Guilty by association: The impact of mainstream media portrayal of African Canadian male criminal participation on the African Canadian community.

Phyllis A. Kumi

University of Windsor

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd

Recommended Citation
https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/2258

This online database contains the full-text of PhD dissertations and Masters' theses of University of Windsor students from 1954 forward. These documents are made available for personal study and research purposes only, in accordance with the Canadian Copyright Act and the Creative Commons license—CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution, Non-Commercial, No Derivative Works). Under this license, works must always be attributed to the copyright holder (original author), cannot be used for any commercial purposes, and may not be altered. Any other use would require the permission of the copyright holder. Students may inquire about withdrawing their dissertation and/or thesis from this database. For additional inquiries, please contact the repository administrator via email (scholarship@uwindsor.ca) or by telephone at 519-253-3000 ext. 3208.
GUilty by Association:
The Impact of Mainstream Media Portrayal
Of African Canadian Male Criminal
Participation on the
African Canadian Community

by
Phyllis A. Kumi

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through Sociology and Anthropology
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada
2005
© 2005 Phyllis A. Kumi
NOTICE:
The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Canada

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of media produced constructions of Black masculinity and crime on Toronto's diverse African communities. Nineteen individuals, living in the areas of Downtown Toronto, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough and East York, were interviewed about their experiences with the racialization of crime in the print and visual media. Interview discussions revolved around the welcome of immigrants of African descent, depictions of Black males, media coverage of crime according to the ethnicity of the assailant and victim and parental concerns of how their children are viewed by society. A second group of issues discussed is intra-group conflict and confidence in the Canadian criminal justice system. The final group of issues discussed is the deportation of Black male immigrants and racial profiling.

Participants demonstrated beliefs that their lives had been negatively affected by this phenomenon. Lack of concern about depictions of Black men and the internalization of images by Black children and adults, were cited as struggles. Participants also admitted to intragroup conflict as a result of depictions of Jamaicans as well as lack of confidence in the criminal justice system. Finally, respondents expressed beliefs that deportations disproportionately affect Black individuals and that racial profiling is a prevalent problem.
DEDICATION

To My Mother
Whose love and support have shown no boundaries
This is for you.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank everyone I have ever met in my life. Seriously, I am extremely appreciative of the six years that I have spent as a student with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. My daily ritual of walking through the halls of the Sociology department was made enjoyable by the friendly nature of the faculty and staff who were there. Dr. Subhas Ramcharan, my advisor, thank you for having enough faith in me to agree to supervise my project. Dr. Daniel O'Connor, I am grateful for your support in helping with the articulation of my ideas as well as your fantastic ability for detail. Dr. Benedicta Egbo, thanks for your words of encouragement as well as your constructive criticism.

To the many colleagues who I had the pleasure of greeting everyday, commiserating with, laughing and sharing with, you proved that school is not just about books. Thanks to all those who made academia fun. Thanks to Graduate Secretary Extraordinaire, Andria Turner, for all her enthusiasm, helpfulness and encouragement. I would like to thank all the participants who provided their time and opinions which helped to bring this project to fruition. Also, thank you to all my informants whose contacts helped this project along. Finally, thank you to my friends and family whose excitement and encouragement have helped me along this long, but important journey.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I .......... THEORETICAL ORIENTATION</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II .......... REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III .......... METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV .......... BIENVENUE AU CANADA?</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V .......... RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VI .......... A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VII .......... ANXIETY</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VIII .......... TO SERVE AND PROTECT WHOM?</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VIII .......... DISCUSSION</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER X .......... CONCLUSION</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D: CHARTS</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E: CONTACT ORGANIZATIONS</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA AUCTORIS</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Defined as an act that violates the law, crime evokes a multitude of emotions, including feelings of fear, uneasiness and nervousness among citizens and politicians. Bemoaned as a societal ill, remedies, such as denunciation and incarceration, are applied to offset and/or eliminate the serious afflictions said to arise from these behaviours. Those who engage in criminal activities rarely escape the scrutiny of their actions. Shame and stigma surround both the perpetrator and his or her behaviour. Though these condemnations may indicate society’s abhorrence of criminal violations, they are also indicative of the social construction of crime and criminals. Media sources, both print and visual, depict certain members of the population as more deviant than others. The African Canadian community has been the hardest hit over these depictions. Specifically, Black\textsuperscript{1} masculinity has been defined as inherently criminal. Crime is a “people” problem but is often constructed as a “Black” problem. It is important to note that some Black males do commit crimes; however, it is the extrapolation of the actions of a few that demonizes the entire Black community. This racialization of crime and the criminalization of the African Canadian community are both pervasive and detrimental.

\textsuperscript{1} The terms Black and African Canadian are used interchangeably to denote those who are of African descent whether they are African born or a member of those in the diaspora.
The problem is further exacerbated by our proximity to the United States. This has ensured that Canadians are exposed to American flavoured analyses of race and crime. While these analyses are insightful, they are a reflection of a uniquely American culture. The following question requires a response: What about race and crime in the Canadian context? This question is the subject of this thesis. Specifically, this project explores African Canadian perceptions of Black male criminal participation. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that negative media portrayals have consequences for the community it characterizes. Proving this required the views of the socially marginalized African Canadian community to discuss issues, such as public backlash, against their community.

Backlash is defined as negative repercussions as a result of the criminal activity of some African Canadian men, but is also mediated by print and visual media sources. The voices of African Canadians were solicited in order to understand the dynamics of interracial and intraracial politics of criminalization. I linked media constructions of Black males, African Canadian perceptions of crime and the backlash against this community to explore the research question that I have outlined above. I chose to discuss the constructions of African Canadian males, because it is this group of African Canadians who, both historically and currently, have been
targeted and thus have come into contact with the criminal justice system. Black males are feared and hence are constructed as “social problems” (Henry, Tater, Mathis and Rees, 1995). Consequently, their actions and activities are used by the dominant society to define who, African Canadians in general, are.

Researching this issue required the use of a varied, but interconnected theoretical framework that was set in a social constructionist paradigm. Symbolic interactionist theory, moral panic literature and Skolnick's concept of the symbolic assailant were the perspectives that were used. This allowed for mean making and responses allowed the community's stories to be heard. Symbolic interactionist literature aided in the understanding of how meanings attached to things, or in this case, people, help identify factors leading up to moral panics, as well as definitions and reasons for this phenomenon. Furthermore, the role of media imagery showed how ideas of Black male criminal participation are constituted. Skolnick's concept of the symbolic assailant was also used to specifically explain the practice of racial profiling. The intention is to produce and analyze first hand accounts on the feelings, fears and debates that surround this contentious phenomenon.

Although the focus of this project is on Indigenous Black Canadians, Afro-Caribbeans and Continental Africans, the author
acknowledges the presence and contributions of other Africans within the diaspora as well as within the Canadian family.
CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

As mentioned previously, symbolic interactionism, moral panic theory and Skolnick's 'symbolic assailant' were used to develop an analytic framework. Symbolic interactionist theory developed out of the theories of the early pragmatists, William James, Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). One of Mead's students, Herbert Blumer, coined the term symbolic interactionism in the 1930s and 1940s (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). It is a small division of social constructionism, part of this larger theory. These theories are different from positivism in many ways: They question the presumption of an objective reality and they differ both in what reality is and how many exist.

Constructionists believe that human beings construct knowledge according to their own experiences. Truth is varied and fluid. Individuals react to images and make meaning of images that are constructed by language use and visual display. This influences the way certain groups are seen and treated. Positivists believe that there is a reality outside or independent of our understanding or description of it. Our understanding is important, but that understanding may be correct or incorrect with respect to what is actually going on out there (Maticka-Tyndale, 2001).
Holstein and Gubrium (2000), state that symbolic interactionism has become "the hallmark of a particular set of ideas about human nature and social order and, especially, about the relationship of the individual to society" (p. 32). It orients to the principle that individuals respond to the meanings they construct as they interact with one another (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). Herbert Blumer's (1969) contribution to symbolic interactionism can be summarized in the following three basic premises: firstly, human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them; secondly, the meaning of such things is derived from or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows; and finally, that meanings are handled in and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (as cited in Holstein and Gubrium, 2000).

The relevance of this theory becomes clearer since the perceptions of Black males in Canadian society are largely negative. Different mediums, for example, newspapers and television, construct and disseminate images of Black males. These "truths" become the foundation of stereotypes that form public opinion. Bauman (2000), in discussing the idea of fluidity, refers to the mobility of information. Like fluids, ideas travel easily. Once they flow, spill, run out, splash, they are not easily stopped. Criminal
activity by Black males is feared and the public reacts. This then brings in the concept of the moral panic. Though attributed to Stanley Cohen in 1972, the term was coined by Jock Young in 1971. Cohen used the term 'moral panic' "to mean a condition, episode, a person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests: its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media..." (as cited in Ben-Yehuda, 1990).

Cohen (1972) states that "...society labels rule breakers as belonging to certain deviant groups and how, once the person is thus type cast, his acts are interpreted in terms of the status to which he is assigned" (p.12). Rule breakers act as catalysts for moral panics. There are five components to the moral panic: concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality and volatility (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). Firstly, concern involves a heightened level of concern over the behaviour of a certain group or category and the consequences that that behavior presumably causes for the rest of the society. Public opinion polls and proposed legislation express concern in concrete forms.

Secondly, there must be an increased level of hostility toward the group or category regarded as engaging in the behaviour in question. Members of this category are collectively designated as the enemy, or an enemy, of respectable society; their behaviour is
seen as harmful or threatening to the values, interests of society. Since these people are made responsible for the threat, a division is made between “us,” good, decent, respectable people and “them” deviants, bad guys, undesirables, outsiders...(Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). Becker’s (1963) concept of the master status “conveys the notion that there are central traits to people’s identities that blind us to their other characteristics” (as cited in Williams and McShane, 1994). As a result of stereotyping, Black masculinity becomes infused with stigma. This infusion leads to the blindness concerning individuality and results in the contempt of these groups and what they represent.

Thirdly, consensus involves a need for substantial or widespread agreement. At least, a certain minimal measure of consensus in the society as a whole or into segments of the society that the threat is real, serious, and caused by the wrongdoing group members and their behaviour. Fourthly, disproportionality states that the degree of public concern over the behaviour itself, the problem it poses, or conditions it creates is far greater than is true for comparable, even more damaging, actions. Finally, volatility refers to moral panics and their tendency to appear very suddenly. However, Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) referred to the versatility of this phenomenon by stating that “some moral panics may become routinized or institutionalized” (p. 39). In other words, the
moral concern about the target behaviour results in, or remains in place in the form of, social movement organizations, legislation, enforcement practices, informal interpersonal norms or practices for punishing transgressors, after it has run its course (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

This resonates with Bauman's (2000) idea of "residue" in that even after the initial panic dies down, one can still see the after effects. Therefore, the seeds of discontent still remain. Glassner (1999) concurs with both authors and states that "scares related to Black men have more staying power" (p. 131). Conversely, McRobbie and Thornton (1995) claim "that panics are harder to constitute than they once were" (as cited in Ungar, 2001). McRobbie and Thornton (1995) interestingly state that "folk devils are less marginalized than they once were and that this has sharply curtailed the potential for moral panics" (as cited in Ungar, 2001).

Studies by numerous authors (see Chambliss 1994; Calliste, 1991) illustrate the continued marginalization of Black men and, by extension, the African Canadian community.

