is most marked in the final question where 90% of whites agree that their race has not made medical help more difficult to get. Only half that number of Aboriginal peoples agree (47%).

The interview participants raised some concerns about medical care, but fewer explicit and obvious concerns and incidents were mentioned in health care than in the other social institutions described above. Korinna, Rick, Gail, Luis and Themba were among the people who simply said “Nope, no problem” regarding treatment. Mike also said there was no problem. Married to a nurse, he did qualify that statement however,

*Um, I don’t think it is really noticeable up front because they are professionals and what they do and what they think are two different things...They will deal with it professionally but moan and piss about it at the desk afterwards about a native person.* (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

A few people felt that the quality of health care service was affected by race. Interview participants’
mentioned negative comments overheard, often by accident, and some subtle interactions such as being ignored, waiting longer than other people, and perhaps some differential treatment. For example, after finding a young Aboriginal women in a ditch Carol explains:

*She was not treated that well at the emergency by the secretary, she was very condescending and very cold, [it] felt like we were bothering her if anything.* (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

*People (natives) are treated as familiar clients (drunks) before proper assessment has taken place. Some problem patients whether white or brown experience the same treatment. Professionals pre-judge based on experience and then expand this attitude.* (Survey Respondent)

As one can see, such situations require interpreting, which a number of interview participants noted was difficult. Rebecca, an Aboriginal professional in her early forties, believed that an ambulance took extra time arriving because she lived on the reserve, but also said she didn’t know that. A Japanese woman, Krista, felt that her doctor treated her like she was creating her ailments. She expressed uncertainty though, about whether this was because of her race or simply that he did not like her. However, incidents do occur, as noted by one survey respondent:

*In 1999 a lady (Chinese) had a baby in hospital. The nursing staff openly criticized her and abused her. The Chinese association complained to the hospital. The nurse admitted her behaviour and apologized.* (Survey Respondent)

Other interview participants felt they had been ignored or passed over while waiting. Tamara gave a similar account were she was told the drop-in clinic was up-stairs and that there was no waiting list. She waited there for over an hour when she was informed that the drop-in clinic was in fact down-stairs and she was put last on the waiting list as if she had just arrived. Carol had a similar account but concluded, “I cannot say if that [racism] is what it was.”

Negative, racial comments were also mentioned.

*My wife is a registered practical nurse, RPN. She tells me a lot of stories about what happens at work. And again, they do not know that she is married to a status Indian.* (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

*Nurse in an emergency room made comments about native race and drunkenness. I am sure the nurse speaking was unaware anyone else heard her comment.* (Survey Respondent)

Rebecca recounted the time she was waiting in the emergency and over heard the staff making rude comments about a second ambulance call made from the reserve, “The nurses inside there, they were joking, ‘Oh, just another Indian,’ and ‘Oh blah blah blah.’” While acknowledging that he has heard comments made, Brian felt the nurses see abuses of the system occur, with a result,

*I think it taints the way the nurses see Native Americans. They are all white nurses. There are no native nurses in the hospital. I don’t think white people receive preferential treatment*
over natives. I've seen native people getting the same treatment that everyone else is getting. [tells about the native lady in the next bed.] I think hopefully they are professional enough that that's not an issue. (Brian, 30s, White, professional)

There is also a systemic issue in the lack of Aboriginal health care providers in Brian’s statement.

From this analysis, it would appear that most of the concerns about the health care system in Thunder Bay are from Aboriginal peoples. Other racialized people had a much greater agreement on the survey that medical care is fair. Aboriginal peoples feel that some differential treatment based on race occurs in medical care. In addition, remarks that are negatively racializing have been overheard. Whether such remarks represent associated attitudes or influences medical care for Aboriginal peoples is something that would be difficult to prove. It does suggest a more thorough analysis and action within the health care system in Thunder Bay.

**Being part of Thunder Bay**

The social locations represented in this section include employment, stores and restaurants and speaking English. The section begins with an analysis of the responses to a question about overhearing negative comments about race in work and school. Since the question allowed for either location, it is impossible to fairly place it in a specific location (Question C10). In addition, it is compared to a parallel question about comments overheard while shopping (Question C8). Figure 21 presents the results from these two questions. The only significant difference is the high level of other racialized people hearing comments either in school or on the job. This may reflect more racialization on the job, particularly among the Asian subsample, or a higher employment or school retention rate overall. There is no clear pattern, except that hearing negative comments about race is a common experience as over 55% of people in all subsamples report hearing such comments.

**Employment**

Employment-related concerns were also frequently mentioned by racialized individuals. Of the social locations in which survey respondents reported witnessing race-based discrimination, work accounted for 14% of the incidents. Work accounted for 16% of the locations in which respondents experienced discrimination based on race. Work was also one of the highest locations that interview participants volunteered as sites of negative racialization. Problems included getting jobs and
racialized circumstances on the job, as well as various beliefs surrounding efforts to make workplaces more representative of population demographics. Little employment-related racialization was blatant, perhaps owing to laws regarding such discrimination. Most racialized treatment was marginalizing in terms of differential treatment and systematic discrimination, as well as negative comments and climate on the worksite.

Two job related questions were asked beside the question about race-related comments. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with “At my work in the past year, people have sometimes commented that someone got a job because of their race” (Question C11) and “I believe discrimination based on race has made it hard for me to get the work I deserve” (Question C12). Figure 20 presents the results of this question. Nearly half of the respondents had heard comments that someone had got a job because of their race. The question does not specify whether the comments were about themself or someone else. Nor does it speculate whether employment equity programs are in place. Therefore, the reasons for the particularly higher agreement for Other racialized people is difficult to interpret. It may be that other racialized people, with a relatively high employment rate, heard these comments more often or where believed to have been employed to meet equity requirements. One of the interview participants suggests this situation occurs; regardless of the quality of work some people assume he has the job because of his colour. On the other hand, the very low agreement by whites, compared with racialized people on the second question would indicate that whites face do not perceive many barriers to employment on the basis of their own race. From both questions, it would appear that there are still employment related racial issues, however, the extent of concerns is lower than other social locations.

Getting the job

Contradicting the survey data, racialized interview participants noted problems in getting jobs because of race. In most cases, the discrimination was not obvious. Interview participants gave careful accounts with explanation for their interpretation of racialization. A number of people noted that those with lighter skin, or who could pass for white, had far less difficulty than did those who looked more native or were of a visible minority.

_For employment? I have never had a problem getting employed. Well, for two reasons. I have an excellent education and by - I walk in the door and I have a white face and blond hair you know! (laughs) So it has never been an issue and I have had excellent jobs._

(Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)
Rachel was another Aboriginal person who credited her “white” appearance with helping her get work. Both women, as well as other interview participants, also described “terrible comments” made on the job, which contributed to a very uncomfortable work climate and motivated them to quit. Nadia reported a similar account of her boyfriend as a store clerk. The light skin can make a big difference in how people are treated at worksites and in other situations. Rebecca’s two daughters are very different in colouring; she says the darker one has faced much more racially oriented discrimination and it has dramatically affected self-esteem, job and other life prospects. Selena, a Black woman, says two of her children do not look Black and are able to get along much better than the third child.

A number of people mentioned a “politeness” when dropping off resumes. Luis commented that employers are polite, “It is not like 20 years ago. They would never say that you did not get the job because you're black, they do not say it straight out anymore.” Charles’ perception of delivering resumes to job openings was “Sometimes I get these funny looks when I drop them off. ‘Okay, we'll call you.’ I never get no calls back.” He also said a friend who is native but looks White gets jobs and that he and his white girlfriend have discussed her dropping resumes off for him.

Other people reported a polite form of treatment that still results in a belief in systematic discrimination.

My cousin was going to move to Thunder Bay from Weston/Toronto. She planned for a job, the man was quite courteous on the phone. She ironed some clean clothes and I drove her down. One look at her and the owner said the job’s been filled. (Survey Respondent)

They are told that the position is filled or there is no work available and yet the employer continues to collect resumes and hire other light skinned people. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

Lana: I think too at the job where I am now if it wasn’t for the person who hired me in the beginning - the type of person that they are - I don't think I would have got the job because I am native... Because they know me now, and the type of worker that I am, there is no stigmatism.

Interviewer: Why do you say they would not have hired you?
Lana: Because I know that they are prejudice against Native people. (Lana, Aboriginal, 40s, Aboriginal, administrative assistant)

Later in the interview, Lana reiterated her belief that an Aboriginal person applying for a job at that employer would have a difficult time getting the job. Other reasons are sometimes given also.

One female client from Somalia, he had, was denied work as a cook at — [deleted] for what [we] feel was due to her colour. The employer did not want to bring that culture there, although she was just going to be in the kitchen. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

Finally, the type of work available to racialized individuals can be a form of differential treatment or even systemic discrimination. In the following quote, the interviewer asked a clarifying question based on previous comments:
Interviewer: So what you’re saying is people of colour in Thunder Bay community can get employment, but it's gonna be the kind of jobs where the employer doesn't care who it is. But, you know, as long as the job gets done. Whereas, if it's something where the employer’s more selective they will filter out the undesirable people of colour that they don’t want?

Walter: I personally find that a lot. Yeah, the ethnicities are usually filtered out, it’s usually you know like, the white people get the majority of jobs. (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

Feels that the attitude that immigrants should take ANY work is widespread in Thunder Bay. While people from Thunder Bay and Canada have the luxury of being able to refuse jobs that they do not want to take and can be picky about what they want to do. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

At — [deleted] the owner called to find workers for an on-call job. No one wanted to take the position because it was on-call. The employer was angry and said that he would call MANWO [Multicultural Association of North Western Ontario] because immigrants will do anything. (Luis, early 30s, Latin-American immigrant, professional)

If you listen to other people, you hear things. Like the work that I do. If you take a job, some people won’t take the job because it pays little money. But we take the job and they get mad.... This one lady said other people coming here take jobs... I can't work in office (because of her English)... have to look for jobs - any jobs - where I don't have to speak English. (Selena, late 40s, Latina, office cleaner)

The combination of factors can make finding work difficult for some racialized people.

On the job

Upon securing employment, study participants reported negative racialized work environments, a feeling of being held to different standards and problems associated with advancement. Negative comments and jokes and a generally negative environment combined with subtle forms of racialized treatment to give some interview participants a sense of not belonging. Several people mentioned leaving certain jobs because of the work environment, and a former civilian employee of one of the police services asserted “The Aboriginal police officers quit and leave just over the dynamics of the police officers working on [the force].” Of the Aboriginal peoples, many ended up working for Aboriginal organisations. This has several effects. Quitting may reinforce stereotypes of work ethic (or lack of) or that Aboriginal peoples can’t hold jobs, according to comments made in the surveys. Non-racialized people also refer to Aboriginal organizations as “closed-shops,” questioning why they tend to only hire Aboriginal employees. For example,

And also, I personally have applied to some of the Native groups for social work positions. You never even get an interview, I don’t know if they just automatically scrap your resume when it comes in or what. (Krista, 50s, Japanese, longtime Thunder Bay resident)

The workplace climate can be very racialized.
She mentioned demeaning captions written beside pictures of Aboriginal peoples in newspapers, and racist slurs scratched into a table as well. The table scratchings had “been there for a while.” (Fieldnotes, Nadia, 20s, Aboriginal, cashier)

My son works at — [deleted]... It is always there, the racist or ethnic jokes. I guess they need humour and there is no other way to find it. You see ethnic slurs written all over the tables in the lunch room and in the bathrooms. (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

Other interview participants reported overhearing negative comments. This was particularly true of those who look “white”. When she called some co-workers on things they were saying about Aboriginal peoples, Korinna was told “Oh we don’t mean you. You’re different. Rachel’s anecdote is reported on page 44.

I have been on a lot of conventions [through work]. At first because of my last name which is — [not a typical native name] and because I do not look like a native person because I am light in colour and people assume that natives are dark and have certain features [people did not know he was native]. It was shocking to hear the people at the conventions talk about native people when they assumed no native people where present. People from Thunder Bay who were on the executive... there was only one person at that time who knew that I was status Indian.... There was all of these jokes and remarks being said... They make this equality statement and what do they do the first convention that they go to they throw all that out the window. (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

On the other hand, those who do not experience racialization personally, may be less aware of the impacts. Mike said about such situations, “It did not bother me because I was raised that way but sometimes it does bother me.” Keep this in mind in reviewing the following quotes.

When I am at work [I hear racial comments and jokes] probably daily. Sometimes it is acceptable stuff. (Richie, White, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

There are some natives at the mill that people bug because of it [their race] and acceptable is kind of a loose term but they accept it and they joke back at it. I think sometimes it is innocent, there is no venom in the words but I can still think it makes the person feel less of a person. (Richie, White, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

You know we think we’ve come a long way, [laughs] but just hang around [my workplace] with me and listen to people it’s like oh! Awful!...I’m working beside a couple of very bigoted, very racist, very everything you want to say type of people... Oh yeah, they talk, they'll talk [and joke] to each other. I mean it’s— I don’t see that there’s any real – no, there’s no real conflict there. They don't create a conflict at all. It's just like I said, their attitude there- it's not like, no, at work there's not like a lotta dislike, or anything like that goes on... Outside of the post office. [but not inside, at work]. (Jean, 50s, white, unionized employee, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

As noted, the impacts of comments and the work environment can vary from person to person.
Recognizing that there is no uniform way of being of a particularly racial or ethnic group, implies paying more attention to how one’s actions are interpreted and to be sensitive to the lived experiences of those who are racialized.

Advancement can also be an issue for racialized people. Mike mentioned that employers hire minorities,

*We’ll play the card they say. Even if someone does get the job - like a good friend of mine who is in management (this goes back a while to the old generation that have now left) he did not get the job although he was qualified beyond the stars - to suppress him so to speak. And it is a matter of education. We just had [equity training] and dealt with a lot of minority issues and that definitely helped.* (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

*One of the established reasons I won’t go anywhere, in this [organization]... Based on my understanding and some of the feedbacks, some of the subtle feedbacks that kind of came back to me is: “You're a brown guy. There is no white guy, around this office or within this [organization] who would be really comfortable working with you as a supervisor for anybody at a higher level within the organization.”* (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

Trivedi was one of several people who commented on having to prove him or herself.

*But, what I am finding, in terms of double standards as an example in the workplace, okay. I gotta be twice as qualified, work twice as hard, to make the same achievement as a non-white person.* (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

Others mentioned feeling that they needed to overcome stereotypes of their ethnicity, for example, that Aboriginal peoples are not good workers. This can add extra pressure to the job.

*Systemic issues*

The structure of jobs and how prepared people are to do the job is one example of a systemic issue. For example, a person may be ok at the job if he or she functions as expected. But what is expected, in terms of social norms or behaviour may never be stated. For example, Dunk (1991) writes about how he, as a Thunder Bay-born person took a job at the grain elevators while he was in university, and how he had to relearn the style of interacting, joking, and even beer drinking of the workers. Such social conventions may be difficult to manoeuvre for people with different backgrounds, such as new immigrants or northerners. Furthermore, social networks may enable or limit who gets or maintains employment.

Farouk and Luis both made reference to such circumstances. Farouk was injured on the job. The worker’s compensation board wanted to know why the employer didn’t find other work for him rather than paying out through compensation. According to Farouk, “the employer, they say, ‘we had something for him to do but he never came to work.’” Later, he said the supervisor told him “we forgot to call you” but that they also expected him to know what to do, and that he would have heard from other workers that there was other work for him. Farouk used this incident to explain that people don’t always know what they are socially “supposed” to know. Similarly, Donata discussed why there were few Aboriginal peoples in places of work like hers. She said that “Well, they're like...
anyone, some of them have been excellent and a couple of them haven't. But then we've had a lot of people we've hired of every other race, and some are useless and some are good [laughs].” Then Donata went on to explain what helps them be accepted. One of these employees is Aboriginal from Thunder Bay.

