

Who Are We—Suzie Wong? Chinese Canadian Women's Search For Identity

By

Grace Wong Sneddon

B.Ed., University of Victoria, 1980

M.Ed., University of Victoria, 1981

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Interdisciplinary Studies

© Grace Wong Sneddon, 2015
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This dissertation may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopying or other means, without the permission of the author.

Supervisory Committee

Who Are We—Suzie Wong? Chinese Canadian Women's Search For Identity

By

Grace Wong Sneddon
B.Ed., University of Victoria, 1980
M.Ed., University of Victoria, 1981

Dr. Margot Wilson, Supervisor
(Department of Anthropology)

Dr. Richard King, Co-Supervisor
(Department of Pacific and Asian Studies)

Dr. Lianne McLarty, Committee Member
(Department of Art History and Visual Studies)

ABSTRACT PAGE

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Margot Wilson, Supervisor
(Department of Anthropology)

Dr. Richard King, Co-Supervisor
(Department of Pacific and Asian Studies)

Dr. Lianne McLarty, Committee Member
(Department of Art History and Visual Studies)

ABSTRACT

The children born into the Canadian-Chinese community following the repeal of the Canadian Chinese Immigration Act (1923) were the first Chinese-Canadians to be born with full citizenship rights. After decades of isolation and segregation, the 1946 Canadian Citizenship Act transformed the limited citizenship of Chinese immigrants to full citizenship. Whether the parents of these children were Canadian or had just arrived, they could offer their children little guidance as Canadian citizens. The participants in the study are Canadian-born women, descendants from the four counties of Sun Wui, Hoi Ping, Toi San, and Yin Ping of the Pearl Delta District of Guangdong, China. Their region, dialect, class, gender, age, and ethnicity unite them. There were few Canadian-born Chinese from the time of the repeal until 1967 when Canada changed its immigration policy to a more equitable point system not based on race.

This is an interdisciplinary study incorporating an anthropological interviewing methodology, an examination of Chinese-Canadian history and of Asian women in Hollywood films, and how these portrayals have impacted the contemporary societal perceptions of Chinese women. I have discussed Asian psychology, feminist, cultural, and film studies and how they relate to identity development. I examined the markers used by the participants to fashion their identity, looking at the themes of beauty, behaviour, language, culture, values, and expectations. I used oral history and narrative methodology through in-depth interviews to examine how the historical, economic, political, and socio-cultural contexts have influenced this generation of Canadian-born women of Chinese descent as they developed their identity in Canada.

Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables and Figures.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Chapter 1. The Beginning: My Love Affair With Stiletto Heels.....	1
Rationale	
Definition of Terms	
Organization of this study	
Chapter 2. The Literature Review: Not Another Long-Suffering Woman Book	34
Concept models of the Interdisciplinary Research	
Chapter 3. Methodology: Narrative and Life History: Empowerment Through Storytelling	78
Population and Sample	
Data collection, procedure and analysis	
Chapter 4. The Findings: Growing up Chinese-Canadian in the 1950s	115
Description of the Sample	
Description of the Responses	
Analysis of Responses	
Discussion	
Chapter 5. Summary and Self-Reflection: Moving Beyond the Stereotypes	203
Summary	
Impact of Study	
Chapter 6. Recommendations for future research	230

References	234
Filmography	284
Appendices:	286
Letter and Poster Request for Participation	
Consent Form	
Interview Questions	

List of tables and figures

Table 1. Chinese Identity	103
Table 2. Role Models	104
Table 3. Dating and Marriage	105
Table 4. TV Shows that Participants Watched Growing Up	149
Table 5. Age Composition of Foreign-born and Native-born Chinese Canadians 1971	173
Table 6. Current Status of Participants	197

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all the participants who so generously gave me their time and their trust in sharing their personal and family stories. Although the details differed from family to family, each story shared commonalities and invoked memories of my experience and my family's history. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to share and preserve the oral histories of these remarkable women. I am deeply grateful to Nancy Kwan, who portrayed Suzie Wong in *The World of Suzie Wong* and Linda Low in *Flower Drum Song*, for so generously giving of her time in sharing her perspectives and insights on her roles and experience behind the scenes as an Asian actress in Hollywood. I am indebted to the Honourable Vivienne Poy for her perspectives on Chineseness and for sharing her research process with me. Both these remarkable women have and continue to be role models for many of us who grew up in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s.

A special thank you goes to Dr. Margot Wilson, Dr. Richard King and Dr. Lianne McLarty for their ongoing encouragement and support. Their advice and guidance helped to shape my dissertation. In particular, I extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Wilson who has been a touchstone for me throughout this study.

Chapter 1. The Beginning:

My Love Affair With Stiletto Heels

Why This Study?

I am ten years old. I am sitting in a theatre watching Nancy Kwan in *Flower Drum Song* (1961). I see a beautiful Chinese actress who is singing and dancing. She seems to be having so much fun. I recognize that she is being mischievous, gets caught and yet survives the traditional father's disapproval and disappointment. She reminds me of Doris Day, a popular White actress who also sings, dances and has fun, but Nancy Kwan is Chinese. She looks like me. I gaze at the screen and, mesmerized by her clothes, I am amazed at how each outfit is paired with the most exquisite pair of high-heeled shoes. So began my love affair with stiletto heels.

Now, decades later, I have undertaken a research study of women of my generation, Canadian-born Chinese, who grew up in the 1950s and 1960s following the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act in 1947. We were the first Canadian-born Chinese to have citizenship rights and, as Franca Iacovetta wrote in 1997, "Little has been written about Asian Canadians as historical actors rather than objects of scorn."(p.4) Previously, Chinese-Canadian history focused mainly on the experiences of the men who came to Canada for the Gold Rush and to build the Canadian Pacific Railway and then stayed, living a bachelor existence. I wanted to provide an alternate reading of Chinese Canadian history beyond that of victimhood. My rationale for undertaking research that is so personal was that this group of women have stories to share that have not previously been told. We are the first group to witness and personally experience the shift in attitude from exclusion to multiculturalism for the Chinese in Canada. We were also the generation to experience the positive and difficult challenges of living and learning about these policies on a day-to-day basis. This study will identify some of those daily occurrences in their

societal, economic and global context as they unfolded in Canada. It will examine how the confluence of these many changes influenced this generation of Canadian-born women who, like most of the preceding Chinese arrivals, were descendants of the four counties of Guangdong, China. This study will also examine how the representation and portrayal of Chinese women in Hollywood have affected the identity of this group of participants.

The goal of this oral history project is to record a segment of Chinese-Canadian history that, to date, has received little attention—the life of Canadian-born Chinese women in the period between the repealing of the Exclusion Act and the introduction of multiculturalism. All participants in this study share the same criteria, as I do, of being Canadian-born Chinese women, descendants of the four counties of Sun Wui, Hoi Ping, Toi San and Yin Ping in the Pearl Delta District in Guangdong, China, whose first language was Szeyup, a dialect from their families' villages in South China. They belong to the first group of Chinese-Canadians to obtain Canadian citizenship, which included the right to non-segregated schooling. Although the repeal of the Canada Immigration Act allowed for family unification, there were persisting restrictions on citizenship and the previous extended period of exclusion of Chinese immigration had limited the numbers of families able to take advantage of family sponsorships. Thus the cohort of Canadian-born Chinese to which these participants belonged was very small. The participants, like their parents, 75% of whom were also Canadian-born, struggled for an identity different from the Chinese sojourners who arrived in Canada before 1923 and distinct from the more educated and affluent Chinese who came after 1967. This struggle for identity has been a lifelong experience for these women who say that, even today, they feel like the perpetual foreigner in Canada, in that they continue to be asked by others, “Where did you come from?” The participants said that the Suzie Wong phenomenon from the Hollywood film, *The World of Suzie*

Wong (1960) played by Nancy Kwan, a Chinese actress, have influenced how the dominant culture views them and indeed how they viewed themselves throughout their life.

I used the following questions to structure this study examining the identity formation of these Canadian-born women descendants of the four counties of Guangdong. How did this generation of Canadian-born women carve a cultural space for themselves, negotiating between the traditions of their family and the expectations of the dominant culture, and propel their lives and family into Canadian middle-class suburbia? How did they upset the existing discourse on Chinese identity, a discourse once dominated by the older generation of male migrants and by the stereotypical representation of the erotized and exotic Asian women in mainstream cinema? How do they presently locate themselves in the Canadian context as a person of Chinese descent among other Chinese?

This is an interdisciplinary study incorporating (a) an anthropological interviewing methodology, (b) a discussion of Chinese-Canadian history, and (c) an exploration of Asian women in film. The study examines the identify formation of these participants. Although they share gender, class, age and being Canadian-born descendants from the four counties of Guangdong, China, they are quite individual in how they have navigated the formation of their identity. To describe their various pathways and the larger narrative of the social, cultural and economic world that influenced them, I have included a discussion of (a) Asian psychology, (b) feminist, cultural and film theorists and their theories, and (c) perspectives and narratives on identity relating to gender and ethnicity.

For clarity and consistency I include definitions of terms that are used throughout this paper. For example, I have given considerable thought to the use of the term *Asian* versus

singular ethnic identities such as *Chinese*. The participants use both terms interchangeably and one participant used the term *Oriental*. In this paper, I use the term *Asian North American* to include those who trace their origins or self-identity through ancestors who come from South Asia, South East Asia, East Asia and the Pacific Islands and who currently reside in the U.S. or Canada. I use the term *Chinese-Canadians* and, in particular, *Canadian-born* to indicate the Canadian-born women who are descendants of the four counties (Sun Wui, Hoi Ping, Toi San and Yin Ping) of Guangdong, China. The term *China-born* refers to those who are born in China and who were partially or fully raised there as well as in Canada. As this study references Asian-American studies, Asian-American literature and Hollywood cinema, I include the term *Asian-American*, which initially described a politically charged group identity in the ethnic consciousness movements of the late 1960s. In Canada, the use of the parallel term *Asian Canadian* grew from similar struggles in the mid-1970s. Today, *Asian American/Canadian* is considered an umbrella term that includes native and foreign-born American or Canadian citizens.

I have concentrated on the factors that affected identity as described by the participants in this study. The formation of a person's identity is a process influenced by a wide variety of factors which include but are not limited to: cultural, social, ethnic, gender and class, coupled with her desire to fit in. To understand their process, I examined diverse models of assimilation, acculturation and integration. Although the assimilation process is currently contested, especially in analysis of post-1967 immigrants and their migration histories and experiences, it was generally accepted and desired by the participants in the 1950s and 1960s. The work and views of cultural and assimilation theorists influenced the nature of this study. Anthropologist, R. Reminick (1983) posited three analytical levels of systemic operation for ethnicity: (a) the

psychological level is based on the problem of ethnic identity, (b) the sociological or social structural level considers the social network that defines one's ethnic group, (c) and the cultural level examines the nature of ethnic culture. G.Tian (1999) stated that ethnic culture reflects an individual's orientation to her own ethnicity, which includes the sense and extent of one's commitment to the traditions or the style of life associated with a particular ethnicity and the conflicts that one deals with or resolves by maintaining an ethnicity.

Identity comes from a sense of belonging that comes from recognising those things we have in common with some people and those that differentiate us. Lola Young (1996) maintained, "Absolutist notions of ethnicity and racial authenticity and belongingness may be illusory since individual identities are almost never fixed or consistent" (p. 186). Psychologist, J. W. Berry (2005) referred to acculturation as the process of cultural change that results when two or more cultural groups come into contact as well as the psychological changes experienced by individuals as a consequence of group changes. His research gave rise to the two-dimensional models of acculturation that recognize: "[The] dominant aspects of acculturation, preservation of one's heritage culture and adaption to the host society, are conceptually distinct and vary independently" (p.704). Thus, acculturation is defined as a process of learning to live in new social and cultural contexts after one has become socialised into an earlier one. Berry et al., (2006) proposed that there are two independent issues underlying the process of acculturation, the individual's connection to their culture or cultures and their link to their societies of settlement. This suggests that the basic issues facing all acculturating people depend upon distinguishing between orientation toward one's own group and orientations towards other groups. The experiences of all but one participant in this study fit this definition of acculturation because they were socialised within their families and communities with some connection to

Chinese peers. Another significant contribution to my research is sociologist, M. Gordon's (1964) definition of assimilation. From the point of view of the racial/ethnic minority, the first type is behavioural assimilation, known as acculturation. "This takes place when s/he absorbs the cultural norms, beliefs, and behaviour patterns of the 'host' society, in effect, when one begins to act 'American.'" (Le, 2007 p. 22-23)

I reviewed the work of various cultural theorists to examine definitions of culture, identity and stereotypes as they relate to identity. For the purpose of this study, I used Mehrunnisa Ali's (2008) definition of culture, which he defined as a set of distinctive, relatively stable attributes associated with a group which are used as a description of relationships between individuals, groups and their representations to create a space in which these attributes are claimed, contested or modified. How the Orient or the East is viewed and represented sets the foundation for my study and is based on the principles posited by Edward Said, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, and Antonio Gramsci.

Said's (1978) post-colonial theory on Orientalism in his book by the same name is used as a basis for many film critics who propound the misrepresentation of Asians in cinema. Said's theory on Orientalism was built on the foundation of other theorists such as Michel Foucault. Foucault (1964) dated the habit of the West and the concept of Othering to post-medieval times. Initially, Othering referred to the leper and, subsequently, to the mad person, suggesting that someone has to be the outcast. Foucault postulates that the Other was constructed through discourses or non-utterances that constructed an object first to be written about, then to be examined, then ultimately to be incarcerated. He said that language must be created for the Other to be spoken of as a means to construct the discourse. Foucault (1975) posited the power of the gaze of the One that would then represent the Other. He suggests that seeing with the gaze of

authority produces knowledge, which then produces power. Said, following Foucault's theory, said that Orientalism is a discourse. The West and the Orient support and reflect each other like opposites in the mirror echoing Lacan's mirror theory. Building on Gramsci's *Prison Notes* (1929-1935) that declared certain cultural forms or representational discourses have dominance over others, Said stated that the Orient became the object of the West's gaze. Foucault argued that the Orient was constructed as inferior, feminized, and uncivilized, and was contained and represented within this dominating framework. Said noted that:

The Orient is always fixed in time and place in the mind of the West and the represented history of the Orient is conceived of as a series of responses to the West, which is always the judge of Oriental behaviour. (p. 108)

Building on this foundational framework of viewing the Orient, I examined Bhabha's (1994) work on identity and stereotypes. The issue of stereotypes is a prevailing theme in the literature and is reflected in the interviews with the participants, as they described their understanding of the gendered and Chinese stereotype in representation and in stereotypical characteristics and behaviour. Bhabha observed:

The stereotype is not a simplification because it is a false representation of a given reality. It is a simplification because it is an arrested, fixated form of representation that, in denying the play of difference, constitutes a problem for the representation of the subject in signification of psychic and social relations. (p. 107)

Richard Dyer (1977) concurs with Bhabha that a stereotype is when everything about a person is reduced to a few simple, vivid, memorable and widely recognized characteristics, exaggerated, exemplified and fixed without change or development to eternity.

Eugene F. Wong (1978) suggested:

Repetitiveness of stereotypes can literally maintain unfavourable images across generations, whereby the consistency and authority of the stereotypes are assumed to be “almost like biological fact”. . . the new generation can in turn, having been conditioned, expect or at the very least accept continuation of racist stereotyping in its own motion picture experience. (p. 94)

Women of colour feminist theorist, C. T. Mohanty (1991), echoing Said, argued that for people of colour, their legal, economic, religious, and familial structures are treated as phenomena to be judged by Western standards. Author, feminist and social activist, bell hooks (1984) offered a more inclusive feminist theory that advocates for women to acknowledge their differences and to accept each other. She says that women do not share a common status and challenges feminists to consider gender’s relation to race, class, and sex. The participants in the study identified race, class, familial structure, and Western standards of beauty as areas in which they felt judged.

As the first group of Chinese to transition from being non-Canadian citizens to Canadian citizens, we witnessed great changes in the Canadian economy and particularly in our social landscape. I felt, as many of the participants stated, that we grew up in two worlds: the Chinese and the outside. During our childhood and adolescence we heard from our parents and our grandparents how they were excluded and segregated and we learned from our own experience of the emergence of multiculturalism and the enactment of the model minority. Today, popular culture suggests that no person or group should feel caught in a binary position of having to

choose. Yet, for the participants, the constant admonitions to be honest, to always do one's best, to work hard, to behave properly, not to bring shame to the family took root.

In the rapidly changing Canada of the 1950s and 1960s this participant group found they were few in number, had few role models with similar experience, and received conflicting information about what was right. Family and outsiders advocated for making a choice. This was the first group of Chinese who called Canada, not China, home. The available Chinese women role models that this group looked to had no experience of the Canadian social or professional milieu since they had no opportunity to access post-secondary education or professional careers. The "successful" Chinese women role models to whom this group had access came from Hollywood cinema in the form of Nancy Kwan in the roles of a prostitute and a nightclub entertainer in *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*.

Just like the participants, I did not ask questions and got on with the task of growing up. Yet, there are aspects that had a lasting impact on how we pursued that task. I am curious as to what degree Nancy Kwan's iconic roles influenced our identity as she taught Chinese and non-Chinese audiences about Chinese women through the eyes of Hollywood. The participants in this study were not the first Canadian-born Chinese (in fact there were several generations of Canadian-born Chinese before and after them) but it was this group that set the bar for the model minority. I entered into this research with the notion that this group with access to so few Chinese role models had little information but I found quite the opposite. This group was deluged with information from home, school, peers, and the media from Chinese, Canadian, U.S., and international perspectives. This group had to decide which perspective they would follow. They had to learn how and what to choose and how to sift and balance the information while still functioning at school, work, and home.

Methodology

I used life history research and reviewed collections of oral histories to examine the life experiences of Canadian-born women of Chinese descent following family unification made possible by the Canada Citizenship Act (1946) and the repeal of the Canada Immigration Act (1923-1947). Using the portrayal of Asian women in mainstream film as a centre point, I interviewed Chinese-Canadian women who are now in their 50s, 60s, and 70s. I used a poster to recruit participants through local Chinese associations and an informal network known as the snowball method to suggest possible initial contacts. Some of the participants came forward in response to my presentation at these meetings and others came because the attendees at the meetings suggested to them that they might be interested in my study. My research experience was similar to that of Jieyu Liu (2006) who noted the importance of personal connections in Chinese social transactions and on the use of informal networks such as the snowball method to garner potential interviewees.

I had varying degrees of familiarity with the participants. Some were school friends, others were acquaintances, and a few were friends of participants. Many of the participants said they viewed me as someone who had shared similar experiences with them. However, I was mindful that they should not assume that I share the same background experience or knowledge. The participants' familiarity and knowledge of me in the community was conducive to sharing and to viewing me as someone trustworthy. In the Chinese culture, people tell each other what they really think only if they classify the other as an insider who has something in common, according to Liu (2006). The common aspects of our age, gender, class, and familial ancestral villages added another layer of trust. The interviews felt rooted in some of our shared experiences and understanding. I made it clear that there was no expectation or pressure for

anyone to participate and that interviewees were not obliged to answer any questions that made them uncomfortable; they were free to end the interview whenever they wished. The participants signed an agreement form. To provide an additional assurance of confidentiality, I used pseudonyms in the text instead of their given names.

I used oral history and narrative methodology from an insider's perspective and I have incorporated some of the coding and self-reflection principles from grounded theory. For consistency and clarification of personal experience methods such as life-history research, I wanted to review both the terminology and its utility in this study. For this study, I used standard anthropology fieldwork techniques such as interviews and participant observation. The data is interpreted and considered in relation to cultural, social, psychological, and feminist theories and is represented in the form of life-history accounts. These accounts represent both the researcher's interpretation of the participants' lives and the researcher's theorizing about those lives in relation to broader contextual situations and issues.

Life history and narrative research rely on and depict the storied nature of lives; both are concerned with honouring the originality and complexity of individuals' experiences. Narrative research concentrates on the individual and the fact that life can be understood through recounting and reconstructing the life story. Life-history research takes the narrative one step beyond the individual and places narrative accounts and interpretations in a broader context such as the cultural, political, familial, educational, and/or religious spheres. Life-history research relates the narrative to the way in which history is defined. History is the documentation of stories told and recorded about the past through the identification of significant people, places, moments, events, and movements located in time and context.

Oral history and oral narrative are often used synonymously. Like personal narratives, personal histories, and life stories, oral history is a method of reconstructing a life. In oral history, the narrator has a predominant role in the representation of the life told. Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis (1993) stated, “Oral history preserves an individual’s own words and perspectives. It reveals an unedited and sometimes unprocessed view of personal meaning and judgement that is not altered by the usual limitations of written language” (p.xii). In the data, I recorded the words and syntax used by the participants and tried to capture their expressed emotions.

At all times, I was mindful of the practice and principles of reflexive practice in life-history research and grounded theory as well as the ongoing process of self-reflection, the heightening of emphatic awareness, and my responsibility to the participants and to our community. My work was guided by the foundational guiding principles of life-history research found in Ardra L. Cole and J. Gary Knowles (2001) and Shirley Dex (1991). The chapter “Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms?” found in *The Ann Oakley Reader* (2005) provided useful insight into interviewing women.

The strategies to ensure reliability in qualitative research are (a) triangulation and (b) transparency of the research process, including the perspectives and assumptions that influence the researcher’s decisions. I provided comparative analysis with other life-history research from other ethnic and diverse identities as a strategy to enhance generalizability and external validity. Traise Yamamoto’s (1999) *Masking Selves, Making Subjects: Japanese American Women, Identity, and the Body*, Lola Young’s (1996) *Fear of the Dark: ‘Race,’ Gender and Sexuality in the Cinema*, Michiko Midge Ayukawa (1996) *Japanese Pioneer Women: fighting Racism and Rearing the Next Generation* among others, provided useful and diverse approaches to their process and insight into their work with gender and ethnicity.

My research included an examination of how other researchers such as Jin Guo (1992), Claire Chow (1998), and Vivienne Poy (2013) conducted and analysed their data. Demonstrating the diversity and flexibility of this methodology, some researchers chose a broad spectrum. Chow interviewed women who identified as Asians. Guo interviewed Chinese-Canadian women with a range of migration and immigration history who are settled in Canada. Through interviews, Poy examined women's historical journey from China to Canada. Poy's sample was the generation before the participants in my study.

In addition to my participant pool of twelve women, I interviewed Nancy Kwan, who portrayed Suzie Wong in *The World of Suzie Wong*. I concentrated on her acting roles and what she thought of her impact on transnational audiences. I also interviewed Vivienne Poy, the first woman of Asian descent called to the Senate of Canada. I asked about her opinions on media representation and her work as a scholar of Chinese-Canadian women. For the interviews I used one set of questions for Nancy Kwan, another set for Vivienne Poy, and a third set to prompt the recollections of the critical junctures of the journey and process of each interviewee.

Cole and Knowles (2001) and Liu (2006) make a distinction between a researcher who is "doing" research and researcher who is an "insider" where there is an intersection of the self as researcher and the researched. Jieyu Liu (2006), Sonya Corbin Dwyer and Jennifer Buckle (2009), and Sema Unluer (2012) examined issues of the insider researcher as they relate to integrity and trust. As a researcher who shares the same moment in time with some of these women, I bring my own voice to this study. I share their common experience through the social attributes of gender, class, age, and race (Finch, 1984). Life historians Maura McIntyre and Ardra Cole (2001) suggested the more blurred the boundaries, the closer they got to a "knowledge-producing" relationship. Similarly, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot and Jessica Hoffman-

Davis (1997) considered intimacy, depth of connection, and interpersonal resonance as integral to knowledge development. Drawing on Ann Oakley (1981), they stated, “Authentic findings will only emerge from authentic relations” (p. 138). Lynn Abrams (2010) argued that scholars should re-evaluate autobiographical texts including oral and written life-story narratives of non-Western traditions, challenging some of the assumptions implicit in the notion of the European autobiographical tradition. She contended that non-Western cultures have ways of speaking about the self which differ from what has come to be regarded as the norm in the West. They often produce an account that “does not position the subject as the author of their own destiny,” (p. 37) meaning that they are not the heroine in their story but part of the events. One participant in my study emphasized this exact point and said, “Chinese women advocates lead by being the kingmakers.” Abrams further argued that this recognition should affect the ways in which researchers gather and analyse non-Western life stories.

I drew on the work of Jocelyn Cornwell (1984) who used an anthropological approach to her research. Her sample of interviewees was found through informal social networks similar to my sampling. She discerned the distinction between public and private accounts and noted that public accounts exclude those parts of people’s existence and opinions that might be considered unacceptable and not respectable. In contrast, she noted that private accounts spring directly from personal experience and from the thoughts and feelings accompanying it. Cornwell also suggested that people cope with entirely new situations where they are uncertain of their own position in relation to others by putting on their “best face” (Laslett & Rapoport, 1975). I hoped that my openness in the interview process would help to dispel any feelings of judgement related to the interviewees.

History

This study follows the Canada Citizenship Act of 1946 and the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act in 1947 to 1967, when Canada adopted a new set of non-racist immigration admission criteria. Although immigration policies after 1947 sanctioned family reunification, the extended period of exclusion coupled with persisting restrictions on citizenship severely limited the number of families able to take advantage of family sponsorships. This situation promoted low levels of Chinese immigration throughout the 1950s and into the early 1960s. During this period, when the participants in the study were born and were growing up in Canada, the numbers of their cohort were small. Canadian-born Chinese made up thirty-one percent (31%) of the Chinese in 1951, twenty-four percent (24%) in 1961, and thirty-eight percent (38%) in 1971. Their experiences differed from the single older Chinese men who came to Canada in the late 1800s and early 1900s and were different even from their disenfranchised Canadian-born parents who had been segregated geographically in Chinatowns, educationally in school, and professionally in limiting their career opportunities. The majority of Canadian-Chinese history that is recorded has dealt with the old-timer male sojourners during the Gold Rush and the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The purpose of this study is to fill some of the gaps found in the historical account of Canada's Chinese community and to expand on the common experiences of Chinese men as railroad workers and bachelors of early Chinatowns. It is important to record the women's voices, their history and experience because they were part of a new relationship between the Chinese and Canada. Just as Canada influenced them, the Chinese influenced Canada.

This study holds particular interest for me as I share a similar background and time-span as the participants. Like three of the participants, my father came to Canada prior to 1923 and was joined by my mother and brother in 1950. At the outset of this study, I assumed that the

majority of the participants would fall into this category of older fathers with mothers joining them after the repeal. In fact, there were only 16.6% of the participants who fit this category, 75% of the participants had one or both parents who were Canadian-born and were raised in Canada and 7% whose father, a Canadian-born went to China to bring back a bride who was approximately his age.

The Chinese community in Canada before the Second World War was composed almost exclusively of men because of the restriction on immigration after 1885 and the exclusion after 1923, which resulted in a married-bachelor society. The men were married to wives in China but lived in Canada as bachelors because they were prevented from bringing their wives with them. Until the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946 the Chinese citizens and immigrants were systematically subjected to social, economic, and residential segregation. They responded by retreating into their own ethnic enclaves to avoid competition with and hostility from White Canadians (Lai & Madoff, 1997; Mar, 2010; Tan & Roy, 1985). With so few women, the growth of a second generation of Chinese-Canadians was greatly inhibited (Li, 1988) until after 1947 when families reunited. At this time, the Chinese gained their civil rights and began to build a new post-war community with the birth of the generation to which the participants belong. Seventy-five percent of the Chinese who came to Canada prior to 1967 came from the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong Province from the four counties of Sun Wui, Hoi Ping, Toi San and Yin Ping (Poy, 2013; Roy, 1989; Woon, 1998). In 1947, in British Columbia and federally, the Chinese received the right to vote if they held Canadian citizenship and, for the first time in twenty-four years, as Canadian citizens they were entitled to family sponsorship of wives and under-aged children.

The new Immigration Act of 1952 opened the door incrementally but it covertly continued Canada's previous policies. It gave the Minister of Immigration extensive new powers to exclude any person based on ethnic or geographic background, as well as education, occupation, and health. According to historian, Kay Anderson (1991):

“The political task was to remove open discrimination and that the appearance of equality was achieved but with no fundamental alteration to the present character of the Canadian population as stated by Prime Minister King in 1947.”

For twenty years following repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act, successive governments pursued this strategy through regulations that allowed them to circumvent parliament. Although race was exorcised from the statutes, it was not erased from the administrative practices of Canadian government. According to Anderson (1991) “For those under the category ‘Asiatic’ or ‘Asian,’ the history of separate treatment continued” (p. 180).

In essence, any person who did not meet the subjective standards of a White, Christian, capitalist society could be barred from admission to Canada. Family migration has always been a reality for the Canadian-born Chinese. They were the first of the Asian groups to arrive in Canada, initially arriving in 1858 from the declining California goldmines (Roy, 1989). In 1860, following China's acceptance of the legality of emigration and reports of the new “Gold Mountain” reached China, the immigrants came directly. At the peak of the Gold Rush immigration of the mid-1860s, there were about 4,000 although the population declined to about 1,500 by 1870.

A second wave of Chinese immigrants, an estimated 16,000-17,000, arrived in the early 1880s during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The first national census that

included British Columbia in 1881 counted 693 Chinese in Victoria, which made it the largest Chinese settlement in Canada.

Between the 1880s and 1940s, Canada and the United States implemented policies that excluded and harassed Chinese immigrants. Canada implemented a head tax (1885-1924) on immigrating Chinese workers, followed by the total exclusion of virtually all new Chinese immigrants through the Canada Immigration Act of 1923. During this time, the Chinese were one of Canada's largest visible minorities, the majority living in British Columbia where they made up two percent of the total population of 817,861.

The most distinctive feature of the Chinese community in Canada until post-World War II was its overwhelming maleness. The Chinese were seen as "racial Others" and were given separate and unequal status. British Columbia did not allow Chinese-Canadians to vote and Canada made it difficult for Chinese immigrants to naturalize. The long-established and inflammatory public perception of the Chinese as "yellow hordes" promoted a fear of unchecked Chinese immigration, which explains the intensity of the calls for strict immigration restrictions. An editorial in the *Victoria Daily Colonist* (March 9, 1912) claimed that "if they [Asians] were permitted to come in unlimited numbers, they would in a short time so occupy the land that the white population would be a minority. If B.C. is not kept 'white,' Canada will become Asiatic." These racist attitudes were expressed through the election laws of British Columbia leading to the disenfranchisement of Chinese and First Nations residents in 1874. This disenfranchisement had additional repercussions since it automatically limited access to certain professions and to land ownership. Persons who did not have the right to vote could not become lawyers, pharmacists, accountants, or civil servants and they were not allowed to pre-empt Crown land for agriculture. Thus, the Chinese were limited to owning their own businesses, mostly laundries or

restaurants, or forced to take on unskilled labouring positions (Roy, 1998). In the mid-1940s, the government's attitude toward immigration began to change due to domestic and international pressure, sustained economic growth in the second half of the 1940s, and an emerging Cold War anxiety over Canada's population being too small to enable its self-proclaimed role as a middle power.

Psychologist, Ben Tong (2005) stated that the descendants from the four counties of Guangdong came from peasant or merchant lineage. They were a traditionally unsophisticated and oppressed segment of Chinese society who transferred their feelings of powerlessness at the hands of the warlords and the scholar-official class to the Whites in Canada. In China they adapted to this powerlessness by taking care only of their own, because to meddle in affairs beyond their immediate village or clan community entailed enormous risks. Given their segregation in Canada, this approach was quickly and easily adapted in their community.

The participants in this study are all Canadian-born Chinese women who viewed their Cantonese background and their family history of emigration from Guangdong as one of struggle coupled to a strong work ethic. Their Cantonese background reflected a class identity that distinguished them from the more prosperous and urban immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan who arrived after 1967.

This carefully cultivated belief system affirmed that by giving others the impression that you are satisfied with your lot, albeit meagre, and that you wish to mind your own business, meant that those with power, such as the White Canadians, would leave you alone. Thus, families cautioned their children to avoid becoming involved in matters that might draw the

White man's attention to them. The participants' recollection of such admonitions was that they were urged to be cautious and deferential, and work towards harmony.

Partly due to their small numbers, the families depended on social networks as a resource to connect their Canadian-born children and maintain their Chinese connections. This was reflected in the need to take care of one's own, a role that parents and the Chinese associations took on to the degree that those from each county and their descendants referred to each other as "cousin." By participating in the Chinese Benevolent Association, various village associations, and emerging clubs such as the Chinatown Lions Club, the participants in this study were able to maintain connection to the Chinese community. Historian, Wing Chung Ng's (1999) book, *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The Pursuit of Identity and Power*, provided foundational information about the struggles of Canadian-born descendants in their search for identity and their sources of support.

Despite the struggles, the Chinese were beginning to assimilate and develop roots in Canada. The post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s witnessed some significant events that coalesced to foster the assimilation of the Chinese. Politically, the communist victory in China in 1949 propelled the Chinese to demonstrate their allegiance to Canada and to prove that they were loyal Canadians. Socially, following almost a century of harassment and exclusion, the arrival of women would change forever the male-dominated bachelor societies (Hsiao, 1992; Lee, 1956).

The 1960s was also the time of the celebrated "model minority" image of Asian-Americans and marked a significant departure from the earlier media depictions of Asian immigrants and their descendants. The Chinese and Japanese, the largest Asian groups at that time, were hailed by the media for their persistence in overcoming extreme hardship through

their own unaided effort. The press attributed their winning of wealth and respect in American society to “hard work, family solidarity, discipline, delayed gratification, and a non-confrontational style” (Zhou & Gatewood, 2000). The model minority image followed the wars in the Pacific and Korea, the military occupation of Asian countries and the return of GIs with their Asian brides. It occurred almost at the peak of the civil rights and the ethnic consciousness movements in the U.S. Preceding the coming waves of immigration and refugee influx from Asia, it changed the expectations of the Asian community held by the dominant culture.

The model minority stereotype meant that Asians were held to higher standards, distinguishing them from the average North American. Gordon Pon’s (2000) article suggested that while there is an abundance of literature about the model minority in the United States, there is a scarcity of this information in Canada. He stated that the model minority discourse has been imported from the U.S. to Canada and draws on the American model, reinforcing Canada’s multiculturalism policy.

The women in the study indicated that their generation adhered mostly to their parents’ idea of success, tightly linked to financial security, which fitted in with this model of assimilation. The “model minority,” although a positive stereotype, was still a stereotype and even today continues to hold Asians to higher standards, distinguishing them from other immigrants and visibly different Americans. As the new model minority emerged as the model worker, the overachiever, and the math whiz, it carried with it a new set of distorted images of Asian-origin North Americans that characterized them as anything but normal.

Some of the participants attested to the pressures that they felt because of these high standards while others accepted them as the norm. Although the issues of class and how success

is interpreted are expressed similarly both in the ethnic community and the greater society, other areas such as independence and interdependence in the family and the community are viewed quite differently from the perspectives of traditional Chinese and middle-class Canadian values and norms.

Intertwined with the history of Canada's immigrant Chinese and their diasporic experience is their depiction in popular culture and the media of the time. Iris Chang (2003) stated that this dependence on how others saw them, combined with the scarcity of strong Chinese American role models in popular culture, resulted in a loss of confidence among the Chinese as they began to see themselves as they thought others saw them.

Asians, stereotyped and exploited by the media as an expression of the political and popular issues of the day, have always been seen as outside the Black/White binary, which has been the dominant framework for understanding race relations in the United States. Coupled with racist legislation, various myths and misinformation in the media in different eras, the media have created stereotypical portrayals of the Chinese, initially portrayed ominously as the "yellow peril" and, later promoted as the "model minority." Whether portrayed positively or negatively, Asians (and the Chinese as the largest Asian group) were categorized as the "Other."

My objective in this dissertation is to examine these circumstances and their influence on the historical and societal lives of Canadian-born Chinese women growing up. These women were educated in a Canadian environment. Through school, peers and the media, they became Canadianized far more quickly than their parents, even those who were Canadian-born, because these participants viewed Canada, not China, as home. By using focused questions, I will explore the themes of identity and media representation of Chinese women at that time. In particular, I

will examine their impression of Nancy Kwan, the first Chinese actor to receive star billing in mainstream films, such as *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and *Flower Drum Song* (1961), in which she was the lead actor.

I will also interview Nancy Kwan about her impression of the influence these roles may have had on Chinese North American women. These major roles act as snapshots of contemporary societal perceptions of Chinese women while some of the themes, assumptions, and perceptions continue to the present day. The participants described situations when they were either called Suzie Wong or compared to her. They related their feelings, experienced throughout their adolescence, of being caught in-between; wanting to be like her yet rejecting the stereotype.

These feelings seemed to affect us in different ways. Some of us chose to reject her, saying that we could not identify with her because she was a Chinese “Barbie Doll” and felt we could not be like her. Others aspired to be like her by being outspoken or identified with her performance. For me, it was embodied in my love of stiletto heels.

By reflecting on these Hollywood characterizations, I will examine how the historical, economic, political, socio-cultural, and transnational contexts have, together, fashioned and influenced this generation of Canadian-born women of Chinese descent as they developed their identity in Canada.

Media plays a formative role in how individuals are socialized, and influences the perception of the people in those communities. Film, television, and print reflect how our society understands itself and also what it deems worthy of knowing (Storman & Jones, 1998). Racial ideology, for example, is articulated through portrayals of race in the media. These portrayals

have taught audiences, both Chinese and non-Chinese, about whom the Chinese are and who they should be. Films that reach mainstream audiences are an important medium because they provide an opportunity to portray Chinese women as complex multi-dimensional characters. Films contribute to raising consciousness and awareness of the full character of Chinese women for the Chinese, the dominant culture, and other communities.

I identified themes related to the representation of Chinese women and the propagation of stereotypical portrayals. I then examined the factors that might have influenced their representation, including the political and economic milieu affected by relations between the United States, Canada, and China. As films evolved, so did the socio-cultural context in Canada. The media have blossomed into a global force that both imposes ideas and listens to people of many identities in all communities. One influences the other, making it difficult to say whether political proclivities, education levels, class, age, gender, sexual orientation, social priorities, or loyalties and expectations evolved first.

The early perception of Asians in American popular consciousness in particular periods resulted in the pervasive image of the “yellow peril.” This term, initially used for Japanese and Chinese in the United States, became conflated to include all of Asia as one yellow horde and became a catchword signifying the “yellow menace” to Western Christian civilization (Espiritu, 1997; Marchetti, 1993; Wong, 1978). Concurrently, for most of the twentieth century, American films reduced the complexity of nations, cultures, and characters to simplified stereotypes. The Birmingham School (The Centre of Cultural Studies, established 1964 in Birmingham, UK) perspective underscores the role of class and hegemony in shaping the experiences of youth and youth culture. For this original group of Canadian-born women with citizenship rights, an important criterion of the model minority was the need to be perfect, which included belonging

to White middle-class North America. Given the power of big business, advertisers, marketers, and distributors of the dominant culture, this group of women was susceptible to the superficial trappings of success, which the media repeated for them at every opportunity.

The use of pan-Asian actors, their interchangeable deployment in film and the issue of authenticity has influenced the participants. Hollywood has played a major role in creating and perpetuating stereotypical images of Asian-Americans by lumping distinct ethnicities into a single racial category, fitting them into particular moulds with racial signifiers such as phenotypes, accents, and distorted behavioural characteristics. The representation of Asian women in popular media trades on their homogeneity, often treating them interchangeably (Jiwani, 1992).

The participants in the study claimed that Hollywood assumes that audiences are not able to distinguish between different Asian national origins and adhere to the common adage that “all Asians look alike.” The participants were, for example, incensed that the role of Mei Li as the picture bride in *Flower Drum Song* was given to a Japanese actress rather than to a Chinese actress.

The participants stated that crafting and supporting a link between the culture and beliefs of their parents and a Canadian way of life was a significant yet challenging element in their daily lives. The process of balancing these two identities played a vital role in their process of identification. Ultimately, the construction of identity, the image of oneself interacting with others, is about power relations. Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Zdzislaw Mach (2007) noted that if the internal power structure in a group is oppressed or incapacitated it affects how the identity is formed. Anthropologist, Victor Witter Turner (1967) stated that the

world provides external images of ourselves and others as well as concepts of social relations, prejudices, stereotypes, ideologies, and beliefs which influence the development of self. The participants stated that, growing up, they saw few Asians portrayed in the media and the ones they did see were portrayed in stereotypical and subservient roles. The experience of Asian North American women, their immigration history, their encounters with exclusion policies, and their stereotype as a model minority have contributed to questions about their identity in terms of ethnicity, gender, and status as North Americans (Uchida, 2000).

The proximity of the U.S. to Canada and the conglomeration of the U.S. media via the work of Hollywood in films such as *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song* have influenced the self-identity of Canadian-born Chinese women. Children learn societal norms and expectations through the media. Cortes (2000) noted that without prior experience or knowledge, children and adolescents will accept the portrayal of people in the media as the truth and will assign those characteristics to that group of people. This generation of Canadian-born Chinese women had few role models or mentors to help them negotiate their adaptation to mainstream society. Even those participants with one or both Canadian-born parents had few cousins, uncles, aunts, or even children of family friends who knew any more about the Canadian cultural scene than they did. As this group of young people reached adolescence and began to explore their self-identity, mainstream Hollywood films featuring Asians influenced them.

Feminists and anti-racist scholars understand racism as necessarily intersecting with other systems of structured inequality: gender, nationality, language, class, sexuality, and ability, among others (Mohanty et al., 1991). They further argued that we could not understand exclusion and subordination without understanding the mechanics of sexuality that underpin its discourse and practice. The sexual desires, fantasies, and fears of White, heterosexual males and

females constitute what society perceives as masculine and feminine. “Others” are often simplified into a few traits and seen as objects to be feared, desired, exploited, and dominated. Therefore an understanding of how Asian women are portrayed in film tells us about the place of Asian women in the larger society.

These Canadian-born children grew up straddling the two cultures, developing a Canadian frame of reference through schooling, peers, and the media. At the same time, they experienced the strong parental beliefs about how children and youth ought to behave from parents who were nervous about the dominant society. Many of their parents retained aspects of the culture of China such as language, values, customs, and cuisine and to a greater or lesser degree, transmitted them to their children. Some of the participants developed an allegiance to the culture of another country, often without ever having set foot there. Although the families wanted their children to participate in Canadian society, they wanted it on their own terms.

Given these divergent goals, my questions explored the strategies used by the participants to assimilate into the dominant host society, to embrace Canadian culture, acquire a Canadian identity and, ultimately, become indistinguishable from their Canadian peers. Cultural conflict arose for the participants when they had to compromise over the expectations of their Chinese heritage and Canadian norms. A participant said that she often felt she was not fitting in, which resulted in interpersonal conflict with parents or peers. Differing from their parents both in their path and adaptation, the participants grew up with a heightened awareness of their heritage and the wider dominant culture, neither of which felt entirely their own. The 25% of the participants whose mother came later to join their father experienced a growing language gap as they increasingly spoke more English than Chinese. This created conflict in intergenerational communication and in the transmission of culture and identity. For the 75% whose parents were

Canadian-born, English was spoken in the home to the children although the parents spoke Chinese to each other.

All participants experienced considerable erosion in heritage-language persistence while other aspects of ethnic identity such as the celebration of festivals and feast days endured. Intrapersonal conflict was experienced and is described as “feeling torn between two cultures” (Giguere et al., 2007, pp. 58-62). Formal acculturation through schooling and informal acculturation through peers and media were also powerful influences on the participants. Sociologist, Vappu Tyyska (2006) identified concerns over issues such as peer relations and social behaviour, dating and spouse selection. These patterns became a struggle between dependence and independence, exemplifying the difference between traditional Chinese values and Canadian values and norms.

Feminist scholar JoAnne Lee (2006) contended that “Asian Canadian women who grow up in Canada align themselves with the dominant groups and turn their backs on new arrivals of immigrants” (p. 28). The participants concurred and stated in the interviews that they viewed newer arrivals from Asia with a sense of ambivalence and found themselves forced to distinguish themselves from the newer arrivals. As one participant put it, “These people weren’t even speaking my Chinese. It was like some foreign kind of Chinese language.” The Canadian-born women grew up speaking *Szeyup*, a dialect of the four counties that differed from the Cantonese or Mandarin spoken by new arrivals. Like other second-generation groups, they acted as a cultural bridge between their parents’ way of life and a new way they considered Canadian. They were well aware of the parents’ expectation to excel in school in courses such as math and science and to get a good job while following cultural traditions. These expectations were not always synonymous with their own need to fit in and become accepted as Canadians (Ali, 2008).

Movies are cultural expressions that bind the social order, present distorted images of reality, and express partial truths as certainty. Historian and ethnic studies scholar, Jun Xing (1998) suggested, “Reading Asian American films is not just a literary or aesthetic but also a sociological, historical, and cultural enterprise.” He says that Asians and Asian North Americans expect Asian American films to include two critical elements, an authentic Asian American point of view and a sensitive portrayal of Asian American characters and communities (p. 45). What constitutes authenticity is contested along gendered and generational lines. “In the practice of cultural misreadings, community responses to the films reinforce the problem of the culture/art divide and a certain ‘burden of representation’ is placed on Asian American films (Xing, 1998 p. 194). Wayne Wang, Director of *Joy Luck Club* (1993) takes the stance that an artist is responsible to his art and proclaims, “No story that is about individuals, about specific people, can represent all of Asian American culture, or Chinese American culture. It just represents those characters” (Wang interview, 1996). Nancy Kwan stated that Asian American directors are needed to make a difference for better representations for Asian Actors. Despite having Asian American directors, Asians have been limited to a few simple stereotypical parts which the dominant culture recognized and with which it felt comfortable since the birth of cinema.

The portrayal of Asian women has historically been through three stereotypes (a) the “China Doll,” an exotic and erotic, yet delicate woman; (b) the “Dragon Lady,” a criminal mastermind who deceives using her sexual wiles; or (c) the self-sacrificing woman, who gives up everything that is asked of her including herself. These stereotypical models showed Asian women as naïve and helpless or devious and untrustworthy. These limitations in the roles offered to Asian women by the film industry have strongly influenced the perception of people in the dominant culture as well as in the minority it purports to represent.

The fact that Asians are generally under-represented in the media contributes to this narrow and often selective view of Asian women and has far-reaching repercussions in that it enables the media to feature narrow segments of Asian diversity. In turn, it promotes and maintains false beliefs in mainstream society. At its worst, it continues the cycle of misunderstanding and pigeonholing of Asian culture (Feng, 2002; Kang, 1979; Lim, 1994). The participants acknowledged that, during their adolescence, they searched for media representation that with which they could identify with. The cultural stereotype of Asian women as sexual and exotic objects is historically rooted in the Western colonization of various Asian countries (Chan, 1988).

The World of Suzie Wong, adapted from Richard Mason's 1957 novel, tells the story of draftsman, Robert Lomax, who has decided to take a year out and establish himself as a painter. Robert Lomax rents a room in what turned out to be a de facto brothel in Hong Kong's Wanchai District. He hires Suzie Wong, as his regular model. Despite incredible hardship as an illiterate prostitute with an illegitimate son, she maintains her goodness, beauty, and innocence. The film tells the story of an interracial romance between Suzie Wong, a wholesome prostitute and single mother, and an American businessman. Although Robert Lomax resisted sleeping with her initially because he cannot condone her career choice, he realizes quickly that he has fallen in love with Suzie Wong. By the film's conclusion, her son dies and the couple intends to marry and live in the United States in the face of his community's disapproval. The role of Suzie Wong, portrayed by Nancy Kwan was played as sexy yet vulnerable and catapulted her, an unknown twenty-year-old, onto the big screen and into Hollywood stardom. It was the essentially good woman trapped in a bad situation. There has been much criticism, particularly from Asian-American writers, (Feng, 2002; Marchetti, 1993; Shimizu, 2007; Xing, 1998) that

Nancy Kwan has taken on roles that perpetuate the image of Asian women as sexualized in their race and gender and that perpetuate the representation of Asian women as objects of beauty and desire. Unlike most White actresses, who are not expected to uphold the character of all White women, Nancy Kwan has been forced to respond to this criticism. She said, “It’s only a role. I’ve never seen myself as an icon for Asian-American women. I’m an actor and I play these roles” reiterating Wayne Wang’s position. Like Nancy Kwan, in this situation, the participants said that they often found themselves in situations where they felt that they represented not just themselves but all Chinese.

The film, *Flower Drum Song*, depicts the immigrant family as a battleground between traditional Chinese parents and their second-generation Chinese-American children. The plot is framed by a clash between romantic and marital customs of East and West. The movie tells the story of the erotic choice faced by bachelor Wang-Ta between Linda Low, a flashily Westernized nightclub singer and Mei Li, a subtle Eastern beauty. The film was set in San Francisco’s Chinatown and followed two Chinese-American families in their search for suitable wives for their sons. This film was unusual in that it featured an all-Asian cast and the Chinese were portrayed as Chinese-Americans.

Flower Drum Song uses the romantic narrative to explore the challenges of the intergenerational conflicts of the traditional and the modern, symbolized in the roles of Linda Low as a nightclub entertainer and Mei Li as the picture bride. It addresses the Chinese-American community’s idealization of the immigrant’s “Old World” femininity as the ideal in a partner for an increasingly established ethnic minority community in the United States.

More revealing is the film's portrayal of the three marriageable women, Linda, Mei Li, and Helen, and the conflict over who is deemed acceptable. The two affluent Chinese families regard Mei Li, portrayed as the stereotype of the passive and chaste Chinese woman, respectful of her elders and a guardian of her culture, the only choice. The fact that Helen's pockmarked face deemed her an unacceptable mate speaks not only to Chinese superstition but to the gendered process of how Asian women are judged by physical beauty. It expresses how their self-worth is internalized from culturally imposed expectations. In Asian culture, women's anatomy, body shape, facial features, and fairness of the skin are assigned value in a hierarchical ranking which expresses the superficiality of how a female is valued. Despite her attractiveness, Linda Low, as the thoroughly Americanized "star attraction," was deemed unacceptable for a traditional Chinese family.

My goal is to provide an in-depth understanding of the complex interaction between the life of an individual, the institutional and societal context, and how they influence and are influenced by each other. To enable this process I hope to create conditions where stories can be meaningfully related. I want to present a variety of voices and stories that collectively captured a moment in time of what it was like to be a Chinese-Canadian woman growing up after the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act and before the influx of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and parts of China other than Guangdong. This study and process has helped me to look at my Chinese ethnicity and my identity at a very deep level. I was interested in hearing from other Canadian-born Chinese women sharing their experiences and their journey of identity. The participants talked about media and other people's ideas shaping their identity, often fighting the stereotype and, at times, using the stereotype to their advantage. The study examined what the participants, growing up without the benefit of role models, used as signposts to guide their

journey, including Hollywood models such as Nancy Kwan. The role of film, particularly mainstream Hollywood film, had a strong influence on how they fashioned themselves, how they chose to dress, behave, and what they valued. Given the small numbers of Canadian-born Chinese in this period, I believe that this piece of Chinese-Canadian history will not be replicated. Qualitative research methodology must also take into account socio-cultural practices in the collection of lived histories. I believe that my insider research experience added value to the qualitative research conducted with this group of Canadian-born Chinese women and elaborates on the theory and practice of oral history in a multicultural context.