Moral panics have an important component to them: Atrocity tales (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). These tales are events that are viewed as flagrant violations of a fundamental cultural value. "It is a presentation of that event in such a way as to a) evoke moral
outrage by specifying and detailing the value violations, b) authorize, implicitly or explicitly, punitive actions and c) mobilize control efforts against the alleged males, becomes defined as a societal threat perpetrators' (Ben-Yehuda, 1990). The media and politicians, through their depictions and rhetoric, act as moral entrepreneurs (Ben-Yehuda, 1990) who embody the superiority of law-abiding behaviour. Success of these entrepreneurs to create a panic are as stated below:

first is their ability to mobilize power, second is the perceived threat in the moral issue for which they crusade, third their ability to create public awareness to the specific issue, fourth, the type, quality and amount of resistance they encounter and last, their ability to suggest a clear persuasive and acceptable solution for the issue or the problem (Ben-Yehuda, 1990, p.98).

The moral panic concept originates from the sociology of deviance, particularly with the labeling approach (Ben-Yehuda, 1990). Cohen makes it clear that moral panics are associated to the sociology of law, of social problems and of collective behaviour (Ben-Yehuda, 1990). An important part of the theory is that human behaviour does not just simply form, develop, and respond to itself, but is organized and directed by something (Ben-Yehuda, 1990). Media sources guide individuals by engaging in selective reporting of issues concerning Black males. Most of the reporting that is done in the media is exclusionary, thus negative press works to render Black men problematic.
Jerome Skolnick (1966) observes that "police tend to perceive young Black men as 'symbolic assailants' or threats, and therefore stop and treat them differently, when they encounter them on the street" (as cited in Wortley, Hagan and Macmillan, 1997). This treatment is based on the belief that Black males are very threatening to the social order. Skolnick (1966) describes how these assailants come into being:

The policeman, because his work requires him to be occupied continually with potential violence, develops a perceptual shorthand to identify certain kinds of people as symbolic assailants, that is, as persons who use gesture, language, and attire that the policeman has come to recognize as a prelude to violence (p. 45).

He continues and states that "the policeman responds to the vague indication of danger suggested by appearance" (p. 45). An interesting element to this is that the "symbolic assailant need not be a person who has used violence in the past" (Skolnick, 1966). So the media hyped constructions justify and lead officers to be suspicious of Black males. Such beliefs are a result of the belief in folk devils. A folk devil is the personification of evil (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). They are outsiders, those on the margins of society who are akin to symbolic assailants. Folk devils permit instant recognition... they are stripped of all favourable characteristics and imparted with exclusively negative ones (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). This is evidenced by Skolnick's (1966) assertion that
"hostility toward Blacks is more likely to manifest itself on the street, especially in situations inviting stereotyping" (p.86).

Goode and Ben-Yehuda, (1994) found that all moral panics, by their very nature identify, denounce, and attempt to eliminate folk devils. Once a category has been identified in the media as consisting of troublemakers, the supposed havoc-wrecking behaviour of its supposed members reported to the public stereotypical features litanized, the process of creating a new folk devil is complete; from then on, all mention of representatives of the new category revolves around their central, and exclusively negative, features (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). According to Stuart Hall (1980), media inspired moral panics are potent because "in modern societies, the different media are especially important sites for the production, reproduction and transformation of ideologies" (as cited in Alvaredo and Thompson, 1990). Hall (1980) continues and states that "the media are not only a powerful source of ideas about race, they are also one place where these ideas are articulated, worked on, transformed and elaborated" (as cited in Alvaredo and Thompson, 1990).

Greenberg and Hier (2001) concur and state that "the significance of crisis, therefore, rests not just in an ability to diagnose a problem at the structural level, but also in the capacity to construct a repertoire of narrative representations of that
problem, which may then compete in the public sphere in terms of
their ability to find resonance with the general population” (p.564).
Therefore, it is a necessary element of a moral panic to construct
the ‘crisis’ and disseminate the information using “code words” or
euphemisms. Examples of the use of such actions are seen in the
following critique of the media’s presentation of the arrival of
Chinese refugees. When discussing the 1999 arrival of several
hundred undocumented Fujianese migrants, Greenberg and Hier
(2001) refer to terms such as “flood of illegals” and “queue jumpers”
as examples of derogatory references to the Chinese migrants.
Further, they identified themes such as “threat to health and
security” and “negative impact on welfare state” that accused the
migrants of being problematic. The presence of the Chinese
migrants was met with skepticism and fear. Greenberg and Hier
(2001) conclude that the themes provided by the four newspapers,
constructed a narrative that told the story of a weak immigration and
refugee system which allowed an influx of illegal Chinese migrants
to cause an increase in crime. This story poses as a counter
narrative to the one presented by the mere presence of the
migrants. In light of such themes, terms such as “floods of illegals”
and “waves of Chinese immigrants” reflected what the journalists
saw as catastrophic. Such metaphorical language equated the
migrant influx with the image of a natural disaster that had the
potential to engulf and destroy lands and its inhabitants. Thus preventing the migrants from entering and staying in Canada was of urgent need.

Stanley Cohen (1972) discusses the impact of such euphemisms when he described the media's tendency to exaggerate situations. He stated that newspapers use exaggerated attention, exaggerated events, distortion and stereotyping in order to describe events. Such actions apply to this topic because it discusses how stories, spun by the media, exaggerate the seriousness of these events. Therefore the media are a definite and powerful "actor in the drama of the moral panic" (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994, p. 24).

Chimonas' argument is different from the traditional Durkheimian belief of social solidarity and collective conscience that springs from the structural functional paradigm. Such ideas are predicated on the belief that society survives and thrives on consensus. Chimonas' approach found resonance with McRobbie's (1994) earlier critique of moral panic theory. McRobbie suggested that the study of moral panics requires "a deeper account of processes of exclusion and regulation than that is available in the old sociology of social control" (p.210). A social conflict persuasion informs Chimonas' (1997) belief that moral panics do not come out of the blue and calls for improvements to the concept with the recognition of panic like
elements in everyday representations, of people within the media and other “public arenas.” In this sense, her views are in accordance with Goode and Ben-Yehuda’s (1994) belief that panics are routinized.

**Actors in the Drama of the Moral Panic**

Cohen (1972) introduced the five segments of society who, together, expressed the essence of a moral panic: the press, the public, agents of social control or law enforcement, lawmakers and politicians and action groups (as cited in Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

**The Press**

Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts (1978) state that “news is the end product of a complex process which begins with a systemic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories.” Evidence of this is found when “the press uses exaggerated attention, exaggerated events, distortion and stereotyping to describe certain societal events” as mentioned previously (Goode and Ben Yehuda, 1994, p.24).

**The Public**

The public is a crucial element of the panic. Without this element, anxiety cannot occur because those who are the receivers of
information need to be influenced by those who disseminate it. As Cohen (1972) states “there must be some latent potential on the part of the public to react to a given issue so that a media campaign can be built” (as cited in Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

**Law Enforcement**

The society is said to be faced with a "clear and present danger" the signs of which it is so sharply attuned to (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994, p. 27). This principle is more clearly evident in public attitudes about what the criminal justice system should be doing about the perceived problem. Efforts are made by officers to broaden the scope of law enforcement and increase its intensity, punitive and overly zealous actions already taken are justified on the basis of the enormity of the threat the society faces (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

**Politicians and Legislators**

Some members of Parliament took an immediate and considerate interest in disturbances in their own constituencies. Politicians and other groups aligned themselves against a devil and on the side of angels. What counted was not the nature of the target but what side they were on and what they were against.
Action Groups

This group is also known as moral entrepreneurs. Moral panics generate appeals, campaigns and finally "fully fledged action groups" which arise to cope with the newly existing threat (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

Disaster Analogy

The last factor in moral panics is the disaster analogy. Cohen (1972) argues that preparations are taken very much like those taken before, during and after a disaster such as a hurricane, a volcano eruption or an earthquake. In the moral panic, there are predictions of impending doom, a warning phase etc. and the subsequent reaction by conventional society to the projected invasion of hordes of deviants and delinquents has many strong parallels with the steps taken before.

Hall et al. (1978) adds to this aspect by stating that "there is a paradox in the selectivity of police reaction to selected crimes almost certainly serves to increase their number" (p. 38). It also tends to increase in the form of a cluster, or crime wave. When the crime wave is then invoked to justify a ‘control campaign’, it has become a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ (p. 38). Thus the police are a significant contributor to the moral panic situation. Together, these aspects help to form public opinion about crime and race.
Hall et al. (1978), state that public opinion is thus raised to a more formal and public level by the networks of mass media. Barrett (1999) credits Hall (1980) with elevating the audience from passive to active consumers of information. Hall stated that our pre-existing views will determine whether one will read a meaning with agreement or disagreement (Barrett, 1999). Access to articles and visual images that are negative, clearly affect those who rely on the media for information about communities that one has limited contact with. Bauman (2000) refers to the active consumer and stated that 'it is by the courtesy of the chooser that a would be authority becomes an authority' (p. 64).

Critiques of Moral Panic Theory

Chimonas (1997) states that "panics do not emerge from such crises or "abnormal" social conditions, rather that panics are born out of normal, ongoing struggles over ideology and representation, reinvigorating the same anxieties, controlling stereotypical images and discursive formulations that pattern social life during non-panic conditions" (p.1). In contrast to traditional theories of moral panics as catalysts for moral boundary clarification, Chimonas (1997) further argued the following point:

In panics, longstanding, popular concern over routine, normative violations is amplified, time worn representations of 'good and deviant' persons are reinvigorated to define the 'problem' and the proposed solutions fortify and elaborate relations of power and inequality. Thus
This concept about the struggle over representation is seen with the opposition of constructions of Black masculinity. Bauman's earlier discussion of fluidity provided evidence of why Black individuals rally against depictions of their communities. Other critics state that 'the moral panic model was criticized because it tends to attribute, to the mass media, considerable power to manipulate public opinion and fails to distinguish between what the papers say and what the public thinks'. Thus it is necessary to seek and evaluate the influence on the general public. According to Shoemaker et al. (1992), “social constructionists have been criticized because they often treat the mass media as mere channels through which passes information about deviance, or about labels that others have assigned, producing little recognition that the mass media may themselves transform information and affect the deviance of people and groups” (Critcher, 2003, p.131).

The attempts to restore agency to the receivers of information and the attempts to recognize and acknowledge positive aspects of "public arenas," have not gone unnoticed. Theorists such as McRobbie and Thornton 1995; and Miller and Kitzinger 1998, among others, 'advocate viewing the audience as more active'
(Critcher, 2003, p. 146). However, it is important to recognize the strong impact images have on individuals, even in cosmopolitan urban centers such as Toronto, Canada.

**Symbolic Interactionist Theory**

Herbert Blumer's (1969) third premise of symbolic interactionism explains the influence of newspapers and television on the public. He states that "meanings are handled in, and modified through an interpreter process used by the person with the things he encounters" (as cited in Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). Though Barrett (1999) credits Hall (1980) with restoring agency to consumers, she failed to address the development of the pre-existing views. How are these views developed? Where do they come from? And why do individuals still believe them? These are the questions that must be answered when critics seek improvements to analysis. Interestingly, Blumer's third premise strikes a balance in allowing the concepts of both influence and agency to flourish. The handling component of the third premise refers to the influence or receiving of information whereas the 'modified through an interpretive process referred to the agency component of the process.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The communication industry, that is the media, is an important institution in North American culture. Both visual and print media are influential and serve as sites of information for the citizens of a country. Television and newspapers tell stories and recount the outcome of situations for their viewers and readers. Although they fulfill these functions, they also indulge in the creation of images through their depictions and discussions of news stories. The description young, Black and male is one that describes the city of Toronto's most visible minority (Hall, 1994). Hall (1994) also states that "this description takes the form of a stigma, one that can take many meanings, for example, an instant suspect of a crime" (p.C1). This occurs because of the media reinforcement of racist ideology and practices through the production of racist discourse (Henry et al, 1995).