_He's like a boss, so he helps some of the people from the reserve or from the Native families to come in, so maybe too they—. I don't know. They do good, and maybe because he's there, you know._ (Donata, 30s, White, unionized government employee)

The boss, Aboriginal himself, may ease the workplace transition for other Aboriginal peoples newly hired.

Social practices at the level of the taken-for-granted are very difficult to explore and are beyond the scope of this study. They usually require tightly focussed and time intensive ethnographic methods.11 Researchers looking into the effects of such practices may point at differential hiring rates or retention or other figures that may represent systemic racism in the workplace (for example, CRRF, 2001).

Both survey respondents and interview participants referred to visible results of employment that does not match the population.

_In Thunder Bay, there are no black people working as letter carriers or as clerks that I'm aware of, that is visible to me at this point in time. There are few Native people.... I just --- don't know if it's systemic racism, if by choice they only hire white male and female, and more male than female._ (Donata, 30s, White, unionized government employee)

_I was eating at a Red Lobster [while on a trip], a Native guy served us. First thing through my mind was “good for you, you've got a job, making something for yourself.” Then I thought, am I so tainted from living in Thunder Bay that I never see natives working in any of the service industries?_ (Brian, 30s, White, professional).

_I don't know if it's just the Native students going through schools and everything not coming in here to apply? Or not being given the chance to apply? Or if it's them coming in, applying, and not getting the job._ (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

_Like I say, when you're applying [with] a resume and stuff like that, I think that [racism] has a lot to do with it. Because you hardly see any Nishnawbe's working or, I mean in general. I hate to say that but you know you do notice that. You hardly see any Nishnawbe's working anywhere around here. And it's really hard. I don't think it's our fault. It's just, people assume things._ (Charles, Aboriginal youth)

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11For a fairly readable, although academic, example of ethnography that is specific to Thunder Bay, one might read Lakehead University sociologist Thomas Dunk’s (1991) _It’s a Working Man’s Town_. Readers most interested in the subtle practices of everyday life might read sections out of Chapters Four or Five.
The consequences are many and can lead to a sort of double jeopardy. For these reasons several people supported employment practices or government rules to increase representation of systemically under-represented groups. Janene represents a point made by several interview participants

“If employment equity were still the law, then there would be more people who were different in those workplaces. And once people got used to seeing people who were different, then it wouldn't be such a big deal.” (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)

Action to make affirmative steps toward workplace equity faced many reactions from study participants. A selected range of reactions, all representing others in the study, is presented below. As can be seen, equity practices, when mandated have a double-edged effect.

“I fully understand that there’s a lot of problems and everything in the past with the Native people and everything and we, I fully agree with the status cards, I fully agree on a lot of things. I just wish that now, hirings were done by qualifications rather than trying to meet a quota.” (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

“Me getting a job here [at his employer]. Some people do interpret that as racial discrimination... [there are many candidates] all eligible, all qualified, are willing to do the job. Okay. But if I get the job, nobody, but nobody, in the general public would stop for half a minute in my mind to consider, “Perhaps he got the job ‘cause he beat everybody else out.” No. The first conclusion is, “He got the job because they are doing the reverse discrimination thing now. They’re only hiring him as a token.” How does that make me feel?” (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

“I experienced discrimination based on race in] promotions and job hiring’s that include an equal opportunity employer but hire to “fill their ethnic quotas.”” (Survey Respondent)

“A couple of native people have been hired, and of course there is comments that they had to be hired. My observation they are as good as if not better workers then some others.” (Survey Respondent)

“Aboriginal interviewers for a job indicated that they would prefer an Aboriginal candidate.” (Survey Respondent)

“Two individuals were to be laid-off. A lot of employees felt the one who is a native (had the same seniority) should be laid-off because she was a native. With the education she had, she should easily be able to get a job because natives have more job opportunities available to

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Employment equity is often misunderstood, or caricaturized. Intents of the laws were to counteract the effects of practices or systemic forces that hinder workforce participation. A person hired under equity practices would not be below the standards expected for the position; the rules encouraged selection of minority candidates when suitable applicants were available.
them. (Survey Respondent)

While employment equity is an attempt to address historical and systemic inequalities, clearly it is problematic to many people. It should be noted that other members of visible minority cultural groups have said they have no race-related difficulties in finding or maintaining employment. It may be that, for some, high status occupations may overcome racializing. For example, a Chinese businessman, an Indian doctor, and a Sikh professional all said they face very little or no racism in Thunder Bay. In addition, perceptions and stereotypes may play role, e.g., a Chinese businessperson may be accepted differently than an Aboriginal business leader. Further study would be needed to explore such status- and class-based differences. Linking the survey data with the interview data leads to some inconclusiveness on the extent of discrimination in employment in Thunder Bay. However, this study can conclude that race-related employment difficulties exist in Thunder Bay. These difficulties take the form of subtle racializing in the form of a feeling of not belonging, and marginalizing through differential treatment, stereotypic and negative comments and atmosphere and systematic discrimination. Getting a job, remaining at a job and systemic forces that inhibit workforce participation are sites of racialization in employment.

**Restaurants**

In the survey, restaurants and stores were placed together. As Figure 10 and Figure 11 (page 35) show, this category far surpassed all other categories as locations of racially based treatment. Racialized people, particularly Aboriginal peoples, often mentioned incidents in restaurants during the interviews. The treatment often took the form of slow or nonexistent service that clearly marginalised the individuals involved. Occasionally comments occurred or accusations were made. Reports of being ignored or given poor service were numerous among interview participants and the survey respondents. The following are a selection of representative comments:

*One time I walked into a restaurant with my dad. And we sat there and these people came in behind us...they were white. She [the waitress] just automatically brought coffee to those people and she took an order. We were sitting there...by fifteen minutes later we were getting upset. She never came back and you know those people were eating before us. Before we even got our coffee.* (Arthur, 30s, Aboriginal, seasonal firefighter)

*It was lack of service at a restaurant - like I was not there.* (Survey Respondent)

*Slower getting service in stores and restaurants.* (Survey Respondent)

*And you will see that the servers often will pick up, they'll pick and chose who they serve and I have seen Native people especially and also sometimes black people wait in line and people who look poor.* (Krista, 50s, Japanese, longtime Thunder Bay resident)

Once again, interpretation is required as the treatment is rarely blatantly racist. But because racialized people report experiencing this type of service over and over, they interpret it as racialized, as the following exchange indicates.
Tamara: We went to the ----[deleted] and it was weird because the waitress went to another table without finishing taking all our orders.... We were not sure if she was going to come back.... She did not even ask if we wanted something to drink and the other people got their drinks first. We thought fuck are we too brown for you?...

Interviewer: Do you think that she just misunderstood you?

Tamara: I don't know... I am not sure if she got confused or what.... Maybe she was just overwhelmed because it was suppertime... I am just saying that this was the stuff that was blurted out. "Is it because we are Indian?" That is just what everybody blames it on.

(Tamara, late 20s, Aboriginal, mother)

Other people recognize that this differential treatment occurs and is racially based. Few have such clear evidence to which to refer as did the following survey respondent.

People of Aboriginal descent come into a restaurant where I was dining - a man, woman and 2 children. They were dressed the same as anyone else and were clean and well groomed. The hostess told them the restaurant was full. When the couple asked about several empty table they were told they were reserved. After the couple left I heard hostess tell a member of wait staff she didn't want those kind of people eating in “her restaurant.” (Survey Respondent)

Even in this example, the respondent is making an argument for the account of the treatment by noting that the customers were “clean and well groomed.” By this, the respondent is removing other justifications for the social behaviour deemed unacceptable.

If my partner and I are both white, walked into a restaurant in Thunder Bay and there was an Aboriginal couple beside us– I fully believe that if there is only one table available in that restaurant, that we’d have better dibs at getting that table. (Suzanne, late 30s, white, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)

Native people are judged poorly, African people are looked upon poorly in various restaurants and stores. (Survey Respondent)

Treating Aboriginal peoples according to a stereotype was also reported; the stereotype became an excuse for not serving such customers.

I walked into a bar with my uncle. As soon as we walked in they said they can’t serve us. I asked them nicely why, eh. And he says ‘Well you guys are too intoxicated.’ None of us had a drink.... As we were walking out we saw a sign, it said “No colours allowed in the bar.” (Arthur, 30s, Aboriginal, seasonal firefighter)

If it is a restaurant I have seen a lot of [Aboriginal] people turned away and told that they were drunk. But I have seen a lot of times too were a white guy comes in and he is obviously drunk yet he will get served but not a native person. (Richie, White, lifelong Thunder Bay resident)
I saw an elderly Indian fellow get asked to leave ----[deleted] because he looked intoxicated and I know for a fact this man hasn’t drunk or anything in 30 years. (Survey Respondent)

Experiencing this type of treatment can have lasting affects on people. It can make them feel unwelcome in certain social settings. Many of the Aboriginal peoples interviewed commented that there are white bars and Aboriginal bars in town. They referred to a number of consequences, including feeling out of place, or choosing to self-segregate. More than one interview participant referred to going in a group intentionally to breach the social conventions.

Oscar: We went to ----[deleted]. I just wanted to go in and shoot some pool with my friends. And those people just kept looking at us. They just kept staring us down.
Interviewer: Like you didn't belong there?
Oscar: Yeah, That's the way the world is.
Interviewer: So you didn't feel welcome.
Oscar: Stayed there though, we didn't care what they thought. There was quite a few of us, so they wouldn't kick us out. (Focus Group 1, male, late 20s, Aboriginal)

Based on the prevalence of comments made in interviews and on surveys, restaurants in Thunder Bay are one of the predominate sites of racially based discriminatory incidents. A number of establishments were explicitly named (some several times) as well-known for systematic discrimination. This discrimination usually takes the form of particularly slow service or nonservice. As is common in the social practices of Thunder Bay, racialization in restaurants is rarely blatant, but is clearly acknowledged in the life experiences of many Aboriginal peoples and some other racialized groups.

Stores

Describing the experience of racialized people in stores entails addressing two linked but disparate aspects - general treatment and use of the Indian Status Card.\textsuperscript{13} Racialized people face various types of treatment in retail establishments, often linked to whether they appear likely to be financially able to purchase. Aboriginal peoples also experience a unique situation in the use of the status card and the rights that go along with that, which puts Aboriginal peoples in a historical and oppressive context unlike other racialized people. Although general treatment in stores and retail establishments will be addressed separate from status cards, one should not lose sight of the link.

As was described in detail in the previous section on restaurant, one can see from Figures 10, 11 (page 35) and 15, that stores and restaurants were the most commonly cited location for racialization to occur. In the survey other questions were asked about the specifics of racialization in stores. Figure 22 shows the Fair Treatment indices for stores. Perception on the part of Aboriginal respondents was that store employees did not treat them personally with fairness. Aboriginal agreement to this statement is significantly lower than the other groups. Surprisingly, while all the other groups dropped on the General Fair Treatment index, the level of agreement from Aboriginal

\footnote{\textsuperscript{13}As noted earlier, use of the word “Indian” is only used to reflect legal terminology or when so used by study participants.}
peoples remains at the same level. However, when one views the range of responses, one can see that the strength of agreement changed - those who answered “strongly agree” scaled down simply to agree.” The level of helpful and fair treatment from retail staff is the lowest of all the Fair Treatment indices, according to Table 7. Retail establishments in Thunder Bay have something of a customer service issue that may or may not be related to racially oriented treatment of customers.

The experiences of racialized people in retail establishments in Thunder Bay has much in common with other social locations and social practices already described. Not only do individuals’ experiences differ, these experiences differ from place to place. Some interview participants found little discrimination in stores, others experienced more. People who experienced discrimination report primarily subtle racializing and marginalizing interactions. The role of interpretation of poor service comes into play. Brian commented (as did others), “Everyone is treated like garbage in Thunder Bay in stores.” On the other hand, many people felt there was a particular service problem for at least some racialized people.

My experience within the business community – I am surprised how businesses react to non-white people. I’m actually amazed because it shouldn’t matter where the dollar’s coming from if you’re still making money.... I thought all business people would just want to make money and who cares who’s buying it. Um, and that might speak to the level of customer service in Thunder Bay as opposed to racism, I don’t know. (Michelle, 30s, White, city employee)

Over and over, in interviews and on surveys, two particular forms of treatment were commonly described:

A store clerk offered to help a white person even though a native person was there first. (Survey Respondent)

As soon as we walked into the store, staff immediately started following us. In order to get them off our backs we flashed them our money to show that-- we should not have had to do that. (Survey Respondent)

In addition, interview participants mentioned being treated as a stereotype, particularly assumed to be poor. Often people reported that their treatment depended upon their clothes, which may or may not be a common experience for non-racialized people.
Going to the jewelry store, depends on how I dress. (Points at one nearby.) They don’t pay attention to me - they ignore you. Other places, before you ask, they come to you right away. Maybe they don’t think can afford it. (Selena, late 40s, Latina, office cleaner)

The one that I really got upset with was walking into –[deleted] one time with a package... So all of a sudden I heard someone say “Hey, you have to check your package with me” and I looked and there was a young kid behind me in his early twenties. And he right away went walking over to the sales, and she said “no, no, her.” Me. I had a package, she was not even asking him, so I said “Oh” so then I did not think anything of it at first. But he had a package too and she did not even look in his package. So, she says we have to close packages you can not walk in with an open bag. And I says “You know what, I was just going to come in here and look for something but forget it. I will not bother” and I walked out and did not go to [that store] for about two years because of that... I thought why didn’t she say any thing to the young boy. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)

Racialized people also found that people sometimes treated them as if they were stupid. Other comments might also get made within the hearing of customers. A survey respondent wrote, “I heard [one clerk] in a store commenting on a woman wearing a head scarf “hejab.” The comment was ‘What’s with that?’ The other clerk rolled her eyes.” “Upscale” stores in the mall were often named. Store clerks were sometimes noticed to prefer to speak to white associates of a visible minority. Racialized people sometimes chose to go with whites to get better service.

Or sometimes it’s just blatant where we can't get service. Sometimes, because, if I were to go in myself [I’d get better service]. And sometimes my husband [who is Filipino] will say, “Can you phone this place?” or “Can you go into this place? Because I've tried and they're not very nice.” (Michelle, 30s, White, city employee)

In a few, rare cases, study participants mentioned similar situations in regards to whites being racialized. For example,

I can't honestly say I’ve seen discrimination against white people, except perhaps in Chinese restaurants, where a white person is with a Chinese person, and they might not be served as fast. Here’s a discrimination that most white people wouldn’t be used to - old-school Chinese families don't want their children mixing with “barbaric” whites. (Survey Respondent)

Retail establishments are the most common location of racially-based discrimination in Thunder Bay. This takes a number of forms, most notably differential treatment, being ignored and poor service. Retail establishments also may treat people as stereotypes, particularly as thieves or poor. Store staff may follow members of racialized groups, contributing even further to a sense of being marginalised by treatment that is different from what others receive.

Using a Status Card

Status cards are, in themselves, an example of systemic racism, as one respondent said “an
identity card for Indians, like I don’t know I am Indian?” Aboriginal interview participants also experienced marginalizing interactions, especially systematic discrimination, at many retail establishments when showing the status card. Every Aboriginal interview participant mentioned discrimination in the context of status cards. It is a contentious issue. Many whites commented negatively about “Natives not paying taxes,” while for Aboriginal peoples it is an clear issue of treaty-contracted obligation. There is considerable lack of knowledge about status cards that only increases the conflict.\footnote{Status cards originated as identity documents, registering with the federal government those who the government defined as entitled to the arrangements of various treaties made with First Nations people. The rules and regulations have changed little over time while society has changed. “Status Indians” only comprise a portion of the Aboriginal population of Canada.}

Part of the conflict is that Aboriginal peoples in this study tended to describe use of status cards in stores as an arrangement or right. On the other hand, those who react negatively to status cards tended to describe it as a privilege, and often a privilege which they felt unfairly gave an advantage to Aboriginal peoples that was not available to whites or others.