Chapter 2. The Literature Review:

Not Another “Long-suffering Woman Book”

The participants in the study (Canadian-born Chinese women, descendants from the four counties in Guangdong, China and the first Chinese-Canadians to have citizenship rights) said they were tired of being labelled as long-suffering and self-sacrificing women. Their experience of growing up after the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act and during Canada’s shift towards multiculturalism was as different from that of the early Chinese immigrants as it was from the experience of those who arrived as part of the large influx of Chinese immigrants after 1967, when Canada adopted a new set of non-racist immigration admission criteria. The Canadian-born Chinese socialized, studied, did things together, and were more interested in being accepted and becoming part of the larger community (Yee, 2006).

This study holds particular interest for me as I share a similar background, time, and location with the participants. I approached this study by looking at various factors known to contribute to identity such as historical context, culture, gender, and class. Then I examined how they affected assimilation, acculturation, and integration processes. I began by studying the diasporic and immigrant experiences of the participants’ parents.

Although there is a large body of work on Chinese-Canadian history, the focus is on the early sojourners. These men were exiled in Canada for a long period starting in the mid-1800s to the early 1900s when they arrived for the Gold Rush and to work on the Canadian Pacific Railway. It then extended through to the period prior to 1923 when Canada’s Chinese head tax (1885-1924) restricted immigration. It ended with the period that excluded virtually all new Chinese immigrants from 1923 to 1947 (Hawkins, 1988; Mar, 2010; Roy, 1989; Wickberg,

1982). The effect of these legislated restrictions on early Chinese-Canadian history was to ensure that it described the perspectives of men almost exclusively. They came to Canada on their own, returned to China to marry but lived out their lives in Canada as bachelors since most were prevented from bringing their wives with them. These Chinese-Canadians were Canada's first group of immigrants from Asia, arriving during an era of "White Canada" policies (Roy, 1989) and an exceedingly racist period in BC history. The readings on Chinese-Canadian history of this period from both Chinese and non-Chinese historians (Mar, 2010; Roy, 1989; Yu, 2011) expounded on the discrimination experienced by the Chinese, which continued until the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act of 1947. Historians such as Stanley (2011) and Lai (1997) wrote about the enforced segregated public schooling that was foisted on the Chinese, which maintained their victimhood. The participants in my study said that they grew up hearing stories about fathers and uncles who were barred from swimming pools and the main floor of movie theatres, and how their Canadian-born parents had to go to a Chinese-only school for their first four years of public schooling. Since the Chinese were subjected to social, economic, and residential segregation, they responded by retreating into their own ethnic enclaves to avoid competition and hostility from White Canadians (Lai & Madoff, 1997; Mar, 2010; Tan & Roy, 1985). The participants said that their parents lived in or close to Chinatown and worked mainly for other Chinese. Most of the participants, including those who had one or both Canadian-born parents and those whose fathers came here as young men, lived close to Chinatown for several reasons but primarily because of their second-class non-Canadian status and their quest for safety and security.

A major justification for advocating for a "White man's" province and for maintaining restrictions on the Chinese culture and character can be found in the commonly expressed

accusation that the Chinese were unassimilable (Royal Commission, 1885). As a reaction to this belief, when the Chinese finally gained their civil rights after 1947 and began to build a new post-war community with the birth of the generation that includes the participants in this study, the families wanted to demonstrate that they and their children could successfully assimilate into Canadian mainstream society.

With these explicit expectations from their parents, school, and the media, the participants said that they embarked on a journey of assimilation. To explore the nature of this journey, I reviewed the work of different generations of assimilation theorists and sociologists starting with Gordon (1964), who defined the assimilation process during the time that the participants in the study were growing up. Expanding on Gordon's initial description of the seven steps of assimilation, sociologists Min Zhou (1999, 2009), Jennifer Lee and Frank Bean (2004), Michelle Kelley and Hui-Mei Tseng (1992), among others, provided a broader definition, particularly when examining different diasporic and migration patterns of incoming immigrants. These more current researchers provide foundational material and data on some of the values that Chinese families maintain, including Confucian beliefs of filial piety. The participants in my study concurred with these findings, expressing a family commitment to many of these values and beliefs, including piety, respect for their elders, and the value of education which, they said, often resulted in their felt experience of conflicting expectations between home and mainstream society. They indicated that these differing expectations resulted in the pressure to excel, the pressure to become White, and the pressure to embrace their ethnic heritage. Some felt they had to work harder to perform twice as well as Whites.

I looked at factors that influenced assimilation such as geography and location, including the move away from Chinatown to the suburbs. The move to the suburbs may have hastened the

assimilation process but it had another effect—the loss of family language. Some parents put their children into piano or dance rather than Chinese school. They said that Chinese school was in Chinatown and they lived in the suburbs and the children did not need to know how to speak Chinese at work any longer. Increased interpersonal contact with Whites and the small Chinese population size and/or geographic location strongly affected the available marriage pool (Blau, Blum, & Schwartz, 1982; Kalmijn 1998). For example, there are more chances to marry endogamously where there is a large concentration of Chinese, as in Vancouver, compared to areas in which the Chinese are more dispersed or in small towns where there were few Chinese (Edmondson & Passel, 1999). This is reflected in the experiences of the two participants who married Chinese-born Canadian men; they both lived in Vancouver at the time.

Like the Canadian-born Chinese, second and third generations of American-born Chinese were among the first Chinese-Americans to integrate successfully in mainstream society as attested by their middle-class status, suburban residence, social lifestyle, and high rates of out-marriage. For example, Chang's study (2003) indicated that 54% of American-born Chinese were married to non-Chinese in 1990. Marrying outside one's own ethnic group is the most tangible and visible form of cultural assimilation. It is considered the ultimate and final breakdown of social distance and completion of assimilation (Alba, 1990; Bogardus, 1967; Gordon, 1964; Waters, 1990). Jacobs and Labov (2002) and Lee and Fernandez (1998) contended that Asian-American women are more likely to intermarry with Whites than any other ethnic group including Blacks or Latinas.

I reviewed the literature on cross-cultural psychology on Asian-American psychology because there is growing discussion on (a) the process of assimilation, and (b) the recognition that the process of having to choose an identity has fostered increasing mental health issues for

Asians. The *Companion to Asian American Studies* (2005), edited by Kent Ono, offers a chapter debate between authors on the issue of Chinese identity which provides diverse psychological perspectives on identity and assimilation. For example, the discussion of assimilation found in Stanley and Sue's (1971) chapter, "Chinese American Personality and Mental Health" was refuted by Tong (2005) in the following chapter, "The Ghetto of the Mind: Notes on the Historical Psychology of Chinese America." Tong emphatically stated that the Sues' typology of Asian personalities, the Traditionalist, Marginal Man, and Asian-American, show little understanding of the cultural sensibilities of Chinese America. Rather, Tong challenges the notion that succeeding generations of American-born Chinese came to believe that they were "super-gracious, timid, apathetic, and industrious" as indicated by the Sues' categories. He suggested that Chinese nobility used Confucian beliefs to control Chinese peasants and that Confucianism was transported to North America and romanticized.

American Literature professor, Anne Anling Cheng (2001) used Asian psychology to explore the concept of racial melancholia, which is a description of the feeling of a group of people as well as a theoretical model of identity, which provides a framework for analysing the role that grief plays in racial and ethnic subjection-formation. She goes on to describe the dynamics of how it is manifested and affected by the dominant White culture and racial Others. She suggests that Asian Americans constitute a complicated category within America and that films like *Flower Drum Song* maintain the boundary that separate America and Asian America through the reification of Chinese patriarchal ideals which serve to close off and maintain the boundaries of Chinatown. (pp. 48-49) Cheng's (2001) premise is that psychoanalysis understands private desires that are enmeshed in social relations. She looked to psychoanalytic thinking as a tool to find a vocabulary to address racial identification that is at once, brash and

elegaic. Her goal is to “forge a vocabulary with which to talk about race and to address the repercussions of loss, fantasy, and mourning in American racial history” (pp. 27-29). Cheng provided a provocative argument that challenges the issue of the “relationship between,” of the power and powerlessness of dominant and minority cultures, and how that interplay can affect melancholy.

I wanted to contextualize the experience of the participants resulting from their parents’ second-class citizenship status either as Canadian-born Chinese or the migration experience of those who immigrated to Canada either before 1923 or between 1947 and 1967. The literature that I reviewed for this period focused mainly on men’s voices and the experience of the single, older men who came to Canada in the early 1900s. Women’s voices were those of the generation of the participants’ mothers, transmitted through stories or dramatized fiction. For the history of this group of Canadian-born women, descendants of Guangdong’s four counties between 1947 and 1967, the literature is sparse, particularly in relation to the factors that affected their identity. Literature about American-born Chinese is more accessible due in part to the growth of Asian-American studies. There were similar experiences between the participants in my study and American-born Chinese as they confessed to embracing racial shame trying to obliterate their Chinese heritage by forfeiting the language and traditions of their ancestors (Chang, 2003; Chen, 2002; Le, 2007; Ling, 2009).

Work documenting the lives of Chinese-Americans at this time with ages similar to the participants can be found in individual perspectives and stories rather than in history books. I included American-born Chinese readings as a comparator for my study. The American-born Chinese saw themselves primarily as Americans of Chinese descent that grew up in the era of suburban living, drive-in movies, television, and rock ’n roll. Despite the influence of popular

culture, education was highly valued in the homes of American-born and Canadian-born Chinese. According to Zhou (2009), education is emphasized in particular ways in Chinese families. She noted:

Children's educational success is tied to the honour of the traditional Chinese family and children are reminded that achievement is a duty and obligation to the family rather than an individual goal and that failure brings shame to the family. Children are under pressure to excel at every step along the way to a good education but parents are under pressure to facilitate their children's education to honour the family and vindicate their own immigration-related sacrifices and also to show the community that they are good parents. Chinese parents see education as the only road to success in society and their experiences tell them that to guarantee their children good jobs in the future a good education in science, math, engineering, medicine, or business is essential. Parents discouraged their children's interest in history, literature, music, dance or anything that they consider unlikely to lead to well-paid stable jobs. (pp. 150-151)

The participants in my study provided many examples that reflected this attitude especially if they were interested in careers that were artistic or less traditional. As one participant in my study said, "My parents wanted me to get a government job with a pension." The participants said that success in school was an expectation, one that was unwavering and non-negotiable". Although children may be frustrated by their parents' unwavering attitude to school and career, many ultimately internalize their parent's educational values (Zhou, 2002).

The path to success in school was not simply the ability to work hard. I examined the literature on academic success, looking at attitudes, values, and behaviours particularly as they

pertained to Chinese and Asian students. School in Canada and in the Western world is oriented toward a particular style and way of being a student. Signithia Fordham (1993) suggested that to achieve academic success, students have to move towards the more valued and Western style and are compelled to assume the identity of the “Other” to the point where they can no longer speak or even think in his or her native tongue.

Sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1984) stated that these behavioural markers of privilege, styles of acting, and matters of taste that serve as indices of high social position are more easily learned in childhood. He suggested that many aspects of these positional identities develop from the individual’s awareness, arising simply through their participation in everyday activities. For the Canadian-born participants, these behaviours and their acquisition of English developed more naturally and less self-consciously. This became a marked difference between the participants, who could “blend in” better than either the earlier generation of Canadian-born Chinese or the China-born Chinese who came later. Chang (2003) described similarities in the American-born Chinese. Bourdieu’s observation is a crucial point because “blending in” was highly valued by the families as a measure of success and assimilation but, as the participants attested, by blending in so well, their identity shifted from a Chinese identity to a Canadian identity.

One outcome of blending in involved Chinese language loss, which affected their self-concept and identity. The subsequent gain of English without a Chinese accent and their easy use of colloquialisms became a marker of the participants’ growing Canadian identity and loss of Chinese identity. I examined language because the interviews indicated that the loss of Chinese language affected assimilation, identity, self-esteem, and memory. I used it as a central theme to examine identity, reviewing various perspectives that support this premise. I began with Lacan’s (1989) belief that:

The unconscious is a hidden structure which resembles that of language and that the knowledge of the world of others and of self is determined by language. Language is the precondition for the act of becoming aware of oneself as a distinct entity. Language is also the vehicle of a social given, a culture, its prohibitions and laws. The young child is fashioned and will be indelibly marked by it without being aware of it. (p. 9)

Alice Yaeger Kaplan's (1994) memoir goes farther, noting, "Language change affects emotion, especially loss of language." This was pertinent to my study in that every participant referred to being affected by her loss of the Chinese language. According to sociologists, Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins (1998), social memory emphasizes the larger context in which we remember and think of the past as social and socialized.

Eviatar Zerubavel (2003) referred to this process as mnemonic socialization where, as children and later as adults, we follow rules about what to remember and what to forget in the context of our families, schools, and neighbourhoods. For example, the rules may be to forget the bad memories such as racism or discrimination, as one participant attests. She remembers coming home from a party crying and her mom knew why but the participant says that, to this day, she does not recall what it was. Zerubavel included, as part of this mnemonic socialization, the traditions such as symbols, rituals, artefacts, and values and also the emotional nostalgia underpinning ethnic identity. Chang (2003) suggested that the "urge to partake in American customs grew more intense as [Chinese] children got older. As adolescents, they craved what they saw on the silver screen, in glossy advertisements, and in their (mostly white) public schools. The most dramatic changes were the ones least visible to the casual observer: the shifts in thought, attitudes and values" (p. 184). Consequently, the shift of forgetting the traditional ways had the effect or the perception that success in America requires abandoning the old world

cultures and histories that once defined ethnic communities. As American Studies professor, Karin Aguilar-San Juan (2009) stated, “Memory is a practice, not a thing” (p. 64). This statement resonates with the opening of this chapter in that the participants no longer wanted to remember the history of the long-suffering woman. They wanted to move beyond that time and space to carve out a Canadian identity that befitted their experience. Participants would often remark that my questions “jogged their memory” and say that they revealed a previously unnoticed pattern. One participant said, “About what our family values, I can’t think of a time when our talk isn’t about work. Nobody asks, ‘How are you today?’ but ‘Did you work?’” She expands this to expressing feelings of guilt, shame, and having to justify the fact if she did not go to work that day. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003), an American scholar in the fields of gender studies, queer theory and critical theory, distinguished shame from guilt in that shame attaches to and sharpens the sense of who one is, whereas guilt attaches to what one does.

This feeling of shame, coupled with the strong desire for academic success, led to the myths of the model minority, a popular concept that continues to have great influence in Canada and the United States (Mar, 2010). Peter S. Li (2001) suggested that the ability of the Chinese-Canadians to adapt to the needs and restrictions of the Anglo-dominant community and their success at not only taking control of their own destiny but also shaping the perception of the surrounding society was due in part to Canadian hostility. Li pointed out that the development of ethnic institutions was not as a transplanted culture but was, instead, in response to a societal context: their need to assimilate and to succeed.

As Tong (2005) suggested, this was an adaptation strategy of the Chinese, used in China in response to the nobles and landowners. The shift to a Canadian identity for the participants’ generation was accentuated by the influence of immigrants who arrived after 1967 when the

restrictions to immigration were no longer based on race. The immigrants were Chinese but behaved in ways that the Canadian-born Chinese such as Ian Lee in Paul Yee's (2006), book on Vancouver, B. C. did not want them to behave: "They didn't speak the language, they didn't dress the same and were an embarrassment to us" (p. 143). The Canadian-born, like Asian-Americans, are often treated as "perpetual foreigners" (Aguilar-San Juan, 2009, p. 42). Asian-ness in North America has involved a balancing act between cultural fidelity and national belonging. Questions familiar to the participants include: "Where do you come from?" and when the answer is "Canada" it is usually followed by: "Where do you *really* come from?" This common interaction prompts self-reflection on the meaning of Asian-ness in oneself as well as a consideration of which parts may be considered non-Asian (Marchetti, 2012). This antagonism with the new immigrants challenged the Canadian-borns' tenuous feelings of acceptance and confidence and contributed, incrementally, to their turning away from things Chinese (Chang, 2003; Li, 2009).

In accounts of both American-born and Canadian-born Chinese, who saw themselves first as Americans or Canadians of Chinese descent, feelings show ambivalence, of feeling "in-between." The way people resolved or at least dealt with this dilemma varied. Related in personal stories, they found solutions through denial, acceptance, creativity, and political and personal struggles (Hune, Kim, Fugita, & Ling, 1991).

Lisa Lowe (1996) suggested, "Asian-American culture also includes the practices that emerge in relation to the dominant representations that deny or subordinate Asian and Asian-American cultures as 'other;' these include practices that are partly inherited, partly modified as well as partly invented and that Chinese-American culture and identity is not fixed, established, or given but are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power" (p. 65). This

extended to what you eat and how you look and corresponds with the words of one participant who said, “The other children at school laughed at what we ate and how we said things.” As their time in Canada lengthened, the participants said that their immigrant mothers became creative in adapting and using whatever materials or food were available and said that this was just how things were done in Canada. Some of the participants, in their desire for acceptance, distanced themselves from newly arrived immigrants, proclaimed Canadian-ness in every syllable spoken, and aligned themselves with the dominant group. Sociology professor, Vanaja Dhruvarajan (2002) concurred:

The first generation copes by maintaining links with the home country and with their own ethnic group but the second and subsequent generations do not find this a viable option. They want to be accepted by the mainstream society as they do not have any other home and exclusive membership in an ethnic group is too confining. (p. 103)

Participant Dawn reinforced this sentiment, stating, “I am countryless.” Maxine Chin, a student at Oregon State College, delivered a speech on the topic “We are Without a Country.” Chin says, “We neither speak real Chinese nor know modern Chinese culture; our roots are in America. We know no other home; going to China means we are looked upon as foreigners” (Wong, 2005). This overwhelming sense of being countryless is not about nationalism, rather it captures the feeling and experience of exclusion as a Chinese person in a dominant White Canada and similarly as a non-speaking Chinese person in China.

Participant Jasmine says that we, as Asian-Canadian women today, “Don’t want to be seen as romanticized historical figures from the distant past, fighting tradition, surviving hardship and being torn between two cultures.” According to sociologists, Jennifer Lee and Min

Zhou (2004) by the third generation, Asian-Americans develop values that are inherently Western and, although they may retain some of their parents' values, American values shape their overriding identity and experience. Three-quarters of the participants I interviewed were second or third generation and they agreed with this perspective while, at the same time, felt that there were expectations from home and from the non-Chinese community that limited the ways in which they were to behave and act.

Sociologist, Rosalind S. Chou's (2012) *Asian American Sexual Politics* shares the experiences of Asian-American women as they battle gendered, racialized and heteronormative pressures from their families and external forces. She suggested that, with the limited representation of Asian-Americans in media, the sharing of experiences is an avenue of empowerment. Similarly, this study is about the covering and recovering of the stories of these Canadian-born women as first generation Canadians to hear the stories of how they managed the stresses and demands of restructuring themselves, their community and society. It is not about essentializing culture but rather noting the emergence of a new culture. Conflicting forces exerted by family, the Chinese community, peers, popular culture, media and Hollywood buffeted their search for identity.

Hollywood Films

The Chinese women who came to Canada in the nineteenth century were viewed as prostitutes, slave girls, or concubines by the larger Canadian society. As Anderson (1991) stated, "All the women are prostitutes...A state of marriage is unknown among them; hence the influence exerted upon society by such wholesale vice cannot be otherwise than highly pernicious" (p.49). Local newspapers, [including the Daily British Colonist, in Victoria BC] and Hollywood films of the times reinforced this distorted image (Guo, 1992; Li, 1988). For its part,

mass media have projected conflicting images that either dehumanize or demonize the Chinese with the implicit message that the Chinese represent either a servile class to be exploited or an enemy to be destroyed. Chang (2003) stated that this dependence on the perception of the dominant culture combined with the scarcity of strong Chinese-American role models in popular culture caused the Chinese to suffer a crisis of confidence, seeing themselves as they believed others saw them. From the early days of silent film to modern television and movies, the meta-narrative of Asians in film describes a wide range of themes that include but are not limited to the lack or minimal representation of Asians, stereotypical roles and portrayals, gendered and hybrid identities in the form of Asian bodies.

Asian film critics uniformly criticize the dearth of roles for Asian-Americans in cinema and theatre. A foundational book on this theme is Wong's (1978) *On Visual Media Racism: Asians in the American Motion Pictures*, which provides a framework that explores how the portrayal of Asians in American feature films both reflects and influences the perceptions of Asians and Asian-Americans by White America. He examined films in different genres from 1939 to 1977, analysing the number of Asians, female and male, in leading or minor roles, including Asian roles that were given to White actors. Asian-American writer Xing (1998), building on Wong's work, provided a survey of Asian-American cinema in both mainstream and alternate film productions. She provided an overview of the earlier stereotypical images of Asian-Americans in cinema, identity politics, and representation in different genres of the Hollywood mainstream that show documentaries, family dramas, and hybrid cinema by Asian-American women filmmakers, the Asian diaspora and the historical background of issues faced by earlier and current Asia-American actors.

Xing's chapter, "Cinematic Asian Representation" is of particular relevance to my study of Asian women in mainstream films and the images that were portrayed. It provides background and analysis of some of the work of Anna May Wong and Nancy Kwan in relation to the Madame Butterfly narrative. Anna May Wong's life and history as femme fatale in the racial construct of Asian-American womanhood set the stage for the emergence of the Asian-American actresses who followed her. It forms the basis of the stereotypical representation and roles assigned to Asian-Americans (Espiritu, 1997; Shimizu, 2007). Other authors focused on Anna May Wong's life, career, and legacy. The books of Anthony Chan (2003), Gordon Hodges (2012), and Karen Leong (2005) provided historical, personal and film information about Anna May Wong's legendary career, including early childhood photographs and movie pin-ups from her silent films. Both Hodges and Chan showed their admiration for this first Chinese-American actress in Hollywood. In my conversations and discussions with Anthony Chan on Anna May Wong, he said, "I was in love with her. I'm still in love with her."

I reviewed articles and books on Asian visual representation with emphasis on the exoticism of Asian women, interracial romance, and the White Knight discourse. I have noted a few here including critical theorist, Gina Marchetti (1993), who examined "the ways in which narratives featuring Asian-Caucasian sexual liaisons work ideologically to uphold and sometimes subvert culturally accepted notions of nation, class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation"(p.1). Her work is supported by Young (1996) who examined the conjunction of race, gender, and sexuality in British films and the problems inherent in regarding representations as truthful, positive, distorted, or negative in interracial, social, and sexual relations.

Marchetti (1993) suggested that, in an interracial relationship between a White male and an Asian female, the price of romance is paid by the woman. She contended that the narrative favours a reading that makes the White male protagonist the vehicle for the Chinese woman's salvation and that the institution of heterosexual marriage is the ultimate hope for womankind. In her analysis of *The World of Suzie Wong*, Marchetti argued that the film implies racial tolerance but does not question either the gender inequality or the right of the male hero to take the heroine from her own culture and independent life-style. The film reveals an often-used formulaic treatment of interracial romance between Caucasian men and non-White women—that of the myth of the White Knight, the myth of femininity and the myth of the Orient.

Film theorists, Laura Hyun-Yi Kang (1993), James Moy (1993), and Darrell Y. Hamamoto (1994) support this viewpoint; they traced the history of representations of the Chinese, both on Broadway and in Hollywood. Hamamoto framed the history of the representation of Asians on American television in a political, economic, and psychosocial colour-caste system. The recurring theme that Hollywood films always provide a negative depiction of Chinese women is discussed in both the literature and in documentaries, including *Slaying the Dragon* (2011), directed, produced, and written by Elaine H. Kim and Deborah Gee. This documentary described the racial and gender stereotyping of Asian women in U.S. motion pictures. The sequel, *Slaying the Dragon: Reloaded* (2011), directed, produced, and written by Elaine H. Kim, gave an overview of 25 years of Asians and Asian-American women in U.S. visual media including blockbuster films, network television, and Asian-American cinema.

Other writers such as Celine P. Shimizu (2007) presented a more controversial viewpoint in exploring and examining how others see Asian women. She argued:

Asian-American women, rather than suffering a crisis of confidence as a result of seeing themselves as they think others see them, can acknowledge the pleasure and pain of racialized hypersexuality and see themselves anew. Asian-American women should enjoy, appreciate and understand their own sexuality as Asian-American women and not limit their understanding of racial sexuality to good and bad or right and wrong. (p. 5)

Shimizu's examination of the work of Asian-American actresses, performers, and filmmakers that pivot on sexuality as part of their identity shows the need for better representation of those marginalized by race and gender. Shimizu echoes the earlier reference to Cheng (2002) in her analysis of Linda Low's overt sexuality and her subsequent shaming at the end of *Flower Drum Song*, when she stated: "In movies and in life, the racial, gendered, and sexual identities of those you sleep with and love and who become your family continue to be culturally contested, questioned and challenged" (p. 13). Shimizu's work and her challenge to racialized Others provided a basis for the reclaiming of my own sexuality through my love affair with stiletto heels which became both a metaphor and an overt challenge of resistance. Peter Feng (2000) described his binary position of a love-hate relationship with Suzie Wong, which accounts for the pleasure of spectators watching people of colour. He suggested that people of colour viewing racist, sexist, cinematic texts also enjoy the spectacle. Feng, like Shimizu, urged the reclaiming of sexuality and described *The World of Suzie Wong* as a film that "Asians love and love to hate." Feng's viewpoint resonated with the participants in my study as they expressed their own conflict with Suzie Wong—proud to see a Chinese actor in Hollywood and embarrassed that people think they are like her.

The Interchangeable Asian

The participants in my study felt strongly that there was limited representation of Asians in Hollywood films and that when they were included, they were lumped together in one racial group devoid of ethnic and cultural differences. Lowe (1996) argued that the construction of Asians as a homogeneous group implies that all Asians are alike and conform to types. The participants in my study did not like the fact that the role of Mei Li, the picture bride in *Flower Drum Song*, was given to a Japanese actress. They said this affected the authenticity of the film and prevented them from identifying with any of the characters. This was one of the few times in the interviews that they expressed annoyance and anger.

Jane Chi Hyun Park (2010) described how Asians and Asian connections such as Chinatown are reduced to decorative flourishes in the films as well as in the popular discourse about them. She examines various films using her theory of oriental style to analyse how the concept has shaped popular American attitudes toward East Asia in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. She noted:

Oriental style describes the process and product of this reduction: the ways in which Hollywood films crystallize and commodify multiple, heterogeneous Asiatic cultures, histories and aesthetics into a small number of easily recognizable, often interchangeable tropes that helped to shape dominant cultural attitudes about Asian and people of Asian descent. (p. ix)

Via their research into history, literature, film, media, and ethnic studies for the past five decades, writers have made references to and judgements of Nancy Kwan in her debut film, *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and in the musical, *Flower Drum Song* (1961). Shimizu (2007) and

Chang (2003) agreed that Anna May Wong exemplifies the marginalization of actors and actresses of colour along with feeling the “burden of representation” and that Nancy Kwan’s roles as Suzie Wong and as Linda Low in *Flower Drum Song* has continued the process. Asian-American writers, Shirley Geok-lin Lim (1994), Doobo Shim (1998), David Palumbo-Liu (1999), and Peter Feng (2002) declared that the legacy left by Anna May Wong and Nancy Kwan in films such as *The Thief of Bagdad* and *The World of Suzie Wong* respectively have become a burden for North American Asian women.

To examine the effect of these stereotypical and eroticized representations on Asian women in the audience and how it influenced their identity, I reviewed the literature on different aspects of beauty including the normative standards of Western beauty and its effect on confidence and self-image. One perspective provided by Cheng (2000) suggested that citizenship is synonymous with beauty. A central question in the essay is the exploration of the strategies that Hollywood deployed in 1961 to make Asian bodies, previously not allowed in the field of vision, desirable. Cheng noted:

Flower Drum Song’s feminine beauty is recruited in the service of creating an image of the ideal citizen. The movie attempts to delineate a visage of citizenship as an ideal, gendered American identity through the ideology of beauty and the morality of a culturally “healthy” erotic choice. (p. 35)

The women participants in my study said that their appearance affected their feelings about citizenship, identity, and sense of belonging. They asserted that the power of the larger society—how others see you—can and does influence how you see yourself and what you do. Lee (2006) contended that Asian-Canadian women who grow up in Canada internalize Whiteness as a

normalized and normative way of being. Attractiveness is an important form of symbolic capital; the relational and positional identities in the world of romance have to do with the assessment of one's attractiveness (Holland, Lachicotte Jr., Skinner, & Cain, 1998). As a group, the participants said that neither parents nor extended family provided any positive reinforcement about their attractiveness or about their appearance. They looked to school friends and the media to dictate what was considered attractive. Lim (1994) suggested that Asian women internalize messages of inadequacy and inferiority and the media reinforces these messages. Professor in Gender and Women's Studies, Carla Rice (2002) noted:

Body image is the product of the messages a female receives from other people including family, friends, strangers, peer groups, school, communities, and her culture. Television images affect the development of self. Young women wanting to fit in and to meet the standards of the clique develop a negative or positive sense of body as a result of others' assessment of their sexual attractiveness. As a result, Rice argues, women's bodies become currency. (p. 148)

Western concepts of beauty are considered the norm, the lens through which all women are viewed (Kaw, 1993; Ling, 2001; Rooks, 1996). These conceptions of beauty have created a hierarchy in which women are strictly ranked according to their closeness to the ideal. Those who feel that their skin colour and physical features are unfavourable compared to those of the ideal of Western beauty often feel ashamed and humiliated (hooks, 1993). This concept of beauty is set at a young age in the portrayal of the fair-haired and light-skinned heroes and heroines of books, television, and movies. Some women who find themselves caught between the dominant White ideal and the ideals of their culture of origin perceive their difference from the mainstream as a liability and one that they tried to conceal as they were growing up (Rice, 2002). According

to Alys Eve Weinbaum et al. (2008), the Western concept of beauty was not only promulgated in the West but it has become a world phenomenon. They contended that all eyes looked to the West to set the beauty standard. As early as the 1930s the Chinese tried to replicate the look. One of the participants spoke about her father returning to China as a young man for his education after his graduation from high school in Canada. She remembers photos of him with women in Western attire while he was dressed in what she called the Gatsby look. In pictorial history books of the Chinese in North America, including ones in Vancouver, B.C. (Wong, 2011; Yee, 2006) a common photo from the 1930s is a Chinese man surrounded by a bevy of Chinese women all wearing Western attire. Participants showed me family photos in the same style.

The media plays a central role in enforcing and maintaining hegemonic ideals. Media critic Jean Kilbourne (2000) argued that advertising is the foundation of mass media with the goal of selling products as well as values, images, concepts of love, security, and ideas of normalcy. She noted that advertising tells us who we are and who we should be, including White hegemonic beauty standards. Lee (2006) suggested that women of colour are pitted against White normalcy. Dhruvarajan (2002) concurs with Lee and states, “In popular media, people of colour are either invisible or portrayed in stereotypical ways. They are rolled out as the exotic but they are not seen as living normal lives”(p. 104).

Beauty is a normative value that is socially constructed. Hegemonic beauty standards are imposed upon all women but they do not affect every woman to the same degree; for example, women of colour subject their bodies to cosmetic surgery to secure whiter features. For women of colour, hegemonic beauty standards are constructed in contrast to White women (Chou, 2012; Kaw, 1993). Due to the scarcity of corresponding media images, it is difficult for North American Asian women to create alternative meanings and values about their beauty. For them,

it is difficult to see beauty exemplified in an Asian body. In the interviews I conducted, the participants recalled their excitement in seeing Nancy Kwan, a beautiful Chinese woman in a Hollywood film, and for the first time, seeing someone with whom they could identify. Some of them can recall, as I can, the exact moment when it happened.

Consumer culture and selling the Asian woman is about mass consumerism according to Perry Johansson and Shoma Munshi (2001). Women of colour face controlling images when the media shines a fantastical pornographic light upon them, which makes them targets of White men. The prevalent images are the ones that portray Asian women as docile, subservient, and exotic; these distorted images can lead White males to fetishize Asian-American women (Fong 1998; Lee 1999; Yu, 2000). The character Suzie Wong has become emblematic as a descriptor of Asian women. One of the participants in the study said that she cut her self-described, long, Suzie Wong hair as soon as she finished high school so that people could see her for herself and not as an exotic Chinese girl. Author, activist and political figure Angela Davis (1981) said that women of colour feel obliged to choose between ethnicity and womanhood. She expands on this statement by explaining that the women have two separate identities, one ethnic and the other female, which results in the Euro-American balancing act because they are caught in the dichotomy of keeping or losing their ethnic identity. Although this perceived division affected all the participants, each woman experienced it differently. Factors such as the proximity to Chinatown and other Chinese, the presence of Chinese community role models or role models in the media influenced whether they identified with their Chinese culture or the dominant Western standards.

Children learn normative standards of appearance and behaviour by monitoring and responding to the reactions of others to their dress style and actions (Lynch, 1999). Some

participants shared stories of growing up with limited means, with mothers and sisters sewing clothes, from looking into shop windows and keeping an eye on sales to give them a chance to fit in with their White classmates. One participant said, “I wanted to look sexy but only on the outside. On the inside I wanted to be a good girl.” Adolescents dress to express multiple identities and to express principles and value structures. While individuals battle for change, their body, and by extension, dress may conform to existing expectations even as the inner voice argues for change (Diamond & Quinby, 1988). Staying true to parental and Chinese values for femininity and being chaste and demure was considered important. Women of colour are asked to look and behave in different ways; they have been told from very early on that they have to conform to two standards of beauty (Rice, 2002). This enforced dichotomy of being different people with different values, behaviour, and sometimes even looks, depending on who they were with, affected the participants’ self-esteem. Sociologist, Lisa Sun-Hee Park (2005) stated that the effect over the long term of these day-to-day encounters and indices of positioning, with the dominant society viewing them either positively or negatively, influenced how women of colour identified themselves.

Just as Hollywood productions showcased the stereotypical Asian woman as exotic, novels tended to feature the long-suffering Chinese woman. The ability to eat bitterness, to bear hardship without complaint, to bend to authority without breaking, to internalize grief while presenting a calm and dignified face, to suffer, to endure, and to survive is regarded by the Chinese as a special and valued talent.

The participants in the study had different opinions about novels written by Chinese North American writers about Chinese women. For some, these novels described common experiences and helped to describe but not fully explain some of the traditions they followed. For

other participants, they were ready to move on from this historical saga of the long-suffering woman and into a newly created space in Canadian history. These participants were tired of the recurring themes and concerns of identity, the accusations of the loss of culture and language, and the revisiting of historical events. I selected some novels in this literature review that show this genre because they were set in the birthplace of the participants along the west coast of British Columbia and are about the people from the four counties in Guangdong, China. These books provide useful background information relevant to the study and most had been read by the participants.

Many of the novels are similar to Ling Zhang's *Gold Mountain Blues* (2012), a novel about family, hope, and ambition. Chronicling the lives of five generations of a Chinese family, it follows the journey of Ah-Fat in his travels to find work with the Canadian Pacific Railroad. The story unfolds through letters written from different locations in British Columbia to his wife left behind in Hoi-Ping, Guangdong. Ah-Fat's enforced bachelor existence in B.C. echoes the experiences of many Chinese men including my father and the fathers of three of the participants and paints the equally solitary life of their mothers in China who were waiting to be reunited. Some of the participants are descendants from Hoi-Ping.

Denise Chong's internationally acclaimed novel, *Concubine's Children* (1995) is about a sojourner who left China to earn a living in Canada, leaving a wife behind. Unlike Ah-Fat, who wanted to earn enough money to return to his wife in China, Chan Sam in *Concubine's Children* brought a concubine with him to Canada to work in the tea houses of west coast Chinatowns in order to support Chan Sam's family in China. Some of the participants in my research shared that their grandmothers were concubines. The story is told by the third daughter of the concubine, May-ying, who documents her family history in Canada and in China. The narrative

of Chong's latest novel, *Lives of the Family: Stories of Fate and Circumstance* (2013) takes place in Ontario. It is a story of severe separation and hardship affected by Canada's immigration policies and the politics in China. The family eventually reunites to work in a café in a predominantly White town in Ontario. Like this family, three of the participants were one of few Chinese families in their town. One said that she was the first Chinese baby to be born in her hometown.

Yuen-Fong Woon's *Excluded Wife* (1998) is a composite of the wives who were left alone and away from their husbands in China. In this novel, Sau-Ping shares her experience of survival through the civil war and famine of 1920s China to her escape to Hong Kong before being reunited in Canada with her husband and the subsequent challenges of creating a life in a new culture. This story captures the tragedy, courage, and triumph of these women who made the journey from China to Canada. Three of the participants' mothers fit this profile. In this novel, the perspective was through the experience of the wife, left on her own, feeling her youth slipping away from her over the two decades before she was able to join her husband. This novel fits the genre of the long-suffering woman and as other participants said, "It helped explain some family dynamics and gave me a better understanding of what my mother endured in those years on her own." I found this novel very difficult to read because it described many of the experiences my mother had told me about over the years. The novel described them in a way that I could understand, in contrast to the way my mother usually told them, trying to guilt me into doing something. I was overwhelmed with remorse, sadness, and guilt as I read this book.

There are several memoirs by Canadian-born Chinese men. Boyhood friends, Wayson Choy and Larry Wong, share memories of their growing up in Vancouver B.C. in the same era as the participants in my study. Choy's novels, *All That Matters* (2004), *Jade Peony* (1995), and his

memoir, *Paper Shadows* (1999), take place in and around Vancouver's Chinatown in the 1930s and 1940s. Wong's novel, *Dim Sum Stories* (2011), offers an insider's knowledge of a Chinatown and provides insight into his struggles to belong. He calls himself a "Yellow Banana," one colour on the outside, another on the inside. Like Tan and Zhang's novels, their families are descendants of Guangdong's four counties. Choy's and Wong's novels provide a Canadian-born male voice, and a common historical background and period.

Larissa Lai's *When Fox is a Thousand* (1995) and *Salt Fish Girl* (2002) provide a radical shift from the long-suffering woman genre to one of search for identity. *When Fox is a Thousand* is a spirited telling of the old Chinese folktale from Chinese mythology. There are two entwined narratives, one set in modern Vancouver and other in medieval China. Rich with poetry, the story is about identity, cultural lore, love, intrigue, and fighting against oppression coloured by Fox's mischievous attitude toward life. *Salt Fish Girl* blurs historical and future narratives, calling into question notions of temporality, memory, and history, all of which are relevant to the dreaming disease afflicting the characters of the future. The novel takes sharp jabs against anti-immigrant attitudes, racialized sexual harassment, and corporate jurisdiction of social spaces in which the characters live. It attempts to connect the readers' understanding of Asian-Canadian pasts with a glimpse of a possible future. The participants in this study said that this novel echoed their lives as they described their journey to a Canadian identity.

Amy Tan's *Joy Luck Club* (1989) had a poignant impact on the participants. This novel emphasized mother-daughter dynamics about interracial relationships and marriage. It told the stories of four Chinese women in pre-1949 China and the lives of their American-born daughters in California. Although 75% of the participants' mothers were Canadian-born, the participants said that this novel assisted them in recognizing and normalizing their experience with that of

other Chinese families. Some of the interactions between the four sets of mothers and daughters, both poignant and humorous, helped participants to know that we share many similar cultural experiences.

Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1976) can be described as creative non-fiction. Kingston blends autobiography with Chinese folktales resulting in a complex portrayal of the twentieth-century experiences of Chinese-Americans living in the U.S. in the shadow of the Chinese Revolution. She shares Chinese myths, family stories, and events in the California childhood that helped shaped her identity.

Asian-American writer Frank Chin advocated for another, more critical perspective on Asian-American literature. Chin's anger was prompted, according to Kim (2005) by what he considered were a falsified view of Chinese culture that he saw writers like Maxine Hong Kingston and Amy Tan promoting in their popular and well-received works (p. 227). He specifically targeted Kingston's *Warrior Woman*, derogating it as "kowtow" and "persona writing." Chin also laid siege to her persona as an example of writers of Oriental Orientalia, who he describes as those who fake Chinese-America and suggests that their success with White publishers is the payoff for selling out (Ventura, 1998 (p. 258). Chin's writing helps us to understand the particular forms of invisibility that Asian American writers confront as they attempt to write themselves into a literary landscape shaded primarily black and white (Kim, 2005 p. 203). He suggests that unlike the image of Black Macho, Yellow Macho has a certain deficiency in both the domains of body and language. He strongly advocates for mimetic aspects of literary representation. Chin values Louis Chu's (1961) *Eat a Bowl of Tea* because he saw it as a depiction of the spoken language used by Chinese immigrants, a translation of the Szeyup dialect. He admired Chu's intention to irritate and distance white readers in having his characters

speak the language which is neither English nor the idealized caption that Whites have of a Chinese tongue (Chin, Aiiieeeee! p. 16). Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Rajagopalan Radhakrishnan (1987) agreed and stated:

Placing minority writers in a passive, powerless mouthpiece position is a built-in function of White writing; that is to have to write about the Chinese in a way that American people would be interested in and to provide local colour and to offer beautiful and exotic façade of the periphery. (pp. 199-220)

Asian American writers experience criticism similar to Asian actors when they portray roles that can be considered stereotypical of Asians. Asian-American male writers, including Jeffrey Chan (1972), joined Frank Chin to form a collective to claim their own specific language and culture as an act of cultural resistance against the widespread distorted exotic images. This was the birth of the *Big Aiiieeeee!* I acknowledge the work and legacy of Frank Chin and his desire to legitimize Chinese-American sensibility, which is to break the imposed silence and stereotypes with a redefinition of the ethnic identity. However, I also firmly believe that the writing of Maxine Hong Kingston does resist and challenge orientalist stereotypes. She says that, “I keep the old Chinese myths alive by telling them in a new, American way” (Pfaff, 1980 p. 26) which speaks to the fluidity of Chinese culture in North America.

As cultural theorist, Stuart Hall (1990) said, “Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power (p. 225).

What are presented here are a variety of sets of binary including masculine and feminine, black and white, and authentic and fake. These highlight the complexity of this dissertation as I explore the identity development of Asians or the singular group, Chinese. How Asian/Chinese are we? How we show our authenticity, femininity and traditional cultural acumen is determined by many factors, some common to the ethnic cultural experience and some unique to the individual and to the family. We are not a homogenous group, neither in the category of Asian nor within our own individual group as evidenced by the public controversies between Frank Chin and Maxine Hong Kingston. The landscape becomes even more complex when writing about how the Chinese are represented by writers who are and who are not Chinese such as Julia Kristeva (1986). Her work is concerned with the issue of the place from which women may speak or represent themselves but it has been criticized as being ethnocentric. Cultural theorist, Gayatri Spivak's essay (1998) argued that Kristeva is both cavalier and condescending in her approach to Chinese culture and society. Spivak's work examines the relationship between language, women, and culture in both Western and non-Western contexts including the cultural texts of those who are marginalized by the dominant culture—the new immigrant, the working class, and women.

My study was influenced by the work of Dorothy Holland, William Lachicotte Jr., Debra Skinner, and Carole Cain (1998), who introduced the concept of figured worlds as part of their theory of self and identity. . They suggested that figured worlds are intimately tied to identity work (pp. 40-41). They defined figured worlds as socially produced, culturally constructed activities where people cognitively produce new self- understandings, that is, identities. In figured worlds, people learn to relate to one another over time across different contexts of place and space. Holland et al. state that there may be figured worlds where we may never enter based on social rank or prestige including class and gender or places that we ourselves deny to others,

who we deem as outsiders. Their theory speaks to some of the experiences of the participants in my study as well as some of the oral history from other North American-born Chinese.

Social capital and positional identities including the dialect we speak, the degree of formality in our speech, the deeds we do, the places we go, the emotions we express, and the clothes we wear are all indicators of, claims to, and identification with positions of privilege. These factors are all relative to those with whom we are interacting (Lutz 1995; McDermott, 1974). The participants, particularly those who moved to the suburbs prior to starting public school, indicated that they viewed White as normal. This viewpoint affected how they saw themselves, how they thought others perceived them and how they interpreted their attitude toward their Chinese ethnicity.

I reviewed a variety of psychoanalytic theories and frames, which examine cinema as it relates to the Orient. Feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey (1975) wrote one of the first major essays that helped shift the orientation of film theory towards a psychoanalytic framework. Her theory on the male gaze stated, "Classic Hollywood cinema put the spectator in a male subject position with the figure of the woman onscreen as the object of desire" (p. 66). She suggested that the Hollywood women of the 1950s and 1960s were coded with the "to-be-looked-at-ness with the male as the bearer of the look" (p. 62). There is no better example of this than the mambo, cha-cha dance Suzie Wong performs with a sailor under the gaze of the White Knight and the drunken Englishman with the camera lovingly caressing her body. Psychoanalytic theory is appropriated to demonstrate the way the unconscious patriarchal society has structured film form. The image of woman in this system is seen as the object of male desire and she is the signifier of the threat of castration. Popular cinema encourages the audience to participate in a voyeuristic fantasy and the sexual objectification of women. Through the roles of Suzie Wong

and Linda Low, the camera takes the audience on a voyeuristic journey of eroticism. The camera according to Cheng (2002) is in love with Linda Low (p. 50). Film is a medium inflected by spectacle, politics and narcissism. Its inherent look-at-me-ness produces structural politics of the gaze: who is watching whom; who is performing for whom. *Flower Drum Song* is an ethnic spectacle obsessed with the question of beauty and Wang Ta's erotic choice between the sexy Linda Low and the ethereal Mei Li. (Cheng, 2002 p. 45). Culture has a profound effect on the way people think about the world.

In some ways, Hollywood has not shifted how it represents Asians from this approach of the 1950s and 1960s and has added the gaze of the male and the West. Asian psychology is a branch of cultural psychology that often aligns with cross-cultural psychology. I extensively reviewed journals and literature related to Asian psychology and cross-cultural psychology. The *Handbook of Asian American Psychology* (1998) provided a comprehensive overview of themes similar to those found in the journals, related to life course development: interracial marriages, ethnic identity, academic achievement and performance, career development, social and personal adjustment, racism, and intergenerational relations.

Writer Phoebe Eng (2000) challenged the earlier concepts of stereotypes and Asian behaviour. She examined the psychological development of this diverse population through cultural and gender role identity and stereotypes as they influence and are influenced by the relationships with family, community, and the law. She provided a new, insightful perspective on the meaning of dependence and interdependence for Asian women in relationships. For example, she suggested that what Western psychotherapy would call interdependence, Asians consider reciprocal.

Theory

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this study based on Chinese-Canadian history, anthropology, film studies, oral history, and narrative, I draw upon the work of the following theorists, showing how their theories intersect with the themes examined in my study. I started with the concept of Othering to analyse racial representation starting with Said's (1978) discussion of Orientalism which parallels Foucault's power/knowledge argument that a discourse produces through different practices of representation such as exhibition, literature, painting and such. A form of racialized knowledge of the Other is deeply implicated in the operations of power. Linguist and semiotician, Ferdinand de Saussure uses the theory of language to argue that we need difference because we can only construct meaning through a dialogue with the Other. Philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin concurs and states that everything we say and mean is modified by the interaction and interplay with another person. Thus, the Other is essential to meaning. Meaning therefore arises through the difference between the participants in any dialogue. Hall (1997) suggests that "People who are in any way significantly different from the majority such as, them rather than us, are frequently exposed to a binary form of representation" (p. 235). Philosopher Jacques Derrida states that there are very few neutral binary oppositions, rather there is one pole of the binary that is the dominant one and that there is always a relation of power between the poles of a binary opposition. Paul du Gay and Stuart Hall (1997) say that "culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different position with a classificatory system. The marking of difference is the basis of that symbolic order of culture and this can give rise to negative feelings and practices" (p. 236). Derrida suggests that one aspect of power is ethnocentrism which is the application of one's own cultural norms to the culture of others creating the binary oppositions of us and them. . The

dominance of one over the other is produced through the way the relationship of priority or privilege is constructed. This binary construction is frequently used in cinema replicating real life. Through the portrayal of roles, the audience is put in the position of choosing one potential heroine over another such as Linda Low, the vivacious nightclub entertainer or Mei Li, the obedient picture bride in *Flower Drum Song*.

“The dialectic of recognition” a concept of Lacan’s (2009), explains that, as humans, we receive knowledge of who we are from how others respond to us. Much of the work of feminist writers is based on this Lacanian idea. He sought to anchor psychoanalysis firmly in culture rather than in biology. According to Lacan:

The mirror stage is when an infant sees itself for the first time in the mirror (between the ages of 6 and 18 months) and forms an identification with the image in the mirror. In the mirror, the child sees not only an image of its current self but also the promise of a more complete self; it is in this promise that the ego begins to emerge. On the basis of this recognition, we begin to see ourselves as separate individuals: that is, as both subject (self that looks) and object (self that is looked at). (p. 102)

Said (1979) adopted Lacan’s mirror image concept for his theory of Orientalism in his book of the same name (1979). According to Said, “The Orient was almost a European invention” (p. 1). He tried to show that European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient. The term *Orientalism* came to describe the relationship between Europe and the Orient and the way “the Orient has helped to define Europe and the West as its contrasting image, idea, personality and experience” (p. 1-2). “The Orient was not Europe’s interlocutor, but its silent Other” (p. 93). Said (1985) observed that feminism and

women's studies, black and ethnic studies all rest upon one ethico-discursive principle: "The right of formerly un- or misrepresented human groups to speak for and represent themselves in domains defined, politically and intellectually, usurping their signifying and representing functions, overriding their historical reality." Psychiatrist, philosopher and writer, Frantz Fanon (1952) described these margins, arguing that the struggle of the Black man is to find self-definition that is not the obedient reproduction of Western projections. Yet in American cinema, "blacks can gain entry to the mainstream but only at the cost of adapting to the white image of them and assimilating white norms of style, looks and behaviour" (Hall, (1997) p. 270). This was exactly what Nancy Kwan did when she was critiqued by Asian-American film critics such as Marchetti (1993), Feng (2002), Palumbo-Liu (1999), and Kim (2013), who decried her for not embodying an activist stance but rather defending the stereotypical roles to which she is assigned.

Sociologist and cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard (1983) claimed that hyperrealism is the characteristic mode of post-modernity. In the realm of the hyper-real, the distinction between simulation and the "real" implodes: the "real" and the imaginary continually collapse into each other. The result is that reality and simulation are experienced without difference and that often simulations can be experienced as more real than reality itself. An example of this can be found in the set of San Francisco's Chinatown in *Flower Drum Song*. The streets are clean and orderly with just enough Chinese artefacts and red accents to claim its ethnicity. It is even better than the real thing for it sells what Chinese should look like to both Western and Chinese audiences.