Crime is the phenomenon that the media links to Black masculinity which results in the racialization of crime. This concept is defined as "the media indulgence in overt and subtle misrepresentation and stereotyping in order to influence popular opinion... and to document the way in which racial identity is linked to deviance and crime" (Henry et al, 1995). The concept of the "other" is the label that media representations project onto Black men. Many authors use this concept to illustrate how a society
marginalizes people deemed deviant and/or unimportant (see Calliste, 1991; Wortley, Hagan and Macmillan, 1997). Jakubowski (1997) referred to the social construction of Blacks in general during Canada's nation-building period. She implied that the criminality trait, attributed to this population, resulted in the creation of a subordinate class.

Two of the most potent examples of marginalization are pictorial and written forms of racialization. Wortley et al., (1997) discuss the potency of the former. In discussing the 1994 Just Deserts robbery and shooting death of patron Georgina Leimonis, certain discourses became evident in local newspapers. In the Toronto Sun, an early arrest photo of suspect Lawrence Brown "depicted a sullen, angry-looking black man with unruly dreadlocks alongside a funeral photo of the white victim's father grieving over the open casket of his daughter" (Wortley et al.,1997). Further, this story portrayed the White female victim as synonymous with Toronto's innocence, whereas the Black suspects represented a foreign, outside threat to the principles of law and order (Wortley et al.,1997). The juxtaposition of the photo is problematic. According to the myth of Black masculinity, an angry Black male is a dangerous Black male. Placing Brown's picture beside the funeral photo said that "this is the result of a Black man's anger". Similarly, Hurwitz and Peffley (1997) found that "violent crime committed by
Blacks comprised a substantial portion of coverage in news stories featuring Blacks.” Police Chief McCormack added to the tension and stated that “our culture is not accustomed to this savagery” (Wortley et al, 1997). Those assumed to be accustomed to the violence lay in “the fact that the suspects were Black, Caribbean immigrants to Canada” (Wortley et al. 1997). Entman (1992) found that “Black males are more likely to be depicted as physically threatening” (as cited in Hurwitz and Peffley, 1997). He confirms the resulting fear by stating “that within the category of crime, white victimization by blacks appeared to have especially high priority” (Entman, 1990, p.337).

Henry and Bjornson (1999) discuss the disproportional attention paid to stereotypes of Blacks in general and males in particular. They studied 2,622 newspaper articles and found that the 45 percent of them that mentioned Jamaicans, “fell into the categories of sports and entertainment” (p. 36). Contrastly, “39 percent of all articles dealing with Jamaicans, concerned social issues such as crime/justice, immigration and deportation” (Henry and Bjornson, 1999, p. 36). The stereotypes result in the dichotomization of Black masculinity. Black men are either good at sports, entertainment or crime. They are forced to conform to socially defined roles in order to fit into society’s racist schemas.
Written discrimination was also apparent in the media's deliberate use of racial signifiers. A Globe and Mail article had the following caption: *Prostitution: Halifax Police Have Set Their Sights on Black Pimps* (as cited in Henry et al., 1995). The article continues and mentions that the workers are White females. It can be speculated that the author wanted to anger his readers by stating that innocent White females were being victimized by Black male perpetrators. The Toronto Star published an article in which the headline read: "Black Crime Rates Highest" which essentializes, and therefore, reinforces the belief that criminal tendencies are natural in Black males. This belief subjected Black males to what Ifekwunigwe (1999) termed biracialization. The process of biracialization dictates that separate inferior black and superior white social and symbolic designations determine subjectivities and define specific and exclusive group memberships. This term resonated with the "us vs. them" tactic that uses skin colour as the standard for those who are desirable and those who aren't. Such tactics can be seen in atrocity tales such as the Just Deserts case.

Most of the news coverage portrayed the shooting as both a tragedy and social crisis (as cited in Wortley, et al, 1997). Comments such as "American style Lawlessness" and "Urban Terrorism" (Wortley, et al, 1997; Henry et al., 1999), revealed a belief in the foreign nature of the act. Armed with this knowledge,
some reporters spoke of violent crime being largely "the result of two decades of choosing too many of the wrong immigrants" (as cited in Wortley et al, 1997).

Stuart Hall (1981) is correct in saying that "ideologies produce different forms of social consciousness" (as cited in Thompson and Alvarado, 1990). Fear is the feeling that results from this internalized knowledge of the dangerous Black male. Calls for tighter gun control laws, immigration laws, and Black community responsibility followed this media inspired moral panic. Although there is no direct empirical evidence from Canada to show that Blacks commit more crimes than members of other racial groups, the belief is reinforced by the alleged over policing of the Black community, particularly with respect to drugs and the drug culture (Henry and Bjornson, 1999).

Stein (1994) reports that "friends had openly begun cursing Black people because of the murder..." and, some said, "send them back to Jamaica" (p. A6). Some also called for the deportation of Jamaicans as well as collective responsibility for criminal acts. Wilkes and Small (1994), reported the call by the bishop at Leimonis' funeral to be one for race based statistics: "I am from a minority, sometimes we minorities shout quite a bit for our causes. When we are at fault, do we reprimand ourselves equally? Is it right that we have statistics to see what is really going on in this
country?" The collection of race-based statistics has been both
championed and opposed (Makin, 1994; Johnston, 1994; Gabor,
1994; Roberts, 1994). Advocates included not just those looking for
confirmation of their anti-ethnic prejudices, but civil libertarians keen
on ending discrimination against minorities in the justice system and
correctional system (Clancey, 1994). Ranged against them were
the Metro Police Service board, many criminologists, politicians and
minority advocacy groups (Clancey, 1994). Roberts (1994),
discusses his opposition to this action: "taking an ascribed
characteristic (skin colour) to determine an achieved characteristic
(criminal behaviour) is incorrect and inaccurate" (p. 175). Gabor
(1994), states that "the origin of these characteristics excludes their
relevance to social policy" (p.154). However, Gabor believes that
discussing issues openly is better than allowing stereotypes to
foster in the absence of information. Henry and Bjornson (1994),
like Chan and Mirchandani (2002), show that because "whiteness"
is seen as the default race, crimes committed by these individuals
"are not linked to any other discourse."

Because of the hysteria that occurs when Black males
participate in crimes, fear of the fallout heightens the nervousness
of the African-Canadian population. Similarly, Cecil Foster (1994)
discusses the collective cringe that occurs when a violent crime is
featured on the news and the "palpable sigh of relief" that is
experienced when the assailants turn out to be other than Black. When the assailants turn out to be Black males, "collectively so many of us feel betrayed as if we, too, had our finger on the trigger" (Foster, 1994). Odetoyinbo (1994) also articulates the colour consciousness fear. He says "I happen to loosely fit the physical description of the prime suspect in the Just Desserts shooting...my pigmentation is identical. To a lynch mob...I am all suspects" (p.B3). Henry et al., (1999) in comparing murders committed by White males and females, with those of Black individuals, found that law reform, moral panics and group dehumanization were non existent. Chan and Mirchandani (2002) offer the following reason for this "...White majority groups have been constructed as race-less.." (p.13). A power differential exists in which "whiteness" is normalized and thus invisible to White people (Henry and Bjornson, 1999), but not to Black people. Minors points out that media omission of success stories paint Blacks as a malevolent group "who make few contributions to business or have noteworthy lifestyles" (Henry et al, 1995).

Collective responsibility is especially controversial because it goes to the heart of the belief that a "culture of deviance" characterizes the African Canadian community. Arnold Minors, then the lone Black member of the police services board, called the shared guilt demand "appalling" (DiManno, 1994). Frustration with
their assigned roles was seen in one young man's legitimate question: "...I mean, Ted Bundy was White and he killed all those girls. That doesn't mean that every White man in America is a serial killer. Why does one bad Black man have to mean all Black men are bad?" (Cannon, 1995). Makin (1994) points to recurring themes of resentment; stereotyping by White society is the first, the second targets those whose actions have brought condemnation upon the entire community. One man said "they are the lowest forms of life...these guys are just messing it up for people who are trying hard to establish themselves" (p. A6). Urry (2000) speaks to the strength of metaphors of exclusion by stating that "the purity of particular national cultures is seen as being overrun by hordes of foreigners moving in and contaminating the essence of each particular culture" (p.27). This is in part why Black males are seen as symbolic assailants. Since they are on the margins of society, they are treated as foreigners, that is, those who do not belong.

Compensation for deviant behaviours of their counterparts, serves as a defense mechanism for some Black individuals. One method of dealing with such stigma is to redefine oneself. This is done to be judged on character. Carl James provides an example of compensation tactics in the following paragraph:

*Many of the youth reported that they used stereotypes as sources of motivation. In situations where Blacks might have helped create negative images in workplaces, for example, the respondents reported that they willingly undertook the task of "making up" for the ignorant behaviour of some Blacks. ...This was a responsibility, a burden that they undertook in*
the hope that their behaviour would prompt employers to think “that the next Black they hire would be like me” (as cited in Green, 1997).

According to the respondents, the hope is that the White individuals will modify their opinions of Black individuals. The fear is that unflattering interactions with Blacks in the workplace lead to unflattering feelings about the latter. Ashamed, this in turn, leads the “good Blacks” to compensate for “ignorant Black behaviour”. Many youth discussed that such endeavours were quite stressful yet believed that they needed to make sacrifices in order to help change the system. While responsibility for one’s community is commendable, the catalyst for the compensatory actions described leaves little to be desired. In fact, it shows how ideological dissemination affects employment opportunities and can affect education and other aspects of one’s life. A caveat must be issued however, not all Black males accept the guilty by association thesis. Some vehemently state that they refuse to capitulate to a prefabricated image. What is indicative of the issues presented is the power that stigma has on a group. Although some interviewees did not accept their culturally bestowed role, they still recognized its impact on their lives.

Contentious describes the relationship between Black males and police officers both historically and currently. The killings of several Black men such as Lester Donaldson in Toronto, Anthony Griffin in Montreal and Wade Lawson in Mississauga have led many
to believe that police are too quick on the trigger when it comes to Blacks (Petrunik and Manyoni, 1991; Benjamin, 2002). Pamela Jackson (1989) explains the distrust of police officers: “subordinate groups still view the police as repressive tool of the dominant group. As a consequence, policing often triggers the unleashing of hostility and violence” (as cited in Manyoni and Petrunik, 1991).

The dangerous dichotomy of Black masculinity aids in the construction and perception of Black males as a risky population. In short, "risks are man made hybrids" (Beck, 1998). They include and combine politics, ethics, mathematics, mass media, technologies, cultural definitions and precepts... (Beck, 1998). When this rational calculation of risk is made, the risk must be controlled. Butler (1993) states that such calculations “lead people to view Black males as possessing enough strength to harm the weak White body” (cited in Benjamin, 2002). Researchers who have studied racism and stereotyping among police have found that they assume that young working class Black men are presumptively expected to commit a higher proportion of all reported crime (Manyoni and Petrunik, 1990). Though the media act as instigators through their representations, it is highly likely that the police, in their encounters with some Black males, generalize certain attributes to the entire population. Benjamin (2002) used the term 'social banishment to refer to “an insidious silence or shunning, the absence and negation
of concerns or issues from the point of view of the racialized
groups...”