Two interview participants connected the cards to the land. For example, Korinna said, “They always have something to say you know. “Oh they get free gas, cards. They get this, they get that.” I says “Hey! Give me my land back.” I would sooner take my land then that silly card.” Similarly, Gail commented,

\begin{quote}
I think it bothers people too. [They say] “Why can't they pay taxes? We pay taxes?” and they say-- it is supposed to be our land “but it's been years and years.” They are always saying that we [Aboriginal people] are saying it is our land first, that type of thing. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Comments were made about the use of a status card in –[store deleted]. “Why didn't you give me this card earlier, is it that important to you to save a few bucks?” (Survey Respondent)
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
In a grocery store a native woman was paying for groceries, and showed her status card. At this point a man behind me began loudly commenting about how he wished he was an Indian in order to get a free ride. The woman (and everyone else) had to endure this behaviour directed at her the whole time of transaction. (Survey Respondent)
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Aboriginals not paying taxes, think they should get everything for free. (Survey Respondent)
\end{quote}

There is quite a leap involved in the above quote - from not paying sales tax to everything free. On the other hand, Brian told an anecdote about some people willing to make use of the tax-free benefit of status.

\begin{quote}
One fellow went to buy a truck. Fifteen thousand. After taxes, twenty thousand. Whoa that's an incredible amount of taxes on the vehicle. The guy [salesman] says, “Go hire yourself an Indian, they don't pay taxes. Give him a hundred bucks, they will buy the vehicle, sign it over
\end{quote}
to you.” John said “I won’t do that.” Praise God there’s still people like that. One of his friends says “That’s what I’ve done.” I think that’s so wrong, not that they are trying to save taxes but some get to save so much and some others see Indians as a way of saving money. Not only does it cheat the system, but it also cheats native Americans. They are just a commodity to be used because you can save on taxes. (Brian, 30s, White, professional)

The laws about certain benefits of being a Status Indian have not changed despite changes in both mainstream and Aboriginal society. For example, the laws generally apply to Status Indians when they are living on the reserve - “as if when I go off reserve, I’m not an Indian anymore” said a study participant. Since reserve housing is limited, and such regulations restrict freedom and pursuit of opportunity (values which most Canadians hold strongly), such regulations are seen by most Aboriginal peoples as examples of racism, because they are target to certain cultural groups. Obviously, the issue is a political hot potato and is part of the national debate over Canadian-Aboriginal relations.

Interview participants clearly described systematic discrimination at the level of store policy and staff training and the autonomy allowed clerks to reject Aboriginal rights. For example, many interview participants mentioned a frequent requirement to present the status card before the cashier starts ringing up groceries. “Cashier quite rude to a quiet native woman who had put her status card on the counter and the cashier didn't see it. She was rude and said it was too late.” Rachel showed how clearly this is a form of systematic discrimination.

There was this sign taped to the [cash register] that said you must present the status card before someone has punched through the order. And I remember being trained and my supervisor was telling me they have to, and if they don't they don't get their tax exempt... What is funny about it is that you needed to total their order and then hit subtotal and then hit the tax exempt. So you actually couldn't even process their tax exempt until after the order was put through.... Instead it was the other way around, adding this rule that would prevent someone from being able to [use the card]. (Rachel, mid-20s, Métis)

Note that Rachel is Métis and therefore does not have Status. Furthermore, the same rules about presenting the card first do not apply to Senior’s or other discount cards, store courtesy cards (like a Safeway Club card) or coupons.

Other requirements imposed by stores and reported by interview participants included,

- Fill out extra forms
- Wait for others so the line is not held up
- Cannot use it by certain stores’ policies
- Cannot use it if not on the reserve
- Cannot use it with certain cashiers

A girl in Intercity tried to use her status card. I was standing behind her and she was a young Native girl. I knew her and um she was actually told that if she was going to use [the card] that she would have to wait on the side because it took too long. All they have to do is write the number down on the form, sign and put the date....I took all of my stuff and I put it on the front counter and I said I do not have time for you to move through the whole line.
I have a status card also and I walked out, and I guess they were just stunned because they think I was native [because I look white].... [The girl] looked like she was going to cry. I guess because it was embarrassment. She had the right to spend money and she was doing what she was told that she could do, then to be treated like a second-class citizen and to be hurt. That is why I did that. But I have always told a lot of people about that store as well. (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

Such rules, whether intended to be racist or not, do lead to marginalizing of Aboriginal peoples. Other interview participants referred to comments they heard and the feeling of being marginalised.

Maybe white people get mad at us because we’re native and we don’t have to pay the tax because of the status card. One time I was shopping at the [deleted] and I had a whole bunch of stuff with me. And I knew I had to show my card before they started [ringing the purchases through]. I just tried to put it down. The lady behind me had a bunch of stuff too. She looks at me, and says “Geez,” and rolls her eyes. I didn’t say anything though. (Focus Group 1, 30s, Aboriginal, female)

[Some people are] resentful because of the status card. I notice that when Natives use the status card [heavy sigh], people in the line think they have to wait two seconds longer. I pull out my status card whenever I can. (Nadia, 20s, Aboriginal, cashier)

Feeling marginalised, the first respondent tried to ignore the comment, while Nadia exerts her rights more forcefully. Brian observed,

I see in stores occasionally, when a native goes to pay for something, tax card pulled out after sale rung through. Smirk on Native person’s face. Do they do it just to spite the cashier? Do they hate us? Are they as prejudiced of us as white people are of them? Do they feel like they’ve been gypped or taken advantage of? (Brian, White, professional)

Certainly, the friction can go both ways, and the treatment can vary, as Donata noted,

I’ve had an Aboriginal person in front of me at the till. Once was in a really nice store, so it was really cool, and the lady was really nice -- she needed to see a status card.... And sometimes its said really nicely, and other times its like “Well! I need to see it” [acidly, with emphasis]. The intonation of the voice is totally different, right? (Donata, 30s, White, unionized government employee)

Several people in the interviews acknowledged that treatment by store clerks regarding the status card does vary. Several people mentioned that it may be becoming easier to use, while another person said that it is certainly more accepted in Thunder Bay than in British Columbia. She speculated that it is because use of the status card is more common here. Another person suggested that retail establishments have to deal with the Aboriginal population since it is growing and becoming more of an economic or consumer force in Thunder Bay. Most interview participants said they make their own decisions and won’t shop at stores that give them poor treatment. On the other
hand, sometimes there is no choice, as in having to buy a certain school uniform at a certain store that would not take the status card.

Status cards are a sensitive issue to Aboriginal peoples. In some cases they are perceived as a sorry substitute for the loss of land and erosion of other rights through a long process of interaction with colonial power. The status cards also appear to be an expression of continued oppression in having to navigate changing and partial rules imposed by retail establishments or store employees, including rules that seem to appear on the spot. However, some Aboriginal peoples seem to use the status card as a way to assert their rights and hold on to a small remainder of what the system has allowed them. This is despite some efforts on the part of the dominant society to refuse to allow the rights to be utilized.

The situation leads to clashes and an increased antagonism between Aboriginal citizens and the dominant society. Some Aboriginal peoples respond by withdrawing or not asserting their rights. The situation also contributes to a more aggressive assertion of Aboriginal identity as some Aboriginal peoples respond to yet another instance of white Canadian rejection of arrangements negotiated in nation-to-nation treaties. More awareness of Canadian history and Aboriginal issues is certainly recommended. However, clarification of past and present practices will still face significant differences in beliefs among white and Aboriginal peoples as to the most appropriate relationships between First Nations and Canadian legal and social structures.

**Speaking a Language**

The level of command of the English language appears to be a factor in the way people are treated in Thunder Bay. It affects general functioning in Thunder Bay, as well as acquiring employment and in people’s perception of the differently abled English-speaker. The strength of accent may matter as well, as noted by a West African for whom English was his only language but who spoke in a strong West African accent and rhythm.

Several interview participants mentioned that people think they are stupid, when their English was not as strong. They are then talked to as if they don’t know what to do or are not intelligent. In his experience in working with refugees, Luis, a Latin-American male immigrant said, “If people are unable to speak English, people [in Thunder Bay] assume that they are stupid.” At the same time, Luis himself has not experienced similar treatment and accounts this to his excellent ability to speak English as well as his light colored skin. Being treated in such a stereotypical manner is a source of frustration for other interview participants. Themba, a female university student feels frustrated that when she finds exams difficult, her fellow students always assume that it is because English is not her first language.

> Even students in University, most of them go up to me and say “Oh how did you find that?” and I’m say “Oh it was hard.” “Oh yeah it should be hard for you because English is not your first language.” I said, “You know, I would not be here in the University, you know?” And if there’re other people too who find it hard, it doesn’t mean that English, you know, is their second language for them. (Themba, Sudanese, five years in Thunder Bay, mother)

Several interview participants referred to lesser ability to speak English as a barrier to employment. Through Luis’s experience as an employment counsellor for new immigrants, he
believes it is impossible for people who have poor English skills to find employment in Thunder Bay, and that their only option is low paying, minimum wage, labour jobs. Selena’s own experience bears this out. As a female of Latin-American decent she can only look for work where the use of English is not required, such as in housekeeping.

Language was mentioned less in the context of Aboriginal peoples. Gail linked intolerance of poorer quality English skills with other assumptions.

...assuming that if somebody cannot speak clearly that they are drunk or something, or just saying, “OK, come on you have to leave.” I think give the guy a chance. Some of them if they are from really up north they do not speak that well of English. So it is hard for them to talk... I don't know if they would be that mouthy to non-native people. Maybe. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)

While most of the comments about language are not obviously linked to racialization, there could be a connection. Donata described how her Italian immigrant parents, now in Thunder Bay for more nearly forty years. Her father had experienced discrimination in the early years, but as a second generation Italian-Canadian she had not. Her parents, especially her father, had never really learned English very well.

My dad has very little interaction other than within the community. And I think that that's by choice, because that's their comfort zone. You know, they're English still isn't that good, although it's a lot better than it used to be, but it's just that I think it's a comfort zone for them. (Donata, 30s, White, unionized government employee)

In contrast is Brian’s comment referring to Chinese immigrants:

It seems that every Chinese people that I see are Chinese-Canadians. They talk about it being a mosaic. My parents, when they came from Holland, became Canadians, that's what they wanted to be. They learned the Canadian language. Not that they hated Holland, they bought into the idea that Canada is a great country. We want to be a part of what is going on here. We will work hard. We will bust our butts to make a go of it in this country. Sometimes when I see Chinese people, and they can't speak the language, I think what is it that you've come here for? (Brian, 30s, White, professional)

It would appear that Brian is assuming that holding on to one’s own language is sign of less commitment to Canada. Conclusions cannot be made based on such few quotes, but the same assumption was not made about the Italians, nor Finns or other groups. Since the comment is specifically about a racialized group, and other comments about immigration or immigrants made in the surveys or during interviews are also about racialized groups, there may be racialized connections, even at a taken-for-granted level.

Both visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples hold language as a symbol of pride and a sense of identity. As Gail commented, “You need to be proud of who you are and language is important.” Several Aboriginal interview participants connected loss of language, residential schools and loss of self-awareness and identity. Gail and several other Aboriginal interview participants regretted never being taught their language by their parents. As is apparent in Donata’s comments
about the Italian community, language is part of the sense of community, and sense of self-identity or personal comfort zone. At the same time, this differentiating can cause resentment, segregation or exclusion. Trivedi commented about how Indian groups from different regions of India, by speaking their original language, can exclude other Indians. One of the research team members concurred with this conclusion based on his own experience.

While the study was not designed to delve into the complexity of Thunder Bay’s ethnic differences, language can have a number of results. It can be used to maintain a sense of culture and community in the group. It can also lead to people who do not know the language feeling not included. There may be a racialized aspect to the way people respect the maintenance of ethnic communities, traditions or language in Thunder Bay. Clearly, a lesser ability to speak English, or speaking English with a heavy accent may negatively affect a person’s acceptance in social interactions in some places, ability to secure employment or ability to function in Thunder Bay.

The Stuff of Life

Passing By

Twelve survey participants reported observing incidents on the street, while four people reported experiencing such incidents. Numerous interview participants reported that they had experienced comments as they passed by. Drive by comments often take the form of racial slurs. Such comments can increase a sense of not being safe, as a focus group member reported above (see p. 44). Often these comments came unexpectedly “out of the blue” leaving the person unprepared and with various reactions.

Apart from people you meet in the streets - some intend to just insult you or, you know, "What are you doing here black person," or something of that kind. (Themba, Sudanese, five years in Thunder Bay, mother)

Kids, when I run, will make derogatory comments. (Mary, late 40s, lifelong Thunder Bay resident, Japanese)

And kids, kids are the worst. There are times when I am walking through the bike path and there is an Indian walking with a walker and there is these punks on bikes saying “oh you bogan.” Stuff like that and it is anger, it makes me feel angry. (Tamara, late 20s, Aboriginal, mother)

Some kids just two days ago - I just came up to some tracks [on my bike] and I had to stop and they looked at me and I looked at them and I said “hey how is it going” and they just keep staring and I said "excuse me did you just call me a nigger" and they said "ya that is what I called you that is what you all are." Alright if that is were you going then that is where you go. He just blurs out and calls me a nigger. I didn’t say as much as I should. — At a stop at a stop light (laughs with tears forming in his eyes). Its strange. (Galen, early 20s, Black)

Several survey respondents described variations of the following type of incident,
Someone in a pickup truck deliberately swerved so as to drive through a large puddle and drench two young Indian women who were standing on the sidewalk outside the highschool. (Survey Respondent)

**Safety concerns**

Safety concerns have been addressed above. They are an additional concern given the feeling that the police are not there to protect all citizens, but will be likely to hassle Aboriginal peoples or visible minorities. As one counsellor who works with Aboriginal women said,

*They don’t tell me no more [about incidents with police or other institutions of power.] They are at a point were they don’t tell me because they do not want to be harassed anymore.*

(Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

Other people also referred to their fear.

**Carol:** But I said at least you tried to do something a lot of them don’t because they are afraid.

**Interviewer:** Why do you think they are afraid?

**Carol:** They are afraid of what is going to happen. The police will go after them (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

*You’d have to watch where you walk, who you were with, or if you were all by yourself sometimes, oh they’d be quick and come after you [laughs].* (David, 40s, Aboriginal, University student)

Charles and Walter also referred to race-related violence. Finally, several people mentioned that authorities will be less likely to attend to violence if a racialized group member is involved. This could lead to addressing the situation through other means.

*Because we are always afraid that something will happen and always tell [the teens] them just to be safe, don’t fight, don’t do anything, if anything happens around here, just come on back to the house, then you’ll be safe, you know?* (Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

While the advice that Farouk gives to the youth may work temporarily, it is not a lasting solution. In addition, one can only imagine other responses to racially-caused concerns about safety.

**Housing**

Racialized people report difficulties obtaining decent housing in Thunder Bay due to discrimination. Interview participants often described treatment that can only be described as systematic discrimination. Landlords may not want to rent to non-Whites. As one white woman Jean confessed, “One of my brothers used to rent apartments and there is no way in heck he would ever rent to Natives.”

Themba, a black woman, said that while helping a friend look for an apartment the landlord’s sister said in front of him and his friend: “You can’t rent to this lady. How do you think the neighbours would feel like?” Few people had such blatant experiences. Janene was one of several
people who reported being invited, over the phone, by landlords to come and look at possible apartments. “I'd phone them up and you know they'd tell us how to get there, and we'd get there and they'd see my Chinese face, and all of a sudden the place would be rented.” Similarly, a survey respondent commented, “seeing that I was native said the apartment was rented when she told me on the phone a few minutes ago it was available.”