In philosopher Louis Althusser's (2009) essay, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, he discussed the concept of the "problematic," which consists of the assumptions, motivations, and underlying ideas from which a text such as an advertisement is made. He

argued that a text is structured as much by what is absent and what is not said as by what is present and what is said. He maintains that for an audience to understand the meaning of a text, they must be aware of not what is in a text but also the assumptions which influence it and which may not appear in the text itself but exist only in the text's problematic. This concept refers to films such as *The World of Suzie Wong* where the text is related to a particular moment in history and to the ideological discourses that circulate in that moment when it used the scenic and exotic location of Hong Kong to encourage more travel to the locale (Roan, 2010; Said, 1979). It does not address the racist discourse of the film.

Foucault (2009) declared:

Each society has its own regime of truth; one of its central aims is to discover how men and women govern themselves and others by the production of truth. Regimes of truth do not have to be true; they have only to be thought of as true and be acted on as if true. If ideas are believed, they establish and legitimate particular regimes of truth. (p. 130)

Thus the persistence of the early ideas and images that Chinese women were brought to North America as prostitutes shaped the thinking of Western society and established a truth that the Chinese women in Canada are prostitutes and available for White men (Kalmijn 1998) and it is this truth that was reinforced in early films featuring Asian women.

Antonio Gramsci (2009) contended:

Hegemony points out that intellectuals and the state use the concept of hegemony to refer to a condition in process in which a dominant class leads a society through the exercise of intellectual and moral leadership. Hegemony involves a specific kind of consensus: a

social group seeking to present its own particular interests as the general interests of the society as a whole. (p. 79-80)

Hegemony is not simply power from above but a result of negotiations between dominant and subordinate groups in a process of resistance and incorporation. This shifting of forces between resistance and incorporation can be analysed in many different configurations and intersections of class, gender, generation, ethnicity, region, religion, sexuality, and others. The racialized regime of representation involves examining the set of representation practices of stereotyping. Dyer (1977) says that:

“ Stereotypes get hold of the few ‘simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized’ characteristics about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity. Stereotyping deploys a strategy of ‘splitting’ which divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and unacceptable and excludes everything which is different. Stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power.” (pp. 28-29)

In essence, stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes difference. A feature of stereotyping is that it symbolically fixes boundaries and excludes everything which does not belong. It effectively maintains social and symbolic order by setting up boundaries between what belongs and what does not and who are considered insiders and outsiders. Mary Douglas (1996) argues that stable cultures require things to stay in their appointed place, to keep the categories pure and to give cultures their unique meaning and identity. In other words, anyone or whatever is considered out of place is dangerous or taboo.

One function of narrative is as a mechanism through which the collective consciousness represses historical contradictions. Ideology is the repression of underlying contradictions that have their source in history. American literary critic Fredric Jameson (1981) conceived of ideologies as strategies of containment and of literature as an ideological production mirroring such strategies at the level of individual work. He tried to subject literature to symptomatic analysis, a mode of interpretation that reveals the ways in which works deny or repress history. Jameson conceived the social totality as constituted by a class struggle between a dominant and a labouring class and he wanted us to think that that we “hear” only one voice because a hegemonic ideology suppresses all antagonistic class voices. The Chinese may be a good example of this; in their eagerness to assimilate and fulfil the role of the model minority, they chose to fit in rather than speak out against such injustices.

Jameson (1981) suggested that with postmodernism there has emerged a new kind of superficiality. The disappearance of the individual subject and the unavailability of unique and personal style have established a new practice, pastiche. This has become a ubiquitous mode especially in film, which suggests that we wish to be recalled to times less problematic than our own. This, he says, has to do with consumer society, which lives in the perpetual present with no care to retain its own past. In *The World of Suzie Wong*, Suzie leaves the slums of Hong Kong along with her independence, ethnicity, and baby to start again with her White Knight in America. Postmodernism reinforces the logic of consumer capitalism and the emergence of present-day multinational capitalism. In my interview with Nancy Kwan, she stated, as a defining criterion, the importance of the highly profitable box-office draw of both *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*.

Compared to the earlier writings by Asian women, which described the long-suffering woman, the contemporary writings of the North American Asian experience has moved beyond the recounting of the history of Asians in North America to viewing these histories as background for how the experiences influenced the formation of relationship. There is a new emphasis on resiliency and on models that empower women coupled with an examination of how North American Asian women have been successful in adapting while being authentic in maintaining their identity. The writings look beyond the negative images and stereotypes of women as self-effacing, unworthy, and subservient to men. The writing and the forms of writing reveal an emotive array of pain, tragedy, anger, and in some, a call to rally and resistance. The following are some examples of this shift.

Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People examines the stereotyping of Asian Americans and popular culture. Author Helen Zia interweaves the socio-historical biography of Asian Pacific Americans with her own journey as an activist and writer about the transformation of Asian Americans. *Warrior Lessons: An Asian American Woman's Journey into Power* (1999), described a particular kind of Asian-American woman, one who sees herself at the crossroads of two often conflicting cultures. This is a self-help book for American-raised daughters with a willingness to cause "trouble." Author, Phoebe Eng described this woman warrior as one who wants to nurture her sense of her own validity and who has tried to develop her own sense of place and home, even when falling between the cracks and boundaries. Eng was a publisher for A. Magazine, a publication that sought to create a pride and self-awareness among young Asian-Americans. She talks about what it means to be seductive and sexual in the face of geisha-girl stereotypes, the eroticism of Asian women and Western notions of what is beautiful. Eng provided different perspectives from Asian American women

confronted by stereotypes, from those who resorted to name-calling of the perpetrator to others who chose to “use silence to their advantage and exploiting the passive Asian female stereotype for all its worth” (pp. 74-75).

Transnationalism and the Asian American Heroine: Essays on Literature, Film, Myth and Media, edited by Lan Dong, (2010) includes themes that show the way in which history, workshops, community, and media representation are interlaced. The essays explore the meanings and implications for transnational Asian-American women. This suggests that literature beyond national boundaries will force us to rethink established narratives about the Asian North American experience. This was particularly helpful in analysing my interview with Vivienne Poy who, based on her own travels and experiences, suggested that the Chinese in Victoria were more accepting of colonial discourse than the Chinese in Toronto, Vancouver, Hong Kong, and elsewhere.

Andrea Louie’s *Chineseness across Borders: Renegotiating Chinese Identities in China and the United States* (2004) describing her participation in the 1992 In Search of Roots Program, which mirrored my study. The Roots Program was run by organizations in Guangzhou and in San Francisco to provide an opportunity for young adults aged 17-25 of Cantonese descent to visit their ancestral village in China. Louie shares her fellow participants’ perspectives about being Chinese-American, which echoes the experiences of the participants in my study. Of particular note is the common issue of critically describing one another as “not being very Chinese or being too Chinesey.” Both Louie’s group and the group of participants in my study agree that their lack of knowledge about Chinese culture, language, and customs makes them feel less authentically Chinese. Both groups share the social marker of Cantoneseness that is closely tied to class distinctions. Their shared Cantonese background reflected a class identity that

distinguished them from the more prosperous immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan that they encountered and, at least for the participants in my study, created a desire for distinctness and separation. For individuals in both groups, their family rose to middle-class status but many of the participants continued to identify with the struggles of their immigrant ancestors. Both groups struggled with how much of their historical past they wished to claim. This book provided a good comparative of similar themes and feelings expressed by both the participants in the Roots program and the participants in my study.

Books about the Chinese can confine Chinese culture to issues of intergenerational conflict and the relationships between mother and daughter. Chin et al. (1974) used the example of the mother-daughter relationship in *The Joy Luck Club* in the beauty parlour scene where the daughter treats her mother to a day at a chic salon. The mother's interpretation is that her daughter is ashamed of her mother's looks. Chin suggests that this scenario emphasizes separation by class and cultural differences that lead to divergent interpretations of how femininity is understood and signified as well as the definition of proper female behaviour. He says that we must examine the mother-daughter relationship as it symbolizes Asian-American culture. Tong (2005) agreed that this relationship emphasizes an expectation of filial respect that conflicts with the American inability to fulfil that expectation. In *Modern Minority: Asian American Literature and Everyday Life*, Yoon Sun Lee (2013) posited that for Asian-American writers, modernity is a settled question or something that belongs in the past. Lee disagreed with Chin et al.'s (1974) perspective that Asian-American literature is primarily the discourse of counter-orientalism.

Yet another perspective is offered by Asian North American feminists who suggested:

Narrative patterns involve questions of identity and the maintenance of that identity

against threats from the outside. Sexual relations and taboos fundamentally define individual, family, clan, ethnic and ultimately national identities, sexual liaisons with people of colour pose a threat to the maintenance of white male hegemony within American society (Marchetti, 1993 p. 8).

They believe that everyone has the right to tell their own story and to express an individual vision and personal concerns and to modify the myths and legends told from their family's perspective. The questions they ask include: Whose account of the culture is privileged? Who has the right to tell the story? How Chinese are you?

Anthologies

I reviewed anthologies of contemporary writing by various groups including Chinese-Canadian authors, Chinese-Canadian women, Asian-American women, and Asian feminists. They provided an array of stories that share the collective past and suggest strategies to forge the future. I particularly like the title of one collection, *Many Mouthed Birds* (1991), a Chinese expression used to describe someone who talks out of turn and is indiscreet, a behaviour that the participants said that got them in trouble with their parents (p. 117 & 283). This anthology featured first-, second-, and third-generation Chinese-Canadian writers from across Canada who share emotional truths firmly rooted in their Canadian experience. Stories and poems deal with themes such as identity and enquire into the past of the sacrifices of the early sojourners and of women bearing pain with quiet courage, and they critique Chinese tradition, as they know it, from their personal experience. These Chinese-Canadian writers are “many-mouthed” birds because they are speaking up, breaking a long and often self-imposed silence. Their stories, some rooted in historical memory, strike a common chord with other Chinese-Canadians and describe

some of the shared tensions. The analogy of the “many-mouthed” birds is a fitting one for the immigrant parents who bemoaned their Canadian-born children’s desire to talk and share secrets.

Strike the Wok (2003) set out to link the socio-historical milieu with aesthetic merit or culture with literature that emphasizes an important element in minority literature. The editors Lien Chao and Jim-Wong Chu wanted to discover emerging writers, particularly those who were willing to risk exploring new territory. The book includes writers who were born in Canada and those born abroad. Community history and family sagas are in the foreground of many stories and include race, ethnicity, and culture. The perspectives of young female characters are shared in some stories depicting conflicts fuelled by family, social expectations, and intercultural issues.

Banana Bending: Asian-Australian and Asian-Canadian Canadian Literatures (2003) examined diasporic Asian literary studies to examine the layers of nation, community, and the gendered self. The chapters in this book chart a progression of concerns by explicating the national context for Asians and racialized writing in Australia and Canada. The themes include: race relations, the formation of Canadian multiculturalism, nationhood, and citizenship in Asian-Australian and Asian-Canadian texts, issues of community and ethnicity for Asian-Australian and Asian-Canadian authors, gender issues, Asian women’s fiction, and versions of family and femininity in Asian women’s texts.

Asian-American Women and Gender (1998) is an anthology of writing by Asian women. The subjects include: history and immigration, family life, community, gender, adaptation, acculturation, and transnational ties among Asian-Americans, inter-ethnic relations and politics, labour, economics, socio-economic status, and gender identity. The writers come from singular

ethnic groups and from intersectionalities of other identities and present an array of writing forms.

Forbidden Stitch (1989) is an Asian-American woman's anthology of emerging Asian-American writers who wrote on topics that may have been traditionally taboo such as sexual abuse, self-destructiveness, a harsh critique of the mother-culture, and cruelty experienced by women of colour. The anthology takes its name from an embroidery knot, which, while it resulted in luxurious beauty, was so difficult to sew that it led to blindness in many of the Chinese artisans assigned to embroider the robes and altar hangings so beloved in feudal China. This "forbidden stitch" was a metaphor for the pain found in much of the writing.

Screaming Monkeys (2003), an anthology of communities of writers, artists, scholars, and activists from various ethnic communities, illustrates the diverse perspectives in Asian-Americans as well as the multiple histories integral to America. There are no silent, subservient types in this anthology of fiction, poetry, essays, and art that skewers stereotypes of Asian-Americans. Rather, it includes a section of cringe-inducing media quotes such as: "American Beats Out Kwan" to critique a wealth of material on the images of Asian-Americans and how the media treats them.

Sisters or Strangers (2004) is a collection of feminist essays in Canadian history that seeks to centre the lives of marginalized immigrant, ethnic, and racialized women. Midge Ayukawa's chapter, under the theme "Immigrants, Gender and Familial Relations," *Japanese Pioneer Women: Fighting Racism and Rearing the Next*, reiterates the common themes of ethnic identity and media representation in Canada in other anthologies. It also shows the common experiences of the immigrant, and first-, second-, and third-generation women.

Four anthologies: *Making Waves* (2002), *Anthology of Writings by and about Asian-American Women*, *Making More Waves* (1997), *Negotiating Identities: An Introduction to Asian American Women's Writing* (2003), and *Dragon Ladies: Asian American Feminists Breathe Fire* (1997) deal with the political perspectives of Asian-American women and Asian-American feminism. The four anthologies feature established and emerging writers on history, memory, sexuality, repression, cultural, spiritual, artistic, and generational conflicts exploring what it means to be Asian, to be American and to be female. They provide analysis of race, class, and gender-power dynamics, Asian-American women's diversity, agency, and strategies for social change. They describe a continuum including a celebration and acknowledgement of artistic vision, differences, often-painful histories, and complex experiences. These essays reiterate Lee's (2006) stance which describes the diversity of Asian women and recognizes that it is their differences rather than their similarities that make them stronger. As in the anthologies, Lee's goal is to describe, expand, and nurture the growing resistance of Asian-American women, and to provide a common ground for Asian women, girls, and their allies.

Chapter 3. Methodology:

Narrative, Oral History and Life Stories: Empowerment Through Storytelling

This chapter covers background material on life history, oral history, narratives and grounded theory and their application to my research. I describe the process of the interviews with the participants, the ways in which I analysed the data, and the results of these analyses.

Life history research depicts the storied nature of lived experience while honouring the individuality and complexity of that experience. It attempts to move beyond the individual by placing narrative accounts and interpretations in a broader context of cultural, political, familial, educational, and religious spheres. The aim of my research is to examine the life experiences of Canadian women of Chinese descent following family unification made possible by the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946 and the repeal of the Canada Immigration Act (1923-1947), which had prevented the Chinese from immigrating to Canada. Although the repeal re-opened the door of immigration for the Chinese after almost a quarter century of virtual exclusion, Canadian immigration policy continued to be very restrictive for the Chinese. Initially, the Chinese, like other Asians, could only sponsor the immigration of their wives and children younger than eighteen years of age. In 1950, the age limit was raised to include children up to twenty-one years and, in 1955, those up to twenty-five years could be admitted on compassionate grounds. At the same time, older parents could be sponsored and, in 1957, the right to sponsor immigrants was extended from citizens to include landed immigrants. However, it was not until 1967 that the Chinese attained full equality in immigration when a universal points system was implemented to screen all applicants without any reference to their racial and ethnic background. The participants who grew up during this 20-year period were part of a distinct group caught in the transitional period between the exclusion era and the liberalization period. Their role models

were mothers and sister siblings who were confined to the Chinese ethnic group in their upbringing, social life, careers, and education. These older mentors had very limited experience with which to advise these young women about their new and evolving role in Canadian society.

This study explores questions intended to examine the strategies that this group of women used to balance the concomitant developmental and cultural changes, given their place and time in Chinese-Canadian history. I wanted to examine the markers they used to fashion their identity, looking at the themes of beauty, behaviour, language, culture, values, and expectations overlain by the influence of the portrayal of Chinese women in Hollywood films. I wanted to hear how each developed a sense of self as a member of an ethnic minority group while becoming a citizen of the broader Canadian society. Who were their role models? How did the iconic representation of Suzie Wong affect their identity? How did they navigate the process of growing up Chinese in Canada?

Exploring Methods

Personal narratives are accounts of past events. As well as recounting the past, they take us on a journey through our understanding of the world. They shape our view of our surroundings and our sense of who we are and where we come from. It is important to recognize that variation in narrative styles associated with specific groups or cultures may reflect differences in how such groups or cultures view themselves, their communities, and their past. Dissatisfaction with the interpretation of history as a record of progress with an emphasis on the actions of great men and great nations has prompted feminists, working classes, and minorities to emphasize the use of narrative as a descriptor of oral histories and life stories. They wanted new sources and new methods that could excavate the past of people in all walks of life whose history

may not have traditionally been deemed noteworthy. The growth of oral history was integral to this movement and it became a mode of analysis during the 1990s. The topics varied from everyday routine occurrences to major pivotal decisions, markers, and events. For this participant group and study, the use of oral history and life stories was a good fit because the participants were all women, minorities, and from working-class families.

Oral history intersects with narrative when the researcher and the interviewee, through their dialogue, are engaged directly with the making of history. This process occurs when the researcher asks the participant to narrate what she saw or experienced. Because it is engaged with real past events, oral history offers a new social realism as stated by one of its early proponents, Lewis (1970). Oscar Lewis, an anthropologist, was a pioneer in life history work and his book, *The Children of Sanchez* is an example of a uniquely intimate investigation. He set out to create an opportunity for interviewees to talk about themselves and relate their observations and experiences in an uninhibited, spontaneous, and natural manner. Narrative is the way people organize their experience and their memory of human happenings; the self becomes the artist and the author of her life (Bruner, 1991). Brian Richardson (1990) suggests:

“Life is not a narrative, people make sense of their lives and the lives of others through narrative construction. In our work as researchers, we weigh and sift experiences to make context meaningful; by doing so, we craft narratives and we write lives” (p. 10).

Philosopher and literary theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984) pointed out that individuals choose more than one narrative through which to recount and construct their lives depending on their geographic and temporal location and their perceived rationale at any one time. Bakhtin (1981) argued that narratives involve a dialogic element in that the narrator and the

researcher are equally implicated in the creation of the text. The memories oral historians tease from their interviewees and narrators are episodes selected from the total narrative of a life that is under constant revision; lapses of memory are evidence of this revisioning self. The participants in my study would reflect this philosophy outlined by Lyotard and Bakhtin as they indicated that their feelings about their Chinese ethnicity has “mellowed” over time and that they are more comfortable with this identity at this stage of their lives. This insight of narrative theory suggests that the individual is engaged in a continuous revision of the self. Individuals unconsciously select from the repertoire of narrative compositions available, which change according to and alongside the life course or the range of contexts in which individuals find themselves, the range of audiences, and even the interview itself. The individual voice contains a multiplicity of voices in that it holds within it the shared meanings of language and cultural narratives and the range of relationships, recounting, and challenges that contributed to a memory and a representation of the self at any one time. As we revision ourselves, what we choose to recollect also influences and alters what is remembered and how. The cultural sensitivity of narratives links individuals integrally with their time and place and social world. Narratives of self offer insights into cultural priorities and values, and recognize a cultural narrative within a life story, which offers a deeper understanding of an interviewee’s or narrator’s location in history.

The extent to which the narratives of “self” conform or do not conform to expectations, is the principal mechanism through which a sense of identity is secured, acknowledged, and recognized by others. Molly Andrews et al. (2000) suggested that narrative structures and meanings are necessarily shared and therefore are public and part of the culture and cannot be understood apart from it. George Steinmetz (1992) has argued that social class so conditions

some narrative models such that events are interpreted, employed, and evaluated through that construct over others.

Narrative selves are multi-layered and poly-vocal because the narrative may follow different narrative priorities or a chronological life course, guided by the interviewers' questions and prompts and as memories are triggered. The narrative changes and shifts as the both the interviewer and interviewee recollect events from childhood, adolescence and the present as middle-aged and mature women. This is particularly pertinent in this study as I share some commonalities of events with the participants. In an interview, the participant remembers her life in fragments. Walter Benjamin (1970) described it as "moments and discontinuities" (p. 12). He contends that memory collapses time, there is no chronological order; the goal is not to recover memory but to understand the past (p. 13).

There are similarities among the stories shared by and between the participants with recurring themes of content or intent. There are repetitions of type such as the experience of entering first grade unable to speak English or of moral purpose, as in the admonition to do the right thing. It is not merely the shared experience that explains the similarity. It is also the shared understanding and interpretation that, at the time, give that kind of story a priority and value, a moral and an emphasis, and explains behaviour that reinforce a particular cultural or social code. According to Mary Chamberlain and Paul Thompson (1998), it is these that constitute genres and that determine the form and the content of the account.

Elizabeth Tonkin (1992) suggested that it is essential to understand the genre through which the words are spoken. She explained that every culture has a set of rhetorical devices through which stories are recounted from the anecdotes of childhood to a professional report. An

example of this is the participants' usage of the words, *lo fan*, meaning a White person. These Chinese words were used more frequently when the participants talked about people whom they thought could not tell the difference between Asian groups.

Psychologist, Theodore R. Sarbin (1994) contended that the reasons why people react and make certain choices are due to the range of stories, fables, parables, myths and legends that offer guidance at moments of choice or dilemma. He noted:

How people present themselves in their silences and the articulations may reveal as much about their values as about their experiences and cultural practices. What is remembered, when, and why is moulded by the culture in which they live or with which they have lived experience, the language now and the language remembered, and the conventions and the genre appropriate to the occasion. (pp. 7-38)

Memory and Language

Cultural practices become manifest in the content, intent and form of stories, emerging out of the traditions and genres of storytelling. Chamberlain (2008) concurred, suggesting: "Memories refer to and reflect the deep imaginative structures of the social mind" (pp. 142-182). Memory is both personal and social. Values and priorities are often implanted in memory descriptions, revealed by the language used or by the generic structure of the recollection and point to what philosopher, Maurice Halbwachs (1980) described as the collective nature of memory, particularly when they become embedded in or through the dominant culture. He observed, "Other peoples' memories, especially family memories, become incorporated into our own, and they are socially and culturally specific."

Memories share meanings and understandings, languages and images, dreams and nightmares (Alexander, 1995). Social anthropologist, Ernest Gellner (1964) argued that of all the shared factors, language is the most central. He said that word use is entwined with the activities and institutions of the society. Edward Sapir (1956, as cited in Whorf) observed that what we see, hear, and experience are largely due to the language habits of our community which predispose certain choices of interpretation. Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956) agreed and noted that language provides a shorthand for a particular cultural worldview with language and thoughts connecting, collaborating, and integrating with behavioural reactions shaped by various cultural developments. The women participants who have maintained some of their Chinese were inclined to intersperse their responses using key Chinese phrases. Some said they used the Chinese words because they weren't completely sure of how it translates in English and the more fluent speakers said that it sounds better in Chinese, reflecting, perhaps, as Sapir and Whorf suggest, that their family language is the language of their memory.

Similar to the findings of Richard Ely and Allyssa McCabe (1996), this study demonstrated the participants' preference for using reported speech in their responses. Reported speech is when a speaker makes explicit reference to a past speech event which is regarded as a part of the re-constructive or sense-making nature of memories. Studies by linguistics professor, Barbara Johnstone (1993) found that women included reports of speech more frequently than did men. The study by Ely and McCabe (1996) examined the association between mothers' and children's reported speech and found the correlation was positive and statistically significant. Examination of this data indicated that the correlation was due in part to children's high rate of compliance to mothers' prompts and queries about past speech events. The women interviewees in my study spoke Chinese to their mothers as children and these memories were framed in the

family language, which may account for their preference of reported speech used in the interviews. The three participants, with mothers who had more limited English, had more Chinese fluency and often quoted their mother in Chinese in answer to my interview questions.

The distinction between life history and a spoken autobiography as defined by David Heinge (1982) is one in which the interviewee relates those parts of her life that seem to her to be more interesting and important. Oral history is when the interviewer guides the interviewee. The personal experiences are still shared but in the context of the larger overview that the interviewer is working on. Because they are personal experiences, the attitude of the interviewee is different than when she is merely recounting what she has been told or what she regards as common knowledge. It is this special relationship between the interviewee and her testimony that sets it apart. Although I guided the conversation, there were periods when the interviewee had a set idea of what she wanted to share. In those instances, I provided the interviewee some time to describe what they needed to and I would try to get the interview back on track by redirecting, repeating, or rephrasing the question. There were times when that worked and others when I would get a cursory answer and the interviewee would return to the story she wanted to tell.

Grounded Theory

The aspects of grounded theory applied to this study include the use metaphor as a theoretical code. I found that it was useful to use metaphor to help explain a theory by clarifying relationships and providing labels for various components. It was also useful to explain a core category identified as a basic social process. Nancy Kwan's role as the iconic Suzie Wong is a metaphor for a particular stereotype of how Chinese-Asian women are viewed. Her name has become synonymous with how a Chinese woman should look and act.

Another application in grounded theory for this study is the use of coding or themes to identify process in the data as well as focusing on the participants' experience as a source of conceptual analysis. I started with a broad category of themes to fracture the data as a method to compare incident with incident and begin the process of comparison between them. This was particularly helpful as a means to open up the data by identifying conceptual possibilities. The initial coding or theming is pertinent to reflection. I continually interrogated myself about the early analytical decisions I had made. Analysing the transcriptions closely, almost line by line, provided the initial coding or theming. This was beneficial because it allowed me to examine the data in minute detail while I questioned the data by revisiting a category or an interaction and the emotions expressed. In essence, I asked about the why, where, what, and how of the described situation.

The next stage in grounded theory is intermediate coding which is an open coding followed by selective coding where attention is turned to generating codes or themes on an identified core variable. I used this method to make connections between and within categories for the identification of patterns and relationships during the process of category development, following the work of Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1990). As I identified explanatory, conceptual patterns in my analysis in order to link together and integrate the categories, I used the grouping of themes for the formation of categories. An example of this is the coding of ethnic identity and all the variables that led to a sense of self as a member of an ethnic minority. This ethnic identity included but was not limited to the acquisition and maintenance of language involvement in cultural activities and events, and culturally expected standards of behaviour. I constantly compared the data, categories and sub-categories and questioned the relationships between these concepts. When I identified gaps or had further questions, I re-interviewed

participants for clarification or probed deeper as needed with a view to validating the findings. I collapsed some of the categories and subsumed them under other categories for example, “beauty” was subsumed under dating and marriage. One reason I chose to do this was because the women had difficulty recalling times when they received messages about how they looked from their parents and family. Instead, these messages came in a form of new clothes or being involved in a feminized activity such as the Miss Vancouver Pageant. Despite extra probing, I did not think that I had enough data to theme “beauty” as a separate category.

I used two core categories, “ethnic identity” and “Canadian identity,” as the two central themes around which all the other sub-categories are integrated. A core category was identified when I was able to trace connections between a frequently occurring variable and all of the other categories, sub-categories, their properties and dimensions.

The use of grounded theory for this study can be compared to Edwards and Jones’ (2009) study of college men’s gender identity development. The aim of Keith E. Edward and Susan R. Jones’ study was to gain an understanding of the processes used by men enrolled at university to manage internalized patriarchy. They used a strong and meaningful metaphor, “the mask of society’s expectation of them as men” to present their findings. My study differs from this study in that they used only grounded theory as a methodology with the intent that it would become a tool for renewed change in the participants’ lives. The result would be affirmative action by some to shift away from living out a traditional hegemonic image of masculinity. Similarities to this study can be found in the use of the interviewing process and the use of metaphor. The goal of my study is to understand and to hear the participants’ process and strategies of their historical lived lives, not with any intent to elicit change but rather to provide opportunity for reflection.

Grounded theory also provided a set of questions for my self-reflection especially in relation to my thinking process as I analysed the data, reviewed the codes, and drew linkages between them.

Why This Group of Women Participants?

Conventional written history and oral tradition is elitist history, written by the victors, who choose what is to be remembered. Far from being seen as winners, the history of the Chinese in Canada has been reflected through the lives of Chinese men as sojourners, framed by events such as the Gold Rush and the building of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

I interviewed twelve women, now in their 50s, 60s or 70s, who were born and raised in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s. All the participants in this study are descendants of Guangdong from the Pearl River Delta in the four counties of Toi-Sun, Hoi-Ping, San-Wooi, and Yin-Ping. The women who came forward for the interviews grew up in working-class families. One out of these twelve families bought land, moved to middle-class status and achieved a place in both the Chinese and greater community when the participant was starting public school. Two other families moved into the suburbs before the children started public school, but 67% of the families lived in the first family home throughout their adolescent years.

Of the twelve participants, 75% of them had parents, either one or both, who were Canadian-born; the remaining 25% had fathers who came to Canada at an early age prior to 1923 and sent for their wives following the repeal. The participants grew up as the first generation of Chinese-Canadians with full citizenship rights. Two of the women had fathers who fought in the Second World War to win these rights. At the age when this group was considering relationships and marriage there were several influential factors in place. One factor was the few available

Canadian-born Chinese prospects. Although the population was growing, the numbers were still small and the majority of the Canadian-born men were under 16. In 1971, for example, 65.4% of the Chinese in Canada were under-16. The delay of this group of Canadian-born Chinese was partly attributed to the policy of exclusion before the war (Li, 1988 p. 68).

As well, the experiences of Canadian-born parents, who had their own difficulties with China-borns, influenced these young women in the cultural distinctiveness on issues of identity and community. The participants expressed a desire for separation from the new immigrants and they spoke of experiences of mutual prejudice, animosity, and cultural hierarchy between them. In turn, the new immigrants ridiculed them for their language loss and deculturation. Even newspaper articles in the Chinatown News in the 1950s suggested that the Canadian-born women were not considered good wife material.

I met with all twelve women for an initial interview of one and one-half hour to four hours. I followed up with nine of them with a second face-to-face meeting of approximately one hour, and six of those with a third face-to-face meeting of an additional hour to ensure that I had interpreted their answers to my questions accurately and to probe more deeply into particular answers they had given.

Call for Participants

The criterion for the participants was that they are Canadian-born women of Chinese ancestry who grew up in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s. I used a poster to elicit participants, put out an open call at Chinese community and ethnic events where I thought participants might be found and used an informal network to suggest possible contacts. The aim was that attendees at

these events would share the information with their friends and family and, through this snowball method, I would be able to find an adequate number of participants. Liu (2006) noted the importance of personal connections in Chinese social transactions and on the use of informal networks, as I did, using the snowball method to garner potential interviewees. I hoped that, if the interviewee was aware of me personally or who I am in the community, she would view me as reliable and be more willing to talk openly and be more likely to view me as trustworthy. At the same time, however, I was mindful of complications that might arise. Given that there would be few participants in the Victoria Chinese community who would fit the criteria, I did not want any personal connections to leverage an expectation for anyone to participate. I developed a list of likely participants from those who responded to the poster and the open call, as well as others who were nominated by others. I followed up all the names I was given and chose the first twelve who showed interest in the study and were able to meet in my timeline. One participant from this initial list was not able to participate and I replaced her with a person suggested by one of the interviewees who was on my original long list. This is an example of the snowball effect and it reflected the comfort that the interviewee experienced in the interviewing process and study. There were two sets of sisters who came forward. In each case, one sister answered the call first and recommended their sister as a participant.

All the interviews were conducted in Victoria, B.C. The participants chose the location of the interview, which took place in a coffee shop, home, or their place of work. I met with eleven of the participants in an informal setting; some of them invited me to their home, others met with me in coffee shops, restaurants, or recreation centres; one met with me in an office setting. At the start of each interview I provided the background on my research, reviewed the ethics

application with them and gave them the option to sign the release at the end of the interview. I interviewed the twelve participants over a five-month period.

External Perspectives

One of my research questions was about the effect of the iconic Suzie Wong (portrayed by Nancy Kwan in *The World of Suzie Wong*) on these participants. *The World of Suzie Wong* was a Hollywood success and made cinematic history in 1960 because this was the first time a lead actor portraying a Chinese character was Chinese. It was released at a time when this group of women were teenagers, a critical time in a young woman's identity development. I was interested in how Nancy Kwan's portrayal of an exotic Asian woman stereotype affected the participants' identity development, both in terms of their ethnic and Canadian identities. I was also interested in exploring the effect of Suzie Wong on non-Chinese viewers and how it may have shaped their responses and behaviour towards the participants.

Nancy Kwan

I approached Nancy Kwan through a former Warner Brothers executive, Brian Jamieson, who produced and directed her documentary, *To Whom It May Concern: Ka Shen's Journey*. The documentary charts Nancy's personal life including her meteoric rise to fame after being cast in *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*. I hoped that a series of interviews with Nancy Kwan might provide insights on her perspective as the persona of Suzie Wong and Linda Low and hear of the reactions of Asian and non-Asian audiences globally as compared to those of the women in this study. When I explained the goal of my study to Nancy Kwan, she was intrigued

with the generation of participants and their place in Canadian history. I met with Nancy Kwan over in Burbank, California; some of those times included Brian Jamieson.

Nancy Kwan is a Hong Kong-born actress who portrayed two breakthrough Asian roles, portraying Suzie Wong in *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and Linda Low in *Flower Drum Song* (1961). Her role as Suzie Wong, a prostitute, with a heart of gold, catapulted her onto the big screen and Hollywood stardom. Nancy Kwan portrayed Suzie Wong, a prostitute who despite her lifestyle has her own strong principles and self-respect—essentially a good woman trapped in a bad situation.

There has been much criticism particularly from Asian-American writers (Feng, 2000; Marchetti, 2012; Shimizu, 2007; Xing, 1998) of Nancy Kwan in her portrayal of Suzie Wong, not because of her acting but because she portrayed a prostitute. This, they say, perpetuates the image that Asian women are sexualized within their race and gender; her character, as an agent of seduction, highlights the representation of Asian women as objects of beauty and as subjects of desire.

Flower Drum Song, set in San Francisco's Chinatown during the late 1950s and early 1960s, is a story about two Chinese-American families as they search for a suitable wife for each of their two sons. The film was unusual, not only in featuring an all-Asian cast, but in its portrayal of Chinese as Chinese-Americans. *Flower Drum Song* reflected the developmental growing pains of the Chinese in America at that time and provided a wide spectrum of Chinese-Americans at various stages of assimilation in relationship to the dominant U.S. culture and in particular the role of Chinese women. The film, a musical comedy, is about the clash between traditional and modern Chinese-Americans over cultural traditions and romance. Nancy Kwan as

Linda Low is a character whose beauty and personality represent a sexually liberated American woman (Cheng, 2000).

The Honourable Vivienne Poy

I was interested in talking to The Honourable Vivienne Poy, a recently retired Canadian senator who lived in Hong Kong at the time Nancy Kwan became a Hollywood icon, hoping that she could provide a contemporary and Canadian counterpoint to Nancy Kwan. I wanted to hear her perspective and interpretation of Suzie Wong in a Chinese context as only one of the participants growing up had any direct personal experience with China. I approached her through a mutual acquaintance, who made the introduction and forwarded her my contact information. Dr. Poy was agreeable to meeting. I had set questions for her. We met three times for approximately 1.5-2 hours each time over a two-day period, one session included her husband and another included a mutual friend when Dr. Poy was in Victoria, B. C. to promote the publication of her book.

I was particularly interested in Dr. Poy's perspective because of her interest, passion, and work in gender issues and multiculturalism. The women I interviewed said that they valued people who were leaders in the community. Dr. Poy was the first Canadian of Asian descent to be appointed to the Senate of Canada and was a member from 1998-2012. She immigrated to Canada in 1959 to attend McGill University. She is and has been a role model for young people, women and immigrants and is a strong advocate for the pursuit of higher education. Dedicated to her Chinese roots, she has published extensively on both her family's past and the preservation of the memory of the Chinese struggles in Hong Kong, China, and Canada. Dr. Poy has consistently demonstrated her leadership, extensive volunteerism and community service and has been recognized through a number of awards and initiatives. She was primarily responsible for

having May recognized as Asian Heritage Month in Canada. I interviewed Dr. Vivienne Poy to gain a broader understanding of the Chinese in Canada and to hear about her research in her *Passage to Promise Land: Voices of Chinese Immigrant Women to Canada* (2013). Dr. Poy interviewed mainly Chinese women who immigrated to Canada in the second half of the century and some who were born in Canada.

My goal is to provide an in-depth understanding of the complex interaction between the life of an individual and the institutional and societal contexts in which it is experienced. Margaret Somers (1992) defined two kinds of narrative: the ontological narrative of stories that compose a life enabling the individual to make sense of it and to act within it and a second kind, the public, cultural and institutional narrative that exists beyond the individual and is larger than the individual such as the family, school, and workplace.

This study deploys the latter. To enable the process, I asked a series of questions thematically framed in a guided conversational style to hear stories that would be related. This group of Canadian-born Chinese women grew up with the advent and availability of public television and in the iconic presence of Suzie Wong. Film, television, and print are known to reflect how society understands itself and what it deems worthy of knowing (Storman & Jones, 1998). Racial ideology, for example, is described through portrayals of race in the media and these portrayals have influenced both Chinese and non-Chinese, providing lessons about who the Chinese were and who they should be (Hamamoto, 1994; Marchetti, 1993; Moy, 1993; Xing, 1998). Films that reach mainstream audiences have, for the dominant culture, contributed to the raising of consciousness and awareness of Chinese women, the Chinese and the broader community. Some of the interview questions asked about the depiction of the characters of Suzie Wong, Linda Low, and Mei Li and how these representations affected these women who found

themselves at the intersection of the mainstream culture and their ethnic identity in the choices they make.

The interviews were an intersection of narrative, oral history, and life stories. A life story is the result of the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. The telling is determined by the culture of the interview, the nature and form of the questions asked, the skill of the interviewer, the relationship between interviewer and interviewee, and the place where the interview occurs. Marie-France Chanfrault-Duchet (1990) contends that a life story is a methodological tool used to collect information from social categories such as women who do not have access to the public stage. One reason I chose to research the lives of Canadian-born Chinese women following the repeal of the Canada Immigration Act was to provide a forum for these lost voices. Accounts of the history of the Chinese in Canada has dealt with the early Chinese sojourner who came to Canada seeking fortune in the Gold Rush or the Chinese men who worked and died building the railway. The participants are women, Canadian-born and are different from the earlier arrivals of Chinese men who came to work, who were not given full Canadian status. They are also different from the Chinese who came following the creation of a multicultural Canada. These women negotiated their way through an unknown terrain in a particular time and place in Canadian history. The stories I collected from the participants are particular stories at a particular time and in a particular location. They may never have been told before in this form, neither in this sequence nor this time frame. The recollection of these stories is constructed through initial questions that triggered certain memories around thematic markers.

As a genre, life history can be viewed as an object created by the form and the contents, which produce meaning, just like a literary form. The guiding principles of life-history research identify the relationship between researcher and participant as central to the empirical, ethical,

and humanistic dimensions of research design. The intimacy and authenticity in relationships are the foundation of both research quality and knowledge production. Ardra Cole (2001), Jieyu Liu (2006) and Deianira Ganga and Sam Scott (2006) make a distinction between a researcher who is “doing” research and researcher who is an “insider,” where there is an intersection of the self as researcher and the researched. The researcher is present through an explicit reflexive self-accounting such that it reveals the intersection of a researcher’s life with those of the researched.

It is important to recognize that a study such as this (asking women of Chinese descent to share their histories) may at times evoke memories of difficult experiences and events, making the research relationship complex where boundaries blur. Some feminist researchers have argued that their common experience as women contributes to the successful establishment of a relationship between the researcher and the researched (Abrams, 2010; Chamberlain, 2008; Finch, 1984). Others suggest that social attributes such as class, age, and race also play a crucial part in the interview relationships. Jane Ribbens (1989) and Maura McIntyre and Ardra Cole (2001) suggest the more blurred the boundaries, the closer they were able to get to a “knowledge producing” relationship. Similarly, Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997) consider intimacy, depth of connection and interpersonal resonance as integral to knowledge development. Drawing on Oakley (1981), they stated, “Authentic findings will only emerge from authentic relations.” I endeavoured to conduct each interview with sensitivity and authenticity and by maintaining boundaries of respect, to increase the knowledge production particularly because I share aspects of class, age, gender, and ethnicity.

Abrams (2010) argued that scholars should re-evaluate autobiographical texts including oral and written life-story narratives of non-Western traditions, challenging some of the assumptions implicit in the notion of the European autobiographical tradition. She contended that

non-Western cultures have ways of speaking about the self which differ from what has come to be regarded as the norm in the West. The result is that they often produce an account that does not position the subject as the author of her own destiny. Abrams asserted that this recognition should affect the ways in which researchers gather and analyse non-Western life stories.

Abrams's argument is reflected in how the participants in my study shared their lives and told their stories often in the third person and not as the heroine in the story. The interviews by Chow (1998), Poy (2013), and Guo (1992) also reflect a modest retelling of stories by their participants of Chinese descent.

Through in-depth interviews, I collected life histories of Canadian-born women of Chinese descent in order to explore the historical and social factors that shaped their lives. The principal application of narrative theory is in the interpretation of the data I collected. Narrative theory recognizes that the interview is a multilayered document. It is information from an individual perspective. With twelve participants, some common themes emerged. Although I had set questions, each interviewee engaged with them individually to create their own text in how they responded as well as in the use of paralanguage such as facial expressions, body language, and vocal tones. I draw attention to my research experience as an insider in my approach to the interviewees and the interviews. As well as the commonalities of gender, class, and ethnicity, I am also a certified clinical counsellor in cross-cultural counselling. Cole and Knowles (2001) suggested that as researcher, I place trust in the participants, who are informed of the general intentions of my scholarship, and that their ease with me and their security in the researching relationship will aid in their comfort in revealing telling information.

The Guided Conversation

Familiarity with the participant before the guided conversation is helpful in striking up a conversation about the focus of my study and her life. As the researcher, my preparation included the gathering of information and developing a set of questions to provide guidance. The inquiry work is personally as well as professionally meaningful and the gathering of information encourages a conversation between friends rather than an interview with a stranger. As researcher, I wanted to maintain a mutual and authentic engagement. As part of my presentation, I told the participants during the call for participants and at the outset of the interview that the telling of their life is important. People often downplay the value of telling their life story. About 40% of the participants said initially that their lives were mundane and they would not have anything interesting to tell me that would help me in my research.

I developed a list of questions that I used with each participant. The questions were deliberately open-ended. They were based on the principles of (a) less is more, and (b) the belief that broad, open questions framing an issue, event, or circumstance, allow wider latitude in responses and yield richer insights. I tried to develop questions that were sufficiently broad to allow individuality but not so broad or vague that the focus of the research is lost or participants are uncertain how to respond. I chose the wording carefully so that the questions were as free as possible from suggestion and conversations would not be led in a particular direction. I tried to phrase the questions in a way that was likely to elicit extensive responses rather than simple “yes/no” answers.

To elicit more information, I used a combination of themes with open-ended guiding questions as well as some structured probing questions. I started with the broader questions and prompted, redirected, or clarified as required. Participants, especially those born and raised in Victoria, asked about my experience because they assumed it must have been similar to what

they experienced or knew. I answered any direct questions they asked while staying mindful of the need to keep my answers succinct so that they would not influence the participants unduly. I made it clear to the participants that they should not feel any obligation to answer questions with which they were uncomfortable, and that they were free to end the interview whenever they wanted. Although I used an interview guide of set questions with pre-identified themes and topics, I allowed the participants to decide how to tell their story.

I used probing questions to seek out participants' description of the obvious and not-so-obvious connections with the world, society, and communities in their experience growing up in Canada. I tried to seek clarification of as many background and life influences and contexts as seemed pertinent to stories being told in conversation. The first step was to understand the role of context and the second, to understand its place of influence. This required asking questions that are more direct than others usually asked but it was essential because it helped me to understand what was important in their life. The participants were not always able to answer these direct questions—whether they chose not to, or could not recall, or had not reflected on that experience at that time I could not discern. As one participant summed up: “I never thought about that”

I used a semi-structured interview approach that is both interactive and conversational, with the primary goal of identifying and analysing key factors that influenced the participants' assimilation and integration in the dominant culture. I asked questions relating to place of birth and place of primary socialization, including individual characteristics, familial values and traditions, social structures, and population dynamics that may have influenced them. This research is an attempt to examine the multifaceted nature of the assimilation process, recognizing that there are multiple forms of assimilation each influenced by particular interactions with political, economic, historical, and cultural factors.

I used a different set of questions for Nancy Kwan, pertaining to her experience. However, given our multiple conversations in different settings, with and without her producer, our interviews evolved into rich conversations. With Vivienne Poy I used another set of questions pertaining to Dr. Poy's perceptions of the Chinese in Canada and her recollections of the phenomenon of Suzie Wong. As in my interview with Nancy Kwan, because of the length of time we spent together the interviews became conversational, personal, and reciprocal.

Cole and Knowles (2001) noted that "life-history work is not a barrage of questions. It is about creating an atmosphere of security, intentional meaning making, reflexivity and genuine interaction around topics that are intensely personal yet vibrantly interesting to both parties." They said that, as researchers, "we need to work hard at creating the conditions where stories can be meaningfully told" (p. 75). My intention is to give voice to these women so that they can tell the history of how they negotiated their way and found a place for themselves during a particular time for Canadian-born Chinese in Canadian history, affected by the iconic role of Suzie Wong from *The World of Suzie Wong*.

Recording the Interview

I used an audio recorder to tape every interview. The interviews were transcribed within four or six weeks of each interview. The interviews with the twelve participants ranged from 1.5 to 4 hours. The length of the conversation was influenced by a variety of variables such as the participant's ability to stay focused, the emotional intensity of the interview, the conviviality of the setting, their availability, the time of day, physical comfort levels, and their general health and well-being.

Artefacts

I had certain questions related to the films, *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*. The participants had varying degrees of memory regarding the two films. There was a difference in the number of times they had watched each film. Some of them remembered watching the films as a child or adolescent, others as an adult and at different stages in their life. There was a difference for some in how they viewed the films during their adolescence and how they viewed them today, as middle-aged women. An important factor that most of the participants wanted to discuss was their awareness, during their adolescence, of the lack of Asians in mainstream Hollywood films or television compared to what is available today. Over half of the participants in their adolescence watched Chinese movies more or as often as they watched Hollywood films.

According to Cole (2001), the physicality of the place of conversations is as important as the relational aspects. Different settings prompt different memories. She suggested that the place of the interview qualifies as artefacts of life history and reflects the response to the environment. All but one participant suggested that we meet in places where we could have tea and something to eat. They said that they always feel more comfortable talking over food. Whether we met in a restaurant, a coffee shop, or in the home of a participant, there was food; some of the women showed me family albums, scrapbooks, mementoes and photographs.

Organization of the Data

Using a modified grounded theory approach I reviewed the transcripts of the interviews by themes to sort, classify, categorize, and code data from its raw form through an analysis process. I did not use a rigid categorization system or analytic scheme, as I felt it could risk the whole by focusing on the parts. I wanted to understand, in a holistic way, the connectedness and

interrelatedness of human experience in complex social systems. My preference was to know the information in a highly personal and complete way. I did not want to lose the individuals in the group. The analysis process is not one of dissection but of immersion, as defined by Cole and Knowles (2001). McIntyre (2001) suggested that it is important to listen with both head and heart to the information accumulated about the lives lived.

Reliability in research is equally important. The strategies for ensuring reliability in qualitative research are triangulation and transparency of the research process, including the perspectives and assumptions that influence the researcher's decisions. I examined different studies related to gender and ethnicity to establish how typical one case or account is compared with others. My research included looking at how other researchers have conducted and analysed their data as ways to enhance generalizability and external validity.

Construction of Themes

One main theme in this study involved identity exploration as a sense of self as a member of an ethnic minority group. Under this theme were several sub-categories, which included maintenance and use of Chinese language, and involvement in Chinese cultural activities and organizations. Another main theme involved being a member of the broader Canadian society. The sub-categories under this theme included: schooling, Western beauty standards, friendships, dating and marriage. There were some sub-categories that fitted both main themes. I included an open question regarding self-labelling, which asked the participants to self-identify. There were questions related to the impact of external influences on identity development such as parents' emphasis on Chinese culture, which included sub-categories in education, filial piety, compliance and the participants' own internalization of social or cultural standards to regulate

behaviour. Another main theme was the influence of Hollywood films, particularly *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*, on their identity. The sub-categories included their own response to each of these films, the role of Suzie Wong and how this affected non-Chinese viewers' expectation and categorization of the participants.

Mary Chamberlain (2006) suggested that there are themes not of our choosing such as gender or race. These gendered and raced selves become the default narrative, affecting the language we use and the structure of our memories. Chamberlain noted, "There are themes within these fundamental narratives such as-the passive woman, good mother, or the Uncle Tom, through which, or against which, we choose to tell our lives" (p. 154). The participants shared some common fundamental narratives such as the expectation of being the "good girl, that is, one who is obedient and does what she is told."

I reviewed the interviews and sorted them by themes. I compared the themes to identify any possible relationships or connections and I reviewed the themes to ascertain whether some could be subsumed or others might need to be developed. Some of the themes lent themselves to tables as in the following.

Table 1. Chinese Identity

Name	Chinese School	Language Now	Chinese Movies	Activities Young	Activities Now
Amy		0			✓
Charlotte		0		✓	✓
Dawn	✓	2	✓	✓	
Daisy	✓	0			

Isabelle	✓	0	✓		
Jess	✓	0	✓		
Jasmine	✓	2		✓	
Kyla	✓	1			
Nicole		3		✓	✓
Sarah		0		✓	
Skye	✓	2	✓		
Wanda	✓	0	✓	✓	

Table 2. Role Models

Name:	Mother	Sisters/Cousins	Bessie/Other	Grandparents
Amy				
Charlotte		✓	✓	
Dawn	✓		✓	
Daisy	✓	✓		
Isabelle		✓		✓
Jess		✓		✓
Jasmine	✓		✓	
Kyla	✓	✓		
Nicole	✓			
Sarah		✓	✓	
Skye	✓			
Wanda	✓	✓	✓	

Table 3. Dating and Marriage

Name	Dated Chinese	Married Chinese	Married White
Annette	✓		✓
Charlotte			✓
Dawn	✓		✓
Daisy	✓		✓
Isabelle			✓
Jess			✓
Jasmine	✓	✓	✓
Kyla			✓
Nicole	✓	✓	✓
Sarah	✓		✓
Skye			✓
Wanda	✓		✓

Public and Private Accounts

Cornwell (1984) found that as her relationship to her participants changed, she received different versions of the same issue. She believed that what people say and how they say it varies depending on the person they are talking to and the circumstances of the conversation. She discerned the distinction between public and private accounts in that public accounts are sets of meanings in common social currency that reproduce and legitimate the assumptions people take

for granted about the nature of social reality. In general public accounts exclude those parts of people's existence and opinions that might be considered unacceptable and not respectable.

In contrast, she noted, "Private accounts spring directly from personal experience and from the thoughts and feelings accompanying it" (p. 16). Cornwell suggested that, "people cope with entirely new situations, where they are uncertain of their own position in relation of others and that the people doing the talking can be sure that whatever they say will be acceptable to other people" (p. 15). By this she meant that they will provide a version of the event so that they appear in a positive light. Cornwell said that she found in her study that the participants provided public accounts during the first interview when they were asked direct questions and private accounts in second and any subsequent interview when they were asked to tell their story. The learning I took from Cornwell was to provide more opportunity for my participants to tell stories as well as asking them direct questions.