The return of the Ontario Conservative government in 1995
did not help improve race relations. Many Black community
members note that since then, there has been a lack of public
policy discussion or government programmes on issues of anti-
racism and equity (Benjamin, 2002). Prior to and after the
Conservative win, however, many committees conducted studies
that showed that systemic racism, particularly anti-Black racism,
exists. Those who take on the media themselves are branded as
“troublemakers.” These people are seen as “making unacceptable
demands that threaten the political, social or moral order of society”
(Henry et al, 1995). For example, members of the Black Action
Defense Committee (BADC) in Toronto have been subjected to
repeated attempts to undermine their efforts. Toronto Sun reporters
referred to the leaders as a “Coalition of Extremists” and trivialized
and downplayed their concerns. Reference to Black leaders as
extremists served to relegate their opinions as being without merit.

Opinions of White individuals were given authority and
attention, while the Black point of view was seen as secondary. The
placement of the two sets of comments, appear to support van
Dijk’s (1996) claim that minority group speakers are seen as
partisan, whereas White authorities, such as the police or
government, are simply seen as ethnically neutral (Henry and Bjornson, 1999). Leaders are accused of “playing the race card” to mask problems in their community. Despite these difficulties, appeals for better representations of Blacks continue.

Racial profiling is a major manifestation of a belief in symbolic assailants. Racial and ethnic profiling refers to the use of race or ethnicity either as the sole factor, or as one factor among many, in a decision to detain or to subject an individual to heightened scrutiny (Choudhry, 2002). Profiling employs race and ethnicity as a proxy for the risk of committing crimes (Choudhry, 2002). When applied to African Canadians, it is colloquially known as “Driving while Black” (Wortley, 1997), since it normally occurs while a Black man is behind the wheel of a car. Cecil Foster (1996) documents the experiences of Black, Caribbean immigrants to Canada and maintains that the police “frequently stop, question and search people from the West Indian community for Driving while Being Black violations” (Wortley, 1997). A 2002 series entitled Race and Crime, written by Toronto Star reporters, found evidence of racial profiling in the Toronto Police Force. While Chief Julian Fantino strongly denied that it occurs “we don’t do profiling at this police service we never have and we will not do it” (Rankin, Quinn, Shepard, Simmie and Duncanson, 2002: A13), Wortley (2002) states that “the Star’s findings provides clear evidence of what, until
now, has been based largely on assumption" (as cited in Rankin et al., 2002).

The main feature of profiling is known as "the gaze". It is a type of surveillance that allows dominant groups to control the social spaces and social interaction of all groups (Kelly, 1998). Foucault (1980) describes control via the gaze as "a process of immersing people in a field of total visibility where the opinion, observation and discourse of others would restrain them from harmful acts" (cited in Kelly, 1998). Results of the risk assessment call for the surveillance properties of the gaze to act as a preventative measure. Consequently, the symbolic assailants come in a one size fits all description. This results in the "overpolicing of Black versus White communities and serves as the reason for the overrepresentation in crime statistics" (Hester and Eglin, 1992; Manyoni and Petrunik, 1990; Wortley, 1997). Many studies show that Black male fears of police are well founded. Pitts' (1986) review of literature on Black juvenile crime, discovered that Blacks are more frequently arrested than Whites on being a suspect. Anderson's (1990) ethnographic study provides an illustration of officer action:

On the streets, colour coding works to confuse race, age, class, gender, incivility and criminality, and it expresses itself most concretely in the person of the anonymous Black male. In doing their job, the police often become willing parties to this colour-coding of the public environment... a young Black male is a suspect until he proves he is not. The burden of proof is not easily lifted (as cited in Wortley, 1997).
What is interesting about this passage is the aspect of social class. Many Black professionals also report discretionary stops by police (Wortley et al, 1997). Hagan and Albonetti (1982) speculate that vulnerability to police stops, accounted for Black professional males being especially likely to perceive criminal injustice (cited in Wortley, et al.: 1997). This shows that social class, as an element of stratification, does not shield one from harassment. Further, Chambliss' (1994) observational study illustrates police officer's suspicions of any Black male driving newer model cars, for example, Isuzus, BMWs and Honda Accords, because of the belief that they are drug dealers. Thus "it became commonplace for officers to stop any car with young Black men in it" (Chambliss, 1994). These two examples are similar to what Skolnick discussed in 1966: "If police are looking for robbery assailants, and have "nothing to go on" but a vague description of a Negro\(^2\) male, innocent Negro males will easily be assimilated to the policeman's stereotype of the suspect" (Skolnick, 1966). The more ambiguous the information the police may have about the suspect, the more likely is it that large numbers of people will be treated as potential suspects (Skolnick, 1966). Such actions support Urry's (2000) claim that the powerful control the mobilities of the subordinate. Both

\(^2\) The term Negro refers to members of a dark skinned race originating in Africa (see the Pocket Oxford Dictionary 1992). It is an archaic and offensive term which will only be used when quoting material in order to provide and preserve its historical context.
contemporary and classic studies indicate that the Black male status as symbolic assailant, or folk devil, has a history that maintains their position as part of the periphery instead of the core.

In regards to racial profiling on the Toronto Police Force, Barry Thomas states that unequal treatment is the result of “lingering stereotypes and a police culture that didn’t keep pace with Toronto’s multiculturalism” (Rankin et al, 2002). Such racist ideologies do not make for good Black community/police relations. Further, it leads one to wonder how the affected community understands the moral panics that surround Black male criminal participation, and their comments on its after effects on the African Canadian community as a whole.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research project incorporated a qualitative approach in the form of in-depth interviewing and analyzed the effects of media-driven constructions of crime and Black masculinity on Toronto's African Canadian population. Given the objective of this study, it was necessary to use in-depth interviewing to allow for rich and freely expressed opinions and ideas from African Canadian participants. In depth, semi-structured interviews provided the interviewer and participants with the necessary flexibility that was conducive to qualitative research. Specifically, it was convenient for participants to communicate orally with the interviewer, as it was convenient for the latter to examine the verbal and non-verbal responses received from the participants. The interviews were conducted between June and December of the year 2003.

Brief in person or telephone interviews were conducted to determine suitability for the project. Participants were also told of the nature of the project. Respondents were asked to state where in Toronto they lived and how long they had resided there. The length of residence was set at a minimum of 10 years to ensure the ability to speak about the issues. A set of structured questions was employed in order to identify the respondent's ethnic group membership, age, gender and whether they are parents or not.
Once suitability was determined, the setting and time mutually acceptable to respondents and interviewer, was set. All participants were provided with the Consent to Participate in Research form (Appendix A), detailing the purpose of the study and the respondent's rights and responsibilities. Time was given for each person to read over the information. Once the forms were signed, thirteen media accounts (newspaper articles) from the Toronto Sun, The Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail were presented to the subjects. This provided a frame of reference for the discussion. Because television images were not provided to respondents, the presentation of the articles played a dual role in achieving discussion. Thus, the articles contained information that covered issues that existed with respect to the two mediums. These newspapers were selected because they focus on issues of Toronto primarily and are read by a large segment of the population. Every article contained the issues that were pertinent to the project and were from the years 1994-2002. Pictorial and written pieces were chosen to help the participants identify overt and subtle messages that emanated from the pieces. After the articles were viewed and read, the participants were reminded that they had no obligation to participate in the project.

Secondly, they were told that everything would be kept confidential and that they only had to answer questions they were
comfortable with. Thirdly, participants were informed that after the transcriptions were made the tapes would be destroyed immediately. Finally, they were given the option of speaking without having their statements recorded on tape. After I was sure that the participant understood the requirements, the interview commenced.

Adjustments to Interview Schedule (Appendix C)

Fifteen questions that covered everything from Canadian society's reception towards immigrants to racial profiling were discussed. Each interview was scheduled for one hour and thirty minutes. However, due to the fact that the interviews were open-ended, some lasted as long as three hours.

After a few sessions, I decided that some adjustments needed to be made to some of the questions. For example, question number four asked the following: “As a parent, do you have any concerns about the effects of negative media portrayals on how others view your children, especially Black males?” This question doesn’t apply to those who are single and without children or who are married without children. I adjusted this question to include these individuals and their concerns for other relatives and friends. Thus the question also read: “Do you have any concerns about the effect of the media portrayals on how people view you, personally? Or friends or family members?”

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Question number eight asked “Have you ever experienced a change in the behaviour of friends, neighbours etc. after a Black male has been accused of committing a crime?” I decided to include the “convicted of a crime” option to gain varied responses.

Finally, with regards to the question “Do you believe that the Toronto Police force engages in racial profiling?” I added a part “B” to the issue by asking about the motto “to serve and protect” and how does it relate to the Black community?” This allowed for clarification of the first part of the question and gave participants a chance to reflect on their reactions to police conduct.

Another change was made to the methodology. Originally, I had planned to meet with the participants after each interview to let the transcript be read. Though it was my intention to have things verified, this process became very time consuming. Also, some people I contacted didn’t feel it was necessary to view their transcripts and so those individuals were not visited. Upon subsequent interviews, the consent forms were adjusted to indicate that the participants may need to be contacted for further questions.

 Settings

A majority of the interviews took place in the homes of respondents. Others took place at places of employment, food courts and inside a vehicle. Care was taken at every location, especially the last, to ensure that the interviewer was safe.
**Participants**

Access to the population under investigation is always a challenging task. Rubin and Rubin (1995) give three criteria for picking respondents to interview: first they should be knowledgeable about the cultural arena or the situation or experience being studied; second, they should be willing to talk; and finally, when people in the arena have different perspectives, the interviewees should represent the range of points of view. The population studied resides in the five former municipalities that comprise the Toronto area: East York, North York, Scarborough, Downtown Toronto and Etobicoke. This criterion was essential in order to capture the activities that occur in the city, rather than venture into the suburban areas. Further, the five former municipalities served as the hot spots for the issues of race and crime.

Because the subject matter required the input of a diverse group of individuals, it was necessary to categorize the participants into three groups: Continental Africans, Afro-Caribbeans and Black Canadians. To maintain a degree of representativeness, a specific number of individuals from each of the three groups were chosen. The numbers chosen were based on the probability of getting people to participate in the study. For example, the Black Canadian group was the smallest because many have moved away from the
city. Secondly, I spoke to a Black Canadian woman who agreed to be a part of the study. When I tried to arrange a meeting, my calls and messages were not returned. I tried to contact her over a period of several weeks, but regrettably did not hear from her. This was disappointing because it would have provided more of a balance for the project. Because Toronto attracts large groups of immigrants, contacting people from the Continental African and Afro-Caribbean groups was more likely and therefore both groups are greatly represented in the study.