A couple of interview participants felt that poverty also made it difficult for Aboriginal peoples and newcomers to find decent housing.

People who look like they’re poor have a hard time finding a decent place to live. Unfortunately it seems to me that a lot of people of colour tend to be poor. You know they tend to be immigrants, or newcomers to the community, they probably haven’t been around long enough to have a decent job, and the cycle just perpetuates itself. (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)

I find more and more that Aboriginal peoples are living more and more in the dives, in places that are not well kept, their apartments and stuff. That has to do more with being poor: poverty. Because the more expensive places are harder to rent and they have stringent lease agreements and so many rules. (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

Those who have found decent housing spoke of being ignored or feeling harassed by neighbours. After moving into a new apartment Selena, a black Latin American said “hi” to her adjacent neighbour. She was ignored and when she repeated herself her neighbour waved her hand dismissively at her. Trivedi, an East Indian male with a family, says he lives in an “all white neighbourhood.” When his family first moved into the area he was told by a neighbour “We have ways of getting rid of people like you.” and feels “they’ve [his neighbours] harassed us in different ways since we’ve been there.” Experiencing discrimination like this makes it not only difficult to find and keep decent housing but also effects one’s sense of belonging.

Bus

There are two issues with the bus - other travellers and transit workers. As noted in several incidents above (page 46), racialized members describe being watched and being ignored by other travellers on the bus. A survey respondent experienced “being yelled at or stared at on the city bus” as race-based discrimination. Several interview participants referred to not being allowed by another passenger to sit next to them.

I take bus. Sometimes people are mean. They don't give you a seat beside them. They look away. They put their bags down right on the seat, and you have to stand. (Selena, late 40s, Latina, office cleaner)

Serena also said, if she let racism affect her, “I wouldn’t take the bus, I wouldn’t go anywhere.”

A number of survey respondents mentioned buses. Although it was not explicitly asked, four survey respondents people wrote comments and added it as an “other” in places where they had witnessed or experienced race-based discrimination. Respondents typically described differential treatment when they referred to transit workers. Comments included,
I've heard shit about the bus drivers saying shit about the Aboriginal peoples, well that's what I heard anyways. I think nothing of it. Why would I make it my problem when it's their own? (Survey Respondent)

The bus driver kicked a native off because he had been drinking, but a white man had also been drinking and the bus driver did not say anything. (Survey Respondent)

I've seen transit workers treat native people differently then turn around and give a white person different words/attitude. Smile at white, but not natives. (Survey Respondent)

On a city bus, a young woman of African-Canadian descent stole another woman's handbag, the bus driver said something like “those black girls...” I have witnessed much racism on our transit system. (Survey Respondent)

While few references were made to the bus during interviews, informally, a number of Aboriginal peoples have mentioned to the primary investigator of this report their sense of racism from transit workers. The subtle racializing of being watched and ignored while a passenger, and the marginalizing from both workers and passengers can make public transit in Thunder Bay an unpleasant experience.

Life in General

As the analysis was being completed, it became very clear that racialized people simply cannot get away from the effects of racialization in their lives. By presenting the aforementioned social practices and the described locations, perhaps non-racialized people can begin to realize the pervasiveness of racialization. For racialized people, it permeates all aspects of everyday life. Three examples,

I met her parents [who talk down about Natives] and they did not know, and I sat and drank a beer with them and they were talking about gasoline prices and of course that [Aboriginal peoples not paying as much for gas] came up and I just did not say anything. I was in their house so I let it ride. I am not sure what they would have said if they would have known. They probably would have said “What a nice Indian, he didn't say anything.” (Laughs). (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

I'm going to contradict myself. On the one hand, I think that it's probably gotten better because when I first came here there were very few people of colour around. I would be in supermarkets and I would see the children staring at me, staring up at me with their mouths wide open and their mothers, “Don't stare.” Because there weren't that many people of colour. Whereas [now] those of us who aren’t white are not quite the novelty that we used to be. And so I think that there's an increasing—. Well, there's less overt racism. I don't think that people come at you and look at you with their mouths hanging open or you know, they don’t talk to you really slow as though you might not speak English. But that kind of overt stuff, I think it's better. (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)
The feeling of resentment I was talking about was just a pervasive feeling again. That's not really a witnessing of a direct incident of racism as much... You know you'll get subtle comments about, well, “The Natives get, they've been given so much... When do we stop providing for their education programs, they get all their education paid for, it's everything tax-free.” And so much of it is sometimes misinformation. Because it seems to me that each Aboriginal person that I know needs to be taken as an individual case. And some of them get certain breaks and others don't qualify, and they have their own struggles to try and qualify for funding and so on and so forth. (Roger, 40s, White, teacher)

The result is a wide variety of coping mechanisms, which will be discussed briefly in Chapter Seven. Some people are able to cope by ignoring, although one wonders at what internalized price. Others cope by become more assertive, and addressing situations or becoming more aware of their past and their people’s past. In some cases, self-segregation occurs, as in Aboriginal peoples setting up parallel social structures, such as Dennis Franklin Cromarty School or Anishnawbe Mushkiki (Aboriginal health access centre) to provide the service and a more comfortable environment in which to operate. Being racialized has significant consequences for individual lives, families, and the entire community of Thunder Bay. It is to these concerns that we will turn in the next chapter.

SOCIAL LOCATIONS CONCLUSION

As is shown by the lengthy discussion of racialization in various social locations around Thunder Bay, racialization occurs in many ways. How do we handle these reports? While this issue will be taken up by recommendations in Chapter Eight, clearly responsibility lies with residents of Thunder Bay who operate in specific social locations described in this chapter. Furthermore, other social locations could have been described. People involved in city government, recreation services, churches, parks, non-retail businesses and so on, should examine their own practices. How might they also contribute to racialization. It is hoped that the detail of this report will help non-racialized people appreciate the issue and better understand the experience of being racialized.

The experience of racialization is cumulative. For those who are racialized, it adds extra complexity and some degree of stress to everyday life. Chapter Seven considers the consequences for the community as a whole.
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Chapter Seven
FINDINGS DISCUSSED - COMMUNITY IMPACTS

I think that this process we’re participating in right now is a result of something that’s occurred in our community over the last couple of years which I think is absolutely wonderful. My only fear to this process is that this process will end... The momentum that’s starting, I hope that we’re able to continue it. (Interview participant)

The data presented in previous chapters has shown that racialization occurs in Thunder Bay and who is most affected. The social practices that are understood as racializing have been described. Racialization as it occurs in certain social locations has been explained. All this accumulates for racialized people and they develop a variety of mechanisms for coping with it.

Racialization has its impacts on individuals. That in itself is enough to warrant addressing the issue. But racialization has impacts on the community as a whole, in addition to its impact on individual quality of life. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss community-level impacts. The chapter will also describe the concepts of social capital and social cohesion and their importance to community development. Community development is understood here as both quality of life and economic and social growth. This chapter concludes by showing how racialization detracts from social cohesion.

COPING WITH RACIALIZATION

As described in Chapter Five, racialized people learn that racism is a part of social interactions. Although interpretation of particular interactions is sometimes uncertain, racialization has an impact on the whole as racialized people negotiate varied social interactions. In the course of the interviews, participants described a number of different mechanisms or means by which they dealt with the process of being racialized. The following is not intended to be a comprehensive list. The coping strategies listed below are tentative as the interviews primarily sought information on how and where racialization occurred in Thunder Bay, and only addressed impacts secondarily. However, in analysis of the interviews, three broad strategies in response to racialization seemed to emerge: 1) Respond to it; 2) Withdraw; 3) Operate around it. Within each strategy are a number of tactics.

Three Strategies for Coping

Responding to racialization

Responding directly to racialization can take a number of forms. Some interview participants described assertively and directly confronting incidents.

Well see for the longest time I would just ignore it. I would just ignore it. And when I was
growing up that's what I did. But, now I just have no tolerance and... [I tell them] that’s unacceptable behaviour. (Mary, late 40s, lifelong Thunder Bay resident, late 40s, Japanese)

Others described getting mad, which also may lead to confronting the incident, but in a different manner and probably different results. Violence was also mentioned by some interview participants. Clearly, these three tactics are increasingly confrontational and increasingly negative social interactions. Finally, in contrast to the incident-by-incident nature of these other tactics of responding to racialization, some of the interview participants mentioned working on anti-racism activism or other social advocacy.

There is overlap between these tactics and other strategies. The commonality in this broad strategy is that racialization is addressed and engagement with other people still occurs. Another commonality is that these tactics take place “within the system.”

Withdrawal
Withdrawal in the face of recurring racialization also takes a number of forms. One way of withdrawing is to try to ignore racialized incidents. The interview with Selena is an informative example,

If you pay attention, yes (it is a problem). If I paid attention, I wouldn't take the bus, I wouldn't go shopping. I wouldn’t talk to no one. I can't live that way. I try to think other things... It does not bother me. (Selena, late 40s, Latina, office cleaner)

Seven times in the interview Selena repeated a version of the quote above. Then, at the conclusion of the interview, smiling broadly, she said,

Thank you. Long time I wanted to talk about that. I feels so good. Thank you. Thank you.

This form of ignoring-as-coping is a form of withdrawal. One wonders at the emotional cost of this tactic as experiences of racism accumulate, as Selena seemed to imply. Several interview participants referred to “learning” not to look at people directly or to speak up for themselves as it seemed to cause more problems.

Another form of withdrawal is when racialized people stereotype others in return for the treatment they had received.

I guess we have to teach our children not to become racist. But even in ourselves as Aboriginal peoples I am sure we are racist against other populations also. There is obviously anger in our hearts still about non-natives. (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

This is a form of withdrawal because stereotyping of any sort is treating the other person as a type rather than the true person that they are. Therefore, this is a withdrawal from the complexity of a relationship, replacing it with the simplicity of stereotype.

Another form of withdrawal is to not participate in social life where racialization may occur. For example, Tracy called herself a homebody. Others talked about not going to stores, the mall, recreation events, and other social settings.
After a time, we stopped going.... I guess my attitude kind of evolved into really bad then, and I said well I don't give a shit anymore. If I feel like going, I do. And if I don't feel like going, I don't go. (Trivedi, late 40s, East-Indian, professional)

My sister used to dance ballet, and a lot of the kids in her ballet classes were white. And they always made the assumption that, because my sister was Native and she looked Native, she couldn’t be a ballet dancer. And she took a lot of garbage for it. She ended up stopping going. So she never went any more after that. (Walter, early 20s, White, father)

Several people mentioned quitting school because of racially-based experiences, which they conceded has had further detrimental effects on their lives.

Finally, another form of withdrawal is to choose to segregate. Referring to Aboriginal youth in her school, one person observed,

They travel in groups, they take the same classes. At lunchtime, they sit together, they don’t eat with others. They don’t mix. And I’m not saying it’s their fault or it’s our fault, but it seems like nobody is trying to break that barrier. Like, we’re not trying to go up and say, Come sit with us” or “There’s a football game tonight, why don’t you come?” But they’re not trying to say “Hi I’m new in town,” Or “Won’t you come sit with us.” No body will make that first step. It’s that separation. (Focus Group 2, Female, late teens, white)

Other interview participants noted that there are bars and restaurants known as “white bars” and others known as “Native bars.” Tamara said she goes to one of the latter, “Because it is full of Aboriginals.... I guess I feel more comfortable.” Another interview participant mentioned the possibility of sending her child to school on the reserve to avoid racism. Others chose to work in Aboriginal organizations. Similarly, immigrant interviewees discussed how they chose to live in neighbourhoods with others like themselves. Obviously this is an ordinary human tendency, but interview participants referred to self-segregation and tactics of withdrawal as a means of avoiding contact with mainstream Thunder Bay society and racializing experiences.

Operating around racialization

Some interview participants operated around racialization by ignoring incidents, but in a self-secure way. A number of interview participants said this became easier as they became more aware of their Aboriginal identity. Other racialized people also stressed the importance of knowing who you are and “where you came from.”

A second tactic in operating around racialization is the creation of parallel social structures. As racialization limits opportunities in the dominant society, alternatives provide full participation. This response is more prevalent among Aboriginal peoples than other racialized people. Aboriginal peoples have set up social agencies, police forces, businesses, health care and schools at least partly in response to racialized treatment. Korinna said she did not have difficulty getting medical care, and continued,

Especially with the new Anishnawbe Mushkiki. It is an excellent idea I have not heard -- the comments, but I am sure that they are out there. Like, “why have you your own health
centre?” kind of thing. I haven't heard that but, um, I also think that too many non-Aboriginal peoples know that the centre exists. (Korinna, 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)

If we had an Aboriginal emergency shelter, Where Aboriginal ones can come to the Aboriginal emergency shelter.... Maybe if we had something like that they would feel good about themselves you know and go back out into the community and start doing something. (Carol, Aboriginal, professional)

Other interview participants also appreciated these other options.

I think it has got a little bit better. I think because you hear of more things happening, more native organizations. Five years ago there was not as much native stuff happening. When you even watch Channel Seven, they have a medical centre now and they have different courses and the high school. People are appreciating that. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)

A number of Aboriginal interview participants commented on quitting a job because of an uncomfortable racialized climate and going to work in an Aboriginal organization. Other racialized people also talked about the negative work climate, but did not have this other option.

In some cases the establishing of alternatives may be due to a loss of legitimacy by mainstream institutions. In this study, interview participants talked about police, courts and government in these terms. For example,

So, I think in Thunder Bay, normal people are good.... civilians, you know. People you meet in the bars, people you meet in the stores, people you meet just outside. But, I'm concerned about the government offices, companies that hire people for employment, something like that. Police, you know? Any government authority. (Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

Alternate societal structures may be perceived as having more legitimacy.

Many of the tactics listed in this strategy overlap with some of the tactics of responding to racialization, and with some of the tactics of withdrawal. The difference between these tactics and the first strategy is that engagement with both racializing practices and the Thunder Bay community at large is less as people operate around racialization. The difference with the second strategy is that withdrawal from all action does not occur. This strategy is an example of working alongside mainstream society rather than participating as full members. It does not mean that there is complete separation and disengagement. In addition, there are reasons other than racism from the mainstream for the development of alternative societal structures.

Direct Community Effects of Racialization

Drawing implications about broad coping strategies from the interviews becomes valuable in the context of the project’s purposes of creating a “community of acceptance.” Community is the issue. The observation of these three broad strategies points beyond the negative effects of racialization on individual quality-of-life to the heart of community itself. Racialization has its own impacts on community, but these tend to be masked because most community members of the
majority experience only peripheral effects of racialization, if they experience any effects at all. “Withdrawal” and “operating around racialization” directly affect social networks and trust in the community. This is the concept of “social capital” - the social resources available for use in Thunder Bay. The implication of racialized people not investing social capital, or investing it in alternatives to mainstream community structures will be examined later through the lens of social cohesion.

The view of most people in the study regarding the impact of racism is summed up by Janene.

Yeah it's a negative effect because, while I don't think that I've been the butt of a whole lot of overt racism, I just think the cumulative effect of people who are, who do suffer racism, just brings the whole community down. (Janene, 40s, Chinese, professional)

Other studies might be undertaken to investigate specific hypotheses about impact on the community. Possible areas for study include the level to which systemic discrimination results in reduced educational levels, reduced access to financial resources, specific loss of economic growth, or increased costs due to conflict, safety concerns or segregation. Note that this is not a call for more study before more action is taken to address racialization in Thunder Bay.

Improving in Thunder Bay?

Many participants in the study compared the situation in Thunder Bay to other places or to the past. Compared to other communities in Northwestern Ontario, race relations in Thunder Bay were better for some people and worse for others. Compared to places like Toronto, the reaction was again mixed. Some study participants felt that more diversity in Toronto increased overall acceptance, although others felt that visible minorities in Thunder Bay were treated better. Aboriginal interview participants generally did not make these comparisons, feeling that comparison was irrelevant as the situation here needed to be addressed regardless.