Some of the personal experiences and feelings the participants shared had been private for a long time and some of the women knew other participants I was interviewing. This required me to be sensitive to the relationships between and among the women, as well as their relationship with me. Although I shared some of my own experience when I was asked directly, I was careful not to say so much that it influenced their response. At all times, I was mindful that the participants not assume I share the same background knowledge which might limit the details they might provide to my interview questions.

Insider Researcher

Qualitative research methodology must also take into account social-cultural practices in the collection of lived histories. I believe that my insider research experience will add to the understanding of doing qualitative research with a cultural group, and can advance discussions of the theory and practice of oral history in a multicultural context.

In the Chinese culture, people will tell each other what they really think only if they classify the other as an insider, one who shares something in common with them (Liu, 2006). The participants considered me an insider and I wanted to demonstrate to them my objectivity as a researcher. Allison I. Griffith (1998) distinguished between those researchers who possess the fixed identity of an insider as a member of a certain group and those who consider themselves an outsider who does not have any intimate knowledge of the group. For me, as researcher, the distinction between the outsider and the insider is not so obvious, nor did I want to create a set binary. I felt that the boundaries between the two are permeable, with the result that my insider or outsider status oscillated, as described by Merton (1972), varying with different participants as our interview and discussion sifted through different situations, aspects and values as they were activated, remembered, and shared. The work of Robert Merton (1972), John Hockey (1993), and J. Powney and M. Watts (1987) helped to influence my work and my relationships with the participants.

I share a similar history with the participants, especially with the women who were born and raised in Victoria B.C. While seven of the women were born and raised in Victoria, the other participants came from Rosetown, Saskatchewan; Lethbridge, Alberta; Nanaimo, B.C.; and Vancouver, B.C. Currently, all reside in Victoria, B.C. An advantage I had was my credibility

and rapport coupled with an informed appreciation of the complexity of their social world. At all times, I was constantly vigilant to the possibility that each participant may have held a preconception of me and my views. Despite familiarity with some of the participants in the study, I endeavoured to set and maintain boundaries between my work and school life and those in my social and friendship circle. The participants were unaware of my research interests and study until the preliminary introduction following the initial call-out for participants. I did not want the interview process to be affected by known, expected alignments or loyalties to me. I am well known to some of the participants while others are acquaintances in the community.

Findings

To share the findings, I employed strategies such as the use of a storytelling technique to weave a composite of common themes to provide participant anonymity. The two main categories are Chinese ethnic identity and Canadian identity. The majority of the participants, 75%, had one or both parents who were born in Canada. Of the remaining 25%, two of them had dads who arrived before 1923 and sponsored their young wives to join them post 1947. The participants all spoke some Chinese as children; two stopped at age three when they moved away from Chinatown and other Chinese people. The other nine participants stopped to varying degrees when they started public school. Eight participants, 66.7%, attended Chinese School. Currently, three can communicate in Chinese in simple conversations, one can order food in a Chinese restaurant, another can say some nouns related to nursing; the other eight say they cannot speak Chinese. None of the twelve can read or write in Chinese.

The participants grew up hearing the messages of the hardworking Chinese/Asians and recognized that their father and especially their mother modelled this behaviour. The participants

emulated this characteristic. Some of them linked this behaviour to what they observed in their parents and some saw it as inherent in themselves and deemed it fulfilling. Some said that they are proud of their hard work and saw that as a contributing part of their independence. They neither sought nor received help from others. They succeeded by the dint of their hard work. Some compared their effort to that of other groups whom they perceived do not work as hard as they and other Chinese/Asians do. Others feel the pressure of hard work or the expectation to work hard or harder, and that it was difficult to compete with the hard work of new arrivals of Asian immigrants.

Along with hard work came the expectation of doing well at school. The participants shared some initial challenges because of starting public school with no English, but all transitioned to speaking English at school and at home. They compared their experience of requiring more help from the teachers in the beginning to how well they ultimately did at school. They attributed this to family expectations to go to university, even if those expectations were not always explicit, and to their own self- motivation.

Some of the women who had brothers said that they felt there were differences in how their brothers were treated compared to them. They said the messages that their brothers received were more positive. They were encouraged in their strengths while the girls were reminded of their weaknesses. They also perceived that there was a stronger expectation for brothers to succeed in school and subsequently in their work and career. Whether it is culturally and/or gender-based, the participants received messages from their parents that speaking out and acting out was not appropriate. There were expectations that they were to behave well, be quiet, positive, demure, and not be seen in the public eye. Some of these messages were more implicit.

The women were told they were embarrassing, or their acting-out actions were ignored, while others were explicitly told they were not allowed to.

The participants said that there was little positive regard or encouragement in their upbringing. They described directives and “telling” rather than encouragement. Some said the telling was explicit especially if they were perceived as committing mistakes and they were told they were being stupid or were stupid. The participants remember being yelled at by parents and extended family members. Two participants took negativity as a challenge and they in turn challenged the status quo and strove to be “number one.” Three participants said that they fought back for themselves and others, working against injustice. Two of these women are strong advocates and activists today.

The participants looked close to home for role models, using mothers, older sisters, family members and a few other Chinese women within their ethnic community. They spoke of their admiration for their mothers and other family members for their characteristics such as being hard-working and helping others. They acknowledged their older sisters for helping them. They admired Chinese women who helped in the Chinese community, especially those who publicly acknowledged pride in their community. The participants from Victoria acknowledged Bessie Tang, a local celebrity, as a role model.

The friends participants remember playing with as they were growing up were siblings, cousins, and other Canadian-born Chinese children. Three of the participants grew up in suburbs, where there were few Chinese families, and said that their friends were White. Of the remaining 75%, two-thirds were involved with local Chinese cultural organizations and events such as dances. As they attended university and started working, their friendship circle grew to include

the broader community and now, 56% of all the participants say they have mainly White and few Chinese friends.

The participants said that they felt protected within their ethnic community and some said that they heard stories of racism and discrimination that their parents or older family members had experienced. About 50% of the participants shared first-hand experiences involving name-calling, racist jokes and feeling excluded. Two others said that being called Suzie Wong on an ongoing basis felt like bullying.

The participants were the first generation to enjoy standardized television, which became commercialized in 1940-41. They watched some family sitcoms that exposed them to families different from their own. They noted the lack of Asians in these shows. Of the participants, 50% grew up watching Chinese movies and Chinese opera because their mothers and older siblings, especially those that emigrated in their teens, were familiar with this genre. The participants said these shows reinforced the behaviour and characteristics of the self-sacrificing women. They also introduced them to the costuming and elaborate hair jewellery of Chinese opera, which they continue to admire.

The movie, *The World of Suzie Wong*, and the iconic role of Suzie Wong portrayed by Nancy Kwan had an impact on the participants. The responses ranged from discounting any impact because Nancy Kwan was Eurasian or because she was a prostitute to admiration of her beauty and outspokenness, to wanting to look like her and to be like her, as a performer. The participants said that they liked seeing an Asian woman in a Hollywood film that they looked like. Ten of the twelve participants did not delve into the negative aspect of the role. Many of the women said that when they watched the film as youngsters, they were not aware that Suzie

Wong was a prostitute, only that she was pretty and dynamic. This is significant because none of the participants were told growing up that they were pretty; they were told to be obedient, quiet and demure, the antithesis of Suzie Wong's behaviour on the screen. Suzie Wong has become a metaphor for Chinese-Asian women since the film was produced fifty-four years ago. It has had as much impact on Chinese-Asian women as on non-Asian viewers. The name Suzie Wong has been used as a descriptor, a noun, and a behaviour that when spoken, both the speaker and receiver share meaning and context. Suzie Wong is a metaphor for the available, sexualized Asian woman. Although only one participant spoke about the White male and the available Chinese woman, all the participants married White men.

The participants viewed *Flower Drum Song*, the first Hollywood musical with an all-Asian cast differently from *The World of Suzie Wong* in that there were two Asian women protagonists in this film. The participants raised two issues about this film. One issue was about the characterization of the two women protagonists. Linda Low, a strong, independent, manipulative woman while Mei Li is the demure and obedient picture bride. They remembered that the dichotomy made them feel as though they had to choose one over the other. The other issue was the casting of Mei Li. Presumably due to the limited availability of Chinese actors and dancers in 1961, Japanese actress, Miyoshi Umeki played the role of Mei Li. The participants said that this interchangeable pan-Asian identity limited their identification with this character. They were annoyed; they assumed and said that although White people did not know the difference, they did. They felt that the producers either didn't care and/or were trying to pull the wool over their eyes. Despite these concerns, the participants said that they watched this show many times with their family and enjoyed the show because it had an all-Asian cast.

Two of the participants chose non-traditional careers in the arts. One said that she did not think her family wanted to know about it and it became something that they did not talk about even when she appeared in the newspapers or news. The other participant said that her parents actively discouraged her from going in the field, saying that she would not succeed. A third participant chose a career in politics and said that her family wanted her to do the “nice” things like ribbon cutting but not be seen as “controversial” like speaking up for things that she deemed unfair or unjust.

In 1971, when this generation were old enough to be dating, only 20.1% of Canadian-born Chinese were aged 16-29, while 65.4% were under the age of 16. For these women, finding another Canadian-born to date was especially difficult since all but two lived in cities with a small ethnic Chinese population. Of the participants who dated Chinese men, 59% dated China-borns, and 16% married one. All twelve women were/are married to White men. Three participants divorced, one from a White partner and two from Chinese men. The two who married Chinese men were born and raised in Vancouver where there is a larger ethnic Chinese population. Their parents accepted their daughters’ relationships with and subsequent marriage to non-Chinese men. The participants said that their Canadian identity is stronger than the Chinese identity especially as their children are bi-racial.

All the participants, to some degree, celebrate the Chinese or Lunar New Year. Eleven of them celebrate it with their family; one participant sought out ethnic organizations to learn about and participate in the festivities. The participants have maintained the tradition of giving out *lai see*, the Chinese red envelopes to wish their children and grandchildren good luck and prosperity. Some of them share their traditions in their workplace, another maintains ancestor-worshipping practices, and three others found ethnic organizations to belong to, to learn about and maintain

Chinese traditions. These Canadian-born participants, unlike their parents, have acquired both visibility and autonomy in Canadian society and their ethnic group. They have started a process of self-definition of Canadians of Chinese descent in a growing population. They believe there is an increasing openness in Canada with job opportunities, social life, and cultural options beyond Chinatown for themselves, their children, and grandchildren. They feel that they have presented themselves publicly, as trailblazers. Some of them seek to present various aspects of Chinese culture to a Canadian audience and to maintain some traditions for their family. During this period of transition, these local-born Chinese navigated a new identity as Canadians using the input of resources they had access to and those they learned to acquire. Despite some earlier decisions, which resulted in the loss of their Chinese identity, the participants, as mature women, are now in the process of reclaiming their ethnic identity in the Canadian context.

Oral testimonies provide intimate and insights into the lives of the women. Their collective voices are a tribute to all Chinese-Canadian women from the past, the present and the future as they share in their evolving Chinese-Canadian identity. Their blend of voices provides insight and reveals perspectives of the realities of Canadian-born Chinese women's day-to-day experiences growing up in the 1950s and 1960s as it pertains to family, education, relationships, cultural traditions, and identity.

I believe that the value of oral testimony lies in the authenticity of experience, in letting people speak for themselves about their daily lives and communities, their thoughts, and their feelings. The aim of this study is to provide a space to record some of these common experiences and similar feelings of these women, descendants from Guangdong growing up in Canada.

Chapter 4. The Findings:

Growing up Chinese-Canadian in the 1950s

This chapter examines the everyday lives of twelve Chinese-Canadian women as they individually negotiated their membership both in their own household and in the larger realm of school and society. I use thematic markers of belonging based on the information gathered through the interviews to provide a framework with which to examine the socio-context of beauty, family expectations, relationships, education, and career such as occupational attainment and socio-economic success. As each participant shared her perspective, experiences, and challenges, she painted a social landscape of how she balanced her own developmental needs with the demands of family and cultural expectations in the context of a complex world of historical, social, political, and multimedia forces.

As an insider researcher who was also born and raised in Victoria I was constantly vigilant to the possibility that each participant may have held a preconception of me and my views. Given the small number of Canadian-born children of that generation in the small Chinese community of Victoria, most of us were familiar at least by sight. Despite familiarity with some of the participants in the study, I endeavoured to set and maintain boundaries between my study and my social and friendship circle. I did not want the interview process to be affected by known, expected alignments or loyalties to me.

My interest lies in women born in Canada following the Canada Citizenship Act of 1946 and the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act, who were teens in the 1960s and in their response to the roles modelled by Nancy Kwan in the films, *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and *Flower Drum Song* (1961). These two films were shown regularly on TV and Nancy Kwan's

portrayal of the fun and feisty prostitute, Suzie Wong, was one of the few images of Asian women in popular culture (Lee, 1998 in Feng, (2002) p. 137). This interest arose through my personal perspective of having a lived familiarity with some of the group members as I shared commonalities of culture, gender, and ethnic background and growing up with few Asian role models. This research is an attempt to examine the multifaceted nature of the assimilation process recognizing the influence of certain interactions among numerous political, economic, historical, and cultural factors.

Nancy Kwan

Nancy Ka Shen Kwan has been criticized for her role as Suzie Wong and for her defence that she was just playing a role. There is no doubt that the role, although a stereotype, was one that is beautiful, feisty and deserved reclaiming. I wanted to interview Nancy Kwan to get a better understanding of the woman behind Suzie Wong.

Nancy Kwan was considered the first Asian actress to succeed in Western cinema. Her first film, *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960), is an adaptation of the book of the same name. The story of a colourful interracial romance set in Hong Kong, *The World of Suzie Wong* was a huge commercial success.

The fictionalized account of Hong Kong's red light district helped create the cultural stereotype of the prostitute that Nancy Kwan immortalized in the role of *Suzie Wong*. At the same time it influenced and even modified the image of Asian women in Western mindsets. For good or bad, whole generations of Asian women grew up under the shadow of Suzie Wong. The women in this study speak about how they were affected by this image.

Nancy Kwan was catapulted into international stardom and landed another leading role in an important Asian film the following year. This was a film adaptation of Rodger and Hammerstein's Broadway hit musical, *Flower Drum Song*, a story of romance and clashing cultures set in San Francisco's Chinatown. Critically and commercially the film was also a great success. It was not only a box office hit but it also garnered five Academy Award nominations. With her ballet training, Nancy Kwan was featured in a number of dance numbers. This was the first major Western film with an all-Asian cast, something that was not to be duplicated until the filming of *The Last Emperor*, twenty-five years later.

Nancy Kwan provided some background on her life prior to her role as Suzie Wong in *The World of Suzie Wong*.

I was eighteen and attending the Royal Ballet School in England studying ballet when, on a summer visit home to Hong Kong to visit my parents and I went to see the auditions for the World of Suzie. I was asked to audition and I was invited to Hollywood on contract to do another screen test for *The World of Suzie Wong*. While I was there, I went on tour with the Broadway production of *The World of Suzie Wong* all around the United States and in Canada. While on tour I was asked to return to do another screen test with William Holden, as the leading man, and I was offered the role.

Offered a title role in a Hollywood film in very her first film, Nancy Kwan was signed to a seven-year contract. At a party with her producer she met Ross Hunter, the producer of *Flower Drum Song* and was offered the role of Linda Low a few days later.

Nancy Kwan on Flower Drum Song

It was the first time the cast of a motion picture was all-Asian and we were very excited about that. After *Flower Drum Song* I had a lot of letters about being a role model. A lot came from young Asians who wanted to be in the film business. It was the first time they said they could identify with someone on the screen in a mainstream film which made a lot of money and had all-Asians. Some said that we made an image for Asian-Americans at a time when there were few Asian-Americans compared to today.

After *Flower Drum Song*, Nancy Kwan returned to Asia with her son to be with her ailing father. When she returned to California in the late 1970s and was promoting a Tai Chi video, an interviewer made the remark that Nancy Kwan's portrayal of Suzie Wong as a prostitute created an impression that all Asian women were prostitutes. Nancy Kwan said she was surprised by this comment and responded, "Suzie Wong is only a role and it happened to be a very successful film." In my conversation with her, Nancy Kwan said, "The interviewer blamed me for that image of being a prostitute. If Suzie had been a nun it would have been a whole different thing, but because she was a prostitute they thought that every Asian woman was a Suzie Wong."

Nancy Kwan reported that the interviewer then continued by saying that *Flower Drum Song* was a stereotypical representation of Asian-Americans in Chinatown, San Francisco and now people think that Chinese behave that way. Nancy Kwan said, "*Flower Drum Song* was the first Asian-cast mainstream movie that made a lot of money in this country, and I think it actually helped enhance the Asian-Americans in this country." Nancy Kwan professed to be taken back by the interviewer's accusations. However, in the interview with me she did say that perhaps the interviewer's sentiments have changed since then. Nancy Kwan said that possibly the opinions voiced were only those of interviewer and were not shared by other Asians as she was honoured by the Asian community in San Francisco with the Golden Ring Award for her

role in *Flower Drum Song*. Nancy Kwan said, “I’ve never seen myself as an icon for Asian-American women. I’m an actor and I play these roles; one happens to be a prostitute, next it’s another role. I never thought of myself as a role model.” She went on to say:

“I’m very proud of *The World of Suzie Wong*. It was the film that set my career off. I was offered a role in the *Joy Luck Club* but I turned it down because the script contained a very insulting scene about Suzie Wong.”

One problem that Nancy identified is that there are not enough roles coming out of Hollywood for Asian-Americans. There are more, few as they are, for females than there are for men.

She said:

As long as there are not enough Asian writers, Asian directors, Asian producers, Asian executive producers working on projects for Asians, how are we going to sustain a career? You need the roles to sustain it. How many good Asian scripts do we get? I really encourage Asians not only to become actors but writers. Until you get Asians developing roles for their own people, things won’t happen. Caucasians are not going to do it. They’re successful with their own race and their own people and maybe they like to see their own people on screen. People judge people by colour. It happens.

Nancy Kwan on Identity

I’m very proud of my heritage. I was brought up as an Asian. I understand the difficulty that Asian-Americans have. When they’re born in North America, they have to deal with White people all the time and even though they’re Asian, they think American. I see that

in my friends' children. You look Asian but you think Caucasian and that's the difference between the Asians from Asia that come over here. It's a delicate balance for Asian-Americans and it is so difficult for them. They're competing very hard and in America, it's always about competition. You have to be number one.

Nancy Kwan's comment captures the competitive milieu that the participants experienced, feeling the need to rise to challenges, to compete and to excel. Some of the participants expressed the competition they felt at school where they were successful. Others said that they could not compete socially in the area of dating where the White males seemed to prefer the blond, blue-eyed girls.

Nancy Kwan on Film

After *The World of Suzie Wong* and *The Flower Drum Song*, I took on non-Asian roles. I played an Italian, French, Mexican, Tahitian, even English. My father is Chinese and my mother is English. I am Eurasian. This gave me quite a variation of different nationalities that I could play. Now I tell my agent to put me up for roles that are non-nationality, just a good role that's the right age. When I go for Asian roles, I won't do a role that I would consider demeaning to Asians. If I read a screenplay and it's demeaning from an Asian point of view I give the producers and directors the benefit of the doubt, as they might not be aware of it. I would point it out through my agent or say directly to them, "Asians would not like that." It's up to them whether they change it or not. For me, it's important that I set the standards because I have to live with them.

A lot of people say that they see me as the success story of an Asian-American actor. I get a lot of letters about how much they've enjoyed the films and some about how proud

they are for Asians and I have the respect of a lot of young actors. I try to help them as much as I can but I don't feel that I am this role model. It's not something I carry on me.

Nancy Kwan spoke to her identity as a Eurasian actor that enabled her to take on a variety of roles portraying a variety of different nationalities. This echoed the experience of one of the participants, a dancer, who said that being Asian had its advantage because of the interchangeable use of Asians on stage, that is, close enough is good enough. She said, as Nancy Kwan also noted, actors and dancers have to survive and that means at times you take the role that is offered even if it isn't always authentic. Nancy Kwan now chooses roles that "suit her age" more than ethnicity, highlighting that cultural identity overlaps with other identities. This speaks to the experiences of the participants who felt that as Canadian-born Chinese that their identity was a continuum that shifted in relation to the Chinese community and the Canadian context.

Vivienne Poy

Like Nancy Kwan, Dr. Poy was born and raised in Hong Kong; she is a similar age to Nancy Kwan and both were from affluent families. I was interested in the prevailing attitudes toward the role models in Hong Kong and cinema in general at that time to find any differences in perception. The women in the study grew up with few Chinese role models to look up to and I was interested in who they would consider as a role model and which characteristics they most valued.

Background

Dr. Poy was born in Hong Kong but lived in China for her first four years when Japan attacked Hong Kong the year she was born. Her family returned to Hong Kong where she

attended school until she left for boarding school for two years in England before coming to Canada on a student visa to study at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. She met her husband at McGill and in 1967 moved to Toronto with their young family. In the late 1970s when her three children were school age, she returned to school to study fashion arts. After graduation, she opened her own fashion design business and became very involved with volunteering in the arts and cultural communities in Toronto. In the mid-1990s, she closed her fashion business and returned to school and obtained first, a master's degree and then, a doctoral degree in history. While she was completing her PhD program, Prime Minister Jean Chretien appointed her to the Senate of Canada in 1998. She was the first Canadian of Asian heritage to receive a Senate appointment and she assumed responsibility for issues that were relevant to the lives of Asian Canadians.

Passage to Promise Land: Voices of Chinese Immigrant Women in Canada

With her appointment, Dr. Poy visited all the provinces and territories speaking to Canadians across the country, many of whom were immigrants.

She said:

My experience of meeting so many new Canadians whose life stories were transformed by their decision to immigrate was a powerful reminder to me that history unfolds through the lives of individuals and the choices they make. For my doctoral research, I recorded and analysed the life stories of more than two-dozen Chinese women from South China and Hong Kong who came to Canada from the end of World War II to the early 1990s. I was interested in exploring the historic patterns and everyday realities of immigration and integration into twentieth-century Canada.

Dr. Poy spoke about her concerns in doing her research as an insider and her position as a senator. What she found was that the women trusted her because she had grown up in China and Hong Kong, knew its history and, like them, spoke Cantonese.

She said:

They knew that I could understand their stories because of our shared background in China and in Canada, and that I would empathize with them. The interviewees were happy to have someone interested in their stories since women's experiences have often been dismissed or regarded as unimportant. A few of them brought snacks or their own baking to share and others brought photos to illustrate their stories.

Dr. Poy's interviews were conducted in Ottawa and Toronto, Ontario, Victoria, British Columbia and some by telephone. Some of the participants only spoke Szeyp in which case Dr. Poy needed a translator to assist her.

I consider myself very fortunate to have had time with Dr. Poy who shared her methodology with me. Her insights as an insider researcher and her experiences in interviewing women who viewed her as one of them helped me navigate my own interviews. Our discussion about interviewing Chinese women revealed the camaraderie and connectedness that comes from our shared gender and ethnicity.

Identity

Dr. Poy shared her perspective on the issue of identity. She said that she grew up in China and Hong Kong while it was a British Protectorate and now has spent over fifty years in Canada as an active participant in the community and an advocate for immigrant and women's groups.

She said that her father and grandfather modelled pride in their Chinese identity as she does. She talked about people she knows, including family members, who lose sight of their Chinese identity and said:

Sometimes this happens because they think that you get a higher status by denying your Chinese roots. Some people even stop visiting their Chinese relatives and think that they are no longer Chinese. It's sad for everyone when that happens.

Like Nancy Kwan, Dr. Poy's identity is rooted in her ethnic identity. She is proud of the history of the Chinese and of their strength in dealing with their earlier struggles in Hong Kong and in Canada. She feels very strongly that anyone who has some Chinese ancestry should acknowledge the achievements of the Chinese and be proud of their heritage. Dr. Poy recognizes the perceived need of fitting into the dominant society but also believes that Canada's multicultural policy provides the opportunity for everyone to belong precisely with an acceptance of one's primordial Chinese identity. She is saddened that some Chinese feel that they have to deny their ethnic identity to feel they are Canadian. Dr. Poy's story of family members who feel this way reflected how the participants sometimes felt growing up, of not wanting to be different and even wishing they were white. As writer and poet May Yee (1993) adroitly states, "Chinese kids are like popcorn- little yellow things that turn white under pressure" (p.30).

Films and Cinema

Dr. Poy did not expound on the topic of films and cinema, either of Nancy Kwan or *The World of Suzie Wong*. Dr. Poy said that as a student at a private school in Hong Kong, she was kept away from places where film stars congregate. She said that film stars always carried

negative connotations.. Dr. Poy emphatically stated, “Good families would have nothing to do with film stars and being involved with films.”

Dr. Poy highlights an assumption held by affluent families in Hong Kong at the time, including Nancy Kwan’s family, about film stars, morality and proper behaviour. Nancy Kwan was confronted by this issue during the filming of *The World of Suzie Wong* in the scene where Suzie visits Robert Lomax wearing a Western-style dress. Robert who prefers that she wear her cheongsam, is repulsed by her wearing Western clothing and strips her down to her lingerie. Nancy Kwan initially refused to do this scene because she did not want to be seen in a bra and half-slip. She reluctantly acquiesced recognizing that as an actor she had a responsibility to portray the role to her best of her ability and that it was not, necessarily, a reflection on who she was. The cheongsam, itself, has been a symbol used by the West to denote Asian women’s available sexuality and an opportunity for a voyeuristic journey. Dr. Poy, some of the participants and I resist the wearing of this pseudo-Chinese traditional dress.

Nancy Kwan and Vivienne Poy share some commonalities with each other as they do with the participants. Although motivated by different goals whether to get ahead or please the parents, formal education and academic success was a high priority. Family connection and ties were important to maintain, clearly demonstrated through the caretaking of family members and maintenance of cultural traditions. For both women, too, the giving back to their communities is also a priority through involvement in volunteer organizations and taking every opportunity to give voice to Asian issues.

Vivienne Poy provided an insightful perspective of the Chinese in Victoria during the 1950s and 1960s relative to her experience of the Chinese in Toronto. She found, in her

experience, that the Chinese in Toronto were more assertive and more likely to advocate for their rights compared to the Chinese in Victoria who appeared more complacent. It would seem that a particular strength of these Chinese, the descendants from Guangdong's four counties, where poverty- and domination by landowners was the rule, lay in their ability to adapt. They were able to astutely observe and judge the situations at hand and behave accordingly. When applied in Canada, the world of Torontonians was very different from that of Victorians and the Chinese adapted as required to fit in.

Nancy Kwan was very intrigued with the participants in this study and said that she thought that the research will address an underrepresented group of women in Canadian history. She suggested that I call this study, "*The Lost Generation.*" to highlight this group and their particular place in history.

Participants

Of the twelve women interviewed, eight of whom had one or both parents who were Canadian-born, only three of them had fathers with any lived experience in China. The family of one participant went to China to give the children a Chinese education. In two cases, the fathers, as young men, were sent to China to be married and/or get an education. Kyla's father went to China for five years where he married and fathered two children and then returned to Canada. Kyla recalled him saying that being in China was the best time of his life because there was no prejudice and he could do whatever he wanted. Kyla said, "It still brings tears to my eyes when I think about it, knowing how hard he worked every day in Canada." Jasmine's father was sent to China after completing high school in Canada to attend a prestigious college as a means to fulfil the promises of the family. She said that her widowed grandmother was raising thirteen children

on her own and she put all of the family resources into sending her oldest son to China to complete his studies so that he could help support the family. For the sake of Nicole and her sisters, Nicole's family returned to China in 1947. Her parents decided that it was time for a cultural exchange. She said, "We integrated right into the village and my sisters and I became real Chinese girls. We did not even wear any of our Western clothes." By "real Chinese girls" Nicole meant that they did everything in Chinese with no English at all. Nicole's family remained until April 1949 and, just ahead of the Communist Revolution, came back on the last ship returning to Canada. She said, "My parents said to us when we got back to Canada that we were very lucky. The communists were close to the village by then." Nicole was the only participant who went to China as a child and attended school there. The other participants have schooling experiences only in Canada.

Of the women interviewed, whether they lived in Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Lethbridge, or Rosewood, 75% of their families lived close to a Chinatown. Of that group, one family moved to the suburbs before she started school. For the families of the remaining 25%, they either did not live close to a Chinatown or there was no Chinatown where they lived because there were few Chinese in that town or city. There were significantly different experiences between those that lived close to Chinatown with a sizeable population of Chinese and those that were the only or one of few Chinese in the community. One participant in this latter group, Amy, said, "We were the only Chinese family growing up in that area. When we moved out of the downtown area, everybody thought my mom was nuts to go live in the sticks and move away from the Chinese." At that time in history it would seem that being close to other Chinese, no matter how few, was considered desirable. Some saw fewer numbers of other Chinese as an advantage. For Jess and Isabelle's family there was a very small Chinatown and

Isabelle said, “I think what was good then was that there weren’t many Chinese so they, the Anglos, didn’t feel threatened by us, like they do now in Vancouver.”

Amy’s experience, which she described as “living in the sticks,” out of the downtown and Chinatown area, isolated her family from all things Chinese.

She said:

I didn’t know any other Chinese people when I grew up. I never had a Chinese friend or anything. We never spoke any Chinese because of the fact that we didn’t want to be different. Mom didn’t cook Chinese, speak Chinese or do anything different [from non-Chinese].

Others moved away from Chinatown during their childhood. Charlotte, for example, moved away from Chinatown when she was three and said, “I experienced racism growing up because there were very few visible minorities in the schools that I attended.”

Those participants who grew up close to and around Chinatown had a profoundly different experience. Skye said, “Dad had been here [in Canada] since he was nine years old and felt that we should be traditional Chinese.” Skye describes herself as being adequately fluent in Cantonese and currently observes the festival celebrations and practises ancestor worship. She said that her father specified in his Will that money be put aside for the family to gather together at *Ching Ming* each year. [Ching Ming Festival, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day, is a traditional Chinese Festival which occurs on April 4 or 5 from the Chinese lunisolar calendar, is a time to tend family grave sites.] Like Skye, Nicole, explained that her connection to her Chinese community was very important to her. Her family returned to Vancouver from China when she was nine years old. She volunteered and helped as a teenager with the elderly Chinese

in Chinatown during the time of TB immunization. She credits her volunteerism as the main reason for retaining her Chinese [language]. Nicole was the only participant who worked in Chinatown as an adult using her Chinese speaking skills. Jasmine lived in a neighbourhood adjacent to Chinatown and attributes this strength in numbers as a major contributor to her Chinese identity.

She remarked:

There was a concentration [of Chinese]. We had a Chinatown and we had the residential community. Geographically and spatially the segregation [from the non-Chinese community] worked to the advantage of the Chinese [Community] because Strathcona became identified as a Chinese neighbourhood.

Of the participants whose fathers were born in Canada, all but one said that their fathers seemed less traditional than their mothers, especially those who arrived as young brides. Kyla's comment was echoed by Nicole and some of the other participants when she said, "My dad was not as traditional because he was born here." She continued:

We celebrated Chinese New Year. Mom would boil you an egg for your birthday. She stayed home. Apparently, Mom thought she would go back to China. She certainly wasn't expecting to start a life here [in Canada]. She left a lot of her belongings there. She only brought a Chinese comb and a few little things.

Most of the mothers of the participants stayed home and worked in the family business or for other Chinese businesses. Even the Canadian-born mothers who spoke English were limited in what they could do in the Canadian job market. Some, like the mothers of Daisy and Dawn, were homemakers until the ill health and the death of their elderly husbands forced them to work

outside the home to support their families. Their fathers had come to Canada as young men and returned to China to marry and father children then returned alone to Canada until the repeal of the Canada Immigration Act when they sent for their wives and children. These two fathers were well into middle age when their younger wives gave birth to their daughters.

School Days

Will Kymlicka (2008), a professor at Queen's University, whose research is in the area of diversity and models of citizenship, argued that there are agreements made by ancestors that are binding on descendants even if those agreements explicitly constrain the descendants' autonomy. Clare Chambers (2008) pointed out that no one consents to membership in their initial cultural group, which shapes the individual's very ability to choose and which they can rarely or barely leave. Kymlicka agreed that no one consents to membership except first-generation immigrants and only certain privileged members of the first generation who can be considered to have voluntarily chosen membership in the group.

All but one of the participants said that they were raised with cultural traditions and expectations of a Chinese identity. They experienced a singularly Chinese upbringing until they entered public school. They expressed a particularly strong reaction to the stereotype of the long-suffering, submissive woman so often described in the media and bemoaned in the family. One particular comment revealed a commonly held feeling: "Not another book where they [Chinese women] have had such a hard life etc., etc...isn't there anything else?" Others internalized this stereotype as reflecting the message of: "Just be good. Work hard. Don't make waves. Do the right thing."

Their first experience with the dominant culture was when they entered public school at which point 67% of the participants spoke Chinese exclusively. Many of the women recalled those early, challenging experiences of starting school with no English and being Chinese.

From the beginning of their public school experience, all the participants were integrated with children of the dominant culture, an experience different from that of their parents, including those who were Canadian-born. The learning of English was neither an option nor a necessity, but rather a way of life for these new full citizens. Close to 40% of the participants were in schools where they were one of a few Chinese families; the other 60% attended schools where there were substantial numbers of Chinese students. For 10 of the 12 participants, Chinese was their first language and for eight of them it was their exclusive language before public school. However, their daily interactions in English, coupled with their parents' view of education as the only effective means to achieve success, quickly solidified their English proficiency and subsequent loss of their family language.

Kyla provided an example of the imperative and challenge of learning English. She said,

“In Grade 1, I didn't speak English. You read about Dick and Jane and Puff, and Jump and Look. I had no idea what that was all about. I still remember having to stay in at lunchtime to do some extra reading with my teacher. Whereas, Lauren, my older and smarter sister got to go home for lunch before me. I was not proud of being Chinese, growing up. You were teased and that was hard. The children would laugh at what you would eat and how you would say things. I was very quiet even through junior high and high school. I kept to myself.”

Isabelle said, “I spoke Chinese until I started school. Then I didn’t want to speak Chinese. I didn’t want to be different.” She went on to say, “We are third-generation Canadian and we don’t speak Chinese. I’m always not quite comfortable with not being able to speak, especially going into Richmond [B.C.].” Skye can understand some Chinese and said:

When I go shopping in Chinatown I understand exactly what they are saying, but I try not to use my Chinese because they look at me like I’m strange. I have to think really, really, hard. Before, it would just come out.

Nicole, whose family returned to China to live with her grandmother for six months, said that upon their return to Canada, she and her sisters did not attend Chinese School. Nicole remembers starting Grade 1. She said, “I was already nine years old because of the delay of going to China. I had to stay after school because I needed help with English.” She said that her parents wanted them to speak English because they did not want the girls to have a Chinese accent. Nicole said that she wanted to continue to speak Chinese because of her involvement in Chinatown and her parents agreed that she could continue to speak to them in Chinese because she was struggling with English but she gave up on Chinese writing and reading.

Others, even those who integrated in the dominant community recalled that there were some difficult moments. Amy said, “My Mom said I had lots of issues. Every once in a while, she said, I would come home crying from a birthday party and she kind of knew where it came from.” Amy’s explanation for the tears was, “Well, it’s so British here [in Victoria].”

The Canadian-born participants and their parents accepted that they needed to integrate into the larger community and recognized that White is mainstream, average and normal. Zhou

(2009) contended that immigrants wanting to assimilate “look to Whites as their frame of reference.” Skye said that her mother was a talented seamstress and was really quite liberal.

My family would walk downtown on a Friday and go through the stores. Mom would look at the crocheted vests and dresses that were on display and then go home and make them for the girls so that we would be fashionable.

This was an approach that Skye’s mother thought would help her daughters fit in. Amy’s recollection was that her mother adopted a Canadian lifestyle and rejected Chinese traditions, language, and culture as a way to integrate into their neighbourhood. Amy, upon reflection, thought how hard it must have been for her mother to cope without the links to other Chinese in town. She described suppressed memories of the times when she felt excluded, stigmatized, and subjected to name-calling that she felt added to the confusion of her own identity. Amy said that, when growing up, it was most important to her to be accepted by the mainstream society. Wanda felt the same need for identification. She said, “I always thought that I was more White [than Chinese] for many parts of my life. I [even] thought White.” By this she meant not thinking about being Chinese. As they grew into adulthood, Amy and Wanda both found they were more able to embrace their Chinese side. Yee (1993) suggested that when people are exposed to hostile or racist experiences during their formative years, they might internalize racism and devalue both themselves and those to whom they are similar. Amy and Wanda said that they did not experience strength in their Chinese culture when they were growing up. They both had non-Chinese school friends and did not identify as Chinese.

Racism

There was a range of lived experiences of racism among the group of participants. Some were more knowledgeable of the historical and institutional racism experienced by the Chinese in Canada, the exclusion from immigration, the restrictions on occupation and schooling, the denial of the basic rights of Canadian citizenship, and denial of access to public spaces. Some of the women were aware of the racism that their parents, grandparents, and extended family members experienced. Wanda speaks of her uncle's experience growing up in Duncan. He was not allowed on the main floor of the theatre when he went to the movies. She described her mother's experience of Canadian exclusion: "Mom wasn't allowed to have a professional career. She wanted to be a home economics teacher." Skye remembers hearing stories from the older, single men in Chinatown from when they first came to Canada in the early 1900s. They told her that the kids would pull their pigtails when they were walking down the street until they cut their hair to stop the teasing—at least about their hair.

Daisy said, "There are still people who make racial jokes. I get it at work. [I just think] the guy is being a jerk. It doesn't bother me when he kids me. I kid back and say, 'I don't speak English.'" Daisy explained that it does not bother her because the people who kid her are educated. She said, "I don't think they think I'm like that. They are not making comparisons. It's just a joke." Skye shares her own firsthand experience of racism. "We noticed that there was prejudice when we moved out of Chinatown. Kids threw stones at me and called me a 'chink.'" Several of the women had similar recollections of growing up and not feeling proud to be Chinese especially during their early school days.

Like Charlotte's story, Dawn relates an example of a later generation experiencing similar situations as their parents of discrimination and/or exclusion when they attended schools

with fewer minorities. She said that her daughter, even a generation later, had some difficult times in high school, which she attributed to her daughter's bi-racial identity. She said:

[I think] my daughter was discriminated against because she was half. That brings totally another thing into it. That, and going to Oak Bay Secondary. Even her cousins, because they so desperately wanted to fit in with their peers, put her aside because she was coloured. My daughter was always on the outside.

Dawn said that her daughter is, "quite oriental looking" and does not pass [as White]. The other participants did not share any discriminatory experiences that their children had at school but they also said that their children could "pass" as White. The comments from the participants who have grandchildren are typically like Isabelle, who said, "Our two grandchildren are blue-eyed and blond-haired. They look similar to each other but not Asian." She explained, "Well, they're diluted, they are one-quarter Chinese." The degrees of how White or "can pass as White" were common remarks by the participants about their children and grandchildren. This indicates the notion of White being the standard of normalcy and acceptance.

Family

Of the women I interviewed, all except one had sister siblings. Some of them had older siblings who were born in China and came to Canada when their mothers joined their fathers; six others had sisters close in age. Participants identified sister siblings as an influential source to check out perceptions and, for some, as role models especially for those who had older sisters. Jess and Isabelle had older sisters who, they said, were the ones who took care of them and looked after them, more so than their parents who were busy making a living. Isabelle said, "Our two oldest sisters were the caretakers of us kids. I always relied on them to organize things, to

look after us.” One of these older sisters did more than just look after Isabelle and Jess; for example, she recognized Jess’s dance talent and paid for her ballet lessons. This affirmation gave Jess the confidence to assert her independence to ultimately leave Lethbridge and go to London, England to pursue a dance career after high school. Another participant, Daisy, said, “My sister moved to Vancouver when I was about fourteen. When she came home to visit, she saw that my clothes were terrible, so she sewed skirts for me to go with the matching sweaters she brought me. I can still remember to this day the blue skirt she made that went with the matching cardigan.”

Both Kyla and Wanda have older sisters close in age. They talked about what a powerful influence their older sisters had been on their growing up. Kyla and Wanda said that their older sisters were outgoing and popular, in marked contrast to them. They described their own characteristics as quiet and said that, in many instances, they hid behind their sisters. They were, in essence, “shadowing” them. They reported that their older sisters were leaders while they, as younger sisters, remained at the periphery and only because their sisters created a space for them. Both younger sisters stated clearly that their older sisters were more accepted and more beautiful. Wanda said, “My sister dated and was very popular when we were growing up. When we went to dances, I didn’t get asked to dance a lot even amongst the Chinese friends. I wasn’t popular. I was really insecure.” Kyla said, “My sister was more popular, more ‘out there.’”

Role Models

Although the participants grew up in different cities in Canada, the role models who influenced them growing up were initially confined to family members, neighbours and Chinese women in their community. The participants, especially those with older or absent fathers,

named their mother as their primary role model, who they recognized for working hard in their family and some, in paid employment, to make ends meet. Daisy said, “I only knew my mother. My dad was so much older than my mom. So when he retired, it was my mom who was supporting us and working so hard on everything.” Wanda said, “I have a really outgoing mother who speaks up. Mom knew what she wanted and was so capable.” Jasmine said that when the government threatened the demolition of their neighbourhood and the expropriation of their property, it was her mom who signed up to help [fight it]. Jess recalls going to the meetings with her mother and other Chinese women [in the neighbourhood]:

There were lots of strong women but they weren't strong in a Caucasian sense of strength. They did not have what I would call this outspoken, bravado performance kind of thing. They were very much behind the scenes. They always put the men first. They were the kingmakers. They would sit down and say, “What about so and so and so;” they were very strategic, very calculating in every regard.

Kyla summed it up. She said, “My mom didn't speak English. She worked one day a week at Victoria Laundry, where she made \$5.00 and she was happy about that.” These participants who looked up to and admired their mothers appreciated how hard their mothers worked. In a variety of contexts, the value of hard work becomes a defining characteristic for many of these women.

There were a few other women in the community who were also seen as role models. For Dawn, her mother was a role model as well as her former pre-school teacher and next-door neighbour.

Dawn said:

Look Gu was the first educated professional Chinese woman to come to Victoria. I was impressed with her ability to do things even when she was in her 70s and 80s. She learned to play the piano, the recorder and the violin. She learned Braille. I remember *Look Gu* telling me that if she put her mind to it, she knew that she could do it. I really admired her strength, doing all this, as a single woman.

Dawn said what helped her was watching *Look Gu* and thinking, “If I she could do it and my mother could do it, I should be able to do it.”

Four of the seven participants who were born and raised in Victoria, spoke about Bessie Tang, a Canadian-born woman of Chinese descent, who was very active in the Chinese and Victoria community. They admired her and saw her as a role model.

As Sarah explained:

Bessie was a remarkable lady. She was always helping, donating and doing charity work and inviting people to her house. She always wore these beautiful Chinese opera outfits. She was a “cool” Chinese person.

Born in Victoria in 1920 (-2005), Bessie and husband, Jack, operated Tang’s Pagoda, a clothing store on Douglas Street. She was an accomplished actress and dancer and was named the best actress at the International Drama Festival in 1936 for her role in the play, *Romance of the Willow Pattern*. She choreographed and performed in many shows at the annual Victoria Chinatown Lions Lantern Festival. This was where most of the participants witnessed Bessie’s involvement in the community, wearing her beautiful Chinese outfits. In recognition of her many years of community work, Bessie was declared an honorary citizen of Victoria on June 26, 1986. The Victoria participants had first-hand knowledge of a glamorous, public role model before

Nancy Kwan, one that they admired for both her persona and her community involvement and which positively affected their growing up experiences.

Friendships and Activities

The participants in the study were cognizant of other Chinese children in their neighbourhood and schools. The participants talked about their Chinese friends. Isabelle said:

There were only two Chinese families in Lethbridge when we were growing up. One of the families had three boys; one was in the same grade as I was. He always wanted to hang out with me. Our parents always tried to match me up with him.

Others, like Kyla, talked about the friends she played with:

There were three Chinese families on our block, us, the Wongs and the Woos and on the next block were the Poons. The Wongs had five children, the Woos had four like us and the Poons had two boys. That's who we played with. But I was closest to my sister Lauren. We were in the same grade. We dressed the same until Grade 5 when we had different teachers.

Sarah said that she had four tight-knit friends at school, two of them Chinese. She said, "We lived close together and we would call on each other in the morning and walk to school together. I was lucky in that respect." Sarah and Charlotte had lots of girl cousins whom they "hung around with a lot." They were a little older and sometimes even babysat them. Sarah said, "It was one of the cousins, who was babysitting, that told me about the facts of life. They were like the big sisters to Char and I because our older sister left home at an early age." Sarah and Charlotte were also involved with the Chinatown Lions marching band—a drum and bell corps

and a baton group, comprised of Chinese youth. Sarah remembered that there were always functions including dances, and guys and girls hung out together. She said that she joined because her older cousins did. Charlotte remembers that she was at the sidelines watching her sister in the parade and proudly joined in and found herself on the front cover of the newspaper. She has continued her work with the Lions and the Lionness to this day. Wanda was also part of the Baton Twirlers group. She said:

I think I joined because my sister did. It was mostly to join my cousins who were part of it. My dad was trying to have us keep the Chinese heritage. He thought that, by going to the marching band and Chinese school, we would have Chinese friends. At school there were only two Chinese guys in my grade at school and one was a cousin.

The fathers of Charlotte, Sarah, and Wanda were involved with the Victoria Chinatown Lions. Dawn was also a part of the Victoria Chinatown marching band in the bell corps along with her brother. She said that her godfather who was active in the Victoria Chinatown Lions encouraged her to go but she was too much of a tomboy to be a baton twirler. Dawn attended a Catholic School for several years but it was when she attended public school that she became aware of the Chinese girls as this was the first time there were Chinese girls in her class either the more traditional ones born in China or those born in Canada. She said, "I didn't have a dad so I was allowed more freedom. I played with my younger brother more." Of the seven women who were born and raised in Victoria, four of them (57%) were involved in the Victoria Chinatown Lions marching band. Fathers or paternal role models introduced them to it because they wanted them to be with other Chinese youth and to retain their Chinese heritage. The Chinatown Lions, through their patronage in the marching band and the annual Lantern Festival, created opportunities for educational and fun cultural events that included social networking. Others,

who were raised in Vancouver, found other avenues for social engagement. As an adolescent, Jasmine was involved in activist work with Chinese women and girls in her community; Nicole volunteered in Vancouver Chinatown as a youth. Others were not as involved in ethnic activities because they had family responsibilities. Daisy, for example, said that she had four younger brothers and sisters to look after so that her mother could go to work. From information gathered from the interviews it would seem that this group of women was involved with their families and the Chinese community activities until late adolescence and early adulthood.

The families of these women had varying degrees of behavioural and language expectations imposed on them. Along with their individual inclinations and personal choices, this imposition affected their entry into White and public spaces. The participants interpreted the journey to fitting in and aligning themselves with the dominant group in a variety of ways. Some were unaware of their difference because they saw themselves as undifferentiated from the Whiteness that surrounded them; others developed a hypersensitivity to their “difference” from the dominant White society; still others thought themselves as being on the spectrum in between. For example, as Wanda remarked, “All my friends were White. I didn’t identify as being Chinese then.”

“The Chinese,” as the perpetual foreigner, has several meanings. One is that the Chinese are seen not as Canadian but as Chinese because Canadian means someone who is White. Another meaning is that no matter whether you were Canadian-born or China-born, as a Chinese, you are seen as a foreigner. For this time and this group of women, their social experience was that they often found themselves as trailblazers; that is, as the “The first Chinese woman in...” Amy summed it up when she said:

I'm usually the only Asian one when I go to the Chamber meetings. Sometimes people are unnerved by it. Is it because I am female or because I'm Asian? I still feel it.

Sometimes I try to ignore it. There is a bit of a wall. I don't know quite where that is coming from and think maybe they are not used to it. How surprising, even after all this time!

From Amy's comment, there appears to be barriers related to race and gender.

As children and youth, the participants grew up with few others like them but as they reached adulthood they had expectations that there would be more. Perhaps, one explanation is that Canadian-born Chinese are making forays into places where the China-born Chinese are not going, which might account for the fewer numbers.

Language Loss and Acquisition

Richard Rodriguez's *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez* (1982) is the story of a Chicano immigrant who understands very early in his life that access to success in the United States has to do with his mastery of American English and the subsequent loss of his family language, Spanish. Language change comes with emotional consequences, principally feelings of loss. Language equals a haven, a place of safety. To be without language or to be between languages feels empty. The writer Elias Canetti (1979) described strong associational worlds having to do with certain languages and that: "Language is the place where our bodies and minds collide or join, where our groundedness can be found in place and time and our capacity for fantasy and invention comes to terms with real life." Micheline Veaux (1994) contended that speech is "at once, the highest and lowest human function, the hitching post between the mechanical grunt of the vocal chords and the poetry of cognition." There is more to

language learning than the memorization of verbs and the mastery of an accent. Kaplan (1994) suggested that the change in language is the emblem of a leap into a new persona; that is, the difference in language is that it's not yourself you're growing into but another self—perceived as better, more powerful, and even safer. This aptly describes the transformation of the participants as they were growing up, socializing and being schooled in the Canadian milieu.

This shift in their spoken language from Chinese to English pitted some of the participants against some aspects of traditional Chinese culture and the pressures of mainstream Western society. Some felt caught in the precarious position of not being Chinese enough for their mother, father, and ethnic community while simultaneously not being Canadian enough to fit into suburbia. Like the struggles described by Maxine Hong Kingston in her autobiographical novel, *The Woman Warrior* (1975), these women “had to transition from early years of a silent childhood to a schoolchild faced with the choice of talking in order to establish an ‘I’ identity or end up becoming a non-person with no language to define herself.” The challenge was more than learning English but rather evolving from the expectation and experience of growing up as the “shy Chinese girl” to someone who speaks out. Dawn described how she learned this important lesson and is now trying to teach it to her mother. Dawn said that her mom is now living in a retired care community and she tells her mom to speak out. “You have to speak out. You don’t exist until you speak up.” This lesson shared from daughter to mother is antithetical to the message she received, growing up, which was to be quiet and not make waves. Charlotte described her experience: “Our parents were always upset with us because we were the generation that didn’t get the good grades that they wanted. We spoke English. We were fighting back. I think that made it difficult for our parents.” While the parents of the participants taught

and expected the Confucian doctrine of a good daughter, one who is obedient, quiet, and demure, many of these participants challenged these teachings.

Dawn said:

That whole Confucius thing—the men waited on hand and foot. It [was] different then. I have changed quite a bit. I was a real rebellious girl. I was the black sheep of the family. I could see there was a difference in treatment between my brothers and me, so I was always arguing. My godfather would talk about my two brothers' strengths but I was told that I had a bad temper. So I fought for people, myself and for my rights.