The original plan was to use twenty individuals as participants for the study; however, upon transcribing one interview, many gaps were heard throughout the tape. After careful consideration, I decided to omit this incomplete interview as I felt that I had time limitations. I tried to replace the interview with another, but the interview proved to be very limited in content. The participant was believed by me to be a member of the Black Canadian group as, had been said by an informant. However, during the course of the session, he stated that he was from the Caribbean which provided me with too many participants from this group. This was a simple mistake that unfortunately couldn't help me keep to my original goal. Therefore, throughout the project the narratives presented will be that of nineteen individuals. Eight of the respondents can be
classified as Afro-Caribbeans, nine are Continental Africans and two are Black Canadians. Out of the nineteen participants, seven identified Canada as their place of birth; Ghana was the birth place of six individuals with Jamaica acting as home to three participants. Guyana, Somalia and Kenya each had one person respectively who identified their origins as being from these areas. Eleven individuals had a University degree, five had a college diploma and three had a secondary school diploma.

With regards to residency in Toronto, 31 percent, (6), of the sample lived between 10 and 17 years in their respective area in the city. Forty-two percent, (8), lived between 20 and 26 years in the city and 26.5 percent, (5), lived 30 and 47 years in Toronto. It was kept in mind that there either be an equal number of men and women in the study, or at least an attempt should be made at a proportionate number. In the end, nine females and ten males had participated in the study. The interviewer also attempted to have a proportionate number of young and older participants to see if age had an influence on one’s experiences.

All participants needed to be, at minimum, 18 years of age. Though originally set at age 55, the decision to increase the upper range was to accommodate those who didn’t fit into the category. A discussion with a 58 year-old man demonstrated that he possessed
opinions that would add to the value of the study. Thus the age range was set from 18-60 for participant eligibility. Friends, family and acquaintances were approached to act as participants and as informants. This proved to be very helpful in deciphering who was really interested in the project and who wasn't. After interviewing those known to me, I was able to describe the traits needed for the project. For example, I asked if anyone knew of a "young, Afro-Caribbean female who was eager to participate in the research." Many interesting people were referred to me by way of snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a method for identifying and sampling (or selecting) the cases in a network (Neuman, 2000). Since membership in these various ethnic groups is not obvious, this method is suitable because it allowed for easier access to respondents who possessed similar characteristics.

In the interest of meeting others, I also approached community leaders, media personalities and entrepreneurs who helped diversify the sample. Respondents were debriefed after the interviews ended and were thanked for their participation. The final stage had the participants answer questions that were designed from a demographic questionnaire. This served to record information such as marital status, level of education, years of residency in Toronto, age, gender, ethnic group membership, status in Canada, and occupation. A greater understanding of each
individual was gained from this and gave insight into what might influence their opinions and experiences. Every participant was given a list of organizations to contact if he or she needed to talk to someone about the issues discussed. So in the end, a combination of enthusiastic individuals and a diligent investigator addressed the goals to the best of our ability.

**Insider Status**

Having insider status brings a different dimension to this project. Baca-Zinn (1979) states that “the lenses through which they see social reality may allow minority scholars to ask questions and gather information others could not.” Baca-Zinn (1979) further states that “insider field research is less apt to encourage distrust and hostility, and the experience of being excluded” (e.g. as a white researcher). Secondly, the establishment of rapport with the respondents is more likely as the element of suspicion is eliminated. De Andrade (2000) states that “…their assessment of my group membership or insider status appeared to include an assumption that I shared their knowledge and experience…” Though I originally believed that my rapport with respondents may lead some to not fully disclose opinions because I am an African-Canadian researcher, I found this to not be the case. I was surprised to find that the participants were comfortable, but not to the extent that I had to downplay the factor of shared ethnicity. In fact the sessions
proceeded as if two old friends were discussing life issues. I only needed to encourage elaboration or reframe the question(s) if a participant seemed to be struggling with an answer. In keeping with the social constructionist framework (see Blumer in Holstein and Gubrium, 2000), I conducted interviews with the knowledge of my own personal biases and avoided posing leading questions. I often left the interviews with a sense of accomplishment, but also a sense of despair. Because I am not far removed from the issues, it was difficult to remain unaffected by the information that was shared with me. I realize that much of the fatigue that I experienced throughout this project was a result of the issues discussed. After each interview, I took time away from the project to regain a fresh perspective. This allowed me to devote myself to the next stage in the process.

**Data Analysis**

Rudin (1995) states that interviewing provides a forum for people to talk about the impact of social events on their lives. The topics that are discussed are as follows: the issue of collective guilt, stereotypes of Black males, fears of discriminatory treatment by police, changes to social policy, tougher immigration laws, negative views of Blacks by other ethnic groups, reasons for crime participation by Black males and the issue of race based statistics. The data was coded and categories were created. Semi-structured
interviews with open ended questions were tape-recorded. The sessions were transcribed verbatim and then saved in individual, password protected Microsoft Word files. Each interview was randomly assigned a number. These narratives were included in the larger themes that were presented in the chapters. For example, questions about deportations, the justice system and racial profiling were categorized as justice issues and formed one part of the four analytical chapters.

Dependability was secured by my attempts to account for changes or unexpected findings with regards to the research question and/or the design created by increasingly refined understanding of the setting (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). Reliability referred to confirming the age, ethnic group membership and years of residence which demonstrated the participant’s truthfulness in their statements. The truthfulness was apparent because I confirmed the length of time spent in the city which proved their ability to discuss pertinent issues.

Limitations to Research

Within every project there are limitations. Though the concept of reliability has already been discussed, it must be noted that these results are not generalizable. In other words, another group of people composed of similar attributes might not vocalize the same
opinions that this sample did. It must be kept in mind that such occurrences are inherent to qualitative projects such as this one. As will be seen in the analysis, even those who share the same ethnicity and experiences differed in their opinions. Since there are differences within the sample, it should be expected that another sample within another project, will also have differences.

Ethics

The ethical component is an important part of this research project. Certain elements must be present in order to proceed. Borg (1995) defines confidentiality as "an active attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subjects' identities." The use of pseudonyms and careful descriptions of participants ensured that confidentiality was maintained. Given that the findings are presented, repercussions for the respondents were considered. The respondents were advised that the results of the study would be available at a local university if they so wish to see it.
CHAPTER FOUR: BIENVENUE AU CANADA?

Every year, Canada welcomes thousands of new residents. Coming to Canada as an immigrant is an exciting opportunity, but also a great challenge. If you are interested in immigrating to Canada, you have a number of options when applying for permanent residence status. Read about these programs and decide which class suits you and your family.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2004)

It is often said that Canada is a mosaic in contrast to the melting pot of our American neighbours. Official multiculturalism has resulted in the dissemination of information, making “mosaic” and “diversity” synonymous with the character of the nation. However, some argue that the arms of Canadians are not always willing to embrace everyone. In order to test the receptiveness of newcomers to Canada, respondents were asked if immigrants, regardless of their countries of origin, are welcomed to Canadian society. Sixty-eight percent, or 13 of the respondents, answered "No" to the question. Variety describes the responses of the men and women who replied in the negative:

The feeling I get is that the typical Canadian (which means those immigrants from long ago who migrated from Europe and other places...) feels that the resources are not enough. My feeling is that they think that we are taking away something that is theirs. That is based, in my mind, on lack of knowledge of economics and how wealth is generated. They don't understand that people make land rich. I am almost sympathetic to them in their ignorance because with recessions and freezes in employment, you have more people creating a large demand; they feel more threatened by us... Sometimes they even
discriminate against Whites from other parts of the world...but more so the Blacks, coloured people are different....

(Guyanese-Canadian Male, 57)

I think the immigrants from predominantly Western European cultures welcome immigrants from Western Europe more openly than they welcome immigrants from Eastern Europe. They welcome immigrants less so from Asia, Africa and the West Indies. So when you are talking about welcome, it depends on who you are talking about. ...When we, the Canadians that are non-Europeans, welcome Canadians who are from non-European countries, we welcome them more openly. If Europeans are White and people from other places are not White, the non-White Canadians welcome everyone with open arms. I think there is a feeling of the sharing of the Canadian pie. Too many of them come into this country; there may be less of the pie to share. It is the predominant feeling among Europeans that the non-Europeans are posing too much of a challenge to their portion of the pie, especially among the uneducated Europeans. ...You can see the same thing among the educated who seem to see non White, non-Europeans challenge them for jobs and other socioeconomic things.

(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 55)

No, I don't think so. Some are more welcomed than others. Those with White skin are more welcomed than those with dark skin. Those from Africa and the Caribbean are less welcomed than those from Europe... People of colour are always, especially the Blacks, at the bottom of the ladder when it comes to the preference of immigrants.

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)

No I don't. Even though you stated we are not a growing population by traditional means, I think that the statistics show that, especially with the Jamaican community, there is a bias. I think there is a bias against a lot of ethnicities that are coming in. They (society) are not as welcoming as say maybe to the Anglo- Saxon, European that they think is non-violent because there has never been any news about them. Now when we are talking about the Jamaican community, the majority want to come here and have a better life. But considering the crime rates that are going on and the targeting of the Black community, they (society) are probably more intense with those types of people. ....Some people are preferred over others, but at the same time we are so multicultural so it is hard to say that... If you go into any particular

3 Descriptions provided in parentheses and bold print are the respondent’s self-identifications.
section of Toronto, you have your Italian community, Greek community, Portuguese community, you have your little Jamaica, you have everything...

(Jamaican-Canadian female, 24)

No, I don't see it as that. You would like to be that way, but to me I see more as you should be able to contribute to the society. If you are able to contribute, that should be the most important part of someone immigrating to the country... It also depends on where you want to go in Canada. If you are from Africa or the Caribbean and if you are going to be in Toronto, it would be more accepting because there is a large Black community in Toronto. So in that sense, I can see Canadian society being more accepting. I am not so sure about other parts of Canada.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 24)

I don't think everyone is welcomed to Canadian society. The ratio is different and there are certain countries that are larger in Canada than others. I agree that Europeans are welcomed more than others, I don't know why though.

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 42)

Canada has a policy to promote immigration from different parts of the world. In the past, immigrants have arrived from Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, then the Caribbean, Africa and Latin America. Although it has a policy that promotes migration to build Canadian society, it doesn't mean that immigrants of different cultural backgrounds are treated equally... In most cases the well educated immigrants from southern nations including the Caribbean, don't get equal treatment in terms of access to opportunities like employment or jobs in different professions.

(Global-African, Somali male, 30)

I think that the welcome to Canadian society is based on the part of the world you are from. I wouldn't say that all immigrants from the Caribbean are not welcomed, but I do think immigrants from certain islands are viewed more cautiously than others. So no, I wouldn't say that they are welcomed overall. I do think that European immigrants are welcomed more open heartedly than say, immigrants from the
Caribbean, Africa and certain parts of Asia... I think they are more welcomed than people of colour, but not just Black immigrants. I do think that race comes into it. For example, with a White immigrant from Barbados and a Black immigrant from Barbados, that White immigrant would be welcomed much more than that same Black immigrant. I think there are still those images that people of colour do certain things...

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

No. No. I don't think that the welcome has ever existed in any historical period for any group of people. I think it is just a blanket repulsion and complete negativity, but there is nothing new in this. There is, on one side, this notion of allowing people in for capitalistic reasons as a human resource pool. There is also the reality of mass human movements that have happened throughout human existence. What is interesting about the Canadian or North American experience, as opposed to Europe, is the potential for the success of immigrant groups coming in. You don't have the historical establishment of race and culture, that is so prevalent in say, Europe ...