Many people felt the situation was not improving in Thunder Bay. On the one hand, interview participants acknowledged that racism was less open and interactions were less violent. Although safety may be greater, it is sometimes easier to deal with blatant racism than more subtle forms. This should be kept in mind when considering whether the situation has improved in Thunder Bay. Sample comments from interview participants include:

I just hope that...ah...this community would put a strong, strong, like really put a good effort into solving racism in here. Like you can't do it overnight but...Like not just 100% effort, try 125%, put that extra time...ah literature out for people... If it's not done it's just gonna keep snowballing and get worse and worse. 'Cause like I say I don't see the change over let's say forty-three years when I started to notice things. (Ralph, 50s, white, labourer)

No, no I have a hard time believing if anybody told me that things changed. I'd say that you are a liar. I'd call them a bull faced liar right to their face. Because the things that I see and the things that I hear from my other nephews and nieces because they are dark[skinned]. (Rebecca, late 30s, Aboriginal, counsellor)
Nope. Stayed the same. Worse than when I first got here [four years ago]. (Nadia, 20s, Aboriginal, cashier)

Hmm. Um, I guess I would say it is OK. We have a long way to go yet but we are coming around though from what it used to be like.... The next generation will have a better chance as we did when I was younger. When I was in public school we were the only native family going to that school so you always got picked on every day. (Gail, 50s, Aboriginal, professional)

Interviewer: Would you say that in the last five years things have changed?
Mike: I wouldn’t say in the last five years. I would say in maybe ten years. (Mike, 50s, Aboriginal, unionized employee)

[I hear things] from all the people, yeah, mostly from the Indians and the immigrants, new immigrants. So, I haven’t seen any single issue that has been made progress. No, everything stays in the same place. (Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

I think it’s definitely incre– like it’s going in the right direction, it is going towards harmony and unification and everybody understanding one another and I hope everyone will eventually get along with one another. But no, I think it’s heading steadily uphill, I think it’s going in the right direction. (Donata, 30s, White, unionized government employee)

As the quotes show, there is considerable feeling that things are not improving enough. The feelings are mixed, however. The conclusion is that there is still effort to be made to improve race relations in Thunder Bay.

SOCIAL COHESION AS A CONCEPT

The concepts of social cohesion and social capital have recently come to the forefront for policymakers and analysts. Robert Putnam’s book *Bowling Alone*, gave currency to the idea that “social capital” is declining, leading to a weakened sense of community and civic involvement (Putnam, 2000). The Canadian government has established social cohesion as an important element in planning future policies (PRI, 1999). United Nations and European Union initiatives have also focussed on social capital and social cohesion. Even traditional economists, using conventional economic calculations, have focussed on the essential role of social cohesion in economic transactions and development Dayton-Johnson, 2001; Helliwell, 2000). The point of the long discussion below is to show how racialization is holding Thunder Bay back, to insist that now is the time to do something about it, and to offer a useful way forward that benefits the entire community of Thunder Bay.

Concepts Defined

The terms social cohesion and social capital are sometimes used synonymously and sometimes have different meanings. *Capital* refers to resources available to be used for a purpose;
Social capital is those resources of a social nature. Social capital involves the networks of relationships in a community along with community norms, cooperation and levels of trust (Portes, 1998; Wilms, 2001). The concept has gained popularity, even in Thunder Bay. One Thunder Bay resident described social capital as “The glue that hold communities together. It builds bridges between diverse groups in the community, nurtures networks of support and promotes community connections. It's creative and inclusive collaboration” (personal communication).

Social capital as a concept is used in both community and individual senses. It can be the collective resources and networks available in the community, or it may be the relational resources accessible by individuals in pursuit of their interests (Glaeser, 2001). The small business mentoring program run by the Chamber of Commerce is one example of creating social capital. The literature has not completely united around uniform understandings of the concept (Portes, 1998; Wilms, 2001; Woolcock, 2001). Many of the analysts using the concept of social capital tend to emphasize economic interpretations of the term.

However, social capital can be conceived with less focus on economics. Glaeser (2001), an economist himself, describes community level social capital as “the set of social resources of a community that increases the welfare of that community” (p. 35). The importance of nonprofit organisations and the voluntary sector is an example. Minor hockey, Rotary and other service clubs, Neighbourhood Watch and neighbourliness in general are all forms of social capital investment at the community level. These voluntary associations are vital to a community. Conceptually and in practice, social capital is different than other forms of capital in two fundamental ways (Dayton-Johnson, 2001). First, if not used, social capital declines. Relationships weaken if no one has time for each other. Second, when used, social capital is not used up, it actually increases. The time spent chatting across the backyard fence makes it more likely that neighbours will look out for each other, watch each other’s property, look after each other’s kids and organize local events.

The Social Cohesion Indicators Project defines social cohesion as “the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians” (CCSD, 2001, p. 4). Social cohesion, then, is the application of social capital. This is how Dayton-Johnson separates the two. Social capital, when invested, increases social cohesion, which has benefits for all in the form of greater economic prosperity.

The European Union links social cohesion to exclusion of some citizens in a way that seems useful for A Community of Acceptance. Social cohesion is “not only the material deprivation of the poor [and other marginalised], but also their inability to fully exercise their social, cultural and political rights as citizens” (PRI, 2001, p. 18). As the Social Cohesion Indicators Project of the Policy Research Institute of the Canadian government notes, social cohesion is necessarily about inclusion, which is “the active participation in society and broad equality of access to opportunities to develop individual talents, capacities and capabilities” (CCSD, 2001, p. 5).

**Essential for Economic Growth**

Drawing from conventional economic theories, Dayton-Johnson (2001) shows how investment in trust-building (social capital) has its payoffs. Trust is a fundamental part of economic transactions and social interaction. Transactions, even at the most impersonal retail level, are a form of cooperation with understood “rules of engagement.” We trust that the money has a relatively
certain value. Retail establishments trust that credit card companies will transfer the money; the card companies trust that most of us will eventually pay our debt. We all trust that the various goods or services will be done properly, or that there are laws and institutional mechanisms to fix the problems. Trust and shared values are essential also for civic functioning. We trust that our votes matter, that elected leaders will do their job and use public office for private gain. We trust that charitable organizations will pursue charitable ends, and that volunteering for an organization helps it meet its purposes. Trust and shared values are relevant only in relationships and social interaction. Thus, networks are the final component of social capital.

As social capital gets used, it builds social cohesion. But trust is fragile, as are weak relationships and loosely shared values. Once trust or relationships are fractured, they are hard to repair. Racialization would appear to fracture social cohesion. It has also been suggested that diversity itself can be a potential “fault line.” Most discussion of social capital has focussed on homogeneous communities, where relationships of like-minded people are likely strongest. Putnam’s (2000) research shows the highest social capital levels in the least diverse regions of the United States. What about diverse communities, like Thunder Bay?

Dayton-Johnson (2001) argues that social cohesion is necessary to, and possibly a cause of, economic prosperity. His explanation is well-referenced and written in a style easily read by non-economists. The basic argument is that cohesive communities are created by cooperation and willingness to trust - social capital investments - in the past. Norms of cooperation, opportunities for trust and the likelihood that the trust will be appropriately placed are unlikely in uncohesive communities. Conversely, untrustworthy behaviour or lack of cooperation reduces the future likelihood of people working together, having a downward effect on cohesion and on both quality of life and economic prosperity.

Dayton-Johnson goes on to provide evidence for this contention that social cohesion is essential for economic prosperity. This evidence includes studies that show:

- National-level analyses of forty years of economic growth correlating with indicators of social cohesion.
- Health measurements correlated with social cohesion, and in some cases only explained by social cohesion indicators. Conversely, fraying social cohesion contributes to poor health.
- Correlation of education levels and social cohesion in a cyclical relationship - education helps create social cohesion, which leads to greater investment in public education.
- Greater income inequality linked to declining economic prosperity, likely through both social unrest (raising costs of community protection and increasing social control) and the effects of lost economic opportunities.
- Communities with less social capital have more teen pregnancy, child suicide, low birth weight, and prenatal mortality. Social capital is also a strong predictor of crime rates and other measures of neighbourhood quality of life (Putnam, 2000).

Dayton-Johnson proposes a multiple equilibrium model. On one hand, in situations of high social cohesion, people have incentive to continue to invest their social capital in cooperation, which benefits all. But on the other hand, in situations of low social cohesion, investment of social capital is likely to be taken advantage. Social cohesion is a process. It is very difficult to move from an equilibrium of low cohesion toward one of higher cohesion. But the effort is worth it, Dayton-Johnson shows. He concludes the book by strongly urging that policymakers should seek to promote social cohesion. The result of putting social cohesion first is that both quality of life and economic prosperity appear to be outcomes.
There are benefits to the use of the concepts of social capital and social cohesion. They provide a unitive theme for municipal policy. Governments can promote social cohesion rather than a hodgepodge of sometimes conflicting programs. The concepts acknowledge that communities are cooperative entities, rather than collections of competitors. They highlight marginalised groups’ access to resources. Social cohesion also provides “a longer-term perspective,” a “moral dimension,” and a “social context to community relations” that go beyond economistic accounting (Schuller, 2001). Finally, while social capital has community level application, Glaeser (2001) notes, “decisions to invest in social capital are made by individuals” (p. 35).

There are “dark sides” to the concept, however. Schuller points out “the way networks can act against social cohesion” (p. 19). Networks can be cohesive in themselves yet exclude others. Tight groups can have a negative impact on others, or society as a whole. Community development in low cohesion situations is very difficult unless groups get talking and willingly utilize their social capital in different ways, including ways that do not benefit themselves in the short run. Weak social capital tends to remain weak. Lin points out that “people in lower socio-economic status tend to use local ties, strong ties, and family and kin ties. Since these ties are usually homogenous in resources this networking tendency reinforces poor social capital” (2000, p. 789). Careful analyses of social inequality conclude that we need a better understanding of how social capital is formed and used in societies segregated along class, racial or ethnic lines (Dayton-Johnson, 2001; Wilms, 2001). Since communities such as Thunder Bay will remain heterogeneous, it is important to determine how racial mixing can contribute to, rather than diminish, social cohesion.

Theorists have tended to assume that there is one type of social capital. Silverman’s (2001) analysis of the collaborations and values mobilized by different types of social service organizations in a small US city shows that there are different types of social capital. The two types of organizations had different values and did not work together. Silverman suggested that thinking in terms of social capital may reinforce current community structures and networks, rather than creating more effective alternatives. This caution needs to be taken into account. A Community of Acceptance also shows that there are different forms of social capital, with racialized people willing to invest in other interactions and withdraw from the mainstream that has tended to exclude them or make it difficult for them to be involved. Differences in social capital represented by differences in networks may reproduce social inequity. Overall, Dayton-Johnson argues, community governments would seem to have good reason to promote investment in social capital, as do community voluntary groups, and business organizations.

**Racialization and Social Cohesion**

Community relations are affected negatively by racialization and racism. The social exclusion felt by racialized members of a community affects social cohesion. The data collected for A Community of Acceptance demonstrates this conclusion. Social practices of blatant racism, subtle racializing, marginalizing interaction and systemic racism destroyed trust, showed that values were not shared, and weakened relations between groups of people.

Relationships were also impacted by racialization. The predominant sites of interaction in a community are also locations of racialization. That the main societal authorities - government services, police services - were sites of racialization reduces the accepted legitimacy of these institutions. When schools are sites of racialization, their potential to knit diverse elements of the
community together is reduced. Nor can schools pass on shared values and social norms when racialized people do not see themselves represented well in the curriculum that acts as the container for those values and norms. Buses, stores, restaurants, recreation are all sites in which social cohesion is fractured due to racialized experiences. These are the findings of *A Community of Acceptance* regarding the community-level effects of racialization.

Breton describes one of the negative results of racism thus: “People expect to recognize themselves in the various expressions of the collective identity... some consistency between their own sense of self-identity and that expressed in public institutions and authorities. Otherwise, people feel like strangers; they feel the society is not their society.” (Breton, 1999, p. 296). In a number of ways, this appears to have happened with racialized study participants.

> The community meets my needs. I have stuff to do, for example, I go to the judo club. All of the things that happen in the community, my church – the people are involved in the community, they are satisfied by what they have here, jobs and all this kind of stuff. At some point we must have separated ourselves from the native community, because they are not involved. Sure they use the services, but they are not involved in that they are satisfied. (Brian, 30s, White, professional)

Not only does racism contribute to the social exclusion of some community members, but denial of racism does not enable the community to move forward and develop the social capital that produces greater cohesion. There were different experiences of racialization among participants in the study. Socio-economic status and class also affected how people were treated. Racialization is a power-over situation, where one party has the ability to construct the terms of interaction. The result is the party with less power finds other ways of investing the social capital they possess, creating new capital but of a different type. The consequences to Thunder Bay are likely to be growing separateness unless action is taken to counter racialization. The tactics under the three broad strategies employed as responses to racialization predominantly show a reduction or change in social capital.

The strategy of responding directly to racialization could be either an investment in social capital or to withdraw it. The direction it goes depends upon the spirit in which responding to the incidents are done, and the manner in which the assertive encounter is responded to. Are non-racialized people willing to listen and not respond negatively when racialized people explain their point of view or confront what they interpret as racializing? Similarly, working for anti-racism can be a source of conflict, or seen as a means of community development. For example, *A Community of Acceptance* has been criticized as bringing up problems instead of being a means of improving the community as Diversity Thunder Bay envisions. While anger and violence as responses to racialization are obviously counterproductive to social capital formation, so was the racializing behaviours in the first place.

The strategy of withdrawal is clearly a refusal to invest what little social capital there is. Ignoring, not participating and self-segregation are all rejections of the mainstream community, as understandable as these tactics may be in the face of racialization. Withdraw weakens community, but it also weakens the position of racialized people. Passive acceptance or fatalism that “nothing will change” may be understandable. The strategies of withdrawal are not productive, but, again, neither is the initial racialization.

The strategy of operating around racialization is more complicated. The creation of parallel structures indicates an unwillingness to invest fully in the mainstream community. Yet it is a
willingness to invest trust, shared values and relational energy to create in-group cohesion. For Aboriginal peoples, this strategy is happening after decades of exclusion. Racialization had clearly fractured social cohesion. As Silverman found, there can be different types of social capital operating in a community. How these networks, values and social norms can operate together is uncertain.

Finally, the survey evidence shows Aboriginal peoples - the most racialized people in Thunder Bay - with the lowest reported levels of life satisfaction, which is a quality of life issue. It also shows Aboriginal peoples reporting the highest disagreement levels regarding the contribution of racial and ethnic diversity to Thunder Bay. That those reporting the most racism also report that race-related problems make Thunder Bay a less desirable place to live and more difficult to make community decisions directly supports the argument that racialization negatively affects social cohesion.

CONCLUSIONS

So, where do we go from here in Thunder Bay? It seems that the current cohesion equilibria could be accepted or a new equilibrium sought. Regardless, the majority of social capital to be invested in the process will have to come from the dominant majority society. Accepting the current situation seems likely to lead to even greater divides and conflict, especially as Aboriginal parallel institutions become established. As these organizations develop, and Aboriginal political identity is exerted, it would seem likely that an internal cohesiveness would benefit Aboriginal peoples. The data collected for this report show that Aboriginal peoples are not served well by mainstream institutions at present. This should lead institutions to consider changes.

There could be many forms of a new equilibrium. A respectful parallelism could be one result. Another arrangement might be a range of partnership options, working together but with benefits that accrue to the separate organizations. Another possible equilibrium might be true cohesion and acceptance. Regardless of the strategies of social cohesion (or not), race relations in Thunder Bay will remain a challenge. It will involve negotiation of power and opportunities, which likely means that the majority, non-racialized society will have to yield in some ways. Such a situation is always hard to do. It will take leadership, and time. It is, however, for the benefit of all. If social cohesion is so valuable in community development and economic growth, the societal changes required will have material payoff.