The participants had a range of fluency of spoken Szeyup and Cantonese. Cantonese is the dialect taught at Chinese school and is considered more refined than the Szeyup village dialect they learned at home. They felt inadequate in terms of their facility with the written language or felt that their vocabulary was arrested at a child's level of development. Some of them spoke with a combination of Cantonese, Szeyup, and English, using Chinese nouns and English syntax. This tendency to combine English and Cantonese was shared among the participants. Only a few of them said they had any fluency in Chinese and all felt inadequate in terms of their level of proficiency in the written language. Almost all the women expressed sorrow that they used to speak fluently as a child or that they did not maintain their Chinese. Now, even for those participants who want to learn, as Canadian-born Chinese, language re-acquisition is much more difficult. They are, in a sense, trapped in history. For example, they cannot decide which dialect they want to learn. Although, over their lifetime, Mandarin has become more ubiquitous, their family members do not speak it. As much as they want to keep Szeyup, only the elders speak it, and the village dialects vary depending on which of the four

counties they were descendants from. This selects Cantonese by elimination, which due to its class implications leaves them feeling inadequate. They acknowledge that the sayings, the myths, and the ways words are strung together shape and communicate a particular worldview. They recognize, for example, that some of the humour just does not transcend cultural lines and that you have to belong to understand. One poignant example of this can be found in several interviews when the laughter we shared was over stereotypical misconceptions of Asian behaviour in mainstream culture. This insider joking provides camaraderie, relieves tension and strengthens ethnic identity. Some of the participants have given up understanding much of their Chinese side. They hope to teach their children the value of respect towards elders and responsibility to family but they are resigned to the fact that what they are most likely to pass on is the enjoyment of Chinese food.

Daisy voiced a set of higher aspirations:

I want to learn more about my mother's life because it is important to me. I can pass it on to my brother and sisters. When she tells me little things I write them down so I don't forget. It also makes me able to communicate with my mom better too, if I can keep it up instead of losing it.

Daisy is working to maintain Szeyup so that she can speak with her mother.

Transformation of Social Capital

Linguistic choice and the unintentional loss of family language is a part of an index system that affects a woman's social positioning, in this case, the participants' social positioning in the Chinese community. According to Holland et al. (1998), relational identities are behaviours that can be indexed to claims to social relationships with others. They relate to how

one identifies one's position relative to others, mediated through the ways one feels comfortable or constrained; for example, to speak to another, to enter into the space of another, to dress for another and so on. I draw on the work of Bourdieu (1991) who observed the way speaking can encompass one's sense of value and a speaker's awareness of the differential social valuing of languages, genres, and styles of speaking. Bourdieu emphasized that the judgement of the linguistic form and of the speaker can lead to strained, self-conscious, "correct" speech or to effortless, unselfconscious speech, to comfort or to discomfort, to voice or to silence. Thus the choice and use of language affects positional identities that lead to changes in the relations between hierarchy, distance, and even affiliation. The participants in my study experienced a discomfort, shared by American-born Chinese in other studies, as their Chinese deteriorated and their sense of belongingness was questioned by family and ethnic community events.

As noted previously, for some of the participants, the initial challenges of the transition from their home language to the public realm of school and English was difficult and required extra tutoring. Most addressed their own, still clear, assessment of the situation and their conscious decision to speak English as a means to be the "same" and to fit into the social milieu. As mentioned earlier, the participants and their families came from one of the four counties in the Pearl Delta Region around Canton, now referred to as Guangdong. Their spoken Chinese is a dialect of Szeyup particular to one county and is a derivative of Cantonese that many native Cantonese speakers profess not to understand. When these women were children, their family dialect was the norm and was understood by most of the Chinese at that time. The old bachelors and families in Canada were also from these same four counties. As the participants grew into adolescence and the immigration laws relaxed to allow more immigrants from China and Hong Kong, the women found that their family dialect was no longer adequate. The new immigrants

said that they could not understand their dialect and laughed at their stammering and, as participant Skye recalled, were asked, “What is wrong with you? Why can’t you speak and understand what we are saying to you?” Another participant, Jasmine felt angry and stated:

They didn’t speak my Cantonese. When you grow up in Canada and all you think of your world is Chinese. Is your world Chinese? The idea that you could be Chinese and speak Mandarin, a language where we have no idea of what they are saying, doesn’t make sense. That is not my Chinese. That is some bizarre foreign Chinese.

Many of the participants recalled the social separation at school between recent Chinese immigrants and Canadian-born Chinese like themselves. The two groups did not associate. Dawn recalled, “In elementary school, there were girls who were very traditional Chinese and then us, the ones that did not quite fit. But we didn’t want to look too Chinese either”—a comment that describes the dilemma of being caught in the middle, of not fitting in with either the Chinese or White Canadians.

On starting public school, English became the language of communication and the participants, for some consciously and others inadvertently, began to lose their Chinese. Language is a means of assessing social worth and had its own symbolic capital. With the groups of new Chinese immigrants arriving, a new dimension emerged. These participants, whose Cantonese was not as fluent as their own family dialect, felt at a disadvantage especially as they experienced the inadequacy of their language with the fluency of the new immigrants. At the same time, the participants also desired a clear distinction between themselves as Canadian-born Chinese from the new Canadians, the China-borns. Bourdieu (1984, 1977a) discussed the issue of timing—the point in their development when children are given the opportunity to learn

behavioural markers of privilege. He suggested that the many styles of acting and matters of taste that serve as indices of high social position are more easily learned in childhood. Those who learn activities in childhood perform them in a more natural, less self-conscious style, itself prestigious. Those who learn later usually retain an awkwardness, a more 'mechanical' than organic sense of the activity. The participants, who grew up and were schooled in Canada, internalized Whiteness as a normalized and normative way of being and became well practised in what Bourdieu referred to as behavioural markers of privilege. Desiring an acceptance into Whiteness, many of them distanced themselves from the China-borns. They learned to proclaim their Canadian-ness in every syllable they spoke and in the behaviour they mimicked. They were very proud that they spoke English without a Chinese accent. Through these and countless other experiences of daily life and with differing investments of cultural capital, they sought entry into White spaces and turned away from new immigrant arrivals. The Canadian-born Chinese, to a large degree, were able to fit into the dominant White society.

Television

During this period, just as the participants were beginning to look to the media for role models, any Asian women in film, according to communications professor, Kent Uno (2003), were portrayed as Lotus blossoms, submissive, less liberated than Western women, shy, retiring, devoted, subservient, exotic and sexy. These labels were, in turn, applied to Canadian-born and immigrant Chinese women alike. The women in this study grew up hearing some of these labels, alternately rejecting them as unwanted barriers, accepting the stereotypes or internalizing and grappling with what the labels meant for them in their everyday world. In the 1950s and 1960s, Canada subscribed to American media through television and film. Television in Canada officially began with the sign-on of the nation's first television stations in Montreal and Toronto

in 1952. The Canadian television industry offered mainly variety or quiz shows. At this time, television fare in Canada was composed of one or two Canadian stations and three to four U.S. stations.

Table 4. TV Shows That the Participants Watched Growing up

Show	Dates	Asian Character(s)
Little Rascals	1924-38; 1955 syndicated	None
Fu Manchu	1929-1980	in yellowface
The Donna Reed Show	1958-1964	None
Bonanza	1959-1973	Hop Sing
That Girl	1966-1971	None

As the participants reached adolescence they looked beyond family members and their community for role models. The participants in the study grew up with the American sitcoms since the US had more established television shows with their sign on twenty-four years before Canada. Shows such as *The Donna Reed Show*, a popular 1950s sitcom about a close family provided moral instructions and advice on how to deal with the dilemmas of life. Mary, the daughter in the home played by Shelley Fabares, was a role model for many of the participants I interviewed. Some of them said they spent hours in front of the mirror trying to mimic her hairstyle and lip-syncing her song, *Teen Angel*. They avidly read the magazines that featured Shelley Fabares. Isabelle, who professed to be a tomboy growing up said:

My older sisters saved Popsicle sticks to send away to the fan magazines. If you collected a certain number they would send you an autographed picture of the latest movie stars, like Shelley Fabares, which my sisters would plaster all over their bedroom.

Daisy said, “I thought other families, not mine, were like Donna Reed’s family with a stay-at-home mother in a pretty dress, who would go around dusting an already clean house.”

That Girl starred Marlo Thomas as the title character, Ann Marie, an aspiring but sporadically employed actress juggling temporary jobs and a boyfriend. This was one of the first sitcoms to focus on a single woman who was not a domestic nor living with her parents. It was an early indication of the changing roles of American women in feminist-era America. Accurate or not, these family sitcoms gave the participants some insight into North American families whose loving attention to children was a clear contrast to their own Chinese family experiences of neither sympathy for problems nor praise for accomplishments. Psychologists, David Sue and Derald W. Sue (1971), defined the traditional Chinese family as having certain values and behavioural characteristics. They said that in the traditional family, ancestors and elders are viewed with great reverence. The primary family unit typically exerts strong control over its children with emphasis placed on obtaining a good education, on being obedient to parents, and in giving the family a good name. Other behaviour such as disobedience or low achievement brings shame on the entire family. In order to control members, parents use guilt-arousing techniques such as threatening to disown the offenders, verbally censuring the individuals, usually in public, or having the individuals engage in activities that accentuate their feelings of guilt and shame.” One explanation of this traditional family derives from the political system of ancient China, originally developed by the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) with the vision of the creation of a harmonious society run by morally perfected men. The embodiment of Confucianism was the “well-ordered patriarchal family, a microcosm of the order that should prevail in state and society.” Even after several centuries, Confucianism was still vital and was transported to North America and beyond. Tong (2005) noted, “The Chinese continued to guide

their lives by the model of the patriarchal family and the idea of the family as the microcosm of the well-ordered state.” Chin-Yau Cindy Lin and Victoria R. Fu (1990) found in their study that immigrant Chinese parents reported that they put more emphasis on parental control and children’s achievements than was reported by White parents. Kelley and Tseng (1992), in their study of child rearing, found that immigrant Chinese parents scored higher than Caucasian parents on physical punishment and yelling at children. These research findings corroborate the work of Mark J. Gehrie (1976) and suggest that, during the time period of these women’s childhood and adolescence, Asian-North American parents held on to certain attitudes and child-rearing practices that translated into expectations that Asian children are to have self-control, be humble, and avoid being “different.” Asian parents do not show overt emotion and affection and provide relatively little praise. They may even call children negative nicknames, some based on unflattering physical characteristics or a perceived character weakness. As Wanda said, “There is not much encouragement or hugging at my house, it was more telling [you] what to do. Family members were kind of bossy, a little bit negative.” Similarly, Isabelle remarked, “My grandpa was a great tailor. That’s where my interest in sewing began when I was a teenager helping him. I must not have done a very good job because I remember getting yelled at a lot.” Charlotte said, “My dad was always yelling at us. I know it was because he was worried about us.” There was a general agreement that Chinese parents showed love and encouragement in a different way than the shows on TV. Shows like *That Girl* made an impact on Charlotte who said, “We are not taught to follow our passion. We are supposed to follow what makes sense. I liked women that were independent, maybe breaking the mould in that generation.” Charlotte carries this philosophy forward in her public life. She continued, “I want to be known for standing up for what I believe in even if it means making my dad mad at me.” Her sister Sarah said, “I used to

watch *That Girl*, Marlo Thomas, moving to New York to fulfil her dreams. Why can't there be an Asian lady like that?" The participants wanted to see an Asian role model exhibiting characteristics that they saw and admired portrayed by White actors. The characters Suzie Wong and Linda Lo did exemplify those characteristics in spite of their negative career choices.

The family sitcoms showed a family life that was mostly alien to the experiences of every participant. It is likely these shows were dissimilar to most immigrant families' experiences. Many of the participants said that this contrast of what a family "should be" like and what their family was like created a feeling of discontent for them. They recognized that it was too great a leap to move from how their family was to how they wanted it to be, like the family on television.

The participants focused as much on behaviours as they did on appearances, trying to be like them so they could fit in as well as in trying to look like the White girls in their school or those on television. Some, like Daisy, recognized that what they watched on television was incongruent with their own home life. She said:

I was responsible for looking after my brother and sisters and the house. I didn't have time to participate in after-school activities. I didn't know anything different. Go to school, come home and look after my brother and sisters; get groceries, start dinner and then there is the after-dinner routine: dishes, getting everybody ready for bed, and me doing homework. I never thought about anything else.

The participants said they could not make themselves over to fit any of the girls in the shows let alone make their parents shower them with attention, interest, love or help them to solve problems as they did on TV. Daisy laughed and added, "It was a good day when we

weren't called stupid." At the same time, for many of the participants, being the first in their families to be born in Canada and to be fluent English speakers resulted in their becoming the problem solvers for their family. This was a skill they identified as one that helped them in their life. When faced with difficult situations they had learned to get on with what was required and do the job at hand.

When asked to reflect on the role of television and the movies, the participants responded quite uniformly. Some of the participants noted the lack of people of colour in television and the movies. Skye said, "The actors were predominantly Caucasian. You didn't see very many coloured faces. I think *The Little Rascals* had a black kid."

Daisy said:

I remember on TV, all the shows and all the commercials used to be Caucasian, all the kids, everyone was Caucasian. I don't know over how long a period but now you see different minorities. There are other people in the world, you know, and not everyone is tall, white and blond with blue eyes.

Daisy said this last comment lightly during the interview but there was a hint of resentment in her tone of voice.

Nicole who perhaps saw more live performances growing up, recalled, "I loved live performance. I always wished at that time that they would look at people like us but they never did." And she too, sadly reflects that there were few people of colour in television. In total, the participants recalled there was Hoskins, the Black kid in *Little Rascals* and Hop Sing, the Chinese houseboy in *Bonanza* neither of whom they could or wanted to identify with.

Chinese Tradition Versus the Movies

To go from the dearth of Asian roles in television and movies to a Hollywood film featuring Asian characters and an Asian protagonist was a startling shift. Just as these participants were reaching their pubescent teenage years, *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and the *Flower Drum Song* (1961), featuring Nancy Kwan, a Chinese woman in the starring role, premiered. Previously, a film with Asian themes would have featured a White leading actress in “yellowface” such as Jennifer Jones in *Love is a Many Splendored Thing* (1955). Yellowface refers to the common make-up technique of the time to make a Caucasian actor look Asian. Techniques involved creating physical features such as black hair, yellow-tinted facial make-up, arched eyebrows and other features deemed stereotypically Asian. The reaction of the participants to these two films was varied and wide-ranging. Some said they were unaware that Suzie Wong was a prostitute in *The World of Suzie Wong* because they were too young and/or they did not understand what a prostitute was. Those in this category saw Suzie Wong as a very glamorous character and they took pride in seeing a Chinese woman as the star on the silver screen.

Amy said:

It was nice because Nancy Kwan was an Asian woman and because you didn't see examples of that very much on the screen. Usually the Asian[s] are hidden somewhere.

And, Nancy Kwan was the star basically. You kind of went, “I'm Asian too.” It gave you some pride of who you were, that it was okay to be strong and outgoing and outspoken.

Amy said that her admiration of Nancy Kwan has not wavered to this day. Charlotte felt strongly about what she saw, “For me, it was seeing an Asian play an Asian. You would see her

dance and sing in *Flower Drum Song* and she was considered Hollywood.” Almost all the participants were pleased to see so many Chinese characters in this film. Nicole said it was important to her. “I went to every single thing where I saw an Asian woman on the screen.”

Jess, too, thought, “I wanted to be playing Nancy Kwan, singing and twirling on stage.” Yet, not all identified with the “sexy one.” One participant said, “I didn’t identify with Nancy. I didn’t think I was that beautiful. To me, she was the popular one that all the guys go after.” Identity went beyond appearances. Jasmine, who spoke vehemently, said:

It was unthinkable at that time that you could actually have a love affair with an older White guy. That was so taboo for a good girl growing up in the heart of the Chinese community. That character would have been an outcast!

It would seem that, even after many years, doing the right thing and being good was (and continues to be) very important.

The scenic location of Hong Kong in *The World of Suzie Wong* seemed to have little or no impact on the participants’ perception, perhaps because only one had ever been out of Canada and certainly, at that time, had no knowledge of Hong Kong. Whereas *The Flower Drum Song*, set in San Francisco with most of the scenes in homes, was described as more “vibrant” for the participants. The plot, including the intergenerational struggles, was meaningful for some of the participants but for these developing young women, the real draw was the clear dichotomy between what they considered the “good and sweet girl” and the “sexy dancing lady” and the choice it implied for them. Even today, they are quick to sum up their own perspective on these two characters. Dawn, for example, says, “I wanted to be the sexy girl of course.” All the participants who commented on *The Flower Drum Song* reacted to the casting interchangeability

of Asians, resenting the fact that a Japanese actress, Miyoshi Umeki, played the role of Mei Li as the picture bride. Wanda said, “I remember when I was watching the show, I was thinking, she [Mei Li] is not Chinese. That’s just not right.”

Some of the participants said that Nancy Kwan looked more “*lo fan*” than Chinese. Skye said, “*Lo fan* [White people] can’t tell the difference [between Japanese and Chinese] but we [Chinese] knew the difference.” Jasmine said Nancy Kwan “performed the role of the Barbie doll in the show; something pretty to look at. I don’t even think that I wanted to aspire to be Nancy Kwan, or even look like her. She was Eurasian and I was Chinese. In those days, race mattered.” Jasmine’s comment illustrates the complexity of identification for these participants as young Chinese females growing up in a predominantly White world. Given the few Asian female role models, it was difficult for the participants to identify with others who were different from them either visually or behaviourally.

Nancy Kwan in her interview provided an explanation for the interchangeability of Asians in *Flower Drum Song*. She said, “At that time [1950s and early 1960s] there were not that many Chinese out there that could sing and dance. They were all Japanese.” Nancy Kwan said that she has had many Asians, both male and female, talk to her over the years about their experience of seeing her in *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*.

She told this story:

A young man whose family lived in a small town where there were no Asians in the community heard about my film. He said he drove a long way because he had never seen an Asian woman as a lead in a big Hollywood film. That opened his eyes! I was one of the first Asians to get a lead part in movies. The producer, Ray Stark, said he chose me

instead of France Nguyen because he thought I had more universal acceptance. It was a time when they were transitioning from White women playing Asian women and being Eurasian meant I could use both my sides.

There could be several explanations for the producer's desire for an actress with more universal acceptance. Nancy Kwan alluded to the fact that she was part of the transition from White women playing Asian women in film and that being bi-cultural helped with that bridging. A more critical reading of the producer's desire would be that a broader audience would accept a beautiful bi-racial woman. As Nancy Kwan said, "The goal of any film is to be a success and to make money for the studio." *The World of Suzie Wong* was a huge Hollywood commercial success.

Chinese Movies

Half of the women grew up watching Chinese movies as often as Hollywood cinema, especially those who lived in Vancouver and Victoria and had access to Chinese movies. These were one of the outings used by families to connect to the Chinese community.

Wanda said:

I used to watch all the Chinese movies, especially the kung fu movies. I also like the more recent ones like *Crouching Tiger and Hidden Dragon* (2000). My mom is friends with the producer, William Kong. I take an interest in Chinese movies. I love Gong Lee. I loved *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991). That film taught me about concubines, as my grandmother is a second wife. It also has a lot of the Chinese rules, the whole thing that you are supposed to obey the elders.

Although the media did offer some new and different options in which the participants could view themselves, it seems that it was when they saw a real-life connection that the impact of the Chinese movies seemed to be most significant.

Dawn said:

My mom took me to Chinese movies. A lot of the films were tragic. There were the good women and the bad women. It was always the really nice female that would sacrifice and die in the end. She would have her heart broken and lose the man. The fellow would be seduced by the beautiful, manipulative woman. My mom would come home in tears and say something like, “Oh the poor woman, she was so good.”

Dawn said that the message she took from the movies and her mom’s response to these movies was: “Be the good, dutiful daughter, no matter what. Do the right thing and don’t think about the tragedy.” Dawn said that, for her, this adage changed over time to include being the good employee, to be good all around, be obedient and work hard. And if there is suffering, well, “suck it up and just get on with it!”

Kyla said:

Our older sister took us to watch Chinese movies at the Fox Theatre on Quadra Street. Because she was born in China she knew who the Chinese movie stars were, like Fung Bobo. She was a little girl around my age. We went to see her and everyone would talk about how pretty and smart she was.

Like Kyla’s sister, Skye’s sister-in-law, who came from China, was also a fan of the Hong Kong movie stars.

Skye said:

My mother made us watch Chinese shows. We were dragged there. We would go, when we were in Vancouver, to the Majestic Theatre and the Orpheum. When we were in Victoria, we went to the Fox, now the Roxy and to the Plaza, downtown. Us [sic] kids used to call the Chinese opera, by the screeching sound, the “ieeee, ieee, ieee.” If Mom or my sister-in-law explained the story, it wasn’t so bad; otherwise, you couldn’t understand anything. But I loved the costumes. Mom said that when she got married, that is how her hair was with all the jewelled and jade hairpins. My mom said that when she was young back in China, if there was a travelling show, she would sit there for three days in a row and not bother to eat. She really, really liked it.

Skye’s mother personalized the Chinese opera for her by sharing the story of her hair and her hairpins. Susie’s appreciation of hair ornaments continues with her own collection of Chinese hair ornaments.

Jess and Isabelle remember watching Chinese films with their grandfather. They said, “He was very political in terms of the Kuomintang and he would take us to watch the propaganda films at the hall.” Jane recalled watching the Chinese opera and, like Skye, remembered how embarrassing it was because of their singing in screechy, high-pitched voices. They both talked about watching the Chinese version of Madame Butterfly. Isabelle said, “I can remember one scene where she was jealous. They showed jealousy by showing flames in her eyes.” Jess added, “And so much drama.” The participants may not have understood all the nuances of the Chinese shows and operas but they were sensitized to the emotions and the messaging they interpreted from them.

Beauty

How did Western ideals of beauty affect the body image and self-image of these Canadian-born women of Chinese descent growing up in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s? What messages did they receive from family, their ethnic community, and the dominant society? According to award-winning poet, Toi Derricotte (1997) Western conceptions of beauty are based on an ideal, creating a hierarchy in which women are ranked according to their closeness to the ideal. This hierarchy ranks and divides women within and across racial groups, separating those who merit visibility and personhood from those who are rendered invisible.

The development of body image is a social and psychological process. A woman internalizes a range of social views to create a mental image, understanding, and assessment of her body. Body image is the product of the messages she receives from others including family, friends, peer groups, school, media, communities, and her culture. Carla Rice and Vanessa Russell (1995a) asserted that body image is not fixed but rather it develops through social relationship. Most young women growing to maturity in Western culture, regardless of race and culture, internalize destructive messages regarding their developing bodies. Just as North Americans have their own beauty ideals; other countries have their own ideas of what beauty is. Girls are faced with the reality of having a female body that can be experienced as pleasurable or problematic, depending on the messages received from others. A girl's hair, breasts, hip size, eyes, skin colour, body shape, weight and facial features can be concerns especially when these are evaluated against White ideals of beauty.

Society, family, and friends can and do assess a young woman's beauty and abilities, and the messages from this assessment is the way she is assigned a value in the world. Her physical

attributes her behaviour and demeanour influence whether she is accepted, rejected, harassed, or ignored. The social meanings attached to a girl's physical and behavioural traits strongly affect her developing feelings about her body and self. As participant Wanda remarked, "I think looks are always important. The popular girls were the special ones."

I wanted to explore the models to whom this group of young Canadian-born adolescents looked for guidance as they negotiated the challenges of growing up. Did they look to their friends and siblings, to parents or to the broader community? Did this include the influence of media in the form of Hollywood films and how they portrayed and positioned Asian women?

Every woman born in the Western world inherits a racial identity and the reality of growing up with such an identity shapes her body image in complex ways. Standards of beauty have everything to do with culture and power; yet, as Colleen B. Cohen, Richard Wilk, and Beverly Stoeltje (1996) argued, there continues to be a set of ideals of Western beauty that promote the illusion that beauty can be measured objectively and renders invisible the role that social and political factors play in shaping those ideals. The myth of universal beauty standards raises problems for all women as it promotes one ideal of a global image of beauty which has become a Western one: fair skin, long hair and European facial features are the expression of these universal standards.

Eugenia Kaw's (1993) study indicated that women must conform to certain standards of beauty to be rewarded for being attractive. This perspective was reiterated by the work of Tolmach Lakoff and Racquel L.Scherr (1984) and Kegan Paul (1991) that suggest that beauty, more than character or intelligence, signifies social and economic success for Asian-American women. During the transition from childhood to adulthood, identified by Western culture as the

time of self-experimentation and definition, young women face the greatest external challenges to their body image. While their bodies are changing, according to Janet Lee and Jennifer Sasser-Coen (1996), they are subjected to unwanted assessment and attention and can become increasingly vulnerable to older men and the myth of the available Asian female.

Participant Charlotte provided one example of this. When she was growing up she found that, in her experience:

Most Caucasian guys didn't date Chinese women. They were after the blonde, blue-eyed girls. But older men seemed to be attracted to me and I was asked out by them. I had the long Suzie Wong sort of hair. When I graduated in Grade 12, the first thing I did was to get my hair cut. I wanted people to like me for who I was as a person.

Charlotte's self-confidence was such that she did not feel she had to create or reproduce a certain acceptable and appropriate appearance and female form.

Chinese women receive lessons about colour and race growing up in a White society and, while some of the participants aspired to mainstream standards of beauty, others adhered to traditional Chinese standards. The ideal to which a woman aspires is connected to her personal and cultural history and to the particular realities of her body. The onslaught of media and the potent combination of cinematic, televisual and other discourses on feminine ideation are no more clearly symbolized than in the Miss America Pageant. This long-established pageant espouses the philosophy: "Miss America represents the highest ideals. She is a real combination of beauty, grace, and intelligence, artistic, and refined. She is a type which the American Girl might well emulate." (Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce President Frederick Hickam, 1940)

Hooks (1992b, 1993) contended that girls who grow up learning that their skin colour and physical features are unfavourably compared to those of Western beauty ideals often feel ashamed and humiliated. The Miss America Pageant had the notorious number seven rule, which stated: “Contestants must be of good health and of the White race.” As late as 1940 all contestants were required to list, on their formal biological data sheet, how far back they could trace their ancestry. Asian-American comedian Margaret Cho recalls watching the pageant:

My father was very into it. At one point when I was a little girl, I said, “I want to be one of those contestants. I want to grow up and do that” and he said, “No, oh no, you cannot do that, no...” I took it to mean that the beauty pageant was not open to all women. My father thought this whole pageant was fascinating but I was not allowed to even entertain the fantasy of becoming one of these women. And I thought, “Well maybe I’m just not pretty enough. Maybe I’m just not White.”

School friends, media, and institutionalized events such as pageants transmitted messages of what and who a woman should look like. A pertinent example is the Modern Girl phenomenon that emerged around the world in the first half of the twentieth century. In cities from Beijing to Bombay, Tokyo to Berlin, Johannesburg to New York, the Modern Girl was identified by her fashionable appearance and her explicit eroticism. According to Lan Dong (2008), the colonial worship of things foreign, including foreign women, had a strong impact on the modernity of the Chinese Modern Girl. Articles in Chinese magazines such as the *Furen Huabao* (1993) suggested that the traditional Chinese standard of beauty—an oval face, willow leaf eyebrows, long thin eyes, small cherry-like mouth and slim fragile looking body—had been replaced by one featuring big eyes, long thin eyebrows, broad mouth with fine white teeth and an agile, energetic body. The modernist writer Ou (1993) said that faces of Chinese women in

contrast to Caucasian women lacked shadow due to the flatness of their noses and eye sockets. He suggested that all Chinese women needed the help of surgical measures to reshape their eyebrows and make them similar to those of Caucasian women and that they need to learn from Western movie actresses how to make their faces more expressive. From every direction across the globe, women's appearance and behaviour elicited opinion and comment and the Chinese in China followed suit using Western women as role models. Anna May Wong, the first Asian-American actor in Hollywood (1922), epitomized the duality of Chinese traditions and Western culture and her success at the latter, such as modelling of one of the first pant suits designed for and worn by an American woman and her extraordinary sense of style, received sharp criticism by the Chinese. This image rang true for participant Jasmine who, as she grew up in Canada, remembers seeing pictures of her dad as this "suave, debonair, Gatsby-looking kind of guy with girls on either arm."

Ethnic groups, including the Chinese, created their version of the Miss America Pageant to bolster their confidence and that of their community by embracing their own distinctive features. Unlike the 1930s Modern Girl phenomenon, parents in these pageants wanted their Canadian-born children to value the continuity of the place of their ancestors, especially as they witnessed the strong influence of the dominant culture on their children.

These pageants, too, espoused a particular view of femininity. Chambers (2008) argued that beauty standards, including various ethnic pageants, imposed on all women, despite being unrealizable by the vast majority, are patriarchal and oppressive. An example of just such an effect can be found in Wanda's experience. She said, "My dad always had the Chinese magazines that had Miss Vancouver and Miss Hong Kong. The women were always beautiful. I just didn't identify with that at all. I knew I was nice. This is where I went." Both Wanda and

Margaret Cho silently internalized the implicit messages from their fathers, who appeared enamoured with the idea of public displays of beauty but did not realize how this could affect their daughters. These presumed judgements were compounded by family dynamics that were miserly in the distribution of positive regard. In terms of their beauty or attractiveness, the women in the study received no explicit direction from home to guide them, only implicit hints from the Dad's interest in attractive women either through pageantry, magazines, or cinema.

For many of these pageants, along with the required ball gown and talent components, the contestants were required to model their traditional dress and demonstrate fluency in their ethnic language. One participant, Nicole, was a contestant for Miss Vancouver Chinatown. She said, "I didn't enter this contest because I or my family thought I was attractive. My mother and aunt said it was good for me." After the Miss Chinatown Pageant Nicole said that she "decided that I didn't want to go to school" and left school in Grade 11. She said:

[She wanted to] challenge everything. I wanted to be a model. I'm still modelling. I did children's wear for Sears and fashion shows for Eaton's at the Tearoom. I volunteered and got to know the Chinese community and I spoke Chinese. Nicole capitalized on her own internal messaging, strengths, community connections, and her Chinese language to make a place for herself.

Kaw (2003) stated that some Asian beauty pageants are sponsored by plastic surgeons, who provide information about altering features to resemble a more Westernized femininity, echoing the earlier message of the Modern Girl in China. Her study records what many Asian American women do to look their "best" as women. They choose cosmetic surgery in an attempt to escape persistent racial prejudice that correlates their stereotyped genetic physical features

such as “small, slanty” eyes and a “flat” nose with negative behavioural characteristics such as passivity, dullness, and a lack of sociability. This desire to change echoes the larger consumer-oriented society that insists that beauty should be every woman’s goal. It even promotes a beauty standard requiring certain racial features of Asian-American women be modified in order to conform to an ethnocentric norm. When racial minorities internalize a body image produced by the dominant culture’s racial ideology that is different to their bodies, they are negatively influenced in their experience of racial identity. According to Kaw (2003), White women usually opt for liposuction, breast augmentation, or wrinkle removal procedures, whereas Asian American women most often request “double-eyelid” surgery, whereby folds of skin are excised from across their upper eyelids to create a crease above each eye that makes the eyes look wider. Another frequent request is for surgical sculpting of the nose tip cartilage bridge in the nose for a more prominent appearance. Kaw’s research reveals that White women’s alterations of features of their body do not correspond to conventional markers of racial identity whereas Asian women primarily seek to alter features that do correspond to such markers. These associations, Kaw suggested, stem directly from stereotypical images created by the dominant culture in the United States and by Western culture in general, which historically has wielded the most power and hegemonic influence over the world.

Western women altered their features mainly to promote a more youthful appearance; while Kaw’s (2003) interviews with Asian-American women who had cosmetic surgeries indicated that they felt they were exercising their American-ness in their use of the freedom of individual choice. Some said they were not conforming to any standard, either feminine or Western; while others said that they were choosing their own standards of beauty. Nevertheless, most agreed that their decision to alter their features was primarily a result of their awareness

that as women they were expected to look their best and this meant less stereotypically Asian. They expressed the hope that their new appearance would help them to improve their social status as women of racial minorities by securing a mate or getting a job. Cosmetic surgery is a means by which they hope to acquire “symbolic capital” in the form of a look that holds more prestige. Like the Modern Girl, the Westernized look played a part in blurring class boundaries and served as a means for women to be upwardly mobile by finding a suitable mate. Even if success in emulating such beauty standards brings a woman some success in obtaining other social goods such as employment, opportunities, a wealthy benefactor, or husband it does not mean that the beauty standards are accurate reflections of womanhood. In an immigrant family’s journey to belonging and to moving up the social class, Ronald Takaki (1959) suggested that there may be familial pressure for daughters to conform to the markers of what constitutes a good Chinese girl, that is, one who is demure, obedient, and hard-working. The 1930s Chinese Modern Girl stereotype had positive attributes which included being beautiful, healthy, energetic, cheerful, and lively in contrast to the racial stereotypes of Asians, reinforced by the media, as docile, passive, slow-witted, and unemotional. Erving Goffman (1979) contended that many Asian-American women internalized these traits, causing them to consider the facial features associated with these negative traits as flaws.

Gender and Women’s Studies professor, Susan Bordo (1990) argued, “The alteration of Asian-American women’s features does not transform them but in the Foucauldian sense, ‘normalizes’ them to conform to patriarchal definitions of femininity and to Caucasian standards of beauty.” Dhruvaraja (2002) agreed, suggesting that White women are perceived as the norm and women of colour as the deviation. This thinking can create a state where the individual’s internalized feelings of fault, criticism and invalidation instils standards or a hierarchy of what is

considered beautiful. This was especially the case for some of the participants in this study, who grew up mainly with Caucasians; they viewed Caucasian physical attributes as more attractive and as the norm. Amy, who grew up in an area as the only Chinese family had this experience and said, “Traditionally, us [sic] Chinese people aren’t that attractive as a race. I don’t think so.”

Although none of the participants in the study said that they altered their features to look more Western, some of them did wrestle with their Chinese identity. Wanda said, “There were times when I didn’t want to be Chinese.” She described being teased at both public school and ostracized at Chinese school and said, “I didn’t know quite who I was.” She went on to say that it wasn’t until she did her own research on Chinese immigration to Canada during her post-secondary education that she was able to come to peace with being Chinese.” Charlotte said that when she was younger, “I hated to say I was Chinese because being Chinese meant everything like being discriminated against, or not getting the guy I like because I was Chinese.” Although the parents wanted their daughters to maintain their Chinese-ness, including their behaviour, even they accepted that light skin is considered desirable. Isabelle remembers being told to wear a hat when she played outside so that she did not get a dark complexion. The reason for this may also be linked to the status of class. Even in China, the nobles, wealthy, or the scholar class would not be seen toiling in the fields under the hot sun and would never have suntanned or dark complexions.

In western culture, bodies are a primary source of identity; they are given a gender, a race, and a class and these labels can shape the options and life possibilities of the person in that body. Bordo (1993) noted that, in puberty, girls become increasingly focused on regulating, managing and controlling their bodies to meet an internalized ideal. Becoming a woman involves internalizing cultural strictures relating to appropriate appearance and behaviour, and learning to

adjust one's body in an effort to reproduce an acceptable or desirable form. Psychologist, Susan Paxton (1996) noted that girls' satisfaction with their body relates to their feelings of belonging and acceptance by others. Peers, adults, and popular media through advertisements send socializing messages about beauty to adolescents at an age when they are particularly vulnerable and at a time when they are subjected to increased scrutiny and control. It is during this time that girls begin to experience body ideals more intensely.

You Have to Fit in to Get in

Efrat Tseelon (1995) contended that a girl develops a feminine body by observing others, experimenting with her own body, getting feedback, correcting herself, and gradually internalizing how she is supposed to look and act, learning what is acceptable and what is taboo. Young women are united in the lessons they learn in growing up female and experiencing the desire to be seen as attractive and normal, like everyone else. Yet, bodily standards are experienced differently by women according to their race, ethnicity and physical abilities, which cause them to experience their bodies and the ideals in very different ways. During adolescence, because of societal norms and biological hormones, girls are prone to become concerned about what others think of them. This is important in their development and can affect their self-esteem.

Based on comments from the participants, the media through television and film played a role in how they perceived their acceptance by others. Similarly, perceptions of Asians were transferred and reiterated by non-Asian audiences in how they responded to some of the participants. Dawn recalls a time in her 20s, when she entered a store where three young men of approximately the same age greeted her with, "Hey, it's Suzie Wong." She remembers her first

reaction, thinking “Oh Suzie Wong, a stereotype” but her second reaction was “OH, SUZIE WONG, they think I’m attractive.” Dawn said of that incident, “I was mad and flattered at the same time.” Sarah experienced a similar salutation in a different way. She said that the only movie that she found negative about Asian people was *The World of Suzie Wong*. She said:

It was difficult enough to be at school and have very few Chinese girls around but after that movie now, when I think about it, I was bullied. They would say, “Hi Suzie!” and make you feel like trash because of Nancy Kwan’s portrayal of a prostitute. At the Recreation Centre I go to now, I still see one of the guys from junior high school who gave me a bad time then and I don’t even waste my time. We don’t even give each other eye contact.

The impact of the stereotypical portrayal still has an effect on Sarah. Whether explicit, implicit, or inadvertent, *The World of Suzie Wong* and the character of Suzie Wong affected these women growing up. Suzie became a standard that Asian women were held to both physically and behaviourally. Nancy Kwan disagreed, saying, “That was never the intent. There was no intention on my part to be a role model. Suzie Wong was a role, a terrific role that the director helped me to enhance my performance, it’s nothing more than that.”

As much as the role of Nancy Kwan portraying a prostitute provided a negative stereotype for some of the participants, the stereotypical portrayal of Chinese and Asian characters in films also created behavioural expectations for the audience. Amy shared her experience from a White boyfriend who said to her, “When I first met you, I was thinking that you would be traditional Chinese, you know, like, be subservient, quiet and that stuff.” Dawn has this same experience with her partner of 30 years. She said, “Bill sometimes will say, ‘You are

not supposed to be like that. You are supposed to be kind, considerate and soft and just be here and listen.” Dawn laughs and responds to him, “That’s what they show you in the movies; it’s not in real life.” Sarah shared her perspective of traditional and cultural expectations. She said:

When I think about some people that married Chinese husbands, their husbands expected a lot because of our culture. They wanted to be served. With my [Caucasian] husband it wasn’t, “It’s your turn” or “Why didn’t you” it was whoever got home first started dinner.

These expectations depicted in the media affected both White and Chinese audiences.

Wanda said that the film, *The Joy Luck Club*, (1993) made a big impression on her. The film was based on Amy Tan’s (1989) novel, *The Joy Luck Club*, which took up the generational theme of the conflicted relationship between mother and daughter over the differences of traditional Chinese values and the new westernized culture of Chinese Americans. Wanda said that she felt an immediate connection when she was watching the sister who couldn’t make any decisions in the film. She said she saw the similarities between the women in the film and her own aunts who, she felt, bossed her around. She said, “*The Joy Luck Club* was a great Hollywood movie because it felt so true.” These comments illustrate the complexity of growing up Chinese in Canada. While the participants were able, as adults, to scoff at some behaviours and expectations shown in films with Asians, as youths they felt powerless to do so. Nancy Kwan spoke about her own experience with *The Joy Luck Club*. She was offered a role in the film but turned it down when they refused to take out a derogatory comment about Suzie Wong in one scene. She said, “I am very proud of *The World of Suzie Wong*. In the movie, an adaptation of Tan’s novel, the character Rose says, “I couldn’t believe what she was telling me. It was straight out of some awful racist movie like *The World of Suzie Wong*.” Nancy Kwan was not interested in a critical interpretation of the film that set her career off.

Factors for Marrying Out

A complicating factor in the lives and relationships of Canadian Chinese is the media-ascribed sexual stereotype of Asian men as effeminate, asexual, or worse, as sexual deviants. It is a contributing factor to the phenomenon of Asian women choosing to marry non-Asian partners. These negative stereotypes had real consequences, which affected the partner preferences among Asian women. Women who grew up with little contact with Asians were especially impressionable about the stereotypes they picked up from movies and television shows such as the Fu Manchu series (1956) and the cowboy western, Bonanza featuring Hop Sing, the Chinese house boy. During the 1950s and 1960s when the participants were dating, the number of Chinese in their world was relatively small. Of that group, there were few Chinese men who were age-appropriate for the women participants. The boys who were in school with them seemed more like brothers than dates. On the other hand, the few older Chinese boys in the community were more likely to be China-borns, who were unlikely to be their first choice given the hierarchy and their need of distinction from this group. There were also very low numbers of other Asian groups during this period because multiculturalism was not in effect in Canada until 1967; thus, immigration of Asians into Canada was much lower. Sociologists, Hou et al. found that where there is a critical mass of certain ethnic groups, individuals will partner with the same ethnicity and background. The larger and more concentrated the ethnic group, the less likely it will produce a mixed relationship. Hou further suggests that in a mid-size Canadian city such as Victoria, where there were relatively few Asians, the intermarriage rate would be much higher. He goes on to quote data collected by Stats Canada that agrees. The rate of intermarriage in Victoria is currently at 40% while in metro Vancouver, it is 9.6% and in multicultural Toronto is at 8.2%. For this group of women born following the repeal of the Canada Immigration Act,

there was no critical mass, as the number of Chinese children born in Canada indicated in the table below.

Table 5. Age Composition of Foreign-born and Native-born Chinese-Canadians 1971

Age	Foreign-born %	Native-born %
Under 16	13.2	65.4
16-29	27.5	20.1
30-45	33.0	6.2

There were more Canadian-born Chinese, younger than 16, than any other age group. Like other immigrants to Canada, the Chinese tended to settle in metropolitan centres. Of the Chinese in Canada, 75% lived in Ontario and British Columbia, with 60% accounted for in Toronto and Vancouver . The participants and their parents lived in small cities and towns and, as indicated earlier, some lived where there was no Chinatown.

Of the nine participants who had one or both parents born in Canada, only one had a father who returned to China for a wife. All the others married a Canadian-born Chinese. Most of their parents married in the period of the Canadian Immigration Act (1923-1947), a time of discriminatory citizenship and exclusion of Chinese immigrants. This fact likely accounts for the Canadian-born Chinese finding each other as spouses because there were few incoming Chinese during that time. Sara Lee (1990) conducted a study with Korean-Americans on partner preferences. She found a distinction of partner preferences between middle-class and working-class Korean-Americans. For working-class Korean-Americans, cultural compatibility means an affinity with socio-economic class status rather than with race, ethnicity, or language. For

middle-class Korean-Americans, place of residence, schools and social networks provided opportunity for interaction and engagement with potential mates. This study provided a comparator because most of the women I interviewed grew up in working-class neighbourhoods and even those who moved to the suburbs had fathers in working-class employment. Lee's findings reiterated what one of the participants in my study concluded as why women of Chinese descent married non-Chinese partners, namely, the opportunity for social interaction.

Statistics Canada reported that the number of mixed marriages or interracial unions has been increasing since 1991 with an increase of 35% in 2001. Now, 6.4 % of all unions in Canada are interracial. Of those that include a person of Asian descent, those with Japanese ancestry have the largest numbers. Those of Chinese descent, although representative of one of the largest Asian groups in Canada, have the second lowest (16%) number of interracial unions. South Asians are the lowest, at 13%, in interracial unions.

Each of the women I interviewed is or was married to a White partner. One is currently widowed and another, divorced. Two of the twelve, both from Vancouver where there was a larger number of Chinese, initially married Chinese men. Of these two, one said, "I married a Chinese guy, not a Canadian-born but a China-born with a good occupation. It's funny, in retrospect, I did that because I thought it would make my mother happy." Others, who dated Chinese men, said that they went through phases when they felt they should, and of those who did, they all said, "It just didn't work out." Wanda said that as she felt more at peace with her Chinese side and after doing her own research paper on the Chinese coming to Canada, she met a Chinese person, but it didn't work out. She said, "I hadn't ever thought that I would be open to it. When I was younger, I didn't think Chinese people would be interested in me either." Amy's experience was similar. She said:

I never dated any Chinese guy until I was in my 20s and moved to Vancouver. It was time to give it a try. I went out with some really traditional Chinese guys. I remember my first date with one of them. He was taking me out to dinner. He came over with some salted fish thinking I was going to cook him dinner. That wasn't going to happen!

Dawn said:

I dated a China-born man who had come to Canada when he was eight or nine years old. He told me his mother didn't like me because I wasn't traditional enough. She made that judgement about me because I didn't call her by her proper Chinese title. Instead I said, "Hello."

Sarah suggested one explanation for dating White men. She said that she had only ever dated one Chinese guy when she was 16 and he was in his 20s. She said, "Once you start working, you are with more Caucasians and you tend to do what they doing, hanging out with them and then you meet Caucasian men. I think it was just social; it just happened."

Although all the participants had White partners, the reactions of the parents varied. Kyla sums up a general sentiment from their parents: "I still think our mom, especially, wanted us to marry someone Chinese." Kyla and her two siblings married non-Chinese, as did Skye's. Both of them said that they felt their older sisters marrying out "paved the way" and would make it smoother when they married a non-Chinese partner. Although this was true for Kyla, it was not true for Skye, who said:

When my sister got married my parents said it was okay because he was a local boy. Dad knew his dad. They had done business together and the boy was a hockey player. It was okay that he was White. When I came along, I introduced my boyfriend to my parents at

my university graduation and my mom tells me that my dad is really upset. Apparently, he had different expectations for me than he did for my sister. Because I had always been more traditional and practised the Chinese traditions and dated a couple of Chinese boys, he didn't expect that I would not marry a Chinese man. He actually threatened not to come to my wedding because I was marrying a *Lo Fan*.

Skye's parents used reasons beyond race, such as education. Skye continued, "Mom tried to talk me out of it; she said that he didn't have the same education. She came up with a whole list of things about why I shouldn't marry him." Skye said that she was the only one of her siblings that encountered this negativity about her choice of partner. She said, "My brother went through three wives and they were all *Lo Fan*. That was okay with them." She finished up with: "Sometimes you just can't win for losing. In the end, my mother was more liberal and supportive; yet, my Dad spent more time with *Lo Fans* than my mother ever did." "Luckily," she continued, "they really like Ron, my second husband he's also *Lo Fan*. I think, better than me sometimes."

Daisy said, "My mom worked at a restaurant at night and saw a lot of drunk Caucasian boys so she didn't want us to date them. But all of my five siblings are married to non-Chinese partners." Many of the women felt the same way as Kyla when she summed up her take on interracial marriage: "Most of us who married out had a better relationship with our spouses than others who married Chinese. We have more things in common."

According to Gordon (1964), intermarriage has long been regarded as a benchmark of assimilation and as an indication of the eroding social and economic barriers between the immigrant group and the host society. Sociologists such as Kingsley Davis (1941), Sharon M.

Lee and Marilyn Fernandez (1998), and Stanley Lieberson, and Mary C. Waters (1988) conceived of intermarriage between Whites and non-Whites as a measure of the decreasing social distance between groups, declining racial prejudice, and changing racial boundaries. Some suggest that this provides an indication of the groups' social proximity to Whites and argue that Asians are the next in line to become White. However, as Lee and Bean (2004) argued, continued immigration from Asia and the racial stereotype they face as the "forever foreigner" ensure that this process will be neither assured nor smooth.

Standards of Expectations

Even more than appearance, the participants attested to feeling caught between two ideals of behaviour. They said that they were expected to look and behave modestly. Looking attractive did not garner comment but what was deemed bad behaviour did. Daisy said that the only compliment she remembers that she got about how she looked was if she wore a nice dress, her mom would say that she looked clean and pretty. However, any behaviour that was considered naughty or rebellious drew comments. Charlotte summed it up by saying, "I always find it funny because I'm the same person but one person would say, 'She goes out too much' or 'She's a bit of a party girl' and someone else would say, 'Oh, she is very old fashioned and traditional.' It depends on who the audience is." Dawn said, "The thing is try to look like Nancy Kwan on the outside, have the long hair, svelte body but, on the inside, you have to be good and not be rebellious."

Existing between two cultures and balancing both is challenging. Some try to resolve this conflict by rejecting traditional ways and adopting more Westernized behaviours. Ling (2001), a Chinese woman, described her experience that echoed feelings similar to those of participants

Sarah, Wanda, Isabelle, and Jess—wanting to fit in and that she was willing to follow any script. Writer Jia Ling said that she felt trapped in the contradiction between what the family wanted and what school valued. Caught between the family’s version of the world and dominant society’s version, she was alternately Model American by day and good Chinese daughter by night. Ling found the balancing act extremely difficult and grew to hate the stereotype of the good Asian.

The participants I interviewed all spoke about their family’s value of education. Vivienne Poy was adamant in her comments:

Education is the leveller [for equity]. It can help women break out of a mould. I wanted people to think of me as smart; being beautiful is a bonus. However, before 1947, even education didn’t help—no Chinese could be a professional.

For the parents, especially the Canadian-born, who had experienced segregation in public schools and been denied access to professional training, their difficult lived experience shaped their aspirations for their children. The value of education was well established in Chinese history and those that did well, described by Wright (1960) as the “diligent students of the Classics” were given rewards of status and wealth. Skye agreed with this as she cited her parents’ sentiments on education and career for their daughters. She said:

My Dad’s ambition was to get a sewing machine and have my sister be a sewer. My mom said, “Forget that. My expectations for my daughters are far higher than that. They will be professionals or close to professionals as they can be.”

Wanda said:

My mom wasn't allowed to go to school [she was in a segregated public school for Chinese students.] They didn't have the opportunities that we have. I guess that is why I'm surprised that I'm a professional because it wasn't something that I aspired to.

Daisy said:

I focused on my studies and did well at school. It was up to myself. My mother didn't have time to enforce it. I enjoyed it and I didn't have much in the way of outside interests so I had time to do homework.

Skye said, "Although there wasn't any verbal pressure, I knew what the message was. I was the first one to go to university in our family." Nancy Kwan agreed and shared her own experiences:

I could get away with anything if I came home with a good report card. Education is number one. Parents in the old days would say to their daughters, "No policemen, no soldiers, no street sweepers or garbage guys—find someone with an education!" They thought that would be the best route to survival.

The value of education permeated the generations. Nicole said, "When my Canadian-born mother went to China as a 17-year-old she saw that girls didn't go to school. She didn't think that was right and found a way to build a school for girls." Education, whether in English or in Chinese, was an area in which to excel. Kyla said:

We went to Chinese School until I was in Grade 5. They gave prizes and they were always won by my sister Lauren, my brother Darrell and me. My mom used to joke and

say, “The amount we pay for you to go to Chinese School, we are getting it back.” Our parents were proud that we would win every month.

Charlotte remembered the weight of the pressure to excel when she said, “There were also expectations that I should be smarter, and better at piano. Being Chinese came with too many expectations.” Charlotte’s comment shows the high standards that Chinese parents set for their daughters. Their need for high achievement coupled with their reticence in providing any praise implied to their daughters that they were simply not good enough. Psychologist and author, Joann Deak (2002) argued that girls between the ages of 10 to 18 become more hesitant to take risks and make mistakes. She suggested that what happens in those first 20 years of life can affect them forever.