(Black Canadian Male, 47)

No, in the sense of being accepted as Canadians? No, that is an easy question to answer. If they don't look like the mainstream White, adopting or just taking that approach, No. But as a country, I believe that society tends to isolate people into certain communities. When people say to me "where are you from?" and I say, "I am Canadian," they can't accept it. Even on the census, they didn't have Canadian Black and I had to mark one or the other. I chose not to and actually wrote something else in. I have had this problem forever. My mother had the same issues, my grandmother had the same issues and my great grandmother had issues with it. I don't believe that they really welcome immigrants, they like the money, they like to think that they are welcoming....but I really don't believe it. ...Basically you still have a dominant group who still define what Canada is, and anyone else is just from somewhere else. So even if your family has been here and you look different from that mode, you are not classified as Canadian. Canadian can't be anything other than White and Anglo-Saxon...

(Black Canadian female, 44)

The narratives reveal the ethnic stratification that occurs in Canada. Many stated that certain people are welcomed but that
those of "white skin", or Europeans, are welcomed the most. Further, some respondents identified immigrants from Western Europe as being believed to be more desirable over their Eastern European kin. Respondents also expressed sentiments that those whose countries of origin lie in the Caribbean, South America, Africa and Asia, are deemed the least desirable. This is reminiscent of Canada's not too distant and not too proud history of preferred and non-preferred status with regards to immigration policy. Traditional affinities with the United Kingdom and the United States naturally favoured immigrants from these countries (Canada Yearbook, 1957). Next in order of preference came immigrants from Northern and Western Europe then Eastern Europe, and finally, Jews, Asians and Blacks at a distant third. This hierarchy still clearly exists and gives substance to the Canadian brand of racism, which has been described as subtle.

James (2003) states that a February 2002 survey of 1,511 Canadians, found that 54 percent of them believe immigration should be reduced while 26 percent favor increasing immigration and 20 percent had no opinion. Considering that the "national growth in the Canadian population declined substantially between 1990 and 1995," (James, 2003) and that by the year 2020, Canada's natural growth will depend increasingly on immigration, one might wonder why so many believe that immigration should be
reduced. The answer to this question necessitates revisiting the idea of a disjuncture between policy and practice. It seems that there is, at the very least, ambivalence with regards to newcomers to Canada. One respondent bluntly replied to the question of whether all immigrants, regardless of country of origin are welcomed to Canadian society:

Well that is the double talk. I think it is one thing to say that Canada is a society of immigrants and it's another to say that immigrants are welcomed. I think that what you see here are some contradictions in terms of the expectations. It is like there is a desire for immigrants, but there is also repulsion in the sense of the perception that immigrants are running over this country, taking over the jobs and taking over the social goods and services. So I see it as more of a double talk where society says one thing and the treatment that is accorded to immigrants is another thing. ...It is critical to say that they are welcomed, if they are going to be “good citizens.” If they are going to behave the way Canadians want people to behave, if they are going to be quiet and not very vocal. But anytime there are issues or problems, immigrants are also scapegoats, so that is the double talk. Being that North America is racially coded, certain bodies are marked so visibly. They are especially racialized in terms of skin color. What happens is that the treatment that is accorded to those bodies is differently accorded to other immigrants who come from European countries but have white skin, for example.

(Ghanaian male, 48)

The statement above resolves the question of ambivalence and at the same time poses others. First who are considered ‘immigrants’ and who aren’t? Often the term immigrant is used as a euphemism for people of color. Kobayashi and Peake (as cited in Li, 1999) provide evidence of this in the following paragraph:

In fact the word immigrant itself evokes negative connotations, the popular conception of the immigrant refers to people of color who come from third world countries, who do not speak fluent English (or French) and who occupy lower positions in the occupational hierarchy. White,
middle class professionals from Britain or United States are not commonly perceived as immigrants.

James (2003) concurs and adds that ‘immigrants are perceived as a “drain on our social services,” as “taking jobs away from Canadians” and responsible for “causing an increase in crime.” However, as a Jamaican male respondent accurately stated “in the first place, most Canadians are immigrants anyway,” yet this idea of the immigrant as an encroacher on Canadian soil persists. While all the narratives presented agree that the idea of receptiveness is questionable, they differ in terms of what was actually stated. It is now time to look at the responses according to gender and ethnicity.

GENDER

Both the male and female respondents stated that people of colour are not as welcome as those of White European background. Many specified that Blacks, or “those with dark skin”, are considered last on the list in terms of preference for immigrants. One male respondent identified Toronto as a good place for those of African descent to live because of the large Black population that resides there. Interestingly, he made no specific reference to the dominant population’s reaction to the Black population that exists there. If new Black immigrants joined their brothers and sisters in Toronto, would they be treated with respect or would they
experience discrimination? The Somali male’s comment coincided with that of the Black Canadian female respondent. They agreed that the mere presence of individuals or groups is no indication of acceptance. The male respondents in particular, had a tendency of specifying the “lack” of available resources as the locus of conflict between new and old Canadians.

The females provided concrete examples of people who are targeted. For example, they mentioned the word “Blacks” and said that “certain islands are viewed more cautiously”, “I think that the statistics show that, especially with the Jamaican community, there is a bias”, “…the disrespect you get because of where you are from and the fact that you are Black,” illustrated their views. The term, “cautiously” reinforces the notion that people of colour in general and Blacks in particular, need to be watched. Thus the respondents indicated that the construction of “White as good” and “Black or non-White, as bad”, is being espoused. To prove this point, one needs to look at the following quotation by a female respondent: “…I do think that race comes into it. For example, that White immigrant would be welcomed much more than that same Black immigrant. I think there are still those images that people of colour do certain things…” This statement can be contrasted with the Jamaican-Canadian female’s statement that Canada is more welcoming to the “…Anglo-Saxon, European that they (society)
think is non violent, because there has never been any news about them...” One can see the difference in how Black/non-White and White people are viewed. The former group is described as problematic whereas the latter is not.

The Canadian man of Jamaican descent made an interesting observation: “If Europeans are White and people from other places are not White, the non-White Canadians welcome everyone with open arms.” In other words, those who are not lovingly received, tend to embrace everyone more so than those of the dominant population. Why is this so? It is possible that non-White Canadians see others as they see themselves? That is, as immigrants to this country whether they are White, Black or Chinese? While those of the dominant group see themselves as Canadians only? Henry and Tator (1999) state that “Anglo-European cultural dominance asserts its entitlement and authority, defining all others as ‘ethnics’, minorities, immigrants, and visible minorities.” Thus even in a society of immigrants, some individuals are given this label while others aren’t. Further, despite many years of residency, many people of colour are unable to transcend the ‘immigrant’ label and all its negative connotations.

ETHNICITY

The narratives presented challenge the notion of receptiveness to newcomers. Black Canadian respondents provide
a unique perspective on this issue because, unlike other African people, they are not immigrants. John Ogbu's (1987) theory helps to understand the differences between African people with his thesis of voluntary and involuntary minorities. According to his thesis, "voluntary minorities tend to be immigrants who move to a country of their own accord in search of a better life. Involuntary minorities are either colonized groups or groups who arrive in a new country through some form of coercion" (as cited in Li, 1999).

Voluntary minorities enter societies such as Canada, expecting that they will have to overcome various barriers in order to succeed, and so place their faith in the school system as a means of providing their children with the tools to achieve upward mobility. Involuntary minorities lack a homeland with which they compare their present circumstances, and have their identities formed through a process of historical subordination to White society (Li, 1999). Involuntary minorities develop an oppositional mentality when it comes to participation in mainstream institutions (Li, 1999). Afro-Caribbeans and Continental Africans fall into the former group whereas Black Canadians fall into the latter. The different histories of these three African groups serve as the reason for the difference in perspectives.

The Black Canadian male respondent was very firm in his statements as stated previously. In response to whether certain
groups are welcomed more than others, he stated that, “it depends on the stance of the other coming in. There is no welcome, but if you duck and cover and are quiet and go about your business, you’re much more likely to be accepted....” This echoes the “double talk” that Canadians have the tendency to engage in, as said by the 48 year-old Ghanaian male respondent. So there is similarity in the observations of the two different African men. The former has lived in Toronto for 47 years and speaks with the experience of a man who remains an almost invisible part of the Canadian mosaic. The latter has lived in Toronto for 23 years, but has Ghana as his country of origin, and thus can compare Canada to his native land. The Black Canadian female counterpart discussed invisibility earlier when stating that those who define the nation often omit those whose looks don’t mirror their own. Having spent 39 years of her life in Toronto, the female respondent still experiences invisibility from government agencies (census) and other individuals.

Thus far, the analysis has revolved around the narratives of two Black Canadians and one Continental African. The discussion of similarities and differences between the ethnic groups will continue but with a twist. A Ghanaian respondent discusses how the all encompassing category of “people of colour” constructs members of this group differently:
If you would take an immigrant from China, he or she would be treated differently than any Black immigrant or African immigrant. I think over time people have become more comfortable with Chinese immigrants and they are the ones who have become classified as model minorities. There is an impression that these people are hardworking, non violent and non threatening people. All of these words are associated with Chinese immigrants. With immigrants of African or Caribbean origin, more noticeably in the media those of Jamaican origin, they are associated with illiteracy, violence and negative attitudes in general.

(Ghanaian female, 26)

Thus the respondent has stated that such constructions of Chinese as model and African as menace determines the respect, and thus, warmth to their presence and welcome as immigrants. Most importantly, it has negative effects on the life experiences of African people. Continental African respondents, either directly or indirectly, identified society as being "racially coded" and "racialized", and described societal beliefs of Africans as being at the "bottom of the ladder in terms of preference of immigrants."

Afro-Caribbean immigrants identified bias in statements such as "there is a disrespect that you get because of who you are," "...some groups are preferred over others", "...they discriminate more so against the Blacks, now being here for 20 years it is not paradise for us anymore." Such sentiments held by both immigrant groups not only explained what they see, but also expressed disappointment with some of the inequalities that are experienced.

Ogbu's (1987) thesis states that frustrations are experienced by involuntary immigrants, however these frustrations can be also be
expressed by voluntary migrants. One reason for this is that going overseas to live is held in high esteem by those from the source countries. Though often a little sensationalized, many immigrants often treat North America as “a place called heaven” (Foster, 1996). Often when traveling to Canada, one has high hopes for opportunities and a chance to be successful in this adopted nation. When one finds out that this society is organized according to a racial hierarchy, one soon learns what it means to be “Black”.

Codjoe accurately explains the following:

In a land where we are ‘Black,’ that Blackness is not significant to a child’s mind. Therefore, when you are born in a land where everyone seems made in your likeness, you do not, as a group, have to learn strategies of self-affirmation and self-love to counter the opposing, culturally dominant force of mirrors in which you don’t figure, have no reflection, or are given images of yourself which do not in any way reflect the selves you see inside (as cited in James and Shadd, 2000).

Upon arrival, voluntary minorities are not aware that “…race matters so much, that Whites and Blacks were living racially structured lives, and that there exists a racially hierarchical society in which people occupied structural or institutional positions by virtue of their ‘racial’ belonging” (as cited in James and Shadd, 2000). After all, they came from predominantly or significantly Black societies and come to a country where the rules are not only different, but unfair. Though academics argue that race is a social construction, its ramifications are definitely real.
COUNTER ARGUMENTS

The respondents who answered “Yes” to the question regarding Canada’s receptiveness to new immigrants, made equally potent contributions to this discussion. One female responded in the following manner:

...I think it is also very important to note that there are people from certain regions of the world that get much more opportunities to come to this country. I would say that those from European countries get an easier time overall, get more chances to settle in this country compared to those from countries in continents such as Africa.