Most of this discussion on social structures has been on the basis of Aboriginal-White relations, ignoring other racialized peoples. The data presented in A Community of Acceptance has shown that while this is the primary racialized tension in the community some visible minorities also face significant racialization. If social capital can be developed - promoting norms of acceptance, and changing social practices and institutional cultures - it seems likely that other racialized people will also benefit. However, if other racialized people will find themselves limited in their involvement in Thunder Bay. The limitations appear to be around such issues as socio-economic status, skill at speaking English, and other ways of “being like the norm” of the majority. This points to the importance of addressing social conditions of inequality, which again, has benefits that accrue to far more than addressing issues of racism. Clearly, all racialized people do not have the same needs. Racialization differs. Again, it is the majority population that is in better position to lower any barriers, build the bridges and nurture relationship across the full diversity of Thunder Bay’s
A Community of Acceptance did not address other issues of diversity and acceptance. Gender and disability are only two of the many other ways that people differ. Because of the multiplicity of needs, the policy primacy of social cohesion would appear to have benefit. It provides the philosophical and practical framework for dealing with other, more specific needs of residents of Thunder Bay.

Finally, this discussion has ignored the moral issues. Poor treatment and diminished opportunities on the basis of race are moral issues. Many of the survey respondents felt strongly that racism was indeed a moral issue. Values are closely connected to social capital. Community dialogue about the issue will be about values anyway. What type of community do we value in Thunder Bay? What type of community do we want to be? Do we or do we not respect each human being? It is hoped that A Community of Acceptance: Respectful of Thunder Bay’s Diversity can help create much more of that dialogue and move it in positive, socially cohesive directions.
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Chapter Eight
RECOMMENDATIONS

I think it would be nice maybe if some of the higher up people in either power or money started worrying, because if you start the talk, things snowball if they roll downhill, rather than trying to roll the snowball uphill. (Interview participant)

This report is written as an integrated whole. If one simply reads selected parts, such as these recommendations, one is likely to miss the logic of the part. Each part is based on other parts. For example, reasons for many of these recommendations are not provided, they flow from other parts of the report. The recommendations are based on the reports of interactions in the various social locations (Chapter 6), which are in turn informed by the accounts of racializing treatment (Chapter 5) and generalized survey data (Chapter 4). The entire report also uses other studies and scholarship to provide structure and understanding to the subject (Chapter 2).

Chapter Seven showed that social cohesion is important to community development. Chapter Seven also showed that racialization does fracture social cohesion in Thunder Bay. Therefore, Thunder Bay has a stake in addressing problems associated with racialization. Solutions to racialization will be multifaceted. There is no quick fix to longstanding problems. It will require changes in existing social structures. Such social change may generate conflict. However, the literature on social cohesion includes data that shows the advantages outweigh the losses. Community development has its benefits, in the form of both quality of life and economic growth.

Still, change is not easy. Changes in privilege and power are even harder. It remains to be seen if the positive vision of becoming a community of acceptance can be pursued. The recommendations in this chapter are not comprehensive. Instead of presenting all possible suggestions, the recommendations herein are selected to present the most important advice. Throughout, attention has been given to those recommendations that appear likely to generate social cohesion. However, the impacts of racialization on individual quality of life should not be forgotten. Finally, institutions need to do their own analysis using the insights generated by this study, and institute changes based on their own specifics.

WHAT DO STUDY PARTICIPANTS THINK OUGHT TO BE DONE?

Recommendation-like comments were generated on the survey through many of the open-ended questions and unsolicited comments, but especially through Question D1, which asked “What do you think should be done to stop race discrimination?” Responses were coded into common themes like the other open-ended questions. This resulted in 418 separate coded comments in nine categories. These thematic categories were analysed, including a comparison across racial groups (although not by other demographic categories). The most relevant themes regarding race relations in Thunder Bay are listed below, with a sample of comments. Additional comments are included in
Appendix Five as a way of generating more ideas and community dialogue on the issue and its solutions. Many of the recommendations are consistent with comments made by interview participants. The interviews tended to focus on specific practices at specific social locations.

Each section below shows disagreement among respondents, including contradictory solutions. This presentation demonstrates some of the perspectives on the issue held by residents of Thunder Bay. By presenting all perspectives in the following sections, Diversity Thunder Bay is provided a greater understanding of the public education challenges.

**Education Recommended**

The foremost recommendation was education or knowledge. Listed by 36% of all respondents, comments about education, learning or knowledge were more than three times the next most listed category of suggestions. Asian respondents referred to education most often (62%), possibly because of the higher than average education levels of the respondents in this group. Suggestions for improving knowledge make sense considering that survey respondents believed lack of knowledge or personal experience to be one of the most significant causes of racial discrimination (see Table 6, page 40).

That so many people suggest learning is significant. Schools and post-secondary institutions were among the most frequently mentioned social locations for the occurrence of racial incidents. Education, therefore, is both a site of the problem and its own solution, according to study participants.

Representative suggestions from survey respondents include:

- “People should be educated about different cultures so that stereotypes can be cleared up, and people will be less ignorant.”
- “Educate and refresh this education continually.”
- “Start at a very early age - Introduce programs at an elementary school level.”
- “The best way to begin is with young children in the schools. Discussion and awareness between youngsters and young people will begin to change entrenched beliefs. We should begin to behave like we belong to the human race!”
- “Better education - if you know about people you are less likely to be prejudiced.”

One wonders at the weight given to education to solve the problems. Reports of the presence of racism in schools, colleges and universities show that education alone will not change the world. Furthermore, study participants noted that the content of present school curriculum may reproduce systemic racialization. Several study participants mentioned the lack of attention to Aboriginal peoples in textbooks. Also mentioned were library books that reproduce racialized stereotypes, and a school environment that does not adequately address racial incidents. Thus, this recommendation must be judged by the ambiguous promise of educational institutions. The extent to which schools should engage in anti-racism education is debated. It would appear that without greater attention to this issue, represented by curriculum, pedagogy, and administrative effort, race relations policies alone will be insufficient to affect either school or student practices and their learning.

Non-formal learning could be important in teaching people about race and ethnicity. Organizations outside of schools could engage in intentional anti-racism education, with perhaps fewer of the challenges than schools. Such organizations include churches, multicultural agencies, youth groups, service clubs, Guides, Scouts, and other associations. Given the growing diversity in Thunder Bay and across the country, multicultural and anti-racism education can be seen as an
investment in the future. The content of this education is important and will be briefly discussed under recommendations for Diversity Thunder Bay on page 129.

**Morals/Values Improved**

Survey respondents listed changes in individual values as the next most frequently mentioned solution to discrimination based on race. In this category also, are references to the family or upbringing. This is consistent with the belief that upbringing is one of more significant causes of racial discrimination and is linked to the personal characteristics that also cause discrimination. Survey respondents listed “personal qualities” as the second most frequently mentioned cause of discrimination (see Table 6, page 40). Many of these personal qualities are values or morals related. Racism was defined in moralistic terms by one-fifth of respondents in an earlier question (See Table 5, page 39).

Representative suggestions from the surveys include:

- “I wish I knew. I try to behave with decency towards all people and I try to teach my kids my values. It all starts with how we treat each other.”
- “No real answer, teach our children that it is not acceptable, teach about diversity and enjoy it. Racism is ignorance/therefore knowledge about others is a tool.”
- “I think we need strong leaders and more people to feel confident enough to stand up for what they believe in.”
- “Teach all races that we are all people of one creation, one world.”

But affecting personal values is a difficult task. Nor do individual values total the entirety of existing social values (Eliasoph, 1999). Given the emphasis on “education” noted above, should schools be involved in affecting social values? Most educators and scholars of education point to the role of education in creating society in certain ways, anyway. Education is not value-free or value-neutral. But what values should be reinforced, what values should be tolerated, and what values should be muted or actively stifled through education?

Values are also taught through other means. The family has already been mentioned. One interview participant wished parenting classes would prepare her for helping her child navigate a racialized environment. Another obvious social institution that is involved in values education are the churches. This study would suggest that they take a more significant role in anti-racism action.15 Similarly, other organizations could be involved. Most important, however, is to recognize that personal values are shaped by the social context in which people find themselves. Social practices, therefore, are value-laden. And our values are reinforced by the social practices in which we participate. We go where we are comfortable, which tends to reinforce our way of seeing the world.

Finally, a genuine consideration of values would go far beyond a simplistic “racism is bad”

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15Churches are a good example of other recommendations. Churches were not specifically mentioned by study participants (except for one person who was in ministry). However, as *A Community of Acceptance* has shown, social practices can racialize, and sometimes social practices in particular locations are taken-for-granted. Churches in Thunder Bay are often segregated on racial and ethnic lines. Among the suggestions, then, is that social institutions such as congregations explicitly talk about and reflect on their individual and collective social practices that contribute to racialization.
sort of analysis. For example, how important is the value of having a city workforce that represents the diverse population of Thunder Bay? What is gained and what is lost when people cannot see anyone like themselves employed in retail establishments or staffing the police force? These are questions about what is valued. Any analysis should also consider values of multiculturalism, diversity, ethnicity and personal identity.

A final example is informative. This study was called “A Community of Acceptance.” A colleague who assisted said he was glad it was not called “A Community of Tolerance.” Those two words are value statements. This colleague did not want to be tolerated. He wanted to be accepted. Tolerance still maintains a power-over orientation, whereas acceptance implies mutual dignity and respect for fellow humans. Such values have major impact on the sort of community which will develop and its cohesiveness.

**Personal Experience & Multi-culturalism Recommended**

These two categories each were suggested by between seven and nine percent of respondents. They were sometimes linked and overlapped as the following representative quotes from the surveys show.

- “Educate our children about other races and cultures. Example: The multicultural festival is a wonderful and fun way to do it. I took my family this year and they got to taste the ‘world’.”
- “Intercultural exchanges - get the Aboriginal community participating - both sending and hosting.”
- “Cannot be changed unless groups stop wanting to be treated different for some aspects of life.”
- “Go out of our way to get to know other “races,” so [we] learn there are other ways in the world. Then we would not have ‘us’ and ‘them’.”
- “Introduce yourself to a person of another race and get to know them.”
- “More day to day contact with other cultures.”
- “Expose children to persons of different cultures.”

There are many ways to perceive multiculturalism. It can be “tolerance.” It can be “allowing” people to “keep their culture.” It can be to actively promote cultural diversity. Multiculturalism rests on an understanding of “culture.” Culture is more than ethnic foods, clothes, dance or appearance. It also includes such things as different ways of perceiving the world, varying values, and interpersonal practices. Can a person’s “multiculturalism” accept these levels? As noted in Chapters Five and Six, racialized people are accepted in some settings, as long as they are “not too Native” or “too ethnic.” Cultures do not remain the same over the years. As people and cultures adapt to changing settings and incorporate new aspects, they and outsiders should not hold onto romantic notions of an idealized past.

Assuming that people learn well through personal experiences, providing opportunities to experience other cultures could be very beneficial. If so, such multi- or inter-cultural experiences would be best if they provide deeper experiences, rather than the shallow level of food, clothing or dance. Personal experience can be a form of experiential learning. If so, such experience would do well to be accompanied with reflection and discussion with others (DeLay, 1996). Experiences can be interpreted in many ways, including ways that simply reinforce past beliefs. Survey respondents alluded to this in suggesting that past bad experiences may lead to discrimination (see page 40).
Systemic Recommendations

Societal structures and the need to address these structures were referred to by approximately 12% of respondents, and equally by both white and Aboriginal respondents. This is heartening as it suggests that some people do have an awareness of the role of social structures in continuing racially prejudicial practices. Representative comments from the surveys are noted below.

- “Racism is a cultural practice. The community must respond to it. We must address it institutionally and culturally, rather than merely incident-based.”
- “Educate citizens, business owners, etc. how racism and discrimination hurts the community.”
- “Re-educate the whole community of T-Bay. E.g., hire Native bank tellers, hire Native people in restaurants.”
- “This [ending discrimination based on race] is an impossible proposition because discrimination is mostly disguised.”
- “More education on rights issues. The racist thinking of a bygone era still exists due to the elitists' oppression of historical facts.”
- “The government at all levels actively setting and following policy. The legal system catching up.”
- “Active promotion of anti-racism policies at municipal, school board levels, etc. Encouragement of people of colour to apply for municipal positions, etc.”

Past history affects the present and future. It does in our personal lives and in our collective life as a country and a city. Past history lives on in the ways laws are made, the way social structures form, the way we see things, what is valued and what is dismissed or ignored. See Chapter Two for Dunk’s (1991, 1998) analysis of the seemingly “abstract and opaque” nature of history and systemic factors compared to the so-called “common-sense” grasp of everyday life. Yet, history and “the system” do affect our lives and the ways we believe and act, whether we are aware of these influences or not.

Media Part of the Solution

The media - television, movies, newspapers - was mentioned by enough respondents to be a separate category. Many survey respondents indicated it has an important role in addressing racialization. Representative comments are listed below.

- “The media plays a crucial role in our social ‘constructs’ - they must be on board to see any type of macro social change.”
- “Less media coverage of minor events of unimportance involving minorities. It would help to stop stereotypes.”
- “Don’t tell race when reporting on crimes, unless you do it for every criminal, even white, white-collar ones.”
- “Television advertisement in particularly about Aboriginal.”

Clearly, survey respondents recognize that the media plays a fundamental role in promoting certain visions of society by what they choose or do not choose to represent. This is an example of a systemic or structural factor in racialization.

In the above themes, Aboriginal and white respondents were consistently similar in the rate by which these themes were suggested as solutions to racial discrimination. There were three themes in which they did not hold views in the same proportion. These are discussed below.
Nothing will change

The belief that nothing will change, or that racism and discrimination are part of being human, was mentioned in 30 of the 418 comments coded. This theme was distinctly split along racial lines. Whereas 16 comments with this theme were received from the 293 white people in the study (5%); eleven such comments were received from the 61 Aboriginal peoples (18%). This is a significant difference. In addition, two of the seven Blacks and none of the sixteen Asians who responded to the study made comments with this theme. The fatalism represented in such comments is stronger in the most racialized peoples. Examples of comments from survey respondents include:

- “I truthfully do not think anyone can stop racism. People are not usually ready to know the truth about themselves.”
- “Nothing further should be done. By proposing more and stronger laws against racist behaviour, we only strengthen the hatred of those who are racist.”
- “Nothing can be done, because nobody ever does anything - period.”
- “No one can stop it. Don’t pay attention.”

The comments vary. Some study participants give reasons, usually implying that it is part of “human nature.” Other comments seem to imply that the person has given up. That the most racialized groups in Thunder Bay had the highest frequencies of such comments leads to certain conclusions. Interview participants referred to a number of mechanisms for dealing with racialization; these were summarized in Chapter Seven. Some of the mechanisms included withdrawal, getting mad, resorting to generalizing in return, and creating parallel social structures. These mechanisms do reduce the cohesiveness of Thunder Bay as individuals withdraw. This response is understandable. When the burden of repeated racializing becomes too much, one would become jaded, and withdraw in some manner. Recognizing this, one can understand that it is not the responsibility of racialized persons to add even more to their own burden by having to be the ones who always push for change on this issue. Therefore, asking multicultural groups and Aboriginal peoples to take on the task of addressing various forms of discrimination or systemic inequalities may not work. This task is the task of all in the community, especially those who are leaders. The result of such action would be more likely to increase levels of trust (social capital) and bring more community members back into engagement. Social cohesion is easily broken, as Dayton-Johnson (2001) argues. It takes more effort - and a willingness to pursue long-term benefit rather than only short-term rational gain - to rebuild the social capital that can be invested in equitable community development.