Model Minority

The stereotypes of Asians as a model minority, imbued with the characteristics of dullness, passivity, and stoicism have been modernized and extended to describe a person who is hard-working and technically skilled but desperately lacking in creativity and sociability. Some participants accepted the hard-working stereotype as positive.

Daisy said:

If I am comparing Asian versus Caucasian, there are fewer Asians getting into trouble; they are usually studious and obedient. I’m assuming it was their upbringing, what they saw as role models. It would be back to parenting; if their parents had time for them to enforce [getting homework done], encourage, and support them.

The stereotypical behaviour was extended to the work environment as Dawn explained: At work, there is still that thing about the Oriental being smart and intelligent. We try to be perfect, to do everything right. I do like to work hard; it's fulfilling. I can't sit and watch someone work and not work [myself]. I couldn't.

Sarah says that work was a family expectation. She said, "When I visit my dad or when my kids are with me, the first question he asks is, 'Did you work today? Not, how are you but oh, not working today?'"

Sarah says that she feels her father's judgement and still responds defensively.

Daisy, Skye, and Dawn provided personal examples of being "hard-working Asians" at school and at work. They were studious and exemplified a desire to learn. Daisy said that she was obedient and was diligent in her schoolwork, conscientiously monitoring her own progress. Skye wanted to do well and consciously worked to be "number one." Dawn says that she is aware of the stereotype of Chinese being smart, intelligent, hardworking and good in math but admits that she cannot help herself or stop herself from working hard.

Some of the participants challenged authority, whether it was familial, cultural, or societal. For some, parents and grandparents were also mentors in this regard. Vivienne Poy shared her story:

My Dad cared about community. He said, "Even if things were bad, like being treated as a second-class citizen the way the Chinese were treated in Hong Kong by the British, you don't have to accept bad treatment." He was always fighting for the Chinese against the government. My grandfather, a successful businessman said, "We, [the Chinese] can do

without the British and succeed very well on our own.” They were my role models. When I saw injustice, I spoke up against it.

Charlotte told a different experience about speaking out. She said:

I fight at home over this issue all the time. My dad gets mad at me when I speak out. He says, “You should just keep quiet. You are stupid for getting involved in that [issue]; it is a no-win situation.” He only wants me involved in nice, happy things. Whenever I’m in the paper with anything controversial, he would hate that because I am not playing the role he likes me to play. He hates it when I speak up. I know that he is proud of me but only of the title.”

Similarly, Nicole said, “When somebody, anybody, says, “You can’t do that.” I say, “Okay, a challenge! Watch me.”

Jess described an event when she stood up to her family. She said:

My older sister paid for my ballet lessons and one time she wanted me to give a performance in the living room in front of everybody and I said, “No.” My sister said, “If you don’t perform, I won’t pay for your lessons any more.” I said, “Okay” and refused to perform [for them]. I told my [dance] teacher that my sister was going to Hong Kong—which was true—and couldn’t afford to pay for me any more—not true. My teacher found an anonymous donor who paid for my whole career [as a student]. We would have a dance festival and the donor would send me a dozen roses. The very last year, I was waiting for the roses. They didn’t come and instead, they sent me a little porcelain Chinese doll. It was a nice keepsake.

Having their children speak out created challenges for Chinese parents in different ways: familial, because the daughter is not observing filial piety and not respecting her elders; societal, by shaming her parents and the family's good name; personal, by challenging their belief that girls should be obedient, quiet, and demure.

Nancy Kwan discussed this problem. She remarked,

It is a cultural thing, being obedient. Be the obedient child at home. Films [make a big] impression on young people. I think it would be a classic case for a girl to say, "If Nancy can do it, why can't I?" Films can leave a lasting impression and they can challenge authority.

Two of the participants, sisters, were looking for this modelling of resistance especially from Asian role models on the big screen. The characters of Suzie Wong and Linda Low provided a spectrum of possibilities and behaviours that many of the participants had previously assumed were not for Chinese girls. Linda Low's performance of the Rodgers and Hammerstein's Broadway song, *I Enjoy Being a Girl*, shows the Asian American woman's achievement of normative standards of beauty for women. Thus, Nancy Kwan became for many of the participants and I, the inspiration and the possibility that we, too, can do it.

For some of the participants, like Nicole, it was the challenge itself that was important. For others, it was important to speak out because they trusted their own instincts and what they believed was right.

Some of the participants were very proud that their families were able to succeed on their own. Sarah summed it up with:

I'm very proud of our race. We didn't have anything given to us. That's why we have been respected.”

Wendy shared this sentiment: “My paternal grandfather came from poverty and came to Canada to escape from the bandits as an 18-year-old. He basically taught himself how to grow tomatoes. He had no experience of this in China. He was able to buy the land and he and my grandmother raised nine children without any help.

Three of the participants, 25%, said that their families received financial assistance or charity of some kind. One of them said that her family, including her extended family, had to survive all sorts of stigma because they were the first Chinese-Canadian family who received welfare. It was difficult enough to ask the Chinese Benevolent Association for help but they did not have the resources at that time to help really needy families on a permanent basis. Another said that they were also on social assistance and were very embarrassed. She said:

We didn't have any choice because our mom was a widow, she spoke very little English and relied on the Chinese community to help her get jobs, and they were not well paid jobs.”

A third participant said that her family growing up “got food from what would be called a food bank today.” She said, “We got charity. We didn't think anything of it. It was accepted. We were poor. We didn't have what we have now. I try to tell my son that and he knows. But it's not the same as actually living it.

Many of the participants conformed to the “model minority” and have lived the “American-Canadian dream” through hard work and perseverance, as previously attested to by Daisy and Dawn. The term “model minority” was coined by American historian Yuki Ichioka in

the 1960s to frame a new inter-ethnic, pan-Asian, self-defining group. Deborah Woo (2000) pointed out that, statistically, Asian-American women have higher college degree attainment rates than White women. Of the participants I interviewed, 75% had obtained university degrees, others chose different career paths, one is a registered nurse, another worked in a professional capacity and two pursued artistic careers. They are all working or retired. This study corroborates the patterns of high socio-economic achievement of remarkable attainment and mobility patterns among Asian-Americans, mainly Chinese and Japanese (Barringer et al. (1995), Bates and Dunham, (1993), Chan, (1991), Yamanaka and McClelland (1994).

Stereotypes, Positive and Negative

Recognized as the most influential Asian-American dramatist and writer in the United States, Frank Chin (1991) is outspoken in his hatred of Asian-American stereotypes. He suggested that these stereotypes of Asians originated in stories that have been fed to us through White writing, reaching back into White history to the time of Marco Polo. He refuted the stereotype of the Chinese coming to Canada as sojourners, that Chinese culture is misogynistic, collective, and morally and ethically opposite to Western culture. He also asserted that Asians, Asian North Americans and non-Asians alike have collectively bought into this false rhetoric. He noted that Asian-American writers are complicit in furthering this stereotype of Asian-Americans and have misrepresented the traditional stories of the Chinese culture.

Lee (2006) agreed with this perspective and suggested:

There has been a deliberate erasure by men, White women and mainland Chinese women which has completely swept aside Asian-Canadian-ness usurped by an interest in

mainland Chinese gender reality under Communist China. There are small numbers of Asian-Canadian women scholars who reflect and write about their own subjectivity. It is not because of some inherent lack of Confucius value that we are inherently complacent, docile, and obedient. But that is the dominant discourse when you tease away the assumptions.

Participants in the study seemed to accept at least some of the stereotypes of the Chinese they have read about. Sarah said:

My daughter complains about novels that feature the Asian woman's hard life. She said, I haven't finished the book but I know [how] that one is going to end. They are all like that. The books are all about the very tragic and long-suffering woman.

Wanda said that the image she has about women is one of martyrdom, struggle, and pain but she thinks that reading these books has helped her to reclaim her Chinese side. Sarah says that the novels reflect the way Asian women think because it has been embedded in us for so long. Or is it, as Frank Chin suggested, that we believe what we have read is real.

There was a general acceptance of the Asian stereotype as someone who is quiet, industrious, reliable, and talented with quantitative skills. Some of the participants confessed that neither they nor their children fit this stereotype. Sarah, who adopted two children from Asia, repeated this comment from one of her children who said to her: "You adopted us too early. You should have left us back there for a while longer so that our brain could process all the math skills."

Jess said:

Not all stereotypes are negative. In some ways, it was an advantage for me being Chinese in dance. People saw me as exotic and I got some unique roles like the crossover of Asians. I was cast as Tiger Lily, the First Nations Princess in Peter Pan. Then it was a plus.

Rather than the emphasis on the stereotypes such as the smart student, math whiz, and hard-working employee, with their negative connotations, the participants experienced a shift to inadequately measuring up to some general expectations of living in the dominant society. The negativity was different from the accusations of being an unclean heathen that their fathers or grandfathers might have experienced. Instead, the negative stereotypes were based more on the caricature of the Asian. One example is that Asians are bad drivers. Sarah says that her kids, who are Asians, have expressed surprise and said to her, “Mom, you are a good driver; not bad for an Asian.” H. Bannai and D. A. Cohen (1985), Y. J. Kim (1983), and Betty Lee Sung (1981) suggested other stereotypical inadequacies of Asians such as not being as competent at expressing feelings, assertiveness, and leadership skills and who, by being more passive, quiet, and socially reticent, don’t measure up to those of Anglo-Canadians. These beliefs influence the ways in which counsellors relate to Asians, as in the case with Wanda. She said, “Sometimes when I did therapy, I avoided working with the Chinese folks because I thought they wouldn’t have deep emotions. I wouldn’t connect with anyone who was Asian. I connected with the White folks.” The inverse experience can happen when you feel that you can’t keep up to the expectations of the stereotype as provided in an example suggested by Isabelle and Jess. Isabelle said:

Our nephew Darren has been trying so hard to get his financial advisor’s papers. He finally got it after three tries. He said that they only let in a certain number of students. He

said to his family, “All those Asians come over, they work too hard and it is so hard to compete.” As Jess sympathetically suggests, “He’s fourth generation. That makes a difference too.”

This statement implicitly suggests that Jess believes that Asians have transformed their earlier behaviours of working hard to that of the dominant culture.

Superficially, the current stereotypes do not appear to be malicious, but are expressed more as comedic, which seems to gain them general agreement externally and internally. These comedic examples support Chin’s (1991) perspective that Asian, Asian-Americans and non-Asians believe the rhetoric about Asians that they have read, watched, and heard about. It also makes acceptance of these stereotypes more palatable.

A couple of the participants resented being the token Chinese person. Sarah said:

Every time there was something at [my place of employment] where they needed a few models, they choose you because you are a minority. They need their token Chinese person. Put her in there. That’s the same with the Rec Centre. Now that I’m going there, I’m their poster child.

Charlotte agreed, “Whenever there is a campaign about something Asian, the media will phone me to ask what I think, to focus on the fact that I’m Asian.” Sarah brought up the concept of the Banana, [a metaphor to describe Asians who are Western in their outlook—yellow on the outside, white on the inside] in relation to her two children. She says that they consider themselves Bananas and different from her generation. There are conflicting perspectives on the Banana metaphor; writers such as Khoo (2003) and Woo (2000) argue that individuals who identify as such were those who moved out of the Chinatown enclaves. They spoke only English,

were socialized exclusively with white Americans, attended schools that were predominantly white, and adopted white, middle-class values. Khoo says that this group have internalized racism and that as they became acculturated, they viewed life in Chinatown in increasingly negative terms. They distanced themselves from it, assuming that it would disappear and, consequently, they wanted nothing to do with what they felt would soon become a thing of the past.

Their acceptance of White Canada's stereotypic descriptions have led some Chinese Canadians to feel that they cannot speak because, to some extent, they have demonstrated that they have excelled and improved their overall position and status from that of their parents and grandparents. Despite the participants' protestations of not wanting to be caught in the middle, their stories reflect the challenges and dilemmas they experience in different aspects of their lives growing up.

The Arts: Dance and Drama

The participants in the study who chose alternative careers said that they received little support from their parents. Jess said:

My parents were horrified. They didn't support me [to pursue a career in dance] because they said, "You don't see a short Chinese swan [in Swan Lake] do you? You're not going to make it." Finally, they sort of went along with it and they actually flew to England to see me perform in *Cats* [Andrew Lloyd Webber Production 1980s]. I never even thought they would ever do something like that. We had a standing ovation that night and they were the only two that didn't stand.

Margaret Cho in her stand-up comedy routine has a similar story: “I told my mother that I wanted to be a comedian when I was 14. My mother looked at me and said, ‘Hmm, maybe better you should die.’”

Psychologists Walter D. Fenz and Abe Arkoff (1962) contended, “Exhibitionistic behaviour was considered bad behaviour which brought shame to the family.” Nicole said:

I’m very different from my sisters. I’m the only bad girl. I’m sure that they [my family] are very embarrassed but I’m afraid to tell them anything that I do. My sister doesn’t say much but sometimes they see things in the newspaper.

For Nicole’s family, embarrassment was defined as being noticed. She was Miss Nabob Foods and wore a bikini and a sarong travelling in Western Canada as a marketing representative. She was Miss Chung King Foods wore a cheongsam and appeared on radio talk shows as well as being Miss Trader Vic’s and Miss Chevron in Canada and was notably in the press in these roles. Rice (2002) suggested that any challenge to the cultural gender markers such as putting your body on display results in being labelled as a “bad girl.”

Charlotte told her story. She said:

My parents always thought that I should have become a schoolteacher or get a good government job with a pension. They wanted me to make money. I don’t do that either. They did like the prestige of what I do [in my job]. They’re proud, especially my mom. She would cut the article out of the paper and stick it on the fridge. She had no idea what it meant. I would have to tell her when I go over [to their house]. My brother was always the black sheep of the family but that changed when he got a job with BC Transit. He worked shifts, got holidays and a pension. All of a sudden, he turned his life around and

was considered a success by the family. Now my niece is following her passion for design. It kills my family.

This example demonstrates that Asians are still fearful of a career that is based on performance and creativity rather than the assumed stereotypical Asian choice of science or technological careers. Parents think that a traditional career path will provide more economic security for their daughters. The fear of a performance career may also be a throwback to earlier judgements about the stereotypes of actors. Vivienne Poy said:

When I was growing up in Hong Kong, we considered girls who were in the movies as ones who went out with sailors and dressed in cheongsams [Chinese dresses with side thigh openings]. The whole Suzie Wong phenomenon was linked to men, boats and the exotic.

Vivienne Poy's comment encapsulates the original hypothesis of the impact of stereotyping in the media on Chinese women. It seems that there is some truth to the idea that the audience has accepted what they have been told. In both Jess's and Charlotte's examples, non-traditional career paths were challenging for their families to accept and it continues even for the upcoming generation, such as Charlotte's niece, who is third-generation Canadian-born Chinese. The worry of getting a job is a concern. Nancy Kwan said that is what she hears from her friends' daughters (both in their 20s) when she asked, "When you marry, what kind of man are you looking for?" expecting to hear them say, 'handsome, rich the usual thing. Instead both girls responded with, 'a guy with a job.' Even participant Jess, as a retired successful stage dancer says, "Actors, dancers and the people in the arts still have a tough time. Parents can't help but think, 'Are you going to make a living?'" Jess has a daughter who is in design.

The participants in the study, either as individuals or in groups, are engaged in forming identity and producing objectification of self-understanding that guide their behaviours. They are caught in the tension between past histories that have settled on them through their parents' experiences in the larger social context, and the discourses and images that attracted and influenced them.

The women made sense of their surroundings, some with the benefit of familial and/or community role models, while others looked to the conglomerate media to guide them. The participants who lived away from a Chinatown lost their Chinese language sooner even if they spoke Chinese before they entered school. This group also felt more pressure to fit in because there were fewer Chinese people in their schools and neighbourhood. All, but one of the participants whose family did not observe Chinese traditions, tried to find a balance between the old-world traditions and fitting into Canadian society. Many of them described a protected ethnic environment until they started school. Once they passed through the initial difficulty of language fluency and acquisition, most of them found school to be an environment where they could succeed and excel. Some thrived at both public school and at Chinese school. More difficulties arose for the participants when they wanted to challenge traditions of behaviour, appearance and career as much from within the family as from the external environment.

Identity: Chinese and Canadian

Through this study, the self-narrated individual stories revealed multiple layers of experience and understanding that combined to trace each participant's assimilation into Canadian society. With varying degrees of adjustment and change, the participants blended the growth and development of both their Chinese and Canadian identities. They spoke of the complex meaning of Chineseness, matching the description suggested by deLauretis (1996) of its multiple, fluid and

often self-contradictory nature. Ethnic identities, whether singular such as Chinese, Asian, Canadian, American or dual, like Chinese Canadian, Asian Canadian, Asian American accompanied by hyphens or slashes, are all complex categories and loaded with imposed meaning. It is difficult to describe a person's ethnic identity using single or even double terms. For example, Chinese is inadequate in describing the multiplicity of identities found throughout China. Even terms such as Hong Kong Chinese or Shanghai Chinese can only provide a superficial sense of each identity. Soniah Shah (1997) argues that Asian-American/Canadian is a stance of re-inventing and restructuring both American/Canadian and Asian cultures. It means understanding and bridging both cultures. JoAnne Lee posits that Asianness, as a cultural identity, cannot be seen as essential or unified but rather as a collective identity. She says that Asianness overlaps with other identities and not all Asian women identify themselves through ethnicity. In essence, definitions of Chineseness cannot be fixed. For this group of participants, they experienced a fluidity between their Chinese and Canadian identities acknowledging the importance of contextualizing family and local situations within the larger community and broader society. The intent of this study is not to reflect a monolithic view or to essentialize Chinese or Asian cultures, values and traditions but to provide a space for the participants to share some commonalities and patterns in their experiences growing up in Canada. The participants identified the vital role that family plays in defining their Chinese identities. They noted how this was translated in their observing the traditions of filial piety and submission to parental authority. They saw this as different to a Canadian identity where value is placed on individualism, autonomy and assertiveness.

Robin Cohen (1997) notes in his book, *Global Diaspora*, that "a member's adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an escapable link with their past

migration history and a sense of co-ethnicity with others of a similar background” (p.ix). May Yee (1993) posits that “home is the heart, the land, the people, the history, the interconnectedness and wholeness of all these things.” It is all of this and more that contribute to identity, place and voice through the knowledge of our painful and proud history in Canada (p. 21).

In contrast, critical thinker Ien Ang (2003) queries whether the signifier, Chinese, is sufficient to differentiate between people who do and do not belong and whether this seals the shared identity of all those who do belong. If this is true, Ang argues, it is based on the premise that ancestry is ultimately more important than present place of living in determining one’s contemporary identity and sense of belonging. Given these diverse perspectives, Chineseness is open to contestation and there is no easy or reductive notion of Chinese that helps in understanding or defining our roles in North America. It is not possible to say with any certainty where the Chinese ends and the non-Chinese begins. As in music, it is not about the notes but the silences in between.

Yet novels by Amy Tan, Denise Chong and many other Chinese-American/Canadian writers have popularized the stories of different generations of Americans/Canadians with Chinese ancestry who derive profound meaning from the rediscovery of their Chinese heritage a sentiment echoed by the participants. Lynn Pan (1990) remarks that the very quest for ethnic self-discovery and identity is a mark of Americanness/Canadianess, not Chineseness: “To the villagers in *Toi-San*, the Chinese American/Canadian who returns to rediscover her origins is doing a very American thing, for the last thing they feel is the need for roots” (p. 295).

The participants described feeling suspended in-between, neither Canadian nor authentically Asian; embedded in Canada and at times partially disengaged from it; disembedded from China yet somehow attached to it emotionally. The participants chose to use the terminology and the identity of White rather than Canadian. As cultural theorists, E. Said posits on Othering, that you need the Other to define who you are not, that is White/Canadian is not Chinese. The participants who self-identified as White behaved in ways that they deemed were not Chinese such as avoiding the speaking of Chinese, doing Chinese related activities and for some, eating Chinese food.

Their counterparts, the Chinese Americans according to Jin Guo's and Iris Chang's work on narrative history shared oral histories that asserted themselves into dominant culture more overtly than the Chinese Canadians in that they took Othering one further step by steeping themselves in American culture. An example of this is aptly illustrated in Flower Drum Song described by Renee Tajima as "giving birth to a whole the new generation of stereotypes- gum chewing Little Leaguers, enterprising businessmen and all-American tomboys of the new model minority myth." The difference between Chinese Canadians and Chinese Americans is that the latter take an active integration into the larger society versus the seemingly more passive stance of the Chinese Canadians. Rather than a difference in the Chinese part of their identity, this may be a reflection of the defining difference between Americans and Canadians. One of the strengths identified by both Chinese Americans and the participants in the study, given that many of them were the language and cultural translators in their family, was their ability to juggle different spheres of knowledge at the same time. According to scholars of colour such as Lisa Park, it also required them to have astute observational skills particularly in times of stress. These learned and practiced skills provided both these groups the ability to access situations and

to figure out what is required to fit in. For the Chinese Americans, the requirement may be to be more explicit and active in the areas valued in American, and for the participants fitting in may be more in tune with values more aligned with Canadians and with their family traditions of being humble. The participants who were more assertive identified this as an ongoing issue with their families.

Participants and Identity.

In their study of adolescents, Rosenthal and Feldman (1992) reported generational differences. First-generation Chinese-American adolescents identify more closely with being Chinese (58%) than do second-generation Chinese-American adolescents (18%). Second-generation Chinese identified themselves as Americans (42%) more often than did first-generation Chinese (16%). There were more women in this study who were second-generation (50%) than first-generation (33%) and third-generation (17%). In this study, most of the participants who were second-generation had both parents born in Canada. One of the women was not sure whether one or both parents were born in Canada. Two of the participants had grandparents and parents born in Canada. The study by D. A. Rosenthal and S. S. Feldman (1992) that examined adolescents differs from this study as the participants were interviewed as mature women. Their response to the question of identity usually included qualifiers such as, “I identify as Canadian but parts of me are Chinese” or “I am Chinese-Canadian. I was born here but the Chinese part is always going to be there.” Most of the women expressed that there are Chinese and Canadian “parts” that make up who they are. Most noted that when they were younger they identified more strongly as Canadian but as they have gotten older, they have felt their Chinese side become stronger. Sarah sums up this sentiment when she says, “It seems as you get older you seem to go back to the Chinese part. Now you think of your culture. When you

are in a working environment, you have a bigger scope and I always felt like I had to produce when I was at work.” There were slightly more women who identified as Canadian (50%) than those who identified as Chinese-Canadian (41%). One woman found this particular question problematic. She said:

I’d like to see myself as actually nothing. It is easier that way. I am Canadian but because of my upbringing, I’m Chinese. At the same time, I’m not really Chinese. I don’t fit into China and I don’t fit into Canada. Being born here but of Chinese background makes me feel like I am country-less.”

Another woman whose parents were born in Canada struggled with this question and answered, “I always thought I was more White for many parts of my life. I thought White. As I have gotten older I have become more at peace with my Chinese part.”

From the variation of how the participants demarcate their identity, it would seem that the concept of Chineseness is one of fluidity with borders and boundaries that move through time and space. Ethnicity and ethnic identification continues to be a powerful mode of collective identification for them despite initial resistance.

Table 6. Current Status of the Participants

The Participants					
Name	Birth Place	Parents’ birthplace	Age	Marital Status	Occupation
Amy	Victoria BC	Canada	50s	M	financial advisor
Charlotte	Victoria BC	Canada	50s	M	city councillor
Dawn	Victoria BC	China	60s	M	city landscaper

Daisy	Victoria BC	China	60s	M	Nurse
Isabelle	Lethbridge AB	Canada	70s	M	retired nutritionist
Jess	Lethbridge AB	Canada	60s	M	retired dancer & educational assistant
Jasmine	Vancouver BC	Mom- Canada	60s	D	professor
Kyla	Victoria BC	Canada	60s	M	teacher
Nicole	Rosetown, AB	Canada	70s	W	consultant
Sarah	Victoria BC	Canada	50s	M	retired-secretarial
Skye	Nanaimo BC	China	60s	M	teacher
Wanda	Victoria BC	Canada	60s	M	counsellor

Of the participating women 25% are retired; 16% retired and doing some consulting or part-time work; 58% are gainfully employed. All the participants and 91% of their siblings are married to White partners. 83% of them have children and 33% have grandchildren. Of the children who married, all married non-Asian partners.

Some of the women expressed the desire to maintain various Chinese traditions, especially the lunar New Year and the *Lai See* [red envelopes] at New Year. As Skye said, “Keep the good things.” Sarah agreed, “I liked having all the aunts over, enjoying the cooking and the family gatherings. I’m not wanting to keep with playing Mahjong all night like my mom and dad did.” Another participant, a nurse, said:

I am learning the names of the body parts in Chinese so I can help, explain, and interpret for my patients. When we were kids, someone in the Chinese community would come and help my mom translate this or that. People were kind enough to help us so it is nice

that I can reciprocate now. It has got to be frightening when you can't speak the language and you don't know what is happening to you in the hospital.

A teacher said:

I'm in a profession where I can share some of my Chinese traditions with my students. We go to Chinatown for a tour and lunch around Chinese New Year. I have a collection of Chinese books to read to them and introduce them to China, their inventions and so on. Once we have studied the country, we go into the Chinese New Year's customs and traditions like not sweeping the floor so as not to get rid of your good luck. I even used to boil an egg for them on their birthday. They love hearing about those things.

Sharing their traditions and giving back to their community was a recurring theme for the participants. Skye said, "Eventually, I would like to be with the Chinese Benevolent Association or our own Village Association and be a bit more involved."

Sharing the traditions with their own children was a goal of many participants. One participant said:

My mom and dad didn't teach me any of the Chinese traditions mainly because I was the fifth child. I have to figure out how I can get more Chinese culture into my son and me now. I don't know it. I have to pick it up wherever I can and introduce it to him.

Skye said, "I hope that I teach my kids tolerance, teach them to be accepting, teach them to accept a more multi-cultural society and to give in the same traditional sense that I felt that my mom had given to me." Others who identified as third generation said, "With each generation, it

tends to dilute itself. The common thing is English. We never really had expectations for all our kids. We left it up to them. I think they are basically happy.”

Another participant noted her own process through her relationship with her daughter and her mother and expressed regret that she did not have more opportunity to explore some of those thoughts and feelings. She said:

It is through my daughter that I see myself and my mother. I see the changes in traditions and how people look at Asians and how that affects my daughter. There are positive sides but there are also negative sides and she and I are able to talk about it. I’m so glad that she is seeing it now, rather than me seeing it at my age.

The participants also expressed an appreciation of their parents’ and grandparents’ hard work and sacrifice as expressed by Charlotte: “As I get older I’m more proud of my Chinese culture, it carries on the pride of my parents. I’m proud of the sacrifices my grandparents made to get a better life for us.” Most of the women expressed their pride in who they are: “I’m proud to be who I am.” They are happy with their lives.

They spoke about the balance between their Chinese and Canadian parts and how that fluctuates depending on who they are with. They are all are house owners, have or had satisfying careers and feel accomplished in their respective fields. Some challenged themselves and their families by choosing occupations that were outside the box of the conventional jobs preferred by the Chinese. Charlotte is a public figure and an outspoken person on Chinese culture and expresses her knowledge and experiences to Chinese and non-Chinese through her work and her volunteerism. Nicole, also a public figure, used her fluency in Cantonese to bridge a series of job opportunities as a model and public face in the service industry. Jess became Victoria, the White

Cat in Andrew Lloyd Webber's London stage production of *Cats*. Jasmine's career included being a mentor and role model for many Asian Canadian and Asian American women who are searching for an identity beyond the heterosexual, patriarchal model of the docile, always available, Asian woman. Others chose helping careers in teaching, nursing, and counselling, sharing their knowledge and traditions to those in their classes and on their wards.

One of the characteristics that many of the women admired in their role models was the individual's commitment to their community, as in the case of Bessie Tang. At least 50% of the women volunteer in either or both the Chinese community and in the broader community. Most of the women expressed appreciation and admiration for their mothers' hard work when they were growing up. They are also hard workers and some said, "It is because of our upbringing." The participants who are now retired balance more leisurely activities such as exercise and travel with looking after aging parents and/or grandchildren. Kyla summed this up best:

Mom worked hard at home wearing the apron she made out of used rice bags. I don't remember her going to bed. She was always in the kitchen cooking and cleaning. Now I come home from work and the first thing I do is put on my fleece housecoat and I put my apron on. I keep it on until I go to bed.

The participants all speak about their mother with admiration and 50% named their mother as a role model when they were growing up. This was particularly true for four of the women (33%) who said that their fathers were absent during much of their childhood and adolescent years. There was appreciation for their fathers' hard work. As Kyla said, "Dad didn't have wonderful well-paying jobs. He had to work hard to support his family." Nicole said, "My Dad went to work in the coffee shop on Hastings Street. He worked in the kitchen and my mom

looked after us in the store. It was 24/7. The store was open every day of the week.” Some wanted to share their parents’ hard work ethic with their children so that they would appreciate what they have. Daisy says:

I don’t hesitate to tell my son that we were poor. We knew what the value of money was. I tell him and he knows, but it is not the same. It doesn’t mean as much to him as it does to me. This is a different generation.

The interviews revealed that these participants are as giving to their children and grandchildren as their parents were to them. For those who can, they share some of the Chinese customs that their parents shared with them. They try to be more flexible regarding expectations of university degrees, as Isabelle indicated, but they struggle with accepting careers in the arts, as Sarah attested to, with her daughter choosing design. They talk more openly to their children about most things such as career, education, dating, and making choices. In general, they see the Canadian landscape changing, perhaps best summed up by Jess:

My hope is that all these divisions-Chinese, Chinese-Canadian, Canadian-Chinese, all of it to sort of melt down rather than having all these little ghettos. There is a lot of ghettoizing and it doesn’t need to be.

With this group of participants, all their children are mixed race except for one participant who adopted two children from Asia and all their grandchildren are mixed race, so the divisions are, indeed, blending and melting down.

Chapter 5. Summary and Self-Reflection:

Moving Beyond the Stereotypes

“Autobiography,” noted Ann Rayson (1987) “becomes a form for the transmission of cultural reality and myths.” Those in culturally marginal positions often use autobiography to assert the validity of their experience. However, autobiography can carry its own kind of textual authority, one that rests upon a claim of its veracity and thus, irrefutability, as a culturally authoritative narrative. Bereft of information since there was nothing in school or media that talked about the experiences of Chinese-Canadians or Canadian-born Chinese, some of the participants, like Wanda, turned to autobiographical novels about the Chinese. Asian-American writers such as Kingston (1976) in *The Woman Warrior* and Tan (1989) in *Joy Luck Club* write about mothers who subscribe to the American dream. In Tan’s novels, for example, Jing-Mei’s mother tells her, “You can be anything you want to be in America.” These books showed intergenerational and mother-daughter conflicts from the perspective of mothers who put pressure on their daughters to succeed so they can live out their ambitions through their daughters. Participants in the study experienced a variety of reactions to these books, ranging from affirmation to saturation. For some, portions of the books echoed experiences in their lives and often provided an explanation of traditions that they accepted but did not understand. For others, the books, as well as the Chinese movies and operas they grew up watching, reinforced the often-repeated allegory of the long-suffering woman and they were weary of this image.

In terms of expected behaviours, the lessons included adhering to behaviours such as working hard, being quiet and doing the right thing. The participants said that, at home, they were steeped in these behaviours and beliefs through constant repetition. They accepted the adage of hard work almost entirely. They all attested to witnessing this behaviour modelled by

their parents and grandparents. They were proud of their work ethic and of the Chinese people who worked hard. In school or in their jobs, they judged others whom they thought did not work as hard. They are confident that their success is due in large part because they were reliable and proved they could work hard. When I analysed the data, I collapsed this sub-category under the larger category of model minority.

The second behaviour of being quiet is, perhaps, better understood as a sliding scale with silence at one end of the spectrum and activism at the other. It is one of the sub-categories that could fit into multiple categories. The participants' responses to this were more varied and more reactive. They reported diverse responses ranging from tacit acceptance or anger towards themselves and others, to taking on a personal role and responsibility for advocacy and activist work, and even taking action against injustice. Some tried to explain to their parents why they needed to speak out while others were more, as they describe it, passive aggressive; that is, outwardly they would agree but they would not follow through with the expected action. A few took it on as a personal challenge. Participants, who had brothers, connected speaking out with a different set of norms or gendered expectations. They believed the messages they heard were that boys were allowed to do things differently or at least get away with less perfect behaviour.

The participants shared many stories about their parents admonishing them not to speak out. I, too, recall similar memories of being told not to talk so much at different stages growing up. I remember many scoldings from my mother for talking too much; that is, revealing too much information about myself or the family. This message inadvertently was reinforced in public school. In my Grade 1 class there were seventeen of us, out of twenty-five children, who did not speak English. During an assembly a translator was brought in to tell us that if we were caught speaking a language other than English in class or on the school ground we would be

strapped. In the 1950s corporal punishment was still permitted. When I started public school I could not speak English and since I wasn't allowed to speak Chinese I did not speak much until Grade 4. Perhaps the combination of all the scolding and my first four years of silence at public school coalesced into a pattern of a quiet, demure exterior. That still was not quite enough for my mother and I remember frequent admonitions throughout my teen years about my naiveté and my lack of guile. As Charlotte described in her interview, some of these admonitions came about because our parents were worried about us. I am convinced that my mother's admonitions grew from her fear of my Canadian-born identity. She believed that the China-borns were more sly and crafty and would take advantage of me if she didn't convince me to be more cautious and consequently, she instilled fear in me. I remember being conflicted because, even as a child, I translated for my mother whenever we were out in any community event beyond Chinatown and she would always push me forward to ask questions or get in the front of a line. The dilemma of being a mouthpiece for her but not having my own voice was confusing. It was not really speaking but parroting. As the participants attested, parents were quick to tell you when you did not get it right.

My experiences are similar to the participants who received more telling than encouragement from their family. It was difficult to know when I was doing something right but I was never in doubt when I was doing something wrong. The participants and I enjoyed much laughter when they were sharing these experiences especially when it came to describing the name-calling used by our elders when we messed up. From their recollections, the participants accepted this part of their upbringing as a given and one they did not question.

As we grew up, there was very little to which we could compare our experience because it was so different from the 1960s family sitcoms on television. For some, decades later, Tan's

The Joy Luck Club revealed a parenting style similar to our own experience and helped us to understand a little of our collective experience. It enabled us to put it in perspective and legitimize it. Lian-Hwang Chiu (1987) found that Chinese-American mothers are similar to Chinese mothers in expecting that children should be obedient to their parents. In their study, Kelley and Tseng (1992) found that immigrant Chinese parents scored higher than Caucasian parents on physical punishment and yelling at their children. Parental expectations were demanding especially in reminding us that achievement is a duty and an obligation to the family goals, meaning we felt the pressure to succeed. This experience of negative reinforcement instead of encouragement left some of us feeling frustrated and, at times, resentful because nothing we did felt as though it was good enough. The participants noted and I, too, felt that “The bar just kept moving up.” However, excelling was not only expected at home, it was also expected by teachers at school. The participants and I had similar stories related to our teachers’ disbelief and confusion when we did not perform as well as they had expected especially in math or science. I recall my Grade 11 math teacher asking me whether I was really Chinese because as he said, “I have never had a Chinese student do poorly in math.” Yet, there was rarely a full confrontation between the participants and their family. Despite some skirmishes in our younger days, to a person, we all seemed to live up to our parents’ expectations. We are not all professional, not all wealthy, but each of us can be considered successful, as we are all gainfully employed and own our own home.

Chinese Associations

Zhou (2009) contended that the success of immigrant Chinese children stems from their involvement in the ethnic community. This involvement included afterschool Chinese classes and other ethnic activities and events. About 75% of the participants attended Chinese school

and/or other ethnic activities such as being a member of the Chinatown Lions Drum and Bell Corp and attending Chinese dances as they were growing up. Ng (1999) provided some information about the Chinatown Lions Club, chartered in Vancouver in 1954 and which later incorporated the Victoria chapter. It heralded some important socio-economic and cultural changes for the Chinese community. It was one of two major organizations founded in the post-war period by Canadian-born Chinese with professional and business backgrounds. The club provided opportunities for substantial interaction with non-Chinese as part of the branch of the prestigious Lions International organization and they were well positioned between the ethnic group and the larger society.

The Chinatown Lions was a strong presence for 50% of the Victoria and Vancouver participants. Of the Victoria participants, over 57% of their fathers and extended family members were Chinatown Lions and they, with older siblings and cousins, were part of the Drum and Bell Corps. This was the Chinatown Lions marching band whose goal was to bring visibility to the greater community and build ethnic pride in the Canadian-born youth. The Vancouver Chinatown Lions were active in public charity and leadership in the community including being a major fundraising program for the Miss Vancouver Chinatown pageants in which one of the Vancouver participants entered. For this group of Chinese women, the Chinatown Lions Drum and Bell Corps and other ethnic institutions such as Chinese School became vehicles for ethnic pride and cultural maintenance.

The participants who grew up in cities where there was a larger concentration of ethnic Chinese such as Vancouver and Victoria, had more opportunities to participate in ethnic organizations and institutions. One participant, who was born in Rosetown, said that she was the first Chinese baby to be born there. She did not become involved in the Chinese community until

her parents moved to Vancouver. Under the theme of ethnic identity, I included past and present membership in ethnic organizations and institutions as well as acquisition and maintenance of language. As youngsters, 57% of participants were involved in ethnic organizations and institutions. As adults, 25% are involved in an ethnic organization. Their ethnic identity was the foundation and remains the central core around which their Canadian identity took shape, grew, and transformed. Even the two participants who rejected their ethnic identity in their youth have reclaimed their Chinese-ness. The others say that a Chinese identity is a part of who they are and even though there are parts that they do not particularly like, as participant Sarah stated, “It’s a full package. You can’t pick and choose.”

Growing up, I attended Chinese School and I was involved with the Victoria Chinatown Lions Drum and Bell Corps. My upbringing was traditional in that I spoke Szeyup in the home. My older brother, 19 years my senior, said categorically: “Chinese people speak Chinese at home.” To this day, although he is an English speaker, I still speak Szeyup with my brother. Unlike the other participants who became involved with the Lions because of family connections, I attended because a classmate invited me. This was the first time that I was in the company of Chinese adults who could and did speak English. My father could speak English but he rarely chose to. With the Lions, I was told to call them by name, such as Uncle Jack or Mr. Tang. For me, that was quite unusual for at that time I didn’t know any Chinese adult by his or her English name. I was expected to call every adult by his or her Chinese title. In traditional Chinese culture, all adults are identified by gender, marital status, and family order in relation to the father’s age, if they are male, or in relation to the mother’s age, if they are female. It was a novel experience for me to not have to make these calculations in my head. The Drum and Bell Corps travelled, played and marched in parades in nearby cities. For the six years I was part of

the group, I had a wonderful time travelling with the marching band. As well as the travelling, I had an opportunity to meet and be with other Chinese. The Lions and their activities exposed the participants and me to role models in the Chinese community. Some 57% of the Victoria-born participants spoke about a particular role model, Bessie Tang. Bessie's husband, Jack, was a founder of and active in the Chinatown Lions. They invited the Corps to their home after the annual Victoria Day parade. I can still remember their home on Douglas Street above their store, Tang's Pagoda. A childless couple, they were collectors. They had knickknacks on every shelf but not the same type found in the Chinese houses I was used to. They were not the usual Chinese Gods and Goddesses; they were toys and fun things. Their house did not smell of Chinese herbs. They and the other Lions were encouraging and would tell us after a parade that we played well or sometimes they would march beside us. They were very different from the Chinese adults I was used to because the Tangs seemed interested in what I thought and how I felt and did not discount my opinions. Although 75% of the participants' parents were Canadian-born, the participants say there was more negative reinforcement than encouragement in their homes. The Lions provided an alternate view which, as Zhou, indicated, contributed to a stronger ethnic identity. Involvement with the Lions provided a broader perspective of characteristics and behaviours beyond the traditional one the participants experienced in their home. It was the foreground or leading edge of our exploration of our ethnic identity and its transition to a Canadian identity that incorporated both cultures.

Language and Memory

As their first language, all the participants spoke Szeyp, an umbrella dialect of Guangdong's four counties in the Pearl River Delta, although each of the counties had their own variation. I, too, speak this dialect since this was the common Chinese dialect spoken in North

America prior to 1967, as 70% of the overseas Chinese in Canada at that time came from these four counties. Kaplan (1994) stated, "Language equals home and in language we can feel our mother's heart beating in a place where we feel safe." Although only 42% of the participants attended Chinese school, 84% spoke mostly Chinese at home until they started Grade 1. As adults, 25% say that they can speak Chinese, albeit not fluently. They say they are able to have a basic conversation with their mother and/or order food at a Chinese restaurant. The other 75% say that they cannot speak any Chinese. As children, the participants did not want to speak Chinese once they started public school because they did not want to be different. Three of them speak some Chinese now because they still speak to older family members. About 50% of them expressed regret that they have not kept up their Chinese language. The participants who did not express this said that there is no one they would speak Chinese to because all their family and friends speak English.

Kaplan (1994) declared that there is no language change without emotional consequences. She further contended that language is how our bodies and minds make sense of stories. The lessons I remember most clearly are evoked by language. I can recall the words, tone, and nuance of my mother's voice as she drew out some syllables while hissing others. I can feel the charged emotion infused through the sound of the words, which gave life to the myths and stories she told me. When I became a parent, I sifted through these messages, analysing my mother's rules and trying to decide whether they made sense or were merely rules to be obeyed because they were just what Chinese people did. My mother and I had some challenging discussions over this. We were in agreement on the Confucian principles of filial piety, respect, and obedience to elders and we were unified in language acquisition and maintenance, but we differed on the principles of being individual and standing out. Wearing stiletto heels was one

way I was able to defy my mother. My mother was a practical woman but my father liked to dress, as Jasmine put it earlier, in the ‘Gatsby look.’ My stiletto heels represented a bygone era for him and a tangible and flamboyant defiance for me. To varying degrees, this was the same experience for the participants. For those who wanted to perform, such as Jess, there was outright opposition and discouragement. For those who wanted to stand out, such as Nicole, even as an adult she did not feel that she could talk about that part of herself with her family. Of those who identify as advocates and activists, some had family role models who supported them while others were told they were foolish and should keep quiet. When I asked the question about Nancy Kwan’s Hollywood persona, the participants expressed admiration that an Asian woman was able to compete in a field that they felt was outside their realm from both the familial and societal perspective. Jess and Nicole looked to Nancy Kwan as an inspiration for their own dreams in performance-related fields. Although Nancy Kwan’s roles were stereotypical, her portrayal of those roles showed a feisty, outspoken Chinese-American woman who was not afraid. That role modelling spoke volumes to many of the participants.

According to Akukawa (2004), the maintenance of family language is considered an important factor in the survival of one’s ethnic identity. The explicit message that I heard growing up is that maintaining my Chinese language is critical to my identity as a Chinese person. My parents said that without knowing Chinese, you cannot claim to be Chinese. It was a source of pride to my parents that I was fluent in Sze Yup. The expectation my mother had for me was that I would be able to call Chinese elders by their title to show respect. This behaviour reflects how we present ourselves. She said that as a Canadian-born, I could still deport myself as a China-born. She saw this as the best of both worlds and as a reflection of her good parenting. I believed this message for most of my life and instilled it in my first two children. Before any

event or outing where I knew Chinese people would be present, I would rehearse in the car with my boys until they had the right title and the appropriate deferential tone.

Maintaining language is important in Chinese and other ethnic communities and events are used to engineer opportunities to showcase language acquisition. Ethnic beauty pageants, for example, include a competition incorporating an oral presentation in the native language. Even in informal gatherings, Canadian-born Chinese intersperse their conversation with each other to include Chinese words or phrases to demonstrate their Chinese-language capabilities. In the hierarchy of how Chinese you are, language maintenance is considered to have cachet. The participants said that as they grew up, there was a flood of feelings attached to language fluency ranging from pride to shame. This internalization of a cultural definition of “Chinese-ness” as pure and fixed, in which any deviation is construed as less, lower, and shameful may have been relevant for our parents given their location in a dominant society. Today, Chinese-Canadians recognize that our Chinese identity is not attached just to language and that identity is transforming and amorphous. As Lisa Lowe (1991) noted, “The making of Chinese-Canadian culture—how ethnicity is imagined, practiced, continued—is worked out as much between ourselves and our communities as it is transmitted from one generation to another.”

Shame and Shaming

In various Asian cultures, shame is strongly linked to the dominant social and moral ideas of Confucianism. The loss of face and perception of moral wrongdoing affects not just the individual but shames the family and community. This view is reflected in the psychotherapy perspective suggested by Kelley Tseng (2004) that recognizes the use by Asian parents of shame as a parenting tool whereas Western parents use guilt.

Shimizu (2007) used the work of Eve Sedgwick to examine how shame can be an opportunity for self-reflection in that Sedgwick (2007) defined shame as a feeling that comes when one falls short of the criteria and norms used to measure the self. She also declared that shame can be rejected, transformed, and redeployed to become a transformative element within their control and not a permanent, defining part of their identity. Author, Kathryn Bond Stockton (2006) wrote, "Shame is a common, forceful word for disgrace." Although shame and guilt are often used interchangeably, they are not the same. In shame, you are responsible for the perceived wrongdoing. It is unquestionably more difficult when real life and representation reinforce a failed sense of self that is humiliatingly public.

The participants experienced shame within the family because of loss of language and cultural acumen; outside the family they experienced the shame of being different, of being Chinese. The participants spoke about not wanting to be different from their classmates when they started school. Those who spoke Chinese stopped and spoke English instead. Some remembered that there were other signifiers that made them different such as the traditional food they brought for lunch and the ill-fitting, outdated, second-hand clothes they wore.

Some participants said that their families shamed them for standing out and being noticed. One participant said that she liked challenges and doing new things that put her in the public eye. She said that her family did not like it and their disapproval was implicit in the absence of any acknowledgment of what she did. This participant spent much of her youth and adult life feeling that she had embarrassed her family. Another participant said that her father disapproved of her when, even in the context of her job, she was controversial in public and not playing the role that he liked her to play, that of being the good girl and involved in good public relations events such as ribbon cutting.

The parents of the participants wanted their daughters to fit the norm or blend in without acknowledging or, perhaps, even understanding how difficult it was for their Chinese daughters to blend into a dominant White society. It is possible the parents wanted to protect their children from the discrimination they experienced and wanted to prevent their children standing out. Their understanding of the adage of the dominant society that “it is the squeaky wheel that gets the grease” was reinterpreted in terms of their experience of poverty and conflict in their homeland into “the protruding nail will get hammered in.” Regardless of the reasons behind their parents’ admonitions, the outcome experienced by the participants resulted in feelings of shame, of not being good enough, not Chinese enough, and not assertive enough to fit in with their non-Chinese classmates.

Role Models

Outside the family, the participants experienced a very different set of messages from those of their parents. Some made references to television shows where they watched women, like Marlo Thomas in *That Girl*, who went to New York to fulfil her dreams. They looked for Asian role models and some of them found them in Nancy Kwan’s breakthrough roles as Suzie Wong in *The World of Suzie Wong* and as Linda Low in *Flower Drum Song*. Two of the participants said that Nancy Kwan was an inspiration for them and gave them courage in the face of family opposition. One was emboldened to pursue a career in dance and the other as an ambassador for different businesses. Some of the participants identified with Nancy Kwan’s roles as an outspoken persona and her fearlessness in the face of adversity. Three of them used their voice to be advocates for others and to speak up against injustice. The significance of these role models was that they were in direct conflict with the home messages of being obedient and quiet. As a pre-teen, I saw in Nancy Kwan’s two roles a mischievousness that piqued my

curiosity and fascinated me. She presented an alter ego, an impish girl who wasn't afraid to get caught and, especially, one who wasn't burdened with responsibility. It opened the door to infinite possibilities that heretofore had been a forbidden playground.

Nancy Kwan's beauty and glamour was an inspiration for the participants even if they did not want a performance-related career. They were proud to see a beautiful Chinese woman as a successful Hollywood star. Two of the participants, although they did not identify with being Chinese, enjoyed Nancy Kwan's star image. Some acknowledged that although they tried to look like her, it was only on the outside. The participants spoke about their own "Suzie Wong" hair which was long straight hair worn down their back or in a ponytail.

Binary Role Models

Nancy Kwan's roles as Suzie Wong and Linda Low provided an alternate reading of Chinese womanhood for the participants and me. It provided a glimpse of glamour and fun. The participants attested to their diligence, hard work, and reliability in doing the right thing. The messages they heard from their parents was that fulfilling your dreams and following your passion were not as valued as working hard and getting a good job with a pension. They said that in novels about the Chinese, the Chinese woman was portrayed as hardworking and long-suffering. All the participants shared many stories of how hard their mothers worked and very few about them having fun, joy, or passion. The participants were successful, reaching different levels of educational attainment and profitable careers. They all attributed the success of their different paths to their hard work with little or no encouragement from their family.

I, too, struggled with the dilemma the participants faced of maintaining our parents' cultural expectations and experimenting with our own desire to change tradition. It was difficult

for us and it often felt as though it was a choice of one over the other. As Charlotte said, “We were the generation that spoke English and fought back.” We knew what our parents expected of us and our awareness of their sacrifices added to the inner conflict over our rebellion. The participants shared many stories about arguing, yelling and disappointing family on our journey to fashioning a new identity of a Chinese-Canadian and the guilt that came with that.

In *Flower Drum Song*, the binary nature of the characters, Linda Low and Mei Li, was a dramatic representation of my personal life. My parents’ expectations of me growing up in terms of school, career, marriage, and maintenance of cultural traditions were more old-fashioned than those expressed by the participants. My parents believed in arranged marriages and had a line-up of prospective husbands for me when I was still in high school. For good reason, my parents used the leverage that because my father was older, he wanted to see me married and settled before anything happened to him. They narrowed their choice to a Canadian-born whose family also came from Guangdong. My parents believed that a Canadian-born would be a better fit for me despite the fact that the family of the groom-to-be expected me to live with them. However, I withstood familial pressure and my mother’s evocation of guilt and refused to marry a man whose nickname, for obvious reasons, was “Fat Boy.” My parents said that my disobedience caused them to lose face and they quickly arranged for one of my cousins in Hong Kong to come as a picture bride to marry him. This situation brought the binary of Linda Low and Mei Li home to me in the present. I was chastised for being rebellious, selfish, and for not thinking ahead to a secure future. The groom came from a financially successful family. My reaction was in contrast to that of Linda Low who was interested in security and finding a man to take care of her. I did not know then what I wanted, but I knew it was not an arranged marriage. In retrospect, the marriage would not have worked out. My presentation as the obedient daughter who followed

cultural expectations was, in essence, a performance. I was able to project the persona my parents needed but only to a point. Unlike my cousin, who stoically accepted this role and her in-laws' many criticisms, I would have been too rebellious to live with the groom's family. The persona of the beautiful, outspoken Chinese woman who dares to challenge, dramatically portrayed in the characters of Suzie Wong and Linda Low, had created a new vista in my world and opened up possibilities for me. Although I courageously took a stand this time, I was well aware that I might not be able to do so the next time. To exert my independence I rushed into a marriage with a China-born man maintaining the hetero-normative marriage as the only viable option. Like the two participants who married Chinese men I, too, divorced and married a White partner. As 58% of the participants stated, the traditional cultural expectations of gender roles was too great a difference to reconcile.