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

Another respondent contributed the following:

In all fairness I think that everyone is welcome here. (When prompted about whether his statement applied to people of colour) he answered, People of colour? That depends on where they are coming from. Say for instance you hear the name Jamaica, once you apply here I think in a sense, Jamaicans will have it the hardest to get here because of the concept of Jamaican behaviour. That makes us almost undesirable for any country to accept us....

(Jamaican male, 57)

Surprisingly, even those who agree that everyone is welcomed also acknowledged that regional and racial preferences still exist. One male respondent answered “yes and no” to the question of whether all immigrants, regardless of country of origin, are welcomed to Canadian society:

... I think it’s obvious that there is a certain preferred element. In the articles that I read they have a real negative perception of people of Caribbean descent, Black descent or whatever. They have that real stigma attached. I was reading an article and everyone starts off by saying, “oh, this poor shack that this person lives in...” that is just an
attachment that comes with being Black. That lazy stigma and things of that nature, so when people from the West Indies or Africa come they (dominant society) already have that idea about them and that probably makes it harder...

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26).

This narrative corresponds with the females’ narratives discussed during the analysis of gender. The Canadian male with Bajan parents specifically mentions Blacks in the analysis of the images that exist. He also clearly outlined some qualities that are attributed to African Canadians. The Canadian male with Bajan parents concurred with the Jamaican male respondent’s comments that West Indians and Africans are demonized. With this in mind, it is now time to understand the specific images that contribute to how African Canadian males are portrayed in the media.
CHAPTER FIVE: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Before the media portrayals of Black men can be discussed and analyzed, a tale must be told. It is a tale that speaks of discovery, missed opportunity and loss. How does this tale fit in with the subject at hand? Well, read on carefully and let the story unfold. I call it Peter's story. Peter was a brilliant student, a loving nephew, an excellent friend and co-worker whose decision to attend a science exhibit would turn out to be the biggest day of his life!!!!

With one bite from a spider, he gains incredible powers that he uses for winning contests, making money, becoming a showman and finally naming himself SPIDERMAN. One night after finishing a television event, Spiderman encounters a situation where a thief runs past him. A policeman yells to Peter to help stop the thief. Peter, however, lets him get away. Later that night, Peter arrives home to find that his uncle, Ben Parker, has been shot and killed. Greatly angered by the news, Peter changes into his Spiderman altered ego and goes after the murderer. Upon apprehension of the thief, Peter's emotions turn from relief to dismay and regret. Why? Because the same man who killed Peter's uncle is the same man who Peter let escape earlier in the day. So what did Peter learn from this? He learned that WITH GREAT POWER THERE MUST ALSO COME GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!!!

(source: http://www.samruby.com/Spiderverse/Origin/origin.htm)
Peter’s lesson is one that many can identify with and provides a lead into the power of the written and spoken word. It helps address whether journalists exercise their power in responsible ways. As the cliché goes, *the pen is mightier than the sword*, but must be kept in check to avoid hurting others. Bias, especially racial bias in media reports about crime, has been challenged by many academics (Henry and Tator, 2000; Collins, 2004). Such methods of reporting reflect not only racial biases, but class biases as well. Baer and Chambliss (1997) state that “...the view of the general public are acts committed by young Black men, never mind that more serious crimes daily occur at corporate headquarters and banks...” The public image is of violent, psychopathic, young Black males (Baer and Chambliss, 1997).

Thus these authors indicate that there is disproportional attention that exists in regards to street and suite crimes; the latter receiving less attention because of the social class of the assailants. This imbalance in reporting strongly influences which crimes are seen as serious and which are not. Often the weight of news reporting falls very heavily on the side of “rights”; one being freedom of the press. According to section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:
a) Freedom of conscience and religion

b) Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression including
   Freedom of the press and other media of communication

c) Freedom of peaceful assembly

d) Freedom of association

(Department of Justice Canada Website, 2004)

The challenge with living in a Western society is that in seeking to avoid the censorship and despotism associated with other nations, we tend to lose control of our 'responsibilities'. In order to remedy this problem, members of the communication industry have been criticized for their lack of balanced portrayals of Black males. Illustrating this issue requires the discussion of the second interview question put forth to the respondents. Participants were asked to discuss what images of Black males are depicted by both print and visual media? What are common to all of the responses are the elements of violence and criminality and how these labels are always attached to Black skin:

*Black males, I'd say, I think the media purports solely to encourage fear within the population; to show Black males in the media as a sort of threat. They show them as those volatile and ready to erupt people who only know how to do wrong. They are trouble to society and to themselves. I think it just forces the society to always be on edge, to feel that they have to protect themselves. ...I sort of see them (the portrayals), as tools to encourage this behaviour.*

(Ghanaian male, 21)
This participant believes that constructions of Black men as "volatile" and "ready to erupt" not only exist, but are intentional. He further stated that Black men are used to demarcate what individuals need to fear. A Black Canadian female respondent added to the discussion by saying the following:

*Black, young males, angry, into hip hop, gangster or whatever they call it and Jamaican. That is the way that they (media) portray them. They are not all Jamaican. They should not all be brushed with the same stroke...*

The respondent lamented the portrayals of Black men by saying the following:

*The unfortunate thing is that when you have a group of young people, you are going to have things happen sometimes. It is not like this is the only generation where things have happened. Instead of addressing it, they sort of stereotype it.*

*(Black Canadian female, 44)*

Gangster, angry, hip-hop and Jamaican are all terms that when fused together, form the body of the Black male. Gangster or "gangsta," as it is usually seen, and "hip-hop" reflect an element of what is known as being "hard core" or tough. This characterizes an element of hip-hop, an African-American musical art form, which at its inception, focused mainly on life in Black neighbourhoods. Because of its lyrical content, it is seen as threatening to the established order. "Jamaican" is significant because of the belief
that all Black people possess a Jamaican national identity as well as its potentiality for violence.

Henry and Tator (2002) provide an explanation which adequately explains the Black Canadian female's lamentation: "the media construct them in ways that are further damaging to their personal identity and to their social status in the community" (p.164). Therefore in the respondent saying that "they should not all be brushed with the same stroke", she was alluding to the potential damaging effects that such actions have on the Black community. Four of the nineteen respondents discussed representations of Black males as typologies of media constructions. One female respondent noted the following in relation to depictions of Black men:

You see a lot of them as the sports icons; the Vince Carters, the Michael Jordans, those who are put up on a pedestal until something happens and the media starts to attack them.... Aside from the athlete you see the criminal, unfortunately, but you do see the criminal. You see the musician; the Michael Jackson and P. Diddy glamour type thing. I think those are the main images.

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

This participant continued the analysis by adding what is omitted by media:

I don't find that we see the average Black man who wakes up every morning and takes care of his children and goes to work. I think those images are not showcased in a lot of ways. The media kind of acts like they don't exist or is not worthy of attention, that it is too normal, that it is too rare.... While the images are not necessarily all negative they are not representative of the average or the norm.

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)
This contribution indicates that the criminal label is one of many "selves" that are said to exist within the Black male body. When asked if more negative images of Black men were presented in the media, the Trinidadian-Guyanese female's response was "negative, no, anomalies, yes." Such statements indicate that the presentation of Black masculinity is very limited and confining. Other respondents also noted the discrepancies and offered their versions of typologies:

*What I find interesting about images of Blacks in media is that they seem to fall within four categories. The first is the entertainer and I will define that as the musician or dancer, but it is usually the musician. Then you have the athlete; the sports figure, particularly basketball or football. Then you have the criminal or the mug shot, who is usually the suspect. Finally, you have the exception. This would be the school teacher or the community service worker who is trying to make a difference in his community. They are the exceptions because they don't fall into the first three that I mentioned.*

*(Ghanaian female, 26)*

When the Ghanaian female was asked if more negative than positive images are depicted, the response was as follows:

*It depends on how you define negative because too much of any one thing can be negative... An entertainer or athlete in itself is not negative, but when presented as the only option, it tells young Black men that these are the only avenues for them to pursue.*

*(Ghanaian female, 26)*

The criminal or suspect images are negative and appear on television and in newspapers more frequently than other depictions. Because there is not enough of a balance, it provides the notion that these are paths that young, Black men *must* and *often* go
through. The similarities between the female respondents are striking. The criminal, entertainer, athlete and musician prototypes are all mentioned in the characterization of Black men. What is most important however, is what the Ghanaian female calls “the exception” and what the Trinidadian female refers to as what is “too normal and too rare.” Both represent the Black male whose law abiding, and productive contributions to society is not shown. Ericson (1987) provides an answer for this by stating that “deviance is the defining characteristics of what journalists regard as newsworthy (as cited in Henry and Tator, 2002). In other words, the Trinidadian-Guyanese female’s statement, “the media kind of acts like they don’t exist, or its not worthy of attention” is correct. Both statements correspond to each other in the agreement that favourable qualities of Black masculinity exist, but usually take a back seat to unfavourable ones.

Positive images are not showcased in many ways because it is not bad enough, not sexy enough and does not fit into the sensationalistic mould. Therefore when average equals positive and productive, it is neither needed nor wanted. Finally, both women indicated that a balance is needed to describe who Black men are. The Trinidadian female’s comment about “while the images are not necessarily all negative, they are not representative of the norm or average,” corresponds to the Ghanaian female’s comment about
“too much of any one thing can be negative.” What is being said is that Black men are encouraged to do the wrong thing, while chastised for not doing what is right.

Continuing with this notion of typologies, two male respondents provided their opinions with regards to Black male media depictions:

When you are talking about Canadian media...you are talking about newspapers...you see negative images. When you look at images and portrayals of Black men from ages 17-25, you see basketball players and you see robbers. The sports person is the only positive image you see of Black men. When it comes to anything positive, any progressive people, anything to do with finances etc., there is absolutely no portrayal of Black men by the media. Well these are people (i.e. positive) who are most active in moving forward in terms of working, in terms of education, but that is the group we see less on television.

(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)

Like his female counterparts, the Canadian man of Jamaican descent identifies the gangster, criminal and sports images as those used to define Black men. By specifying age, he agrees with the criminological research which points to adolescence as a period when violence and drug use make themselves available to vulnerable youth. Mentioning the specific age range of 17-25 is done to discuss the problematic traits associated with youth and the dangerous traits associated with Black men. Sports figures are defined as entertainment for the public and thus face colour blindness in terms of the admiration received from their audience.

Positivity works for the media as long as it does not transcend social and economic boundaries. For example, a Black man
working in finance or as President of a Bank would not only be void of newsworthiness but would, as the respondent said, "just be so unnatural to see, it is something that is not real." The sports figure fits into the schema of Black maleness because of the physical nature of the activity. Wiggins (1989) states that "Blacks are thought to possess natural athletic ability in speed, quickness, and jumping ability; traits that many coaches believe cannot be taught" (as cited in Spence, 2000). The major problem with this belief is that excelling in sport, according to this perspective, "has little to do with their work ethic or their intellect" .... (as cited in Spence, 2000).