Recognizing this pattern also means that members of racialized groups can make the effort to overcome the jadedness that nothing is going to change. As another survey respondent commented, “Minorities have to do something to help themselves, get respect, demand respect from others.” It is likely that without continuing pressure little will change. It is my impression, from the interviews, that racialized people with the strongest sense of self-identity, were most assertive in addressing racial incidents rather than trying to ignore them. This assertiveness also seems to increase self-esteem and provide a feeling of empowerment. For Aboriginal peoples, an articulation of Aboriginal identity also seemed very important, an observation that will be seen as confrontational for many who hold the next two views.

“Canadian” Unity

Two other themes came forth only among whites in the survey. These two perspectives are
minor views in terms of numbers of respondents, but stand out because they are strongly held and often voiced in popular media. This theme includes those comments that express a version of “unity, not diversity.” It represents a particular construction of what is “Canadian” and competes with visions of Canada as “multicultural.” Only nine such comments were received of the 392 surveys.

- “We are Canadian first and foremost. This should be more important than trying to be different by having a different culture, dress, etc.”
- “Dress and act like most Canadian do.”
- “Less attention to our differences and more concentration to fact that all are Canadians.”

The infrequency of comments in this category suggests that it is a minor view among the population and a vision of Canada as a country that accepts differences is more prevalent and could be promoted.

Reverse Aboriginal privilege

A number of other comments about how to stop racial discrimination referred to perceptions that Aboriginal rights were part of the problem. Thirteen such comments were received, such as,

- “Cut out special privileges to some groups.”
- “Abolish native rights and treat everyone the same. This is 2001, it only breeds hate and segregation.”

This view represents a small number of survey respondents. It does expresses a particular point of view that is at odds with other points of view and with history.

During treaty negotiations, First Nations people exchanged one set of rights for other sets of rights. The language used in the two quotes is instructive. “Privileges” are considerably different than “treaty rights.” A privilege is something given as a favour, rather than something that is owed. The second quote implies that the “native rights” are the only way people are treated differently. Such a view ignores systemic factors that do indeed treat people differently and give different advantages on the basis of being white, or parents having certain financial resources, or even being able to walk rather than using a wheelchair. Historical and societal factors cannot be changed immediately. Society would probably look MUCH different if we could indeed “make everyone equal - no special privileges.”

RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE ANALYSIS

The following recommendations are drawn from analysis of the data in the study. They will be presented in two sections. First, recommendations for the community. Second, recommendations for the coalition that is Diversity Thunder Bay. Again, note that these recommendations are not intended to be comprehensive, but to focus on the most important and useful recommendations.

For the Community of Thunder Bay

The previous chapter, on social cohesion is an integral part of these recommendations. These recommendations on race relations fit into a broader recommendation that suggests the prime function of municipal policy is to build social cohesion. The effects of racism and racialization affect Thunder Bay’s ability to function in a cohesive manner. This impacts community development - both quality of life for all residents and economic development of the community. The literature is clear on this: weak social cohesion has a downward effect on community development. This study has shown the
link of racialization to weakened social cohesion.

Therefore, the strongest recommendation possible is to work on improving race relations in Thunder Bay at the levels of institutional culture and social practices. A Community of Acceptance has shown the complex and multifaceted nature of racialization in Thunder Bay. Many beliefs, social practices, institutions and social locations are involved. Racialized people experience this racializing in different ways. Addressing the situation will also be multifaceted. Three broad areas in particular are important.

First, addressing systemic factors is necessary. Such factors are bigger than Thunder Bay. But it dramatically affects Thunder Bay and both individual lives and community development. A diverse Canada is the country that Canadians will increasingly encounter. An increasingly diverse Thunder Bay will happen as the Aboriginal population grows and both in-migration and out-migration change the demographics of the population. There are many societal conditions that affect racialization.

> It is bigger than and not based on common sense. The cultural and economic conditions are both relevant. (Survey respondent)

Policies are only a first step. Adequate implementation of policies and evaluation of their effectiveness are also needed. Evaluation means that the policies can be revised. For example, employment equity policies have been shown to be effective in hiring more minority employees, but ineffective at increasing retention (CRRF, 2001).

Along with, and maybe more important than policies, is educating people as to why the policies are being implemented. What is the philosophy behind the policy? What is it really trying to address? If systemic factors tend to be “abstract and opaque,” helping people peer through the clouded windows would appear to be relevant. Educational practices that help people become critical thinkers, would be beneficial, particularly as they take place at all sorts of social locations. Ironically, critical thinking can be a very productive workplace skill, besides its benefit in becoming more aware of complex social issues.

Second, taken-for-granted social practices need to be recognized. Address institutional cultures. All social institutions - workplaces, school systems, small and large business, the police, health care - involve social norms of how they do things. Since social practices and cultural norms are often unrecognized and taken-for-granted, a more thoughtful consideration than “common-sense” is called for.

Racialization should be acknowledged rather than defensively denied, or the victim blamed for being out-of-line or a trouble-maker. This requires listening, respecting, self-examining, and acting to improve conditions. It may mean stepping against accepted practices or norms, or refusing to be involved in offensive conversation. Since most racialization is subtle, individuals need to think often about how they are doing things, and whether that contributes to the racializing described in Chapter Five.

Third, strong leadership is demanded. Leaders need to be models of inclusiveness and awareness of social practices. Leaders will show the citizenry that a community of acceptance is important. Strong and prophetic measures may be called for to address taken-for-granted and systemic

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16 See pages 10-11 and 16.
factors. Since moving from some level of low cohesion to a higher level of social cohesion will take considerable effort, courageous and innovative leaders who are prepared for the long haul are needed. Most of the recommendations are directed primarily to the majority community. It is they who must invest resources of all types in order to show racialized people that the majority is committed to improving relations. Doing so builds the trust necessary for racialized people to invest social capital in reciprocation.

**People at Large**

There are many recommendations that are appropriate for all residents of Thunder Bay, in most situations. Racialization affects all of us as it affects the community in which we live. There is little excuse for ignoring proactive strategies. If social capital is to be created, relationships need to be established.

*It's also a community problem... How to get the community involved to fix it? I think we need to be more relational and less institutional... Until we have good relations between whites and natives in this town, you are going to continue to see racism all over the place.* (Brian, 30s, White, professional)

The skills of good relationships are needed - listening, making an effort, taking risks.

Everyone should take a good look at the social practices described in *A Community of Acceptance* - subtle racializing, marginalizing and systemic aspects of racialization. It is a learning process to make the changes in our own behaviour, instead of relying on past practices only. This is not “political correctness,” it is caring to include all people. It is accepting people as they are, including differences, including real differences that are deeper than surface ones. It is recognizing that decisions to treat people well, or invest in relationships across racial categories are individual decisions. Finally, it is remembering that we seem to find it easier to remember negative examples of stereotypes, which serve to reinforce those stereotypes.

**Retail Establishments**

Retail establishments - stores, restaurants – proved to be the most frequent sites of racism. This suggests the business community needs to be more involved in anti-racist communication. Racialization directly affects our economic prosperity in terms of lost opportunity and increased costs of operation. There is a bottom line benefit to reducing racialization in Thunder Bay. Leaders of the business community and the Chamber of Commerce would do well to become much more involved.

A need for training of retail staff exists. The Chamber of Commerce could develop small business training. An important topic to include would be use of treaty cards. Other techniques than store staff following racialized customers can be found to protect both stores and the dignity of citizens.

Other large actors should be involved also. Some of the malls have suggested diversity training for staff might be in order. Bowater’s recent deal with Fort William First Nation may be another good sign. We can acknowledge that Thunder Bay has come some distance from even more segregated situations in the past.

**Police Services**
Police services are another very significant site of racialization. Clearly, the institutional culture of the police force must be addressed. Again, courageous leadership from the ranks would be needed to make Thunder Bay’s police forces a safe place for both racialized employees and citizens. Diversity training might help. Several interview participants suggest the police learn about the different cultures in Thunder Bay. For example, Farouk commented,

*Then at least maybe then the police could know something about my culture, then they would believe some of my statements. But before they don’t know my culture, they can’t imagine what I am, they can’t imagine what I can do and what I cannot do. But if they have at least some idea about my culture, then, “Ok... we know his background, so he cannot do bad things.”*  
(Farouk, 50s, African, labourer)

Good trainers could be used to help the police (and other institutions) understand the unacknowledged and taken-for-granted level at which social practices tend to operate.

More Aboriginal officers would probably help relations with Aboriginal peoples who come into contact with the police. Institutional culture of the police services may make for an uncomfortable workplace for Aboriginal peoples. The accounts provided in *A Community of Acceptance* would suggest that the culture of the police force may predispose negative interactions with racialized people. Treating people as stereotypes reinforces itself.

Stop racial profiling. It suggests the police force is there to protect the white community first. Aboriginal and black people appear particularly stigmatized.

The job of the police is hard and dangerous. But an uncohesive and divided community makes the job more difficult yet.

**Schools**

Schools are the dominant sites of societal reproduction. Unfortunately, they were described as one of the most frequent sites of racialized interactions. Schools are more than teaching classrooms. The learning takes place through the teachers, the texts, the extracurricular activities, the hall displays, the peers, the disciplinary practices, the expectations, and much more. Educational programs would do well to include more content on systemic racism.

School boards and schools have race relations policies. Studies have shown that many staff are unaware of them. Such policies are often unclear about what to do in cases of racial incidents that are not blatant. Students report most racial incidents go unresolved or poorly handled (RMYC, 1994, 1999). Teachers who are members of racialized groups often report being the ones asked to handle incidents, as if it is their skills and issue, rather than an issue for the non-racialized majority.

Teachers have a huge number of expectations put on them. But in a diverse community such as Thunder Bay, perhaps more high quality multicultural and anti-racism education is warranted. Such education means going beyond the simple multiculturalism of festivals, dances and international potlucks. The education should address the varied manifestations of racism. Many schools have called on the hardworking staff and volunteers of the Regional Multicultural Youth Centre.

Parents and other community volunteers could help. Studies have shown investment of time, talents and financial resources in schools have a huge payoff - academic capital translates well into social benefit.

Schools should also be specific in their actions. The Catholic School Board might look into it’s uniform suppliers practices regarding customer use of status cards and rights.
Other Social Locations

Much of what has been suggested already is relevant for most social locations. Each place, large and small, has a duty as members of a community, to reflect on how others are treated at their establishment. Why are racialized people not present in many settings? This is a question for each store, service club, sports league, and voluntary association to consider.

Municipal Government

Again, most of the recommendations for other institutions apply here. Government services have some work to do to serve racialized people better. Municipal government is expected to take a leadership role. A Community of Acceptance has shown that the effects of racialization on individuals and that this has a negative effect on social cohesion. There is a sound theoretical framework, backed by this and other research, for investment of resources into social cohesion. That is the role of municipal authorities.

For Diversity Thunder Bay

A Community of Acceptance provides a framework for future action on the part of Diversity Thunder Bay and the partner organizations. Diversity Thunder Bay is itself an example of social capital investment as organizations have formed a network to address a social concern. There are many ways that this report can be used. A few specific recommendations will follow.

Most important, the report will do little other than document the situation unless it is communicated, promoted and used to motivate change. A Community of Acceptance needs to be converted into public education and made available through libraries, internet, media and other outlets. It should be capitalized upon, and opportunities for community education created.

Community Education

The data show that the public is only partly aware of processes of racialization. Even racialized people may not have a solid handle on systemic racism.

- Presentations and public education should be done with the non-racialized majority through clubs, organizations, business associations, churches and youth groups.
- Public education should include the complexity of racism. This education should address *systemic* racism, as this aspect was referred to relatively infrequently by study participants.
- The public would appear to need a better understanding of historical factors, for example, around abuses that occurred to Aboriginal peoples and racist immigration laws.
- The focus on *social practices* in this report can illuminate how all of us may tacitly affect others. This provides a handy, experiential vehicle for awareness-building without blame. But unconsciousness and lack of racist intent does not excuse the negative effects of racialization.

Work with Institutions

Diversity Thunder Bay should also help to clarify certain aspects of life in Thunder Bay that impact on racialized people

- Work with the institutions identified as social locations in which racialization occurs. Good initial focuses would be schools, workplaces, retail establishments and police. Later focuses could include churches, recreation settings and so on.
Offer suggestions about how handle racialized treatment. Rather than focussing on race relations policies and blatant racism, such suggestions should also address the more common subtle, marginalizing and systemic manifestations of racialization.

Assist the Chamber of Commerce to work with retail establishments and the business sector.

As the use of Status cards as this is one of the clearest types of systematic discrimination, clarifying rights, responsibilities and issues regarding Status cards would be very helpful. Producing an explanatory brochure for retail staff might be a good start.

**Build Social Capital**

Diversity Thunder Bay could also engage in creative programming that help to build relationships among people who otherwise have less contact. This is a conscious way of creating social capital.

- Open houses regarding this report.
- Sharing circles where people can hear each other’s experiences across cultural and ethnic boundaries.
- Healing circles where people can go to talk about the racializing they have experienced, and its impact on them.
- Although many events are announced as open to the public, many people feel uncomfortable attending because they do not know how they will be welcomed. Diversity Thunder Bay could be a partner, assisting the process of participation through such programs as information booths at events.
- Finding ways to create welcoming environments for full participation of all people.

These recommendations are only a small fraction of the many that could be made. Community dialogue and community decision-making should be part of the process of reducing racialization and improving social cohesion in Thunder Bay. The experience of coordinating this study opened my eyes wider to the wonderful diversity of people in this community as well as to the horrible experiences of racialization. The study itself was sometimes contentious with some citizens being concerned about its intents and other residents being hopeful that it would improve the community.

It is my hope that this report be seen as a positive thing, a stepping forward, a breaking out of a certain equilibrium. The vision always has been that we truly become the community of acceptance that is indeed respectful of Thunder Bay’s diversity.

*If I had solutions I wouldn't be here! We'd have a great place to live! [laughs] Um, I don't know, this is a really good start, and whatever. And everything that's come prior to this has been a really good start. So I think this where we oughta keep going and just keep doing stuff like this.*

*(Interview participant)*

*I hope to see this published. Like, you have to let people know about it. This is good!*

*(Interview participant)*
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

REFERENCES


Sioux Lookout Race Relations Committee. (1990). Together we’re better: A report on race relations in
Sioux Lookout, Ontario.  


Appendix One
LIST OF DIVERSITY THUNDER BAY ORGANIZATIONS

Diversity Thunder Bay is a coalition, rather than an organizational entity of its own. These organizations have affiliation in the coalition.

Aboriginal Head Start
Baha’i Community
Canada - Department of Canadian Heritage
Canada - Department of Citizenship & Immigration
City of Thunder Bay
Confederation College Student Union
Confederation College/Oshkie Anishnawbe
Diocesan Office of Refugee Settlement (DOORS)
Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic
Lakehead Social Planning Council
Lakehead University Students Union
Lakehead Public School Board
Leap For Life
Métis Nation of Ontario
Multicultural Association of Northwestern Ontario
Nishnawbe-Aski Nation
P.U.S.H. Northwest
Regional Multicultural Youth Centre
Thunder Bay & Dist. Labour Council
Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce
Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre
Thunder Bay Multicultural Association
Thunder Bay Police
Thunder Bay Regional Hospital
Thunder Bay Religious Muslim Association
Thunder Bay Roman Catholic School Board
Thunder Bay Public Library
Trillium Foundation
This survey takes about 15-25 minutes to fill out.

**Thank you** for taking the time to respond in full to the following survey.

Think about how you answer. Your answers should be about Thunder Bay and the area, and not other places, or Canada as a whole. This is about us here in Thunder Bay!

If you wish to explain any answers please do so!

All surveys will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. Your name will never be used. (The identifying number at the top cannot be linked to any person. It is only for recordkeeping purposes.)