Unlike the participants who said they had older siblings and cousins as role models to guide them, I grew up as an only child with a brother nineteen years my senior who became another father figure. In many ways my brother, who came to Canada in his late teens, was more traditional than my father who had lived in Canada most of his life. As my mother's only child and reluctant confidante, she often told me that other families could make mistakes because they had more children but she only had me so I had to do everything right. This relentless pressure was, at times, daunting and limiting.

My mother's criteria of a successful marriage for me were that my spouse should come from a financially secure family, be healthy, and be Chinese. This was significantly different from the participants who said that their older sisters opened the door for them when it came to dating and marriage. Although some of their parents wanted them to marry Chinese partners, they accepted their choice of marrying White. Only one participant said that her father was angry

when she married a non-Chinese. Most of them said that they have more in common with their White partners than they did with the Chinese men they dated, who had more traditional views especially about gender roles. The participants, 58%, who dated Chinese men all dated China-born men, they were older boys who had come to Canada with their mothers to join their fathers after the repeal in 1947. The participants did not date Canadian-born Chinese men for a number of reasons. They said that the Canadian-born men were usually a classmate or a neighbour's brother and they seemed young and not partner material. This group of boys did not attend the Chinese dances whereas the China-born boys did. This was a change from the participants' Canadian-born parents, whereby 91% of them married another Canadian-born Chinese. This was particularly significant given that in their parents' generation, there were even fewer Canadian-born Chinese in Canada, and no in-coming Chinese from China due to immigration exclusion.

Marrying Out

It is significant that 100% of the participants were or are married to non-Chinese partners. Did mainstream films which featured interracial romance and purported Western masculinity influence this choice? Assimilationist theorists such as Gordon (1964) would suggest that intermarriage is the ultimate form of assimilation to the culture and society of the host country. Two of the participants spoke explicitly about identifying as White. The other participants may have recognized the privileged status associated with whiteness, just as their parents did, but they did not view intermarriage as assimilation. They indicated that they viewed success of education and career choice as the markers of being more socially accepted in the dominant culture. The participants said that once they started work they were introduced to more non-Chinese people and became more involved in activities. As Gordon (1964) stated, "If children of different ethnic backgrounds belong to the same play-group, later the same adolescent cliques and the same

colleges and universities and in the same neighbourhoods then it is completely unrealistic not to expect these children, now grown, to love and to marry each other.”

While Hollywood films may have cast the White male lead as more attractive than the character roles traditionally assigned to an Asian male and normalized interracial romance, the participants named common interests as the main reason that they married a White partner. All the participants and I were the first generation in our families to marry non-Chinese partners.

Growing our Canadian Identity

The participants and I spent our childhood and adolescence meeting the expectations of our parents and school, working hard to fulfil our part of being the model minority. We were quiet, we did what we were told, and we did it well. My experiences were similar to those of the participants growing up and wanting to blend in. Like them, I compartmentalized my life—a Canadian child at school, good at my studies, [except in mathematics] active in sports teams—and a dutiful Chinese daughter at home. I always felt that I was brought up very traditionally. My mother took me everywhere with her and I was privy to her private tête-à-têtes with her women friends. I heard stories about issues far beyond my years. They were about the ravages of war, of how babies are made, what herbs to boil and drink to prevent colds, and how women were different from men. I think that sometimes my mother underestimated how much I understood when she allowed me to listen to their discussions. Everything we did at home was in Chinese. We ate Chinese food, observed all the festivals, watched Chinese movies, and used Chinese herbs and medicines. Dad entertained us by reading the Chinese newspapers out loud or singing snippets of Chinese operas. At the same time, as incongruous as it might sound, I felt I also had a Canadian upbringing. My sister and brother grew up in China while our father was working in

Canada and I was the only child he had an opportunity to parent. He was an older dad and retired the year I started Grade 1. He walked me to school and was the only non-White parent who attended the school's open houses. He baked constantly and our house became the meeting place for all my friends, both Chinese and non-Chinese. My friends were accustomed to me shifting between speaking English and Chinese, for example, as we watched TV in the living room, I would often translate a funny sequence for my mother. One of the participants said that she thought of me as "Being Canadian, really Canadianized" because my dad came to our school. She said, "I used to really envy you. Your dad must have really loved you." She equated my dad's involvement in my school life as love. For me, as I grew up, the boundaries between these two identities were mostly blurred. For me, like the participants, that was just the way it was. I learned to shift between the two. However, mistakes happened when I miscalculated and moved one direction instead of the other.

By the 1970s, there were increasingly greater numbers of Chinese immigrating and the notion of the Chinese as the perpetual foreigner became an issue for Canadian-born Chinese. This new influx of immigrant teens threatened our Canadian identity. Up to 1967, there were few Canadian-born Chinese children. In the smaller towns where the participants grew up, such as Nanaimo and Lethbridge, and even Victoria, where there were more families, we knew each other by sight in the community and from attending Chinese Association dinners together. The participants and I recall the desire to have a clear distinction between the new Chinese immigrants and ourselves and demonstrate to the non-Chinese that we were not like the others. We made fun of their English and how they dressed. For their part, they made fun of our stilted Cantonese. Although we learned to speak Cantonese at Chinese School, most of us spoke our family dialect, a variation of Szeyup, at home.

Sensitivity about our identity was characteristic of most of us. The participants were insulted by the casting of Japanese actors in *Flower Drum Song*. They made assumptions that the producers believed that the non-Asian audience would not know the difference and that perhaps the producers, themselves, could not tell the difference. They were particularly angry about the casting of Miyoshi Umeki in the role of Mei Li as the picture bride. Although they identified with some of her characteristics, they said they kept thinking that she was not Chinese and that it was not right. Nancy Kwan explained that the producers had to use Japanese actors because there were few Chinese actors who were able to sing and dance.

In further conversations with the participants, some of these feelings derive from their own lived experiences when schoolmates, teachers, and customers asked them about their ethnic identity. They said they were asked questions about where they came from, that is, from which part of Asia and had to endure the disbelief when they said they are Canadian-born. They were resentful of having to continually prove their Canadian identity and that even after asserting it they received a response that was not satisfying. Perhaps to cover an awkward moment, non-Asians will often make a joke or justify their query by referring to a movie about a stereotypical, often unflattering, Asian character. Although the participants and I enjoyed sharing some common and sometimes embarrassing experiences of Chinese culture, it was difficult hearing these same situations coming from those who are not Chinese. When that happened, it brought back feelings of us and them and that we were seen as the Other. It seems that we are still sensitive and vigilant about those blurred boundaries.

Values and Beliefs

As adults, this group of participants and I continued the process of examining our values and beliefs and assessing which part of our Chinese identity we wanted to maintain as we grew our Canadian identity. The participants were clear on how much they valued family, extended family, family gatherings and dinners. The participants continue these traditions, gathering together to celebrate the Lunar New Year as well as other celebrations such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. As in their own family of origin, they talked about school and careers with their children. Some participants said they did not direct their children in making educational or career choices while others said that they worried when their children chose careers in the arts; in essence, not so different from their own experiences growing up. The notion of security is as relevant today as it was then. As parents, the participants wanted their children to do well, an echo of their parents' message of "getting a government job with a pension."

Caring for family went beyond the family dinners to include care of their parents as they aged. The participants who have parents or older relatives provided regular care including meal preparation, taking them to doctors' appointments and special outings, even for relatives who lived in care facilities. Some, like Kyla and I, brought our mother to live with us after our father passed away. The participants said that looking after aging parents helped them to reclaim their Chinese identity because it gave them an opportunity to reflect on their past, free of some of the intergenerational conflicts they experienced when they were growing up.

The participants, 57% of whom watched Chinese movies at an impressionable age, said the portrayal of the tragic heroine normalized suffering for women. The good woman in Chinese films ended up suffering or dying whereas the bad or manipulative woman was usually rewarded. These films imbued these women with some lasting perceptions about being long suffering and the importance of doing the right thing. Although the participants declared they

enjoyed working hard, they were also able to have a balanced work life, which included a self-care regime of recreational sports, meditation, yoga, and travel. They saw this as a change from the world of novels, describing the long-suffering, docile, and submissive woman and the pure and demure woman from the traditional Chinese movies, to re-creating a new Chinese-Canadian identity. They felt that this transition is not complete, but still in progress.

The participants said that they found it difficult to let go of the remnants of being part of the model minority and pleasing their parents. They said that it was difficult to pinpoint when they were able to make their own decisions, given the lack of positive reinforcement they received at home. They recalled the many incidents of yelling, some name-calling, and very little encouragement. Most of them accepted this but some of the participants said that the family expectations created too much pressure and standards that were too high in school, piano, and careers. Some said that they always felt they were not good enough and always fell short of meeting the parents' high standards. The participants said they thought they disappointed both their parents and their teachers. One participant said, "I couldn't get the grades that the school or my parents expected." Many of the participants felt that any mistake they made reflected on all Chinese people and that they felt responsible for upholding their reputation. Whether positive or negative, a stereotype sets expectations and standards. When we do not meet the myth of the model minority, non-Chinese people are confused about who we are and we are put in the position of defending ourselves.

The flip from model minority to negative stereotype is illustrated in Nancy Kwan's role as Suzie Wong, a prostitute, exotic and available to White men, which has defined Asian women since *The World of Suzie Wong* debuted fifty-four years ago. Feng (2000) noted that the figure of Suzie Wong is both a character in a film and a character that is larger than film, and that this

character that has had a pronounced and observable impact on people's lives. Suzie Wong has taken on a life of its own. Films like *The World of Suzie Wong* have constructed an audience of Asian-American women with a heavy investment in the character played by Nancy Kwan. Hollywood's contribution to this superficial, Asian-American identity fulfilled a commercial hunger for a domesticated Otherness that represented both the fulfilment of the American myth of the melting pot and dabbled with the dangers of the exotic, but it left Asian women around the globe universally decrying the stereotype.

The Chinese-Canadian ethnicity is neither uniform nor consistent but rather, it contains a wide spectrum of articulations that celebrate ethnicity as a fluctuating composition of differences, intersections, and incommensurabilities. This goes beyond cultural inheritance; it is a site for active construction. The making of Asian-Canadian culture is a messy process; it is not a vertical transmission from one generation to another. It includes practices that are partly inherited and partly modified as well as partly invented. One of the findings of this study is about the process of receiving, refiguring and rewriting cultural traditions. Like Chinatown, Chinese ethnicity is emblematic of fluctuating demographics, languages, and populations.

Interchangeable Asians

Although there has been a strong shift since *Flower Drum Song* to a pan-Asian identity, there are still places for a singular ethnic identity. The shift from singular ethnic identity to the pan-Asian identity is not a linear process for all groups. Their experience is influenced by factors such as migration, diasporic experiences, immigrant or refugee status, class and education. For this group of participants, they share a strong singular ethnic identity as descendants of the four counties of Guangdong as well as from the particular time in Canadian history.

As part of an adult audience, the participants expressed greater appreciation of all Asian characters and the roles they are assigned whether they were cast in the background as sidekicks and nemeses or as the racialized other. They applauded the performances by Asian-American actors in their roles to which they gave texture, dimensionality, and humanity. As adults, the participants and I have been able to go beyond the concept of feeling shame and shaming others as we reflect on our own judgements based on our own lived experiences.

Impact of the Study

Talking to all these women has changed and continues to change me. This research and analysis has helped me to look at my ethnicity and my identity at a very deep level. I am aware that my experience is particular to me so that even with the preconceptions I carried into this study, I have tried hard to let each woman speak for herself. My goal was to present a variety of voices and stories that collectively captured what it was like to be a Chinese-Canadian female growing up at the moment in time immediately following the repeal of the Canadian Immigration Act and before the influx of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and parts of China other than Guangdong.

When I started this research I had certain preconceptions about what I would encounter in my interviews with this group of women. I thought they would have similar experiences to mine since we were all part of a demographic group in a particular historical setting as Canadian-born Chinese women. When I initially put the call out for participants, I had expected that most of the women would be first-generation Canadians with older fathers who had come to Canada prior to 1923 and mothers who came to join them after 1947. Instead, only 25% of the participants fitted this category and 75% of the participants had one or both parents who were Canadian-born. I

was interested in hearing from other Canadian-born Chinese women of their experiences and to learn of the factors that influenced their identity. At one level, I was looking for affirmation from others with similar or shared experiences.

Given the relatively few Canadian-born Chinese during this period, I believed that this piece of Chinese-Canadian history would not be replicated. What I found were some common themes and experiences that we all shared. There was a range of cultural expectations that were determined by how close you lived to the Chinese community and the size of the Chinese population. Those who lived away or in cities where there were few Chinese families said that they did not want to be different and experienced the transition from their Chinese identity to a Canadian identity faster than those whose families lived closer to other Chinese. The transition included Chinese language maintenance and involvement in cultural events and organizations.

Language maintenance was seen as a strong marker of Chinese identity. The loss of family language was viewed with some inner shame. Two of the participants were my classmates. One said to me that she always saw me as “More Chinese [than they were] because I could speak Chinese fluently.” Maintenance of language defines our Chinese identity to this day. Most of the participants say that they feel embarrassment or shame that they have never learned it or lost it and wished that they could still speak it. In this way, they have taken on the role of the new immigrants who used to tease them as, now, they tease each other on their accented Chinese. Diane Chang’s (1989) short story, “The Oriental Contingent” examines how North American-born Chinese today dance around each other, trying to determine how Chinese each person is and it is the maintenance of Chinese language that is used as a marker to determine how Chinese you are. The evolving identity of Canadian-born Chinese still includes those moments of insecurity.

The incorporation of a Canadian identity began with public schooling when the participants learned to speak English, played with non-Chinese classmates, and began to be influenced by Hollywood productions with Asian characters. They learned to adapt to living with other people's ideas about who they were, when those ideas did not often coincide with who they actually were. At times, it meant they had to overcome stereotypical images while at other times they could, as Jess documents about receiving the role of Tiger Lily in a production of *Peter Pan*, "play the stereotype to our advantage." There were times for each of us when we occasionally wished we were White. It meant the moments of feeling the sting of shame about our ethnicity trickling out from hidden places. It accounted for the times we distanced ourselves from recent immigrants who did not speak English well and who acted differently from us. It occasionally meant that we cringed when an Asian person made a mistake and was laughed at by non-Asians even when we felt they deserved it.

The participants shared stories about how they experienced these feelings and dealt with these issues while negotiating family, culture, school, media, and societal expectations while they were trying to define their own identity. This study examined who and what the participants used as signposts to guide their journey including role models, Hollywood films such as *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*, organizations and institutions.

They were influenced by input from home, the Chinese community, and the larger community all with ideas on how to define their identity. They knew that they were in a process of creating a new identity as Chinese-Canadians, which grew from the positive aspects of their Chinese identity while incorporating the newly learned behaviours of Canadians. Their world is not what their parents imagined—a singular desire to assimilate into Canadian society. Their identity was morphing, evolving, and transforming themselves, their children, and their

grandchildren. Their history is not arrested in perpetuity as the long-suffering Chinese woman but unfolding as empowered Chinese-Canadian women. They believed that they had choice. They have moved beyond the mantle of Suzie Wong, the prostitute with a heart of gold, to a place and time where there is cachet in being ethnic. Today, film stars around the globe are modelling ethnic wear including the Chinese cheongsam Suzie Wong wore. For me, stiletto heels embody both a defiance of cultural expectations and a challenge to the dominant culture that I can do anything as well as or better than they can. My aspiration, like Nicole and Skye, was to answer the call of a challenge and be number one and I demonstrated that through my wearing of stiletto heels, the higher the better. They are, of course, a Western symbol and I loved claiming them. The cheongsam, however, for me is a symbol that represents the hypersexualized stereotype bestowed on Chinese women by a dominant culture. To this day the cheongsam brings on the cringe of embarrassment and discomfort similar to that brought on by a racially tinged joke told by non-Chinese.

The aim of this study is (a) to offer some insight into the experiences of these Canadian-born Chinese women, descendants from families in Guangdong's four counties of Sun Wui, Hoi Ping, Toi San, and Yin Ping, and (b) to consider the ways in which they have empowered themselves in the process of transition. I attempted to weave the observations, experiences, and views of the participants in themes. These participants represent a group of Canadian-born Chinese women during a transitional time in Chinese-Canadian history, a time when, although immigration was opening up, the number of Chinese-Canadians remained low until the era of multiculturalism beginning in 1967. The voices of this group have not been reflected in Canadian history books. My goal is to provide an opportunity for them to reclaim their voices, to share their experiences, and to take their place in Canadian history.

The richness and the depth of the information uncovered in this study surpassed my expectations. I was honoured by the sharing of stories from the participants and moved by its impact on my own increasing reflexivity. The stories provided scenes through different windows from which the participants examined the outside world and what they saw reflected in their home. Sometimes the view was the same and sometimes it seemed that they were standing at different angles from the same scene and from each other. My reflexivity came about through the questions I asked, the observations I made, the emotions I felt, the impressions I formed, the hunches I followed, and the analyses I formulated, all of which reflect some part of who I am as a person and researcher. I read and re-read transcripts, reviewed the kinds of clarifying questions I asked and the nudges I gave that took the conversation in a particular direction, or reflected particular assumptions, hunches, or lines of thought. It was critical that I was aware of this presence to assist me in being responsive as a researcher. For myself, it has been a process of reflecting, revisiting, and resolving. Through it I have gained great self-knowledge, both as a researcher and as a Canadian-born Chinese woman.

Chapter 6.

Recommendations for Future Research:

In my call for participants I chose the first twelve who fitted the criteria of being a Canadian-born woman and a descendent of the four counties of the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong, China. Of the interviewees who came forward 75% had one or both parents who were Canadian-born. It would be useful to extend this study to include a larger group of participants whose fathers were in Canada and brought their wives and family to join them following the repeal of the Immigration Act in 1947. In the 1950s, a common practice for the overseas Chinese bachelors who were already in Canada was to send for “picture brides,” women who were much younger and who could look after them in their old age. Some of these young wives had never met their sponsoring husbands before the marriage. In some cases, like my father, the men needed stepmothers to look after their children because their first wives had died. Through correspondence with relatives in China or Hong Kong or through professional matchmakers, the bachelor would arrange a marriage by proxy to a young woman. For some of the women who were poverty-stricken, this provided them an opportunity to come to Canada for better economic prospects. The participants’ mothers who came as young brides were only 25% of my study. Two of the three participants in this group had much older fathers who died when they were children, which they said significantly affected their families. I would like to extend the number of participants for this group to examine common themes and experiences.

My study has concentrated on women. I would like to include research with the Canadian-born men in these families. As I examined the impact of Hollywood films on the Canadian-born women of Chinese descent, the stereotypical portrayal of Asian women affected

their identity. Many of them said that the portrayal of Asian men in mainstream films and television shows were, if anything, more negative with stereotypical characters. Many of the participants brought up Hop Sing, the Chinese houseboy in *Bonanza* as an example. This quintessential domestic servant evolved into a character often known as Charlie. His typical traits included the characteristics of submissiveness, loyalty, and a lack of sexuality.

Nancy Kwan agreed with the participants when she said there are not enough roles coming out of Hollywood for Asian-Americans, especially males. She provided the example of Jackie Chan who she said tried to break into the American market in the 1980s and could not make it. Now she says, “He is successful because there are more Asians in America and they go to see his films; he is also well known in Asia and internationally.” Having the increase in numbers is opening up the market for Asian male actors who she believes have a worse time than Asian women.

The depiction of Asian men in mainstream Hollywood films, well documented in Wong’s (1978) *On Visual Media Representation in the American Motion Pictures*, showed anti-Asian sentiments before, during, and after WW II. The supposed cheapness of Asian life became an institutional necessity as Asians were killed by Americans to demonstrate their moral and racial superiority over the hordes that rushed to their perdition with fanatical zeal. Throughout the 1940s all the major roles were given to White actors and actresses with the assistance of cosmetics, a technique known as “yellowface,” mentioned previously. Most of the films for Asian males from the 1940s to the 1960s were roles involving military figures. In the 1970s, the roles changed to dealing with illegal occupation and, among other things, the myth of the inscrutable Oriental mind—a throwback to Dr. Fu Manchu.

Asian male characters have been and continue to be feminized and asexualized. There are rare occurrences of Asian males in roles of implicit or explicit sex with White females except when the Asian male is portrayed as an oddball or rapacious as in Long Duk Dong, the international student in *Sixteen Candles* (1984) or the Eurasian male character as a White male in yellow face in the film, *Seven Women* (1966). Film scholar Richard Dyer (1998) noted the problem of representing White male sexuality as the default sexuality, forcing all male sexuality to be based on its terms of reference. White male sexuality in cinema becomes the normal and natural. A further study to explore this Western attitude towards Chinese men through the media and how it affected the Canadian-born boys of Chinese descent, such as the brothers of the participants, would enhance this study. This research would reveal whether this negative depiction of Asian men in film changed perceptions of race and gender and affected the marriage choices of the Canadian-born women of Chinese descendant.

Films such as *The World of Suzie Wong* were forerunners of a number of films that depict interracial sexual liaison between White men and Asian females: *Marines, Let's Go* (1961), *The Sand Pebbles* (1965), *Once Before I Die* (1965), *Kill a Dragon* (1967) and *Alice's Restaurant* (1969). White males are depicted as having free sexual license with Asian females, whereas Asian males as sexual partners for White females seem to be a sexual threat to White males. Feminist writers such as Shimizu (2007) suggested, "In *The World of Suzie Wong*, interracial romance is idealized and the lovers transform each other and join together across a racial divide" (p. 79). How have films such as these affected the partners of the participants in their marriage choices? Have these films taught the audience of White men what to believe about Asian women? A further study to first include the partners of the participants and then to conduct couple interviews could provide some valuable insight into partner choices.

I would also like to expand future research to examine the increasing number of bi-racial actors in mainstream Hollywood films. There is current discussion that this group of actors given as Nancy Kwan stated, ‘utilize both sides of their ethnicities’ are taking roles from Asian actors. This raises questions of how Asian are you? How Asian do you need to be to obtain an Asian role? I would like to replicate a study similar to Wong’s (1978) study on the representation of bi-racial actors. I believe this would be particularly timely given the number of bi-racial children born with the increasing rate of intermarriages with Asians and non-Asians.

There is much work to do to add to Chinese Canadian history and the voices of Chinese Canadians. I am inspired by the work done before me and I look forward to the collaborations ahead.

References

- Abrams, L. (2010). *Oral history theory*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Alba, R. D. (1 Ganga, D., & Scott, S. (2006). Cultural “insiders” and the issue of positionality in qualitative migration research: 990). *Ethnic identity: The transformation of white America*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press.
- Alba, R. & Nee, V. (1999). Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration. In C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz, & J. Dewind.(Eds.) *The handbook of international migration: The American experience*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Ali, M. “Second Generation Youth in Toronto: Are we all Multicultural?” Presentation Paper at the 77th Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences. Quebec: 2008.
- Alquizola, M. C., & Hirabayashi, L. R. (2003). Confronting gender stereotypes of Asian American women: Slaying the dragon. In J. Xing & L. R. Hirabayashi (Eds.), *Reversing the lens: Ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality through film*. Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press.
- Amos, R., & Wong, K. (2009). *Inside Chinatown: Ancient culture in a new world*. Marlyn Horsdal (Ed.). BC Arts Council: TouchWood.
- Anderson, K. J. (1991). *Vancouver’s Chinatown: Racial discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Andrews, M., Selater, S. D., Squire, C., & Treacher, A. (2000). (Eds.). *Lines of narrative: Psychological perspectives*. London, UK: Routledge.

Ang, I. (2003). Together-in-Difference: Beyond Diaspora, Into Hybridity. *Asian Studies Review*. 27(2): pp. 141-154.

Angrosino, M. V. (2008). *Exploring oral history: A window on the past*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Anisef, P., Kilbride, K. M., Ochocka, J., & Janzen, R. (2001). *Parenting Issues of Newcomer Families in Ontario, Kitchener*. Centre for Research and Education in Human Services and Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement.

Ashley, S. L. T. (2013). (Ed.). *Diverse spaces: Identity, heritage and community in Canadian public culture*. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Asian American Journal of Psychology. Retrieved from www.apa.org

Asian American Journal of Social Psychology. Retrieved from [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-839X](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-839X)

Ayukawa, M. (2004). *Japanese Pioneer Women: Fighting Racism and Rearing the Next Generation*. In M. Epp, F. Iacovetta and F. Swyripa (Eds.) *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized History*. Toronto, Buffalo, & London: University of Toronto Press Incorporated. p. 233.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. M. Holquist. (Ed.). C. Emerson and M. Holquist. (Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bammer, A. (1994). Mother tongues and other strangers: Writing "family" across cultural divides. In A. Bammer (Ed.), *Displacements: Cultural identities in question*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

- Banet-Weiser, S. (1999). *The most beautiful girl in the world: Beauty pageants and national identity*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/New York: University of California Press.
- Bannai, H., & Cohen, D. A. (1985). The passive-methodical image of Asian American students in the school system. *Sociology and Social Research*, 70(1), 79-81.
- Bannerji, H. (1993). (Ed.). *Returning the Gaze: Essays on Racism, Feminism and Politics*. Toronto: Sister Vision Press.
- Barash, S. S. (2006). *Tripping the prom queen: The truth about women and rivalry*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Barringer, H., Gardner, R. W., & Levin, M. J. (1995). *Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Bates, T., & Dunham, C. R. (1993). Asian American success in self-employment. *Economic Development Quarterly* 7, 199-214.
- Baudrillard, J. (1983). *Simulations*. P. Foss, P. Patton, & P. Beitchman (Trans). USA: Foreign Agents Series.
- Beck, R. W. (1986). Yuppies as arbiters of the emerging consumption style. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 13, 514-519.
- Beck, R. W. (1988). Possessions of the extended self. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 18, 139-167.
- Benjamin, W. (1970). *One Way Street and Other Writings*. E. Jephcott & K. Shorter (Trans.). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag

- Benshoff, H. M., & Griffin, S. (2004). *America on Film: Representing race, class, gender, and sexuality at the movies*. USA, UK, & Australia: Blackwell Press.
- Benson, L. (1974). *Images, heroes, and self-perceptions: The struggle for identity from mask-wearing to authenticity*. Englewood Cliffs/New Jersey, NY: Prentice-Hall.
- Bernhard, J. K., Lefebvre, M. L., Chud, G., & Lange, R. (1996). Linguistic match between children and English in Canadian early childhood education. *Canadian Journal of Research for Early Childhood Education*, 5(2), 202-222.
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relationships*, 29, 697-712.
- Berry, J. W., J. S. Phinney, D. L. Sam, & P. Vedder. (Eds). (2006). *Immigrant youth in cultural transition: Acculturation, identity and adaptation across national contexts*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1984). Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse in discipleship. *A special issue on psychoanalysis* (Spring), 125-133.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Birks, M., & Mills, J. (2011). *Grounded theory: A practical guide*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Blau, P. M., Blum, T. C., & Schwartz, J. E. (1982, February). Heterogeneity and intermarriage. *American Sociological Review*, 47. 45-62.
- Bloom, L. R. (1996). *Stories of one's own: Nonunitary subjectivity in narrative representation in qualitative inquiry*. Retrieved from <http://qix.sagepub.com/content/2/2/176>

- Bogardus, E. (1967). *A forty year racial distance study*. Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California.
- Bordo, S. (1990). Material girl: The effacements of postmodern culture. *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 29, 635-676.
- Bordo, S. (1993). Feminism, Foucault and the politics of the body. In C. Ramazanoglu (Ed.), *Up against Foucault*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977a). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Richard Nice. (Trans.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Richard Nice (Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brown, M. E. (Ed). (1990). *Television and women's culture: The politics of the popular*. London, UK: Sage.
- Bruner, J. (1991, Autumn). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry*, 18(1), 1-21.
- Buikema, R., & Van der Tuin, I. (Eds). (2009). *Doing gender in media, art and culture*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Burnet, J. (1987). Multiculturalism in Canada. In L. Dreidger (Ed.), *Ethnic Canada* (pp. 65-79). Toronto, ON: Copp Clark Pitman.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex."* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2004). In S. Salih (Ed.). *The Judith Butler Reader.* (pp. 243-257). USA & UK: Blackwell.
- Callahan, V. (Ed). (2010). *Reclaiming the archive: Feminism and film history.* Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Canetti, E. (1979). *The tongue set free: Remembrance of a European childhood.* Joachim Neugroschel (Trans.). New York, NY: Seabury.
- Chamberlain, M. (2008). Narrative theory. In T. L. Charlton, L. E. Meyers, & R. Sharpless (Eds.), *Thinking about oral history: Theories and applications* (pp. 142-165). New York, NY: AltaMira Press.
- Chambers, C. (2008). *Sex, culture, and justice: The limits of choice.* Pennsylvania, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Chan, A. B. (2003). *Perpetually cool: The many lives of Anna May Wong (1905-1961).* Lanham, NY: The Scarecrow Press.
- Chan, F., Karpovich, A., & Zhang, X. (2011). *Genre in Asian film and television: New approaches.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chanfrault-Duchet, M.F. (1991). Narrative Structures, Social Models, and Symbolic Representation in the Life Story. In S. Gluck & D. Patai (Eds.). *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History.* New York: Routledge. pp. 77-92

- Chang, I. (2003). *The Chinese in America: A narrative history*. New York, New York: Penguin Books.
- Chao, L., & Wong-Chu, J. (2003). (Eds.). *Strike the wok: An anthology of contemporary Canadian fiction*. Toronto, ON: Coach House.
- Charlton, T. L., Myers, L. E., & Sharpless, R. (2008). (Eds.). *Thinking about oral history: Theories and applications*. New York, NY: AltaMira Press.
- Chen, S. (1991). *Asian Americans: An interpretive history*. Boston, MA: Twayne.
- Chen, S. (2002). *Being Chinese, becoming Chinese American*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Cheng, A. A. (2000). Beauty and ideal citizenship: Inventing Asian America in Rodgers and Hammerstein's Flower Drum Song (1961). In, *The melancholy of race: Psychoanalysis, assimilation, and hidden grief* (pp. 31-63). New York, NY: Oxford Press.
- Chaudhuri, S. (2006). *Feminist film theorists: Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Teresa de Lauretis, Barbara Creed*. NY: Routledge.
- Chin, J. L. (2000). *Relationships among Asian American women*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Chin, F. (1991). Come all ye Asian American writers of the real and the fake. In J. P. Chan et al. (Eds.), *The Big Aiiieeeee! An anthology of Chinese American and Japanese American literature*. New York, NY: Meridian.
- Chin, F., & Chan J. P. (1972). Racist! In R. Kostelanetz (Ed.). *Seeing through shuck*. New York, NY: Ballantine.

- Chin, F., Chan, J. P., Lawson, F. I., & Wong, S. H. (1974). (Eds.). *Aiiieeeee! An anthology of Asian-American writers*. Washington, DC: Howard University Press.
- Chin, W. P. (1991). Children of the Chinese Diaspora: A comparison of Lee Kok Liang's *Flowers in the Sky* and Maxine Hong Kingston's *China Men*. In S. Hune, H. C. Kim, S. S. Fugita, & A. Ling (Eds.), *Asian Americans: Comparative and global perspectives*. Washington, WA: Washington State University Press.
- Chiu, L. H. (1987). Child Rearing Attitudes of Chinese, Chinese-American and Anglo-American Mothers. *International Journal of Psychology*. Vol.22, Issue 4, pp. 409-419.
- Chong, D. (1994). *The concubine's children: The story of a family living on two sides of the globe*. Toronto, ON: Penguin.
- Chong, D. (2013). *Lives of the family: Stories of fate and circumstance*. Toronto, ON: Random House.
- Chou, R. S. (2012). *Asian American sexual politics: The construction of race, gender, and sexuality*. New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Chow, C. S. (1998). *Leaving deep water: The lives of Asian American women at the crossroads of two cultures*. New York, NY: Dutton.
- Chow, O. (2014). *My journey*. Toronto, ON: Harper-Collins.
- Chow, R. (1994). Where have all the natives gone?: The inauthentic native. In A. Bammer (Ed.), *Displacements: Cultural identities in question* (pp. 125-151). Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.

- Chow, R. (2001). Fire at my face: Growing up immigrant. In P. W. Hall & V. M. Hwang (Eds.), *Anti-Asian violence in North America: Asian American and Asian Canadian reflections on hate, healing, and resistance*. New York, NY: AltaMira Press.
- Choy, C. (1978). Images of Asian-Americans in films and television. In R. Miller (Ed.), *Ethnic and racial images in American film and television*. Philadelphia, PA: Balch Institute.
- Choy, W. (1995). *Jade peony*. Vancouver, B.C.: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Choy, W. (1999). *Paper shadows: A Chinatown childhood*. Toronto, ON: Viking.
- Choy, W. (2004). *All that matters*. Toronto, CAN.: Anchor Canada.
- Clandinin, D. J. (2007). (Ed.) *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*. London, UK: Sage.
- Clark, J. (1976). Subcultures, cultures and class. In S. Hall & T. Jefferson (Eds.), *Resistance through rituals*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Clement, R., & Noels, K. A. (1992). Towards a situated approach to ethno-linguistic identity: The effects of status on individuals and groups. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 11*(4), 203-231.
- Cohen, C., Wilk, R., & Stoeltje, B. (Eds.). (1996). *Beauty queens on the global stage: Gender, contests and power*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cole, A. L. (2001). Telling “inside” stories: The paradox of researcher privilege. In A. L. Cole & J. G. Knowles (Eds.), *Lives in context: The art of life history research*. Oxford, UK: Altamira Press.

- Cole, A. L., & Knowles, J. G. (2001). (Eds.) *Lives in context: The art of life history research*. Oxford, UK: Altamira Press.
- Connor, S. (1989). *Postmodernist culture: An introduction to theories of the contemporary*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Corbin, S., & Buckle, J. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. Retrieved from <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>
- Corcoran-Nantes, Y. (2005). *Lost voices: Central Asian women confronting transition*. New York, NY: Zed Books.
- Cornwell, J. (1984). *Accounts of health and illnesses from East London: Hard-earned lives*. London, UK: Tavistock.
- Cote, J. E., & Levine, C. G. (2002). *Identity formation, agency, and culture: A social psychological synthesis*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Coward, R. (1997). Slim and sexy: Modern woman's holy grail, In S. Kemp & J. Squires (Eds.), *Feminisms* (pp. 358-362). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Curtis, J. E., & Scott, W. G. (1973). (Eds.). *Social stratification: Canada*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall.
- Danto, A. C. (2000). Beauty and beautification. In P. Zeglin Brand (Ed.), *Beauty matters* (pp. 65-83). Indianapolis, IA: Indiana University Press.

- Dato-on, M. C. (2000, winter). Cultural assimilation and consumption behaviours: A methodological investigation. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 12(4), 427-445. Pittsburg State University. Retrieved from <http://www/jstor.org/stable/40604323>
- Davies, J., & Smith, C. R. (1997). *Gender, ethnicity and sexuality in contemporary American film*. Edinburgh, UK: Keele University Press.
- Davis, A. (1981). *Women, race and class*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Davis, K. (1941). Intermarriage in caste societies. *American Anthropologist*, 43, 376-395.
- Davis, L. J. (1995). *Enforcing normalcy: Disability, deafness and the body*. New York, NY: Verso Press.
- Deak, J. & J. Barker (2002). *Girls Will Be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters*. N.Y., N.Y.: Hyperion.
- Derricotte, T. (1997). *The black notebooks: An interior journey*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- Dex, S. (1991). *Life and work history analyses: Qualitative and quantitative developments*. Sociological review monograph.
- Dey, I. (1999). *Grounding grounded theory: Guidelines for qualitative inquiry*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Dhruvarajan, V. (2002). Women of colour in Canada. In V. Dhruvarajan & J. Vickers (Eds.), *Gender, race, and nation: A global perspective* (pp. 99-122). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

- Diamond, I., & Quinby, L. (1988). *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on resistance*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.
- Dion, K. K., & Dion, K. L. (1993). Individualist and collectivist perspectives on gender and the cultural context of love and intimacy. *Journal of Social Issues, 49*(3), 53-69.
- Docker, J. (1994). *Postmodernism and popular culture: A cultural history*. Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press.
- Doherty, R. W., Hatfield E., Thompson, K., & Choo, P. (1994). Cultural and ethnic influences on love and attachment. *Personal Relationships, 1*, 391-398.
- Dong, L. (Ed.). (2010). *Transnationalism and the Asian American heroine: Essays on literature, film, myth and media*. London, UK: McFarland.
- Driedger, L. (Ed.). (1978). *The Canadian ethnic mosaic: A quest for identity*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart.
- Dua, E. (2004). Racializing imperial Canada: Indian women and the making of ethnic communities. In M. Epp, F. Iacovetta, & F. Swyripa (Eds.), *Sisters or strangers?: Immigrant, ethnic, and racialized women in Canadian history* (pp. 71-85). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Research*. Retrieved from <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>
- Dyer, R. (1979). Stereotyping as a signifying practice. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices* (pp. 257-259). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Dyer, R. (2000). *The matter of images: Essays on representation*. N.Y. : Routledge.
- Edmondson B., & Passel, J. (1999). How immigration and intermarriage affect the racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. population. In F. K. Bean & S. Bell-rose (Eds.), *Immigration and opportunity: Race, ethnicity, and employment in the United States*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Edwards, K., & Jones, S. (2009). Putting my man face on: A grounded theory of college men's gender identity development. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(2), 210-228.
- Ely, R., & McCabe, A. (1995). Family talk about talk: Mothers lead the way. In M. W. Pratt & B. H. Fiese (Eds.), *Family stories and the life course: Across time and generations*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Ely, R., & McCabe, A. (1996). Gender differences in memories for speech. In S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini, & P. Thompson (Eds.), *International yearbook of oral History and life stories* (Vol. IV). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Eng, D. L. (2001). *Racial castration: Managing masculinity in Asian America*. London, UK: Duke University Press.
- Eng, P. (1999). *Warrior lessons: An Asian American woman's journey into power*. New York, NY: Pocket Books.
- Espiritu, Y. L. (1997). *Asian American women and men: Labour, laws and love*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Etter-Lewis, G. (1991). Black women's life stories: Reclaiming self in narrative texts. In S. B. Gluck & D. Patai (Eds.), *Woman's words: The feminist practice of oral history*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Fanon, F. (1967/1952). *Black skin, white masks*. C. Lam Markmann. (Trans.). New York, NY: Grove.
- Featherston, E. (1994). *Skin deep: Women writing on colour, culture and identity*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press.
- Feng, P. (2000). Recuperating Suzie Wong: A Fan's Nancy Kwan-dary. In D. Y. Hamamoto & S. Lui (Eds.), *Countervisions: Asian American film criticisms* (pp. 40-56). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Feng, P. (Ed.). (2002). *Screening Asian Americans*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Feng, P. (2002). *Identities in motion: Asian American film and video*. London, UK: Duke University Press.
- Fenz, W., & Arkoff, A. (1962). Comparative need patterns of five ancestry groups in Hawaii. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 58, 82.
- Ferriss, S., & Young, M. (2008). (Eds.). *Chick flicks: Contemporary women at the movies*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Finch, J. (1984). "It's great to have someone to talk to": The ethics and politics of interviewing women. In C. C. Bell and H. Roberts (Eds.), *Social researching: Politics, problems, and practice*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Fong, T. P. (1998). *The contemporary Asian American experience: Beyond the model minority*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Fordham, S. (1993). Those loud black girls: (Black) women, silence, and gender passing in the academy. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 24(1), 3-32.
- Foster, G. A. (2006). Performing modernity and gender in the 1930s. In M. Pomerance (Ed.), *Cinema and modernity* (pp. 93-109). London, UK: Rutgers University Press.
- Galang, M. E. (Ed.). (2003). *Screaming monkeys: Critiques of Asian American images*. Minneapolis, MN: Coffee House Press.
- Galbraith, J. K. (1984). *The affluent society*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Gallant, N. (2002). Identity and political participation among young second generation immigrants. *INRS-Urbanisation, Culture et Société*.
- Ganga, D., & Scott, S. (2006). Cultural "insiders" and the issue of positionality in qualitative migration research: Moving "across" and moving "along" researcher-participant divides. *Qualitative Social Research*, 7(3). Article 7 pp. 1-11.
- Gans, H. J. (1992). Second generation decline: Scenarios for the economic and ethnic futures of the post-1965 American immigrants. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 12(2) 173-192.

- Gehrie, M. J. (1976). Childhood and community: On the experience of young Japanese Americans in Chicago. *Ethos*, 4(3), 353-383.
- Gelder, K., & Thornton, S. (1997). (Eds.). *The subculture reader*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Gellner, E. (1964). *Thought and Change: Nature of human society series*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson.
- Georgiou, M. (2006). *Diaspora, identity and the media: Diasporic transnationalism and mediated spatialities*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Gerard, S. (2008). *For goodness' sake: A novel of the afterlife of Suzie Wong*. Hong Kong: UrbisMedia.
- Giguere, B., et al. (2007). When might the two cultural worlds of second generation biculturals collide? *Canadian Diversity*, 58-62.
- Glenn, E. N. (2005). Split household, small producer and dual wage earner: An analysis of Chinese-American family strategies. In K. A Ono (Ed.), *The companion to Asian American Studies* (pp. 177-195). Australia: The Blackwell Press.
- Gluck, S. B. (2008). Women's oral history: Is it so special? In T. L. Charlton, L. E. Myers, & R. Sharpless (Eds.), *Thinking about oral history: Theories and applications*. Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press.
- Goffman, E. (1952). Symbols of class status. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 2, 294-304.
- Goffman, E. (1979). *Gender advertisements*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Gold, S. J., & Rumbaut, R.G. (Eds). (2007). *The new Americans: Recent immigration and American society*. New York, NY: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC.
- Gomes, C. (2008). Lost in translation: American critical audience and the transnational Chinese swordswoman. In L. Dong (Ed.), *Transnationalism and the Asian American heroine: Essays on literature, film, myth and media* (pp.168-186). London, UK: McFarland.
- Gong, E. (2006). I want to marry an American girl (1955). In J. Yung, G. H. Chang, & H. M. Lai (Eds.), *Chinese American voices: From the gold rush to the present* (pp. 240-246). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Gong, T. (1980). Approaching cultural change through literature: From Chinese to Chinese American. *Amerasia*, 7(1), 73-86. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Asian American Studies Center.
- Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life: The role of race, religion, and national origins*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Gray, E., & Cosgrove, J. (1985). Ethnocentric perception of childrearing practices in protective services. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 9, 389-396.
- Grice, H. (2002). *Negotiating identities: An introduction to Asian American women's writing*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Griffith, A. I. (1998). Insider/outsider: Epistemological privilege and mothering work. *Human Studies*, 21, 361-376.
- Greenman, E., & Xie. Y. (2008). Is assimilation theory dead? Re: effect of assimilation on adolescence well-being. *Social Science Research*, 37(1), 109-137.

- Guo, J. (1992). *Voices of Chinese Canadian women*. Toronto, ON: The Women's Book Committee. Chinese Canadian National Council. Women's Press.
- Hagedorn, J. (2003). Asian women in film: No joy, No luck. In M. E. Galang (Ed.), *Screaming monkeys: Critiques of Asian American images*. Minneapolis, MN: Coffee House Press.
- Halbwachs, M. (1980). *On collective memory*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Hall, S. (1993). Cultural studies and its theoretical legacies. In S. During (Ed.), *The cultural studies reader* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hall, S. (1990). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Hall, S. (1997). (Ed.). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hamamoto, D. Y. (1994). *Monitored peril: Asian Americans and the politics of TV representation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hamamoto, D. Y. (2000). The joy fuck club: Prolegomenon to an Asian American porno practice. In D. Hamamoto & S. Liu (Eds.), *Countervisions: Asian American film criticism* (pp. 59-89). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Hamamoto, D. Y., & Liu, S. (2000). *Countervisions: Asian American film criticism*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Harre, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (1991). Varieties of positioning. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 21, 391-407.

- Harris, R. C., & Warkentin, J. (1974). *Canada before confederation*. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Hawkins, F. (1988). *Canada and immigration public policy and public concern* (2nd ed.). Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Heinge, D. (1982). *Oral historiography*. London, UK: Longman.
- Hellwig, T., & Thobani, S. (Eds.). (2006). *Asian women interconnections*. Toronto, ON: Women's Press.
- Henkin, A. B., & Nguyen, L. T. (1981). *Between two cultures: The Vietnamese in America*. Saratoga, CA: Century Twenty One.
- Hirschman, C., & Morrison, W. (1981). Education, occupational and income attainment patterns of Asian Americans. Trends in socioeconomic achievement among immigrant and native-born Asian Americans, 1960-76. *Sociological Quarterly*, 22, 495-513.
- Hirschman, C., & Morrison, W. (1986). The extraordinary educational attainment of Asian Americans: A search for historical evidence and explanations. *Social Forces*, 65, 1-27.
- Ho, W. (1991). Mother/daughter writing and the politics of race and sex in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*. In S. Hune, H-C. Kim, S. S. Fugita, & A. Ling. (Eds.), *Asian Americans: Comparative and global perspectives* (pp. 211-238). Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press.
- Hockey, J. (1993). Research methods: Researching peers and familiar settings. *Research Papers in Education*, 8(2), 199-225.

Hodges, G. R. (2012). *Anna May Wong: From laundryman's daughter to Hollywood legend.*

Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Hodgin, K., & Radstone, S. (Eds.). (2003). *Contested pasts: The politics of memory.* London,

UK: Routledge.

Holland, D., Lachicotte Jr., W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural*

worlds. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Holstein J. A., & Gubrium, J. F.(2003). (Eds). *Inside interviewing new lenses, new concerns.*

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist theory from margin to center.* Cambridge, MASS: South End Press.

hooks, b. (1992b). *Black looks: Race and representation.* Toronto, ON: Between the Lines Press.

hooks, b. (1993). *Sisters of the Yam: Black women and self-recovery.* Toronto, ON: Between the

Lines Press.

Hou, F.et al., (2015). Group Size and Social Interaction: A Canada-US Comparison of Interracial

Marriage. clsn.econ.ubc.ca

Hsiao, R. Y. (1992). Facing the incurable: Patriarchy in eat a bowl of tea. In S. G. Lim & A. Ling

(Eds.), *Reading the literatures of Asian America.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University

Press.

Hu K. (1933). Zhongguo nuxing de zhizhou mei and Moran, Wairen muzhong zhi Zhongguo

nuxing mei in Furen huaboa. 1. No. 4. Special issue on beauty of Chinese women. pp. 10-

12.

- Humphreys, D. (1999). *On the street where you live: Pioneer pathways of early Victoria*. Toronto, ON: Heritage House.
- Hune, S. (1977). Pacific migration to the United States: Trends and themes in historical and sociological literature. In N. Yetman (Ed.), *Majority and minority: The dynamics of race and ethnicity in American life*. Boston, MA: Allyn Bacon.
- Hune, S., Hyung-chan, K., Fugita, S. S., & Ling, A. (1991). (Eds.). *Asian Americans: Comparative and global perspectives*. Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press.
- Hurd, B. W. (1982). Inter-ethnic marriages. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 23, 225-235.
- Hutcheon, L. (1988). *A poetics of postmodernism: History, theory, fiction*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Hynie, M., Lalonde, R. N., & Lee, N. (2006). Parent-child value transmission among Chinese immigrants to North America: The case of traditional mate preferences. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 12, 230-244.
- Iacovetta, F. (1997). *The Writing of English Canadian Immigration on History*. Canadian Ethnic Group Series 22. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association (p.4).
- Ibrahim, F. A. (1992). A course on Asian-American women: Identity development issues. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 20, No.1/2. Feminist Psychology: Curriculum and Pedagogy (Spring-Summer). New York, NY: The Feminist Press (pp. 41-58)
- <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40003482>
- Issacs, H. R. (1956). *Images of Asia*. New York, NY: Capricorn.

- Jacobs, J. A., & Labov, T. G. (2002). *Gender differentials in intermarriage among sixteen race and ethnic groups*. *Sociological Forum*, 17, 621-646.
- Jameson, F. (1981). *The political unconscious*. London, UK: Methuen.
- Jameson, F. (1988). Postmodernism and consumer society. In E. A. Kaplan (Ed.), *Postmodernism and its discontents* (pp. 192-205). New York, NY: Verso.
- Jameson, F. (1990). *Signatures of the visible*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Jameson, F. (1992). *The geopolitical aesthetic: Cinema and space in the world system*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Jameson, F. (2002). *A singular modernity: Essay on the ontology of the present*. New York, NY: Verso.
- Janovicek, N., & Parr, J. (2003). *Histories of Canadian children and youth*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Jedwab, J. (2008, spring). The rise of the unmelttable Canadians? Ethnic and national belonging in Canada's second generation. *Canadian Diversity*, 6(2), pp. 25-34.
- Jiwani, Y. (1992). The exotic, the erotic, and the dangerous: South Asian women in popular film. *Canadian Women Studies*, 19(3), 178-184. (2006). From Dragon Lady to Action Hero: Race and Gender in Popular Western Television. *Asian Women Interconnections*. pp. 161-182.

- Johansson, P. (2001). Selling the "modern woman": Consumer culture and Chinese gender politics. In M. Shoma. (Eds.), *Images of the "modern woman" in Asia: Global media, local meanings*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Johnstone, B. (1993). Community and contest: Midwestern men and women creating their worlds. In D. Tannen (Ed). *Gender and conversational interaction*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Kalmijn, M. (1998). Intermarriage and homogamy: Causes, patterns and trends. *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: pp. 395-421.
- Kaplan, A. E. (1993, winter). The couch-affair: Gender, race and the Hollywood transference. *American Imago*, 281-514. Brooklyn: Association for Applied Psychoanalysis.
- Kaplan, A. Y. (1994). *On language memoir in displacements: Cultural identities in question*. In A. Bammer. (Ed.). Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. pp. 59-70.
- Kaw, E. (1993). Medicalization of racial features: Asian American women and cosmetic surgery (2nd ed.). In R. Weitz (Ed.), *The politics of women's bodies: Sexuality, appearance, and behaviour* (pp. 184-200). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Kegan, P., & Wolf, N. (1991). *The beauty myth: How images of beauty are used against women*. New York, NY: William Morrow.
- Kelley, M. L., & Tseng. H. (1992). Cultural differences in child rearing: A comparison of immigrant Chinese and Caucasian American mothers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 23, 444-445.

