Intergroup Romance and the Bicultural Identities of Second Generation Asian Canadians

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- Bob Gardner
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- Novelists such as Monica Ali, Deanna Fei, Gish Jen, Vincent Lam, Shilpi Somaya Gowda, Zadie Smith, ...
Outline for today’s talk

• Studying biculturals
• Cultural influences in Asian biculturals
• Norms of endogamy & exogamy
  – Study 1: The preference for traditional attributes (endogamy) in a mate
  – Study 2: Chinese Canadians & interracial dating (exogamy)
  – Study 3: South Asian Canadians & interracial dating (exogamy)
• Situational specificity of biculturalism
• 2006: Four million second-generation immigrants in Canada \cite{statistics_canada_2008} – Most from East or South Asian countries

• Being bicultural
  – Identification with two cultures—heritage and mainstream
  – Access to two sets of norms

\cite{berry_1997, lafromboise_et_al._1993}
The importance and prevalence of the bicultural experience

A Brimful of Asha
Juggling Between Autonomy & Embeddedness Norms

– Western cultures promote independence
– Eastern cultures promote interdependence

*Examples where norms can conflict:*

– Intimate relationships (Dion & Dion, 1996; Inman, 2006)
  » Interracial dating
– Moving out of the family home (Fuligni et al., 1999; Lou, Lalonde, & Giguère, in press; Mitchell, 2004)
– Academic pursuits
Assessing bi-cultural influences

• **Heritage influences**
  – Collectivism (too broad)
  – Holistic thinking (too narrow)
  – **Family allocentrism/connectedness** (just right)
    – Lay et al. (1998) (Phinney & Vedder, ‘06)
  – Heritage/ethnic identity
    • Traditional mate attributes: Lalonde et al. (2004)

• **Mainstream influence**
  – **Canadian identity** (Cameron, 2004)
The meaning of Canadian identity

• more than hockey, ice & beer.
• more than not being American (Lalonde, 2002)

• Autonomy, Equality, & Diversity
  – Cameron & Berry (2008) – Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Multiculturalism
Study of bicultural identities

- Problem – how to delineate groups for study
- Pragmatic approach of demography
  - East Asian Canadians (primarily Chinese)
  - South Asian Canadians (primarily Indian & Pakistani)
- Playing by the normative psychological rule of looking for differences
  - majority Western European Canadians as a comparison group
  - but who are they?
Historical cultural slices of Canadians

- First Nations followed by colonization & immigration
  - 1\textsuperscript{st} wave: French then English
  - 2\textsuperscript{nd} wave: British & Irish
  - 3\textsuperscript{rd} wave: Continental Europe
  - 4\textsuperscript{th} wave: (post WWII) Europe
  - 5\textsuperscript{th} wave: South Asia & China
Contemporary cultural norms in Canada

• Canadians from 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, & 3\textsuperscript{rd} waves most influential in shaping the \textit{mainstream norms} of English Canada
Contemporary cultural norms in Canada

- Canadians from 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 4\textsuperscript{th}, & 5\textsuperscript{th} waves with stronger ethnolinguistic vitality (status, demographics, & institutional support) likely have strong heritage norms (Bourhis et al., 1981)
  - Italian Canadians (40\% of Vaughan), Chinese (24\% Markham), & South Asian (34\% Brampton)
The norm of endogamy

• cultural (evolutionary) norm of pairing within one’s social groups

• applies to ethnicity, “race”, class, religion,…

• intimately tied to social identities

• norm that is changing with history, immigration & globalization

2000 US census & 2001 Canadian census

*Endogamy* for Asians
- 80% US & 92% Canada

*Exogamy* for Asians
- Japanese are highest (US: 41% & Can: 49%)
- Chinese (US: 14% & Can: 6%)
- South Asian (US: 9% & Can: 5%)

- Endogamy drops from 1st to 2nd generation
Exogamy among visible minorities in Canada
Milan et al. (2010)

• Mixed unions in Canadian census
  – 2.6% in 1991; 3.1% in 2001; 3.9% in 2006
  – *Chinese & South Asian* least likely to be exogamous

• Who is more exogamous?
  – young, educated, & from large metropolitan areas
Chart 2  Longer history in Canada was associated with higher proportion of persons in mixed unions

Percentage of visible minority group members in a mixed union

Second generation and beyond:
- Persons born in Canada

First generation:
- Person born outside the country

Generation status:
- Total
- 1st generation
- 1.0
- 1.5
- 1.75
- 2nd generation
- 2.0
- 2.5
- 3rd generation or more

Note: 1.0 = more than 12 years of age at immigration; 1.5 = between 6 and 12 years of age at immigration; 1.75 = less than 6 years of age at immigration; 2.0 = no parents were born in Canada; 2.5 = only one parent was born in Canada.