Please mail the survey back in a week, even if you have not filled it out. Use the stamped envelope and send it to the address below:

“A Community of Acceptance” Survey
P.O. Box 21089
640 River Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7A 8A7

Thank you very much for your time. If you have any questions or comments, please email csop@canada.com or call 627-1385.

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People often think about race and ethnicity together. **Race** is often used to refer to physical characteristics such as skin colour or facial features. **Ethnicity** often refers to a person’s language, the country of their ancestors, customs, foods, clothes, and so on.

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**PART A: Introductory Questions**

A1) How long have you lived in Thunder Bay or immediate area?
   - ☐ less than one year
   - ☐ 1-2 years
   - ☐ 3-5 years
   - ☐ 6-10 years
   - ☐ 11-20 years
   - ☐ more than 20 years

A2) Do you have children? ☐ YES ☐ NO

A3) Please fill in the blank: Ethnically, I am ______________________________

A4) Check all of the boxes that apply: I am:
   - ☐ Black
   - ☐ Aboriginal
   - ☐ White
   - ☐ Asian
   - ☐ Other ________________

If you checked more than one of these boxes - is there is one of these that you think you belong to the most? If so, please circle it.
Put an “X” on the number that shows how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Feel free to explain any of your answers.

A5) I am satisfied with my overall quality of life.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

A6) I am satisfied with Thunder Bay as a place to live.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

A7) Sometimes I don’t feel I belong in the community.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

A8) I feel good about my future.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

The next section is about interactions with some of the parts of the community. Put an “X” on the number that shows how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Feel free to explain any of your answers.

B1) Police in my neighbourhood are usually helpful and treat me fairly.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

B2) Doctors and nurses in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat me fairly.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

B3) Social service workers in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat me fairly.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

B4) People who work in stores in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat me fairly.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

B5) Teachers and school staff in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat me and my children fairly.
   1  2  3  4  5  6
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s diversity

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B6) Police in my neighbourhood are usually helpful and treat all people fairly.
   
B7) Doctors and nurses in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat all people fairly.

B8) Social service workers in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat all people fairly.

B9) People who work in stores in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat all people fairly.

B10) Teachers and school staff in Thunder Bay are usually helpful and treat all people and their children fairly.

The following statements are about diversity in the community. Put an “X” on the number that shows how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Feel free to explain any of your answers.

B11) I am sure that people generally do not use my race or ethnic background to decide how they treat me.

B12) Having people from many ethnic backgrounds and races makes Thunder Bay a better place to live.

B13) Problems related to race make Thunder Bay a less desirable place to live.

B14) Racial diversity makes it more difficult to make community decisions in Thunder Bay.

B15) My workplace is ethnically or racially diverse.

B16) I have friends from other racial or ethnic backgrounds.
The following questions are about discrimination and racism. Thank you for answering honestly and to the best of your ability. Remember, all responses are confidential and anonymous.

C1) What do you think racism is? ________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Discrimination is the actions that result from negative beliefs about others.

C2) Why do you think discrimination based on race happens? ____________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

When “race” is used to negatively evaluate a person, it is called racism. Racism is not always visible; it may also include judgements or circumstances that give people of some races advantages that others may not have.

C3) To what extent do you feel racism is a problem in Thunder Bay? Please explain: __________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Put an “X” on the number that shows how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Feel free to explain any of your answers.

C4) Racism does not affect me.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

C5) People of my race have been discriminated against.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

C6) Racism is a personal problem, not a community problem.
   1  2  3  4  5  6

C7) Many people in Thunder Bay are prejudiced.
   1  2  3  4  5  6
C8) While shopping in the past year, I have heard negative comments made about my race or someone else’s race.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C9) I believe social service workers treat everyone the same regardless of race.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C10) At my work or school in the past year, I have heard negative comments made about my race or someone else’s race.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C11) At my work in the past year, people have sometimes commented that someone got a job because of their race.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C12) I believe discrimination based on race has made it hard for me to get the work I deserve.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C13) I believe I have had trouble in the past year getting medical help because of discrimination based on race.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C14) I believe teachers and school staff treat everyone the same regardless of race.

1 2 3 4 5 6

C15) I have observed discrimination based on race against someone else in Thunder Bay in the past year.

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

If you answered “YES” to Question #C15, Please answer the questions in the box on the next page:
C16) I have been discriminated against because of my race in Thunder Bay in the past year.
□ YES □ NO

*If you answered “YES” to question #C16, Please answer the questions in the box on the next page:*

a) Where did you see discrimination based on race happen? (Check all that apply)
   □ School   □ College/University   □ Work   □ Store/Restaurant
   □ Government Services   □ Health Care   □ Recreation   □ Other: ______________________

b) Please describe what happened. _____________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

If you answered “YES” to question #C16, Please answer the questions in the box on the next page:

a) Where did you experience discrimination based on race? (Check all that apply)
   □ School   □ College/University   □ Work   □ Store/Restaurant
   □ Government Services   □ Health Care   □ Recreation   □ Other: ______________________

b) Please describe what happened. ______________________          ______________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

If you answered “YES” to question #C16, Please answer the questions in the box on the next page:

a) Where did you experience discrimination based on race? (Check all that apply)
   □ School   □ College/University   □ Work   □ Store/Restaurant
   □ Government Services   □ Health Care   □ Recreation   □ Other: ______________________

b) Please describe what happened. ______________________          ______________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
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If you answered “YES” to question #C16, Please answer the questions in the box on the next page:

a) Where did you experience discrimination based on race? (Check all that apply)
   □ School   □ College/University   □ Work   □ Store/Restaurant
   □ Government Services   □ Health Care   □ Recreation   □ Other: ______________________

b) Please describe what happened. ______________________          ______________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
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If you answered “YES” to question #C16, Please answer the questions in the box on the next page:

a) Where did you experience discrimination based on race? (Check all that apply)
   □ School   □ College/University   □ Work   □ Store/Restaurant
   □ Government Services   □ Health Care   □ Recreation   □ Other: ______________________

b) Please describe what happened. ______________________          ______________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
For Questions #17, 18, 19, please check one response and explain.

C17) I believe there is __________ discrimination against Aboriginal peoples in Thunder Bay.

- little
- some
- widespread

Please explain:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

C18) I believe there is __________ discrimination against visible minorities in Thunder Bay.

- little
- some
- widespread

Please explain:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

C19) I believe there is __________ discrimination against white people in Thunder Bay.

- little
- some
- widespread

Please explain:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

C20) Based on the answers you gave in Questions 17-19, do you think being visibly poor affects how people are treated? Please explain:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

PART D: Moving Forward

D1) What do you think should be done to stop race discrimination? Please explain:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
D2) What could be done at your work or school to better show Thunder Bay’s diversity? Please explain:

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

PART E: Information about you

E1) Are you: ☐ Female ☐ Male

E2) What is your age?
☐ Under 16 years ☐ 16-30 years ☐ 31-45 years
☐ 46-60 years ☐ Over 60 years

E3) What is your highest Education level?
☐ Did not start High School ☐ Have not finished High School
☐ Finished High School ☐ Some College/University
☐ Finished University/College ☐ Graduate School

E4) What is your job? ___________________________________

☐ Other ☐ Don’t know

E6) What is your family’s annual income?
☐ Under $10,000 ☐ $10,001 to $25,000 ☐ $25,001 to $50,000
☐ $50,001 to $100,000 ☐ over $100,00

Would you be willing to talk further about your own experiences and views on diversity and race relations in the community? The interview would be at a place of your choosing and take about 30 minutes.

If so,
First name only: __________________________ Telephone Number: ____________________________
(If you do not have a phone number, call the number listed on the first page.)
(Thank you in advance, not everyone will be called.)
Are there any further comments you would like to make?

Please place in the enclosed, stamped envelope and mail to:
“Community of Acceptance” Survey
P.O. Box 21089
640 River Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7A 8A7

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ENERGY!
A Community of Acceptance: Respect for Thunder Bay’s Diversity

Appendix Three
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

NOTE: QUESTION ORDER VARIED FROM INTERVIEW TO INTERVIEW.

The Interview
1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
2. Why were you interested in doing this interview?
3. Do you feel YOU are often discriminated against because of race?
4. Tell me a little about some of the most common things that have happened to you?
5. What are the places or situations where this tends to happen?

Ask about the places listed below
6. I’d like to got through a list of general areas. Tell me your experiences here. Like,
   A) What is your experience in this place? Do you feel you receive the same treatment as others? Do people treat you differently (or have you noticed them treating others differently) because of race?
     Stores
     Restaurants
     Recreation settings
     Health care
     Government Services
     Workplace
     School
     Police
     Buses

7. How do you decide if it is racism? (Maybe it is something else, or the person is cranky?)
   (Follow up on responses)
8. How often would you say racial sorts of things happen?
9. How do you react to such situations?
10. What impacts does it have on you?
11. Ask about People of colour/Aboriginal peoples. Are they treated the same in Thunder Bay? What do you notice about how ______ are treated?
12. Do you think racism is a personal problem or a community problem? Why?
13. Do you think racism happens because of just a few bad apples?
   (Leave pause, add if needed for clarification--) Or is it more widespread? Please explain.
14. In your day-to-day life, are you aware of any practices or policies that you consider to give advantages or disadvantages, or just affect certain racial groups more than others?
15. Have things changed over, say, the last five years?
16. What do you think are the solutions to the problem, generally?

Wrap-up
17. Ok, pretend I’m not from here, tell me, what is it like to be _______ in Thunder Bay?
18. Is there anything else that you think is important? Any things that should have been asked?
In the interests of open dialogue, the following suggestions have been culled from surveys and listed here. They are loosely grouped. They are not edited. They come from a variety of perspectives. One of the goals of A Community of Acceptance is to foster community dialogue and problem-solving. It is in that spirit that this appendix is added. The comments are loosely grouped.

VALUES
• Individual people can make a difference by not tolerating the racism they experience either directly, or that they see happening to someone else. Simple things like saying, "that’s really not appropriate", to racist jokes or comments.
• Talking about it in school, Church, work place, and teaching our kids it is wrong and the reasons why it is wrong.
• You can't stop ignorance. You can only keep dialogue going.
• Love each other, like the Lord said to do.
• Make it unacceptable to say negative jokes etc. Advertising (especially in schools) about tolerance and diversity - campaigns that show people in a positive light when they speak up against it.

EDUCATION
• I think that diversity training should be given to Police Officers, all city workers as well as any local government employees.
• We need the information we receive in university on Aboriginal issues in the high school curriculum.
• Education in schools, teaching of different races ways, likes and dislikes and beliefs starting in J.K. This should as important of a subject as any.
• I believe we should have workshops about stopping racism or multicultural weeks.
• Be part of curriculum in schools throughout each year… Tests should be administered to get rid of racist teachers… Aren't there models in other countries? Too many bad teachers.
• Educate the white folk. Make those who discriminate more aware of others and their problems.
• Educate youth in school. Children are often educated in their own homes regarding racism; however, the education is not always positive.
• Teach about the various races creeds, colours, etc, that the differences are not a bad thing with everyone.
• Education from kindergarten and up. Change attitudes. Learn history, beliefs, and systems of all nations. Teach respect, and be respected.
• Education. People should be informed of minorities' cultures, and beliefs to better understand the people a culture not just a person.
• Start with the kids and small children. It was taught in schools (and shoved down our throats), but eventually the older population caught on.
• Education to raise awareness that society os now mixed, it is no longer one ancestry, different people have different ways of doing things.
• Education - start with the kids, hopefully adults will follow. We are all immigrants (except for Aboriginals!)
• Children should be exposed to different cultures and encouraged to be friends with people of all races.
• More interaction within the community. More education - possibly reverse role playing so people realize what it is like to be in the other person's shoes.
• Integration into public schools. Not assimilation!

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
• Intermarriage
• Encourage all people to use all experiences that T. Bay has to offer being either white or other.
• People need to start having good experiences with those they discriminate against. They need to start hearing about positive things these people do to help our community.
• Stand up individually as a community when we witness discrimination.
• Leave the children alone and let them enjoy each other's company without interference from prejudiced adults.

MULTICULTURALISM
• Presentations to the high schools.
• Integrated experiences, small group interactions. Multi-cultural events.
• More multi-cultural events. More celebration of diversity.
• Cultural exchanges between communities. Dragon boat festival was one example.
• Public education. Multicultural centre does wonderful work. Folklore festivals and other such functions to celebrate diversity are important.
• My son's school celebrated national Aboriginal day and I thought it was great. All the kids were excited, the parents too! I think the same could be done with other and we would be teaching our children to embrace all races and cultures.
• We need more cross cultural interaction such as workshops, street dances in all parts of the city. Dress days at schools.
• Can not be changed unless groups stop wanting to be treated different for some aspects of life and the same for others.
• Have sharing circles. Teach others about the importance of your own culture they can learn and not be ignorant.
• Invite the public to events like pow wows or other ethnic gatherings to experience other cultural practices.
• More social events harmonizing everyone as equals.
• Dress and act like most Canadian do. If you want to do it different do it in your home.
MEDIA
- Articles about people first that just happen to be of another race or religion.
- Information on racism - impacts to individuals and communities - Public awareness campaign.
- Also, question what read and watch in the mainstream media.
- Ad campaign encouraging (whites) or all to speak out against it.

OTHER COMMENTS
- More communication (positive) about the Aboriginals in our community. "a day in your shoes" - "change your culture for a day".
- Education and advertising.
- I think there should be more information on race discrimination in schools, workplaces, and people should be made aware of how many cases of race discrimination.
- Education to overcome stereotypes - also policies/by-laws which are neutral on their face should be examined for adverse affects on visible minorities and the poor.
- Punish those who discriminate.
- Education-integration (i.e. sharing places like youth centres). Legal framework.
- More education and appreciation for the unique city we have.
- This is an essay question … (1) equal access to education. (2) We encourage people to be 'victims' too much, instead of promoting personal responsibility.
- More diversity education but with more awareness surrounding Aboriginal issues …… people still think Aboriginal people "deserve" to be where they are, or worst, its their "fault" that they are poor.
- Cut out special privileges to some groups.
- Empowerment training for these who are discriminated against.
- Education, many more cultural events such as multicultural festivals etc, implement some sort of zero tolerance on racism policy.
- Have social groups where you can choose a race or culture and read up and find out about that particular race.
- Talk, talk talk! Community dialogues.
- If higher public officials/workers in Thunder Bay meet and greet with all people in Thunder Bay, the public will see this as the norm and follow suit. Also, the media should have more ethnic diversity, such as a native news anchor, etc.
- I think managers should go, at their own expense and in cognition, to Superior. Do a little shopping and see how American clerks treat people, then come home and train their own people.
- Nothing further should be done. By proposing more and stronger laws against racist behaviour, we only strengthen the hatred of those who are racist.
- More television ads on TV (people do pay attention to those). More council meetings between "mayors" and "leaders of races to discuss problem. It is a start anyway.
- The white majority will have to be more accepting. The government and local leaders could assist by leading the in this regard.
- Have few ideas, except to try to encourage Indian youths to stay in school - get some qualifications before they become pregnant. Develop some consistent work habits.
- Better education for Aboriginals in health and education. Promote multicultural shows.
• Help Natives get off the street, get them a good home, and healthy food to eat, and also a good paying job.
• Stiffen up the criminal code, invoke greater penalties against those who commit hate crimes.
• Integration of society.
• Make sure that there is responsible and just handling of all affairs (i.e. finances and benefits and infrastructure). So that rumours don’t leak out causing stereotypes.
• Assimilation. Put everyone together. No separate funding or organizations based on race.
• Not give natives status cards, well fair, and everything like that.
• Education - positive promotion re-employment opportunities - address inequities in court system - disproportionate # of Native people in jail.
• Once people have been here for awhile they are understood better and time has always, through every wave of immigration has allowed people to be part of Canada.
• Collective action from faith groups, law enforcement, laws that outlaws any form of discrimination.