- Kelley, N., & Trebilcock, M. (1991). *The making of the mosaic* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart.
- Khoo, T. L. (2003). *Banana bending: Asian-Australian and Asian Canadian literatures*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Press.
- Kibria, N. (1993). *Family tightrope: The changing lives of Vietnamese Americans*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kibria, N. (2000). *Becoming Asian American: Second generation Chinese and Korean American identities*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- Kilbourne, J. (2000). *Killing us softly 3: Advertising's image of women* (videotape). Northampton, MA: Media Education Foundation.
- Kim, C. H. (2013, fall). Asian performance on the stage of American Empire in Flower Drum Song. *Cultural Critique*, 85, 1-37.
- Kim, C. J. (2001). The racial triangulation of Asian Americans. In G. H. Chang (Ed.), *Asian Americans and politics: Perspectives, experiences, prospects* (pp. 39-78). Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press.
- Kim, E. H. (1986). Asian Americans and American popular culture. In H-C. Kim (Ed.), *Dictionary of Asian American history*. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.
- Kim, E. H. (1987). Defining Asian American realities through literature. In K. A. Ono (Ed.), *A companion to Asian American studies* (pp. 196-214). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

- Kim, E. H. (1997). "Bad women:" Asian American visual artists Hanh Thi Pham, Hung Liu, and Yong Soon Min. In E. H. Kim & L. V. Villanueva (Eds.), *Making more waves: New writing by Asian American women* (pp. 184-194). Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Kim, E. H., & Villanueva, L. V. & Asian Women United of California. (1997). (Eds.). *making more waves: New writing by Asian American women*. Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Kim, Y. J. (1983). Problems in the delivery of the school-based psycho-educational services to the Asian immigrant children. *Journal of Children in Contemporary Society*, 15(3), 81-89.
- Kingston, M. H. (1976). *The woman warrior*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Kingston, S. (2006). *Step aside Barbie! You're blocking my view...of me!: Women and body image in North America*. Vancouver, BC: Shasuze Books.
- Kitano, H. H. L., Fujino, D. C., & Sato, J. T. (1998). Interracial marriages: The Asian Americans and where are they going? In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Koshy, S. (2004). *Sexual naturalization: Asian Americans and miscegenation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Kristeva, J. (1986). In T. Moi. (Ed). *The Kristeva Reader*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lai, L. (1995). *When fox is a thousand*. Vancouver, B.C.: Douglas & McIntyre.

- Lai, L. (2002). *Salt fish girl*. Toronto, ON.: Thomas Island.
- Lakoff, R. T., & Scherr, R. L. (1984). *Face value: The politics of beauty*. Boston, MA: Routledge.
- Larson, S. G. (2006). *Media and minorities: The politics of race in news and entertainment*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Lau, E. T. (2006). *Paper families: Identity, immigration, administration, and Chinese exclusion*. London, UK: Duke University Press.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Hoffman-Davis, J. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San-Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Le, C. N. (2007). *The new Americans: Recent immigration and American society*. In S. J. Gold & R. G. Rumbaut (Eds.), *Asian American assimilation: Ethnicity, immigration, and socioeconomic attainment*. New York, NY: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC.
- LeBaron, M., & Venashri, P. (2006). *Conflict across cultures: A unique experience of bridging differences*. Boston, MA: Intercultural Press.
- Lee, B., & Wong-Chu, J. (1991). (Eds.) *Many-mouthed birds: Contemporary writing by Chinese Canadians*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Lee, C. L., & Zhan, G. (1998). Psychosocial status of children and youths. In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lee, C. Y. (1957). *The flower drum song*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

- Lee, J., & Sasser-Coen, J. (1996). *Blood stories: Menarche and the politics of the female body in contemporary U. S. society*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, J., & Bean, F. D. (2003). Beyond black and white: Remaking race in America. In J. Lee & M. Zhou (Eds.), *Asian American youth: Culture, identity and ethnicity*. New York, NY: Routledge. pp. 26-33.
- Lee, J., & Bean, F. D. (2004). Intermarriage and multiracial identification: The Asian American experience and implications for changing colour lines. In J. Lee & M. Zhou (Eds.), *Asian American youth: Culture, identity and ethnicity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, J., & Zhou, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Asian American youth: Culture, identity and ethnicity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, J. A. (2006). Issues in constituting Asian-Canadian feminisms. *Asian Women Interconnections*, 21-46.
- Lee, J. F. J. (1991). *Asian Americans: Oral histories of first to fourth generation Americans from China, the Philippines, Japan, India, the Pacific Islands, Vietnam and Cambodia*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- Lee, J. F. J. (2000). *Asian American actors: Oral histories from stage, screen and television*. London, UK: McFarland.
- Lee, C. L., & Zhan, G. (1998). Psychosocial status of children and youths. In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lee, R. (1999). *Orientalists: Asian Americans in popular culture*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

- Lee, R. H. (1956). The recent immigrant Chinese families of the San Francisco-Oakland area. *Marriage and Living*, 18, 14-24.
- Lee, R. H. (1960). *The Chinese in the United States of America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, S. S. (2004). Marriage dilemmas: Partner choices and constraints for Korean Americans in New York City. In J. Lee & M. Zhou (Eds.), *Asian American youth: Culture, identity and ethnicity* (pp. 285-298). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, S. M., & Fernandez, M. (1998). Patterns in Asian American racial/ethnic Intermarriage: A companion of 1980-1999 Census Data. *Sociological Perspectives*, 41, No. 2 pp. 323-342.
- Lee, Y. S. (2013). *Modern minority: Asian American literature and everyday life*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Leong, K. J. (2005). *The China mystique: Pearl S. Buck, Anna May Wong, Mayling Soong, and the transformation of American orientalism*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Levy, S. J. (1959). Symbols for sale. *Harvard Business Review*, 37, 117-124.
- Leydesdorff, S., Passerini, L., & Thompson, P. (Eds.). (1996). *International yearbook of oral history and life stories: Gender and memory* (vol. iv). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Lewis, O. (1970). *The children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican family*. London, UK: Picador.

- Li, D. L. (1991). The formation of Frank Chin and formations of Chinese American literature. In S. Hune, H-C. Kim, S. S. Fugita, & A. Ling (Eds.), *Asian Americans: Comparative and global perspectives* (pp. 211-223). Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press.
- Li, P. S. (1985, January 17, issue 1). The use of oral history in studying elderly Chinese-Canadian. *Canadian Ethnic Studies=Etudes Ethniques au Canada*.
- Li, P. S. (1988). *The Chinese in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Li, P. S. (2009) The social construction of Chinese in Canada. In H. Ling (Ed.), *Asia America: Forming new communities, expanding boundaries* (pp. 223-243). London, UK: Rutgers University Press.
- Lieberson, S., & Waters, M. C. (1988). In *many strands: Ethnic and racial groups in contemporary America*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Lieblich, A., & Josselson, R. (Eds.). (1994). *Exploring identity and gender: The narrative study of lives* (vol. 2). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lim, S. G. (1991). Asian American daughter rewriting Asian maternal texts. In S. Hune, H-C. Kim, S. S. Fugita, & A. Ling (Eds.), *Asian Americans: Comparative and global perspectives* (pp. 238-263). Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press.
- Lim, S. G. (1994). Gender transformations in Asian/American representations. In N. Masavisut, G. Simson, & L. E. Smith (Eds.), *Gender and culture in literature and film east and west: Issues of perception and interpretation* (pp. 95-112). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.

- Lim, S. G., Tsutakawa, M., & Donnelly, M. (Eds.). (1989). *The forbidden stitch: An Asian American women's anthology*. Corvallis, OR: Calyx Books.
- Lim, S. J. (2006). I protest: Anna May Wong and the performance of modernity. *A feeling of belonging Asian American Women's public culture 1930-1960*. New York: New York University Press.
- Lin, C. Y. C., & Fu, V. R. (1990). A comparison of child-rearing practices among Chinese, immigrant Chinese, and Caucasian–American parents. *Child Development*, 6, 429-433.
- Ling, J. (2001). Am I beautiful now? In P. W. Hall & V. M. Hwang (Eds.), *Anti-Asian violence in North America: Asian American and Asian Canadian reflections on hate, healing, and resistance* (pp. 123-132). Oxford, UK: AltaMira Press.
- Liu, J. (2006, spring). Researching Chinese Women's Lives: Insider research and life history interviewing. *Oral History*, 34(1), 43-52. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40179843>
- Louie, A. (2004). *Chineseness across borders: Renegotiating Chinese identities in China and the United States*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Louie, S. C. (2000). Interpersonal Relationships: Independence versus Interdependence In J. L. Chin (Ed.), *Relationships among Asian American women*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Lowe, L. (1996). *Immigrant acts: On Asian American cultural politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lummis, T. (1987). *Listening to oral history: The authenticity of oral evidence*. London, UK: Hutchinson.

Lutz, C. (1988). *Unnatural emotions: Everyday sentiments on a Micronesian atoll and their challenge to western theory*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lutz, C. (1990). Engendered emotion: Gender, power, and the rhetoric of emotional control in *American discourse*. C. Lutz & L. E. Abu-Lughod (Eds.), (pp. 69-90). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lutz, C. (1995). The gender of theory. In R. Behar & D. A. Gordon (Eds.), *Women writing culture* (pp. 249-266). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lyman, S. M. (1970). *The Asian in North America*. Santa Barbara, CA: American Bibliographical Centre: Clio Press.

Lynch, A. (1999). *Dress, gender and cultural change: Asian American and African American rites of passage*. New York, NY: Berg.

Lyotard, J. F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Trans.). Manchester, England: Manchester University Press.

Lyotard, J. F. (1993). Defining the postmodern. In S. During (Ed.), *The cultural studies reader* (2nd ed., pp. 142-145). London, UK: Routledge.

Ma, L. J. C., & Cartier, C. (2003). *The Chinese diaspora: Space, place, mobility, and identity*. Oxford, UK: Rowman & Littlefield.

- Mach, Z. (2007). Constructing identities in a post-communist society: Ethnic, national, and European. In D. F. Bryceson, J. Okely, & J. Webber (Eds.), *Identity and networks: Fashioning gender and ethnicity across cultures*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.
- Mar, L. R. (2010). *Brokering belonging: Chinese in Canada's exclusion era, 1885-1945*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Marchetti, G. (1987). The threat of captivity: Hollywood and the sexualization of race relations in the girls of the white orchid and the bitter tea of General Yen. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 11(1), 29-42.
- Marchetti, G. (1993). *Romance of the yellow peril: Race, sex and discursive strategies in Hollywood fiction*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Marchetti, G. (2012). *The Chinese Diaspora on American screens: Race, sex, and cinema*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98(2), 224-253.
- Masavisut, N., Simson, G., & Smith, L. E. (Eds.). (1994). Gender and culture in literature and film east and west. *Issues of Perception and Interpretation*, 9. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- McAdams, D., Josselson, R., & Lieblich, A. (2001). *Turns in the road: Narrative studies of lives in transition*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- McCabe, J. (2004). *Feminist film studies: Writing the woman into cinema*. London, UK: Wallflower Press.

- McCracken, G. (1986) Culture and consumption: A theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13, 71-84.
- McDermott, R. P. (1974). Achieving school failure: An anthropological approach to illiteracy and social stratification in education and cultural processes. In G. D. Spindler (Ed.), *Toward an anthropology of education* (pp. 82-118). New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- McIntyre, M., & Cole, A. L. (2001). Conversations in relation: The research relation in/as artful self-study. *Journal of Reflective Practice*, 2(1), 5-25.
- McIntyre, M. (2001). Rereading "Anne:" Using images in an artful inquiry. In A. L. Cole & J. G. Knowles (Eds.), *Lives in context: The art of life history research*. Oxford, England: Altamira Press.
- McRobbie, A. (1982). Jackie: An ideology of adolescent femininity. In B. Waites, T. Bennett, & G. Martin (Eds.), *Popular culture: Past and present: A reader* (pp. 263-283). London, UK: Taylor & Francis.
- Melia, M. (2004). Transatlantic dialogue on integration of immigrant children and adolescents. *International Migration*, 42(4), 123-139.
- Merton, R. (1972, July). Insiders and outsiders: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78, 9-47.

- Miller, J. G. (1988). Bridging the content-structure dichotomy: Culture and the self. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The cross-cultural challenge to social psychology* (pp. 267-328). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Milton, G. M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life: The role of race, religion, and national origins*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Mohanty, C. T. (1991). Cartographies of struggle. In C. T. Mohanty, A. Russo, & L. Torres. *Third world women and the politics of feminism* (pp. 1-47). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Moy, J. (1993). *Marginal sights: Staging the Chinese in America*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.
- Mulvey, L. (1999). Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. In L. Braudy & M. Cohen (Eds.), *Film theory and criticism: Introductory readings* (pp. 833-844). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Munshi, S. (2001). *Images of the modern woman in Asia: Global media, local meanings*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Mura, D. (1991). Mirrors of the self: Autobiography and the Japanese American Writer. In S. Hune, H-C. Kim, S. S. Fugita, & A. Ling (Eds.), *Asian Americans: Comparative and global perspectives* (pp. 249-263). Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press.
- Nagel, J. (1994). Constructing ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture, social problems Vol 41. No. 1 pp. 152-176. [www.jstor.org/stable3096847](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3096847)

- Nee, V., de Bary, G., & Nee, B. (1972). *Longtime Californ' : A documentary study of an American Chinatown*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Nee, V., & Sanders, J. (1985). The road to parity: Determinants of the socioeconomic achievements of Asian Americans. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 8, 75-93.
- Negra, D. (2009). *What a girl wants? Fantasizing the reclamation of self in postfeminism*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nichols, B. (1994). *Blurred boundaries: Questions of meaning in contemporary culture*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Ng, F. (Ed.). (1998). *Asian American women and gender*. London, UK: Garland.
- Ng, W. C. (1999). *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The pursuit of identity and power*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Oakley, A. (1981). Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms. In H. Roberts (Ed.), *Doing feminist research* (pp. 30-61). London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Oakley, A. (2000). *Experiments in knowing: Gender and method in the social sciences*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Oakley, A. (2005). *The Ann Oakley reader: Gender, women and social science*. Cambridge, UK: The Polity Press.
- Oehling, R. A. (1980). The yellow menace: Asian images in American film. In R. M. Miller (Ed.), *The kaleidoscopic lens: How Hollywood views ethnic groups*. Englewood, N.J.: Jerome S. Ozer.

- O'Hearn, C. C. (Ed.). (1998). *Half + half: Writers on growing up biracial + bicultural*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Olick, J. K., & Robbins, J. (1998). Social memory studies: From "collective memory" to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 105-140.
Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/223476>
- O'Neill, E. R. (1997, February). American filmmakers: The next generation? Identity, mimicry and transtextuality in Mina Shum's *Double Happiness* and Quentin Lee and Justin Lin's *Shopping for Fangs*. *CineAction*, 42, 50-62.
- Ono, K. A. (Ed.). (2005). *A companion to Asian American studies*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Osajima, K. (2005). Asian Americans as the model minority: An analysis of the popular press image in the 1960s and 1980s. In K. A. Ono (Ed.), *A companion to Asian American studies* (pp. 215-225). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Palumbo-Liu, D. (1999). *Asian/American: Historical crossings of a racial frontier*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Pang, V. O. (1998). *Struggling to be heard: The unmet needs of Asian Pacific American children*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Park, L. S. H. (2005). *Consuming citizenship: Children of Asian immigrant entrepreneurs*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Park, L. S. H. (2008). Continuing significance of the model minority myth: The second generation. Asian American and Pacific Islander population struggles for social justice. *Social Justice/Global Options*, 35(2), 134-144.

- Park, J. C. H. (2010). *Yellow future: Oriental style in Hollywood cinema*. Minneapolis, MN: Regents of the University of Minnesota.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA.: Sage.
- Paxton, S. (1996). Friendships, body image and dieting in teenage girls: A research report. *National Eating Disorder Information Centre Bulletin*, 11(2), 1-4.
- Peacock, J. L., & Holland, D. C. (1993, December). The narrated self: Life stories in process. *Ethos*, 21(4), 3367-393. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650577>
- Pineo, P. C., & Porter, J. (1973). Occupational prestige in Canada. In J. E. Curtis & W. G. Scott (Eds.), *Social stratification: Canada*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall.
- Pon, G. (2000). Importing the Asian model minority discourse into Canada: Implications for social work and education. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 17(2), 279-291. Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41669710>
- Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press and Russell Sage Foundation.
- Powney, J., & Watts, M. (1987). *Interviewing in educational research*. London, UK: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Poy, V. (2013). *Passages to promise land: Voices of Chinese immigrant women to Canada*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.

- Pyke, K., & Johnson, D. (2003). Asian American women and racialized femininities: "Doing" gender across cultural worlds. *Gender and Society*, 17(1), 33-53.
- Radhakrishnan, R. (1987). Ethnic identity and post-structural difference. *Cultural Critique*, 6, 199-220.
- Rayson, A. (1987). Beneath the Mask: Autobiographies of Japanese-American Women. MELUS 14, no. 1, pp. 43-84.
- Rasuli, K. M., & Hollander, S. C. (1986, fall). Desire, induced, innate, insatiable? *Journal of Acromarketing*, 6(2), 4-24.
- Reminick, R. A. (1983). *Theory of ethnicity*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Ribbens, J. (1989). Interviewing: An "unnatural situation?" *Women Studies International Forum*, 12(6), 579-592.
- Rice, C. (2002). Between body and culture: Beauty, ability, and growing up female. In V. Dhruvarajan & J. Vickers (Eds.), *Gender, race and nation: A global perspective* (pp. 147-183). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Rice, C., & V. Russell. (1955a). Embodying equity: Putting body and soul into education. Part I: How oppression is embodied. *Our Schools, Ourselves*, 7(1), 14-36.
- Richard, M. A. (1991). *Ethnic groups and marital choices: Ethnic history and marital assimilation in Canada, 1871 and 1971*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Richardson, B. (2002). *Narrative Dynamics: Essays on Time, Plot, Closure and Frames*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press.

- Richmond, A. H., & Kalach, W. E. (1980). *Factors in the adjustment of immigrants and their descendants*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.
- Roan, J. (2010). *Envisioning Asia: On location, travel, and the cinematic geography of U.S. orientalism*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Robin, D., & Jaffe, I. (Eds.). (1999). *Redirecting the gaze: Gender, theory, and cinema in the third world*. New York, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Rodriguez, R. (1982). *Hunger of memory: The education of Richard Rodriguez*. New York, NY: Bantam.
- Rooks, N. (1996). *Hair raising: Beauty, culture, and African American women*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Rutgers University Press.
- Root, M. P. P. (1998). Women. In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rosenthal, D. A., & S. S. Feldman. (1992). The nature and stability of ethnic identity in Chinese youth. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 23, 214-227.
- Roy, P. E. (1989). *A white man's province: British Columbia politicians and Chinese and Japanese immigrants 1858-1914*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.
- Rueschmann, E. (2003). Mediating worlds/migrating identities: Representing home, Diaspora and identity in recent Asian American and Asian Canadian women's films. In *Moving Pictures, Migrating Identities*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.

- Sahay, A. J. (1996, February). The location of culture by Homi Bhabha. *College Literature*, 23(1), 227-232. Comparative Poetics: Non-western Traditions of Literary Theory.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Sarbin, T. R. (1994). Steps to the narratory principle: An autobiographical essay in life and story. In J. D. Lee (Ed.), *Autobiographies for a narrative psychology* (pp. 7-38). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Sarup, M. (1989). *An introductory guide to post-structuralism and postmodernism*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.
- Sartre, J. P. (1956). *Being and nothingness: An essay on phenomenological ontology*. New York, NY: Philosophia Library.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (2003). *Touching feeling: Affect, pedagogy, performativity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Schiller, N. G. (1999). Transmigrants and nation-states: Something old and something new in the U.S. immigrant experience. In C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz, & J. DeWind (Eds.), *The handbook of international migration: The American experience* (pp. 94-119). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Schurman, F., & Levenson, J. (1969). *China: An interpretive history*. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

- Sedgwick, E. K. (2003). *Touching feeling: Affect, pedagogy, performativity*. M. A. Barale, J. Goldberg, M. Moon & E. K. Sedgwick (Eds.). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- See-Kam, T., Feng, P. X., & Marchetti, G. (2009). *Chinese connections: Critical perspectives on film, identity & Diaspora*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Shah, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Dragon ladies: Asian American feminists breathe fire*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Shimizu, C. P. (2007). *The hypersexuality of race: Performing Asian/American women on screen and scene*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Shim, D. (1998, October). From yellow peril through model minority to renewed yellow peril (Asians in popular culture)(Constructing(Mis)Representing). *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 22(4), 385-410.
- Silvera, M. (Ed.). (1995). *The other woman: Women of colour in contemporary Canadian literature*. Toronto, ON: Sister Vision.
- Simon, S. (1996). *Gender in translation: Cultural identity and the politics of transmission*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Simpson, P., Utterson, A., & Shepherdson, K. J. (Eds.). (2004). *Film theory: Critical concepts in media and cultural studies* (vol. 3). London, UK: Routledge.
- Solomon, M. R. (1983). The role of products as social stimuli: A symbolic interactionism perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10, 319-329.

- Somers, M. (1992, winter). Narrativity, narrative identity and social action: Rethinking English working class formation. *Social Science History*, 16(4), 591-630.
- Spivak, G. (1998). *In other worlds: Essays in cultural politics*. N.Y., NY: Routledge.
- Stanley, T. J. (2011). *Contesting white supremacy: School segregation, anti-racism, and the making of Chinese Canadians*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Statistics Canada. (1974). *Vital statistics 1971*. Ottawa: Information Canada, Volume 2: Table 14.
- Steinmetz, G. (1992). Reflections on the role of social narrative in working class formation: Narrative theory in the social sciences. *Social Science History*, 19(3), 489-516.
- Stewart, A. J. (1994). The women's movement and women's lives: Linking individual development and social events. In A. Lieblich & R. Josselson (Eds.), *Exploring identity and gender: The narrative study of lives* (vol. 2). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stockton, K. B. (2006). *Beautiful Bottom, Beautiful Shame: Where "Black" Meets "Queer"*. London, UK: Duke University Press.
- Storey, J. (2009). *Cultural theory and popular culture: An introduction* (5th ed.). Essex, UK: Pearson Education.
- Storman, C., & Jones, K. (1998). Asamen, J. & Berry, G. (Eds). *The Analysis of Television Content. Research Paradigms, Television, and Social Behaviour*. London, UK: Sage. pp. 271-285.

- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Streigel-Moore, R., & Kearney-Cooke, A. (1994). Exploring parents' attitudes and behaviours about their children's physical appearance. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, *15*(4), 377-385.
- Stromgren, D. (1990). The Chinese syndrome: The evolving images of Chinese and Chinese-Americans. In P. Loukides & L. K. Fuller (Eds.), *Hollywood films, beyond the stars: Stock characters in American popular film*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
- Sue, D., Mak, W. S., & Sue, D. W. (1998). Ethnic identity. In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sue, S., & Sue, D. W. (1971). Chinese-American personality and mental health. *Amerasia Journal*, *1*, 36-49.
- Sung, B. L. (1987). The adjustment experience of Chinese immigrant children. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *19*, 255-269.
- Tajima, R. (1989). Lotus blossoms don't bleed: Images of Asian women. In D. Y-M. Wong (Ed.), *Making waves: An anthology of writings by and about Asian women*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Tajima, R. (1993). Asian women's images in film: The past sixty years. *Colour: Sixty years of minority women in film 1921-1981*. New York, NY: Third World Newsreel.
- Takaki, R. (1989). *Strangers from a different shore*. Boston, MA: Little Brown.

- Tan, A. (1989). *The joy luck club*. New York, NY: Ivy Books.
- Tan, J., & Roy, P. (1985). *The Chinese in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Historical Association.
- Tanaka, J. S., Ebreo, A., Linn, N., & Morera, O. F. (1998). Research methods: The construct validity of self-identity and its psychological implications. In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tasker, Y. (1998). *Working girls: Gender and sexuality in popular cinema*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Trinh, T. M. (1989). *Woman, native, other: Writing post-coloniality and feminism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Tian, G. (1999). *Chinese-Canadians, Canadian-Chinese coping and adapting in North America*. Lampeter, Wales: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Tierney, W. G. (1998). Life history's history: Subjects foretold. *Qualitative Inquiry*. Sage Publications. Retrieved from <http://qix.sagepub.com/content/4/1/49>
- Thi, T. N. (1995, fall). The long march from Wong to Woo: Asians in Hollywood. (Race in Contemporary American Cinema: Part 5). *Cineaste*, 21(4), 38-41.
- Thompson, B. Y. (2004). Fence Sitters, Switch Hitters, and Bi-Bi Girls: An Exploration of Hapa and Bisexual Identities. In L.T. Vo & M. Sciachitano (Eds.), *Asian American women: The frontiers reader* (pp. 337-345). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Thuno, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Beyond Chinatown: New Chinese migration and the global expansion of China*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Nias Press.

- Tong, B. R. (2005). The ghetto of the mind: Notes on the historical psychology of Chinese America. In K. A. Ono (Ed.), *A companion to Asian American studies* (pp. 34-72). Australia: Blackwell Press.
- Tonkin, E. (1992). *Narrating our pasts: The social construction of oral history*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Tseelon, E. (1995). *The masque of femininity: The presentation of women in everyday life*. Nottingham, UK: Nottingham Trent University.
- Turner, V. (1967). *The forest of symbols*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Tyyska, V. (2005). Immigrant adjustment and parenting of teens: A study of newcomer groups in Toronto, Canada. In V. Puuronen, J. Soilevuo-Gronnerod, & J. Herranen (Eds.), *Youth: Similarities, differences, inequalities*. Joensuu, Finland: University of Joensuu, Report of the Karelian Institute No. 1.
- Tyyska, V. (2006). *Teen perspectives on family relations in the Toronto Tamil community*. Toronto, ON: CERIS. Working paper No. 45.
- Uchida, A. (2000). Reconstructing identity: The autobiographical self of a Japanese American woman in Lydia Minatoya's Talking to high monks in the snow. In *Asian American Women: The Frontiers Reader*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Unluer, S. (2012). Being an insider researcher while conducting case study research. *The Qualitative Report*, 17(58), 1-14. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR17/unluer.pdf>

- Uno, K. (2003). Unlearning orientalism: Locating Asian and Asian American women In S. Hune & G. M. Nomura (Eds.), *Family history in Asian/Pacific Islander American women: A historical anthology* (pp. 42-57). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Vancouver Sun. (1914, March 3). Retrieved from <http://www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/resiyrce-centr/electoria-history-of-bc/#top><April 2, 2013>
- Veblen, T. (1912). *The theory of the leisure class*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Vo, L. T., & Bonus, R. (Eds.). (2002). *Contemporary Asian American communities: Intersections and divergences*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Vo, L. T., & Sciachitano, M. (2000). Introduction: Moving beyond “exotics, whores, and nimble fingers:” Asian American women in a new era of globalization and resistance. *Frontiers: A Journal of Woman Studies*, 21(1/2), 1-19.
- Wang, L. L-C. (1991, spring). The politics of ethnic identity and empowerment: The Asian American community since the 1960s. *Asian American Policy Review*, 43-56.
- Ward, W. P. (1978). *White Canada forever: Popular attitudes and public policy toward Orientals in British Columbia*. Montreal, QC: Queen’s University Press.
- Warner, W. L., & Srole, L. (1945). *The social systems of American ethnic groups*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Waters, M. (1990). *Ethnic options: Later generation ethnicity in America*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

- Weinbaum, A. E., Thomas, L. M., Ramamurthy, P., Poiger, U. G., Dong, M. Y., & Barlow, T. E. (Eds.). (2008). *The modern girl as heuristic device: Collaboration, connective comparison, multidirectional citation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Weitz, R. (Ed.). (2003). *The politics of women's bodies: Sexuality, appearance, and behaviour* (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Weitz, R. (2004). *Rapunzel's daughters*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.
- Whorf, B. (1956). The relation of habitual thought and behaviour to language. In J. B. Carroll (Ed.), *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. Cambridge, MA: Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Wickberg, E. (Ed.). (1982). *From China to Canada: A history of the Chinese communities in Canada*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart.
- Wimmer, A. (2008, January). The making and unmaking of ethnic boundaries: A multilevel process theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, 113(4), 970-1022.
- Wolf, N. (2002). *The beauty myth: How images of beauty are used against women*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- Wong, E. F. (1978). *On visual media racism: Asians in the American motion pictures*. New York, NY: Arno Press.
- Wong, J. S. (1945). *Fifth Chinese daughter*. Washington, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Wong, K. S. (2005). *Americans first: Chinese Americans and the Second World War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Wong, L. (2011). *Dim Sum stories: A Chinatown childhood*. Gold Mountain Series. Vancouver, BC: Chinese Historical Society of British Columbia.
- Woo, D. (2000). The inventing and reinventing of model minorities: The cultural veil obscuring structural sources of inequality. In T. Fong & L. H. Shinagawa (Eds.), *Asian Americans: Experiences and perspectives*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Woo, D. (2002). *Glass ceilings and Asian Americans: The new face of workplace barriers*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Woo, T. (2000). *Banana boys (heung jiu jei)*. Toronto, ON: The Riverbank Press.
- Woon, Y. (1998). *The excluded wife*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Wright, A. F. (1960). *The Confucian persuasion*. Stanford, CA: University of Stanford Press.
- Xing, J. (1998). *Asian America through the lens: History, representation and identities*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Xing, J. (2000). In/visible difference: Asian American women and the politics of spectacle. *Race, Gender and Class*, 7(1), 43-56.
- Xing, J., & Hirabayashi, L. R. (2003). *Reversing the lens: Ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality through film*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Yamamoto, T., (1999). *Masking selves, making subjects: Japanese American women, identity, and the body*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Yamanaka, K., & McClelland, K. (1994). Earning the model minority image: Diverse strategies of economic adaptation by Asian American women. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 17, 79-114.
- Yano, C.R. (2006). *Crowning the nice girl: Gender, ethnicity, and culture in Hawaii's cherry blossom festival*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- Yee, B. W. K., Larke, N. H., & Lew, A. (1998). Families: Life-span socialization in a cultural context. In L. C. Lee & N. W. S. Zane (Eds.), *Handbook of Asian American psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yee, M. (1993). Finding the way home through issues of gender, race and class. In H. Bannerji (Ed.), *Returning the gaze*. Toronto, ON: Sister Vision Press.
- Yee, P. (2006). *Saltwater city: An illustrated history of the Chinese in Vancouver*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre.
- Young, L. (1996). *Fear of the dark: "Race," gender and sexuality in the cinema*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Yu, H. (2000). *Thinking Orientals: Migration, contact, and exoticism in modern America*. London, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Yung, J. (1986). *Chinese women of America: A pictorial history*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Yung, J. (1998). Giving voice to Chinese American women. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 19(3), 130-156.

- Yung, J., Chang, G. H., & Lai H. M. (Eds). (2006). *Chinese American voices: From the gold rush to the present*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Zerubavel, E. (2003). *Time maps: Collective memory and the social shape of the past*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Zhang, L. (2012). *Gold Mountain blues*. Nicky Harman (Trans.). Toronto, ON: Penguin Books.
- Zia, H. (2000). *Asian American dreams: The emergence of an American people*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.
- Zhou, M. (1997). Growing up American: The challenge confronting immigrant children and children of immigrants. *Annual Reviews Sociology*, 23, 63-95.
- Zhou, M. (1999). Coming of age: The current situation of Asian American children. *Amerasia Journal*, 25(1), 1-27.
- Zhou, M. (2009). *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, ethnicity, community and transformation*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Zhou, M., & Cai, G. (2002, fall). Chinese language media in the United States: Immigration and assimilation in American life. *Qualitative Sociology*, 25(3), pp. 419-442.
- Zhou, M., & Gatewood, J. V. (Eds.). (2000). *Contemporary Asian America: A multidisciplinary reader*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Zhou, M., & Lee, J. (2007). Becoming ethnic or becoming American? Reflecting on the divergent pathways to social mobility and assimilation among the new second generation. *DuBois Review*, 4(1), 189-205.

Filmography

Anna May Wong in Her Own Words. (2011). Yunah Hong. A Women Make Movies Release. 56 minutes.

Flower Drum Song. (1961). Directed by Henry Koster. Ross Hunter and Joseph Fields Production in Technicolor. Screenplay by Joseph Fields adapted from C. Y. Lee's 1957 novel of the same name. Music by Rodgers and Hammerstein. The cast included Nancy Kwan, Miyoshi Umeki, Jack Soo, James Shigeta, and Benson Fong.

Shanghai Express. (1931). Directed by Josef von Sternberg. Cinematography by Lee Garmes. Screenplay by Jules Furthman. Original story by Harry Hervey. Paramount. 80 minutes. Cast: Marlene Dietrich, Clive Brook, Anna May Wong, Warner Oland, Eugene Pallette.

Slaying the Dragon. (2011). Directed, produced, and written by Elaine H. Kim and Deborah Gee. Asian Women United of California. 58 minutes.

Slaying the Dragon: Reloaded. (2011). Directed, produced, and written by Elaine H. Kim. Asian Women United of California. 30 minutes.

Stories from Chinese America. Collection. Volume 2.

Hollywood Chinese. (2007). Directed, produced and written by Arthur Dong. Deep Focus Productions. 90 minutes. Cast: Ang Lee, Nancy Kwan, Christopher Lee, Wayne Wang.

Forbidden City, U.S.A. Collector's Edition. (1989). Directed, produced and written by Arthur Dong. Deep Focus Productions. Named Best Documentary of the Decade at the Hawaii International Film Festival. 56 minutes.

Sewing Woman. (1982). Written by Lorraine Dong. Narrated by Lisa Lu. Winner of over 20 international film awards including an Oscar nomination for Best Short Documentary. 14 minutes.

Living Music for Golden Mountains. (1981). Produced by Arthur Dong and Elizabeth Meyer. Winner of a Regional Academy Student Film Award for Best Documentary. 27 minutes.

Lotus. (1987). Produced by Arthur Dong and Rebecca Soladay. Story by Lorraine Dong and Arthur Dong. Script by Rebecca Soladay. Winner of the CINE Golden Eagle Award. 27 minutes.

The World of Suzie Wong. (1960). Directed by Richard Quine. Produced by Ray Stark and George Duning. Cinematography by Geoffry Unsworth. Screenplay by John Patrick. Original novel by Richard Mason. Adapted from the stage play by Paul Osborn. 126 minutes. Cast: William Holden, Nancy Kwan.

To Whom It May Concern: Ka Shen's Journey. (2008). Directed, produced, and written by Brian Jamieson. Cinematography by Dean Head, Brandon C. Hall, Craig McCourry and David Strohmaier. Redwind Productions. Cast: Nancy Kwan, Joan Chen, Viven Wu.

You Don't Know Jack: The Jack Soo Story. (2009). Written and directed by Jeff Adachi. Alex Yeung Productions. AAMM Production/Slanted Screen Films. (documentary).

Beyond the Stereotype of Asian Women Representation

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “Beyond the Stereotype of Asian Women Representation” that is being conducted by Grace Wong Sneddon.

Grace Wong Sneddon is a graduate student in an interdisciplinary program the University of Victoria. You may contact her if you have any questions by phone: 250 598-3006; by email: gwongsne@uvic.ca

As a graduate student Grace Wong Sneddon is required to conduct research as part of the requirements for her PhD degree. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Margot Wilson. You may contact Dr. Wilson by phone at: 250 472-5403, or by email at: gsadean1@uvic.ca

The purpose of this research project is learn more about how movies featuring Asian women influenced Asian girls growing up in Canada in the 1950’s and 1960’s and how these movies influenced decisions the young women made later in their lives.

Research of this type is important because little information exists about the impact of 1950’s and 1960’s media portrayals of Asian women on the young Asian women who viewed them at that time.

You are being invited to participate in this study because you are an Asian woman who grew up in Canada and who viewed movies featuring Asian actors in the 1950’s and 1960’s.

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include attending a two hour individual meeting where experiences resulting from viewing popular movies of the 1950’s and 1960’s that featured Asian actors will be discussed.

The meeting will be recorded on audio-tapes. Later a transcription will be made.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including the amount of time taken to complete the group meeting.

There are some potential risks to you by participating in this research. You may feel upset or emotional when discussing your experiences.

To prevent or to deal with these risks I will stop the discussion and audio tape immediately I notice any member of the group becoming upset or emotional and give the participant time. I WILL ALSO STOP THE INTERVIEW IF I NOTICE ANY MEMBER OF THE GROUP WHO APPEARS FATIGUED OR STRESSED. I CAN ALSO RECOMMEND A COUNSELOR FOR ANYONE WHO ANYONE WHO WISHES TO SEE ONE.

The potential benefits of your participation in this research may include benefits you perceive from reflecting on and sharing your experiences, and benefits society and the state of knowledge may derive from the findings of this study.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will be removed from the study.

In the event that a second meeting is needed in order to complete data gathering for this study, and to make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, at the start of the second meeting I will ask you to confirm that you wish to continue to participate.

In the event that at some time in the future I would like to use data I gathered for this study for some other purpose, I will contact you, explain the purpose, and send you a new consent letter review and sign.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, if something you say during the group discussion is quoted directly in my findings or report, I will attach a pseudonym to the quote so that you cannot be identified.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: findings will be published in my dissertation, presented at scholarly meeting, and published in scholarly articles or books.

Data from this study will be stored securely on a password protected computer or in a locked cabinet in my office. Data will be disposed of after five years by deleting all audio tapes, shredding all paper files and transcriptions, and deleting all electronic data.

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study are Grace Wong Sneddon or Dr. Margot Wilson. They may be contacted at the telephone numbers or email addresses set out at the top of this letter.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Interview Guide

Questions for Nancy Kwan

1. Demographics and background questions will be interspersed and woven into the following questions.
2. The World of Suzie Wong
 - a. You were projected into a lead role as a first time actor. Please tell me what that was like.
 - b. How did you feel about the (reported) competition between France Ngyuen and you for the role of Suzie?
 - c. The producer, Ray Stark, was reported as saying that he wanted you to play Suzie because “she would have more universal acceptance.” What do you think he meant by that? What do you think about that and has that changed now?
 - d. I understand that the make-up artists made you look more Chinese by slanting your eyes, plucking your eyebrows and sketching a line across your forehead, what was that like for you? (Did it have the feel of yellowfacing?)
 - e. Currently, there are discussions that bi-racial actors are taking Asian roles because they are more easily accepted as the lead or protagonist? What are your thoughts about that?
 - f. I read in a few of your interviews how difficult it was for you to in the lingerie scene. Can you recall that incident?
3. The Flower Drum Song
 - a. In an interview you said that this role/film was easier for you than Suzie, can you say more about that?
 - b. This film was one of the first to portray Asian American characters and Asian Americans as Americans- how/ did you feel the weight/responsibility of this historical legacy. What was the impact on you then and now? For other Asian American actors?
 - c. In Suzie you played a ‘prostitute with a heart of gold’ in Flower Drum Song, your role has been described as that of the ‘Dragon Lady’ hypersexualized, manipulative and dominating. What did you find what these two roles had in common/different?
 - d. What did you enjoy about your role as a Dragon Lady and as a prostitute with a heart of gold?
 - e. Given your chagrin over the lingerie scene in Suzie, how did you feel about the fan dance in the nightclub in Flower Drum Song?
 - f. You must be very proud that The Flower Drum Song received five Academy Award nominations. Can you share your thoughts from that time? The casts’?
 - g. Flower Drum Song was the first film to showcase an almost all (but one) Asian cast, the next show that did this was The Last Emperor, twenty-five years later. Did you feel that you were breaking racial barriers?
4. I read in an interview that when you were eight years old, you saw a fortune teller who predicted travel, fame and fortune for you, how much of that do you feel have been true? In Suzie, you also saw a fortune teller, how do you see the parallel of this to your real life?

5. You were called Hong Kong's gift to Hollywood and promoted as a Chinese (Brigitte) Bardot. How was that for you?
 - a. You were in a number of magazines, Cosmopolitan etc. In October 1960 you were on the cover of Life which is said to cement a star's status, in your case an eminent sex symbol in the 1960s; in 1962, an article in McCall's called you the "Chinadoll that men like"-what was that publicity like for you? How did you feel about it? Did you feel that it perpetuated the stereotype of Asian women and the roles you played?
 - b. Women around the world wanted to look like you. Vidal Sassoon fashioned the Kwan hairdo or bob-how did this affect you /what impact did it have on you/did you feel the responsibility of being an icon/Asian icon?
6. You were recognized with a number of awards:
 - The Golden Ring Award in San Francisco for The flower Drum Song
 - History Maker for Excellence in the Performing Arts by the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles
 - In 1960, the Golden Globe for the most promising newcomer female
 - In 1961, voted as the Star of tomorrow
 - In 2009, The Women's International Film & Television Showcase Lifetime Tribute Award for your outstanding contribution to the world of cinema

Do you feel that you have been acknowledged for your contributions to cinema? For western audiences? For Asian audiences? As forerunner for emerging Asian actors?

7. Your work provided you an opportunity to meet royalty. You met the Queen of England and the President of the United States. How did you feel about that?
8. Following Suzie, you were reported to say that the cheongsam is a National costume and that Chinese girls like wearing them to show off their pretty legs. This comment generated some negativity among Chinese and Chinese American women because of the stereotype of Chinese/Asian girls as being promiscuous and resulted in some bad publicity. Do you recall that time and your thoughts about that?
9. You have a diverse acting career that encompasses Hollywood films, television, independent films and stage productions. Please tell me what you liked about these different forms, how they were the same/different.
 - a. You went to Hong Kong and Europe to act. Was that partly to escape Hollywood's ethnic typecasting of Asian roles?
 - b. After you left Hollywood in the 1970s, you went to the People's Republic of China which resulted in your blacklisted from films. Can you tell me more about that experience?
 - c. How did you find the experience acting in your first Chinese language film in a romantic drama, "Spring Comes Not Again."
10. Besides your film career you have started and owned a number of businesses including:
 - an alpine ski resort,
 - a ballet school in Hong Kong
 - Nancy Kwan films in Hong Kong
 - Produced and starred in instructional video: Tai Chi Chuan
 - Involved in audiobooks

Can you tell me more about those experiences? What led you to these options and what you liked about them?

11. As well as films and business, you also found time to volunteer. Most notable is your work as spokesperson for the Asian American Voters Coalition which led to you meeting the President of the United States. What led to your interest and work in this area?
12. What would you say is the highlight of your film career?
13. What do you consider is the legacy you left: for other (Asian) actors? Audience? Or the impact you had?
14. When and what would you consider was the low point in your career?
15. Tell me about your experiences as a bi-racial actor in a predominantly white American studio?
 - a. What did that felt like?
 - b. How you were treated?
 - c. Did you feel like you had to identify as Asian or non-Asian?
16. Asian women actors are sometimes viewed as the representation of all Asian women.
 - a. Did you experience this? How so?
 - b. Did this have an impact on the roles you chose? Some writers have been quite critical of these roles, what are your thoughts about this?
17. As a follow-up to this question as an Asian feeling responsible for all Asians, some call this the 'cringe factor.' That is when you see a portrayal of a stereotype of an Asian, as an Asian you cringe perhaps because you are embarrassed and/or ashamed that others see Asians that way, internalized oppression is an expression that is used. Is that something you have experienced?
18. Some feminists and critics have made comments regarding your perspective on taking acting roles which, they believe, perpetuate the stereotyping of Asian women?
 - a. What are your thoughts about that?
 - b. Do you think that it has changed over time?
19. In my review of the literature written about you, there appears to be a significantly greater amount written, analysed and critiqued of *The World of Suzie Wong* in comparison to *The Flower Drum Song*?
Why do you think that is?
20. Asians from their arrival to North America in the late 1800s and early 1900s were not treated as citizens but as unassimilable aliens. Asians in America have struggled and continue to struggle with their identity. How do you think that has impacted their critique of you?
21. How do you think Asian women are viewed today (in North America)?
Do you think Asian women are still caught in the dichotomy of the Dragon Lady and the Lotus Flower?
22. Do you think there is racism (in North America)?
 - a. If so, how does it show up?
 - b. What needs to happen to change it

Questions for Vivienne Poy

Demographic questions will be interspersed and woven in throughout the following questions; however, I would like to establish her knowledge, experiences and interests. She has written four books:

1. Vivienne is the first Asian Senator (in Senate) and made a motion to recognize May as Asian Heritage Month in December 2001. As a result, the Government of Canada declared May as Asian Heritage Month in a formal signing ceremony in May 2002.
 - a. You are an honorary patron and continue to work closely with Asian Heritage Societies across Canada. What prompted you to make this motion?
 - b. What was your goal/objective?
 - c. This was a legacy you left for Asians in Canada and around the world. Please tell me what you hoped this would accomplish (or accomplished)?
2. How would you describe (Asian) women's evolution over the past few decades?
 - a. In day to day life
 - b. In popular culture (particularly film)
 - c. What progress do you think we have made?
 - d. How do you think it has been felt?
 - e. How do you think Asian women are viewed today?
3. Media and popular culture is often blamed for perpetuating Asian stereotypes.
 - a. Do you think there are Asian stereotypes in Hollywood films?
 - b. Of men and/or women?
 - c. Do you think that Hollywood films perpetuate dominant thinking of Asian stereotypes?
 - d. If that were true, what needs to happen to change that?
4. Did you watch the World of Suzie Wong (and The Flower Drum Song)
 - a. Growing up in Hong Kong do you recall the publicity around The World of Suzie Wong (and Nancy Kwan)?
 - b. What are your thoughts then and now about the film(s)
 - c. What was the impact it had on you?
5. As a senator, especially as the first Asian Senator in the Senate of Canada, many people, women and Asian women look to you as a role model.
 - a. What are your thoughts about that?
 - b. How do you handle that?
 - c. Do you feel some responsibility or obligation?
6. In 2010 you were upset and outspoken over MacLean's "Too Asian" article that claimed Asian students were taking too many seats in Canadian universities. In part, the article stated that Asian students only study and non-Asian students who want to do other things besides studies are not able to get the same grades. Can you talk a little more about that?
 - a. What do you think of positive stereotyping?

- b. What impact do you think that can have?
7. As an Asian woman, do you ever feel that you are representing and/or the spokesperson for all Asian women?
- Where or when are the places and times that this may occur?
 - Do you feel at times that you embody Asianness/Chineseness to dominant culture? For example in the Senate, do you feel like you are the voice that brings up race or cultural issues?
 - Do you feel that others think that you are the one to do so because you are Asian and thus, 'qualified' or have the lived experience to do so?
8. You are well respected in the Senate and other places. Have you had experience where you felt unsupported and that your voice was the lone voice in the wilderness?
9. There is a term called the cringe factor, where some Asians "cringe" when they see an Asian portrayed unfavourably in media and/or popular culture.
- Have you experienced this?
 - Why do you think that some Asians might have this experience?
10. I have heard this condition/phenomenon labelled as internalized oppression, where minority groups take on the attitudes/beliefs of the dominant culture and turn upon themselves.
- Have you heard about internalized oppression?
 - Does this resonate with you in any way?
11. You have lived in different parts of the globe where you have experienced being part of the majority in some places (Hong Kong) and as a minority in others (Australia and Canada).
- What were your experiences of the commonalities and differences living in these places?
 - Did being a majority/minority feel different?
 - How did that impact you re: your choices/decisions/friends?
12. How would you describe your voice as an activist? Feminist? Other?
13. Asian women are often touted as being a Dragon Lady, among her characteristics is her domineering and manipulative side or as a Lotus Flower where she exhibits a passive demeanor. What do you think of this dichotomy that Asian women find themselves?
14. When minority women/Asian women speak out, they are sometimes called 'the angry Asian' and they feel that their voices are discounted as a result.
- What are your thoughts about this? Do you agree?

- b. Is this something you have experienced?
15. As you look back over your career
- a. What do you consider the highlight or highlights?
 - b. The low point?
 - c. Is there anything you would do differently?

Questions for the Canadian-born participants

Demographic questions will be interspersed and woven in throughout the following questions; however, I would like to establish her knowledge, experiences and interests. She has written four books:

1. Have you seen the films *The World of Suzie Wong* and *The Flower Drum Song*?
 - a. When did you first see it?
 - b. Have you seen it again/recently?
 - c. What were your impressions of the film(s)?
 - d. Have those impressions/thoughts shifted in the second (or more) viewing of the film(s)?
 - e. Did the first viewing of the film raise any questions/concerns for you? Such as?
 - f. How did you reconcile those questions? Did you talk to others about them?

2. *The Flower Drum Song* set up a dichotomy between the passive nice girl from China and the dominating American-born girl. Did this create any conflict for you?
 - a. Who did you identify with? What was your thinking around that?
 - b. Did you watch this film(s) with your family? Do you remember any discussion about it or any explicit or implicit messaging from your family about the two women in this film?
 - c. Did you see this film as entertainment or did you see any similarities in real life?
 - d. What impact, if any, did this film have on you?
 - e. How did you feel about this film?

3. In *The World of Suzie Wong*, Suzie, played by Nancy Kwan, is a prostitute although with a heart of gold is still the stereotype of the sexualized, exotic Asian woman.
 - a. What are your thoughts about that?
 - b. Nancy Kwan is bi-racial and the make-up artists were told to make her more Asian/Chinese. Did you identify with her as an Asian female?
 - c. Did you have any conflicts with the role she played in the film?
 - d. What are your thoughts about the roles that Asian women play in films in general? Do you think they are portrayed as stereotypes?
 - e. In Hollywood films, Asian women are often coupled with white men. What are your thoughts about that?
 - f. Has that had any impact on you in your partnerships in your life or even who you attracted to?

4. When you watch a film where there are Asians, what are some thoughts that come to mind?
 - a. Do you notice how they are portrayed?
 - b. Does that have an impact on how you view the film eg. The credibility of the film?
 - c. There is a term sometimes called cringe factor, when you see someone that you identify with, eg another Asian and they are portrayed in a way that is stereotypical, negative or ridiculed. Have you ever experience that when you watch a film?

5. Stereotypes can be positive as well as negative. Asian women are often portrayed in films as beautiful and exotic.
What are your thoughts about positive stereotyping?

6. In a documentary called Reel Indians, one First Nations/Indigenous/Aboriginal actor said that when he watched a film where the Cowboys were fighting with the Indians, he identified with the Cowboys. He said I wanted to be a winner, I didn't want to be killed. When you watch a film where there are Asians pitted against non-Asians (James Bond in Skyfall, Anna May Wong with Marlene Dietrich in The Shanghai Express), who do you identify with?
 - a. Do you think that these Asian stereotypical portrayals have influenced how non-Asians view you (or other Asians)?
 - b. Do you have any reason/evidence to think that non-Asians have expectations about you that they learned from (Hollywood) films?
 - c. Do you have expectations about yourself about how you 'should be' from films?

7. What progress do you think (Hollywood) films have made in the past few decades regarding Asian women?

8. What conversations do you have with your own children about the portrayal of Asians in film?

9. What changes (if any) would you like to see in (Hollywood) representation of Asians.

10. How do you identify?
What influences have helped to shape your identity?

11. As a youngster growing up, who were your role models?