Exogamy (1994-2006) of Second gen. in USA
Kalmijin & Tubergen, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Endogamy</th>
<th>Mixing</th>
<th>Exogamy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The norm of endogamy

• endogamy is weakening in the North American Western (autonomous) context

• It is also shifting for 2nd generation Canadians & Americans

• What aspects of identity relate to endogamy for 2nd generation Canadians?
Study 1. Preferred mate attributes (endogamy) Lalonde, Lou, Cila, & Giguère (in prep)

• How similar and/or different are young Canadians from different ethnic backgrounds in their preferred mate attributes?

• If they are different, do heritage culture influences (family allocentrism) and mainstream influences (Canadian identity) help describe cultural differences?
Preferred mate attributes

- **Likeability**
  - *kind/understanding, dependable, attraction, ...*

- **Status**
  - *social class, favourable social status, family reputation, good financial prospect, ...*

- **Tradition (endogamy)**
  - *similar religious background, strong cultural ties, similar cultural background, parents’ approval*
### Young Canadians from the GTA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Born Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants who identified with an ethnic group from Southern Europe (e.g., Spain, Portugal) were excluded.
### Cultural influences: Family Allocentrism & Canadian Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>South Asian</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>European</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family allocentrism</strong></td>
<td>4.43&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.48&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.57&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td><strong>4.15&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canadian identity</strong></td>
<td>5.25&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.23&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.34&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td><strong>5.68&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preferred mate attributes

Likeability

Status

Tradition

- South Asian
- Chinese
- Italian
- European
Preferred mate attributes

- Likeability: South Asian > Chinese > Italian > European
- Status: South Asian > Chinese > Italian
- Tradition: South Asian > Italian
Preferred mate attributes

- Likeability
- Status
- Tradition

- South Asian
- Chinese
- Italian
- European
Cultural influences within cultural differences

Same pattern for all comparisons:
SA vs. Euro / Chin vs. Euro / Ital vs. Euro

Multiple mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008)
Summary of mate attributes study

• Similarity rather than difference for most important attributes (likeability)

• Differences found for less valued attributes
  – South Asian & Chinese Canadians value Tradition and Status more than Western Europeans

• Italians should not be grouped with Europeans
  – Italians quite similar to South Asians!

• Cultural influences from both heritage & mainstream identities in explaining cultural differences
Exogamy: Interracial/interethnic relationships

• Early research: Black-White coupling in US

• Theoretical perspectives
  – social norms
  – Social-psychology of relationship formation
  – symbolic racism & social dominance theory

• changing immigration patterns are bringing a new focus to this area of research
Research on Asian interracial dating

• Mok (1999)
  – dating Whites related to *American acculturation*, perceived attractiveness of Whites, & fewer Asian friends

• Levin, Taylor & Caudle (2007)
  – Asian Americans (compared to African Americans, Latinos, & Whites) most likely to *intra*-date
    • Intra-dating related to *having more ingroup friends* in high school
Our research question

- Will identities (heritage & Canadian) be related to interracial/interethnic dating (exogamy) attitudes for 2nd generation Chinese and South Asian Canadians?
  - strength of Canadian national identity related to support for equality & cultural diversity
Study 2 – Predicting the push to exogamy for Chinese Canadians  Uskul, Lalonde, & Cheng (2007)

• 61 Chinese Canadian & 59 Euro Canadian
• Attitude interracial dating
  – *It does not bother me if Chinese (White) people date White (Chinese) people*
• Personal openness
  – *I would date a Chinese (White) person*
• Heritage & Canadian identities  (Cameron, 2004)
Culture * Gender interactions

FIGURE 2
Gender and culture differences in general attitudes towards and personal openness to interracial dating

(7a) General attitudes towards interracial dating

(7b) Personal openness to interracial dating
Correlations: Identities & attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Euro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study 2 – Predicting the push to exogamy for South Asian Canadians Uskul, Lalonde, & Konanur (2011)

• 118 South Asian Canadian (Older & younger)
• 120 Euro Canadian (Older & younger)
• Attitude interracial dating
  – Persons of different races should not become seriously involved (-)
• Personal openness
  – I am open to my child’s involvement in an relationship with a South Asian person
• Heritage & Canadian identities
Attitude Interracial Dating Culture * Generation Interaction

![Graph showing support for South Asian Canadian and European Canadian generations.](image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Interracial Dating Studies

• Canadian (mainstream) identity
  – associated with positive attitude and openness to interethnic intimate relationships, for South Asian Canadians, but not for Euro-Canadians

• Interracial dating can be a source of intergenerational and internal conflict for 2nd generation Canadians from Asian cultural backgrounds
  – Older South Asians have less favourable views
Asian/South Asian Family Conflict

• Parent-child gap in acculturation (Chung, 2006)

• Generational gap more problematic for immigrant families (Kwak, 2003)

• Disagreements often reflect issues of autonomy (Lee et al., 2000; Lee & Liu, 2001)
  • Personal versus family interests
    – Rights vs. family obligations (Phinney & Vedder, ‘06)
Are bicultural experiences pan-cultural?

- \( r \) between ethnic & national IDs pos. for settler countries, but neg. for other western nations
- integration acculturation profile most prevalent in settler countries
The big picture – biculturalism as a micro-cultural historical experience?
FIN