Intergroup Romance and the Bicultural Identities of Second Generation Asian Canadians

Richard N. Lalonde
Faculty of Health & Glendon College
York University, Toronto
Thanks to...

- Migration and Ethnic Relation Program at UWO
- Vicki Esses
- Bob Gardner
- Collaborators: Ayse Uskul, Ben Giguère, Evelina Lou, Jorida Cila, Michaela Hynie, Mirella Stroink, Reeshma Haji, Sheila Konanur, Linda Cheng, ...
- SSHRC: past funding
- Participants from York U & the broader community
- 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 (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

(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 3rd, 4th, & 5th 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 1\textsuperscript{st} to 2\textsuperscript{nd} 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

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 2*nd *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>Family allocentrism</td>
<td>4.43\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>4.48\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>4.57\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>4.15\textsubscript{b}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian identity</td>
<td>5.25\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>5.23\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>5.34\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>5.68\textsubscript{b}</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 > Italian > Chinese > European
- **Tradition**: South Asian > Italian > Chinese > European
Preferred mate attributes
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 2\textsuperscript{nd} 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

(a) General attitudes towards interracial dating

(b) Personal openness to interracial dating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural group</th>
<th>General attitudes</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Canadian</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro Canadian</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural group</th>
<th>Personal openness</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Canadian</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro Canadian</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Correlations: Identities & attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Euro</td>
<td></td>
<td></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

Support

South Asian Canadian
European Canadian

- ■ Younger
- □ Older
| Sample       | Cohort | |
|--------------|--------|--
| Dating       | South Asian | Old |
|              |         | Young |
| Euro         | Old     | Young |
| Openness     | South Asian | Old |
|              |         | Young |
| Euro         | Old     | Young |
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?