The second male respondent also added to this discussion:

_This is where some of the contradictions come. I think on the one hand there is a desire. If you look at the way the Black male body is consumed, in terms of sexuality, the typification of Black male bodies, they show all these images of the macho male, something that is worth consumption. On the other hand it (the Black male body) typifies concerns about danger, concerns about violence, criminality and so the association of Black with criminality is the race and crime dialectic..._

(Ghanaian male, 48)

This contribution corresponds to the Canadian man of Jamaican descent’s opinion, in that the former discussed the role that physicality plays in defining individuals. For example, hip-hop culture is the most popular cultural form with the youth of today. Though it is an African-American cultural product that is characterized by music, dance and Art (graffiti), it has been adopted
and emulated by people of different ethnicities. With regards to the men, baggy jeans worn low on the waist, corn-rowed hair and bright jerseys are symbols of hip-hop fashion. While this is a part of cultural diffusion, it also serves as a symbol of what is "macho or masculine." This is what the Ghanaian male respondent referred to as "sexuality" and what Cornel West (1993) refers to as the Afro-Americanization of White youth:

*The Afro-Americanization of White youth has been more a male than female affair given the prominence of male athletes and the cultural weight of male pop artists. This process results in White youth, male and female, imitating and emulating Black male styles of walking, talking, dressing and gesticulating in relations to others...* (Kitwana, 2002).

Bell Hooks (1992) sees this diffusion of culture differently from her counterpart. Her concept of "eating the other" discusses the commodification of Black culture:

...*Mass culture is the contemporary location that both publicly declares and perpetuates the idea that there is pleasure to be found in the acknowledgement and enjoyment of racial difference. The commodification of otherness has been successful because it is offered as a new delight, more intense, more satisfying than normal ways of doing and feeling. Within commodity culture, ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture.*

Embraced by different ethnicities, this emulation of fashion and culture is not normally seen as worrisome. Engaged in by those who are Black and male, it is seen as a sign that others might need to use caution with these individuals. The "macho" or "masculine" traits that make up the sexuality of Black men are seen as
frightening in many circumstances. It is frightening because these traits exist in the physicality of the men. This is demonstrated by the clothes that are worn and the movement (swagger) of these individuals. The "sexuality" of Black men is intimidating because their physicality is deemed as helpful in the commission of crimes. Further to this discussion of physicality, intimidation and crime are the following contributions to images of Black males in print and visual media:

There is a certain breadth to it centering around the singular notion of the Black male as threat. There is a notion of physical dominance and the image of the Black male sex savage. The belief is that even if we are not more physically powerful, we are closer to our savage instincts. We are not rational; we have huge cocks, that we are sexual, bestial and incredibly physical specimens of manhood. The Black male has been put on a pedestal in a lot of ways in this culture as a representation of ignorance, passion and raw physical ability. We are seen as the diametric opposite of the dominant culture here, I think it makes it more pregnant, more complex and socially exciting.

(Black Canadian male, 47)

This participant elaborates on the issue of physicality by mentioning the "notion of physical power" and being seen as "closer to our savage instincts." The statement about the Black male "being put on a pedestal as representatives of ignorance, passion and raw physical ability," explains the fear of Black men. Thus one who is perceived as "not cerebral", that is, not a thinker, but one who acts out on impulse, is to be watched.
An unexpected but salient point was made by the Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54:

.... If you show a Black man as a President of a Bank it would be so unnatural to see. Strangely, you could see a Black woman as a teacher or one of those things and it wouldn't be so unbelievable. There is a distinction between how the media portrays gender.

There is a gender divide in the portrayals of Black individuals. While it is true that a depiction of a Black woman as a teacher would not be 'unbelievable,' the respondent neglects the fact that teaching is a profession that is dominated by females. Education, in the primary years especially, has long been designated as belonging to women. Though males have a definite presence and often occupy positions in the higher echelons of the field, education remains part of the "helping industry". Though this respondent did not exhibit any hostility or resentment towards Black women, the occurrence of this phenomenon does occur with some Black men. Kitwana (2002) provides the commentary of a Black professional female on the causes and reasoning behind these sentiments: "Of course Black men resent Black women. Black men feel that white society is more accepting of Black women and find them less threatening than Black men." Some other respondents concurred with the second statement and provided a glimpse into how Black women are perceived:

...I think it is that we are not tied to the violence aspect of things; the media does not portray us in that light... In the working hierarchy, the Black female is not portrayed... It is as if they are not present. ...
again I think it is the perception of threat. The system sees Black women as people who are docile and not troublesome and can be tamed so to speak. We have never been highlighted in that same light as Black males. The few women that have been studied have been proven to be very intelligent and very knowledgeable about a lot of things. We are seen as people who can probably build bridges and act as peacemakers....

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

...They don't value the life of a Black man. It is not valuable to them as opposed to a Black female because we are not threatening to them. The chances of a Black woman getting a job over a Black man with the same qualifications, same background and same experience are high.

(Ghanaian female, 30)

I don't think that society has any fear of Black females. I think they will embrace them and the White society will enjoy seeing a culture that is led or dominated by what they see as powerful Black woman. So in that sense they will terrorize the male or keep them in ghettos and keep the females because they are no threat to the system. It is the male who will stomp his feet. These are the people they see as trying to change things. If it is a Black man who speaks, people will say, "Wow, what is going on here? It is that guy who shouted," you know it becomes a federal offense...

(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)

The Kenyan and Ghanaian female narratives contained descriptions such as "not threatening", "docile" and "can be tamed" in reference to the dominant society’s view of Black women. Such statements reveal the women’s awareness of the differential treatment they receive. Their level of awareness is also framed within a gendered and racial context. In a male dominated society, women are not normally seen as physically threatening. Acts of violence that occur often take place between men. Physical
strength and lack of rationality attributed to Black masculinity, proves problematic. This results in the use of the criminal justice system as a tool for those deemed unruly.

Though many advances have been made, females are still working towards gender equity. In this sense, they can be socially threatening. However, if Black women are permitted to experience social mobility within their racialized and gendered society and are not normally seen as “threatening,” how is this possible? Let’s consider the stereotypes of Black women and how it relates to their portrayals. According to African-American feminist Patricia Hill Collins (2000), challenging controlling or negative images of Black women has long been a core theme in Black feminist thought. The controlling image of the mammy, the faithful, obedient, domestic servant grew out of the slavery period. By loving, nurturing and caring for her White children and family better than her own, the mammy symbolizes the dominant group’s perceptions of the ideal Black female relationship to elite White male power (Collins, 2000). Even though she may be loved and may wield considerable authority in her White family, the mammy still knows her ‘place’ (Collins, 2000).

Canadian examples of the adherence to the mammy image can be seen in the Caribbean Domestic scheme of 1955. Calliste (1991) states that “employment in domestic service was one of the few
ways by which Black women from the Caribbean could immigrate to Canada before 1962" (cited in Vorst, 1991). Racially constructed gender ideologies and images portrayed Black women as "naturally" suited for jobs in the lowest stratum of a labor market segmented along gender lines (Calliste, 1991). The 1911 Caribbean Domestic Scheme saw employers describe Francophone Black women as being "fond of children," women who "knew their place" and who, consequently, should be "kept in the country as servants" (Calliste, 1991). Thus the belief in the docility of Black women stems from these images.

Collins (2000) provides another image manifestation of the Black woman that is social class specific. The 'Black lady' is the image of a Black female who stayed in school, worked hard and has achieved much. In describing this manifestation, Collins provides a caveat to the Kenyan female’s earlier statement. This caveat challenges the belief about the dominant society’s attributions about Black women’s intelligence and their peacemaking abilities:

...Via Affirmative Action, Black ladies allegedly take jobs that should go to more worthy Whites, especially U.S. White men. Given a political climate in the 1980s and 1990s, that re-interpreted anti-discrimination and affirmative action programs as examples of an unfair 'reverse racism,' no matter how highly educated or demonstrably competent Black ladies may be, their accomplishments remain questionable.

North of the Border in Canada, charges of reverse racism with regards to employment equity, also occur. Former Premier Bob Rae made strides to implement fair hiring practices in 1993 by bringing
in the first provincial government policy on employment equity (as cited in Li, 1999). The Mike Harris government in 1995 and subsequent years dismantled all of these efforts. A Bill called the Act to Repeal the Job Quotas and to Restore Merit Based Employment Practices (Li, 1999), sent a strong message about the Conservative government's position on fair practices related to employment attainment. The federal Employment Equity Act became law in 1986 with the goal of ensuring that fair and equitable representation throughout the workplace for women, Aboriginal Peoples, people with disabilities and visible minorities.

Hostility to these measures came from newspapers that sympathized with the Conservative ideology of the period. Headlines such as 'Employment Equity's True Colours', 'The Cutting Edge of Ontario's Bad Law', 'Why Merit Matters' and 'Equity between the Groups Cannot Justify Discrimination Against Individuals' (Li, 2000), indicated some media opposition to the measure. Because Black women are both "African" and "female", such negative sentiments expressed in both the American and Canadian examples indicate that the climbing of the social ladder is not necessarily easier for Black women as is presumed. If anything, the achievements would be more in relative than absolute terms. Evaluation of the perceived differences between Black males
and females open the door for potential conflict between the two groups. Appearance makes a difference in the lives of Black men in the following manner:

_The media looks for sensationalism that creates an evil in the imbalance in reporting. When you see a Black man with the dreadlocks and the baggy pants and then he talks the yard talk, he's stigmatized immediately. This is wrong because they are a few of these youths who are actually the bad guys. The perception of the average Black man being violent or criminal is a perception. It is a false perception...._

(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)

The difference with this contribution is its focus on language and speech patterns. Such characteristics can intimidate others. The "yard talk" refers to speech that is spoken by those of Jamaican origin. In many circumstances when describing a suspect, the speech is often used as a means of determining whether the suspect is of African descent. Further, any type of Caribbean accent is always presumed to be "Jamaican". This is one source of beliefs that Jamaicans are habitual perpetrators of illegal activity.

One male participant, when asked about images that are supposed to represent him, said the following:

..._I never used to watch the news because they never say anything good on the news. ...It depends (referring to images of Black males) If you are bad and you are wanted, you are a Black man. If it is something good, you are African something, you are African-Canadian, you are African-American. They are always politically correct when someone is being honoured. But if it is something negative, they take it down to the basics. They make it Black and White._

(Canadian man with Bajan Parents, 26)
The respondent discussed an issue that often acts as a sore point for African Canadians. A case in point illustrates the media’s treatment of Ben Johnson during the 1988 Olympic steroid scandal. Ben Johnson won the gold medal for Canada in the 400metre race and earned the status of being the world’s fastest man. Upon discovering that Johnson had taken performance-enhancing drugs, his status quickly descended and then dissolved. A Toronto newspaper’s cartoonist illustrated Johnson’s rise and fall. In the first illustration, Johnson is shown running, the word “Canadian” is printed to the side of him. In the second illustration, Johnson is shown and he has the word “Jamaican-Canadian” printed to the right of him. In the final box, Johnson is shown once again, this time with the words “Jamaican” written to the right of him (cited in Green, 1997). This example clearly describes the pressures that befall Black men. Spence (2000) states that “validation is the reason why so many Black youth choose sport above all else and spend countless hours perfecting their game. After all, in what areas does society applaud Black achievement?” (p. 40). Though Johnson’s actions were rightly disavowed, the fact that attention was paid to his Jamaican roots indicates that he had not been accepted.

Spence’s comment about sports participation and validation may hold true, however the Ben Johnson doping scandal shows that the Canadian man with Bajan parents’ comments are valid. The
The reason why Black people ask, I think, is that with Black people it is more of a pride thing. They feel good for you. They acknowledge you and say, "that's good" and nod their head. The average White person has a confused look like "what the hell, how did you get this?" People get that perception that this guy (respondent) cannot know more than me, or could not have more talent than me.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)

In this contribution, the respondent experienced what he felt is the questioning of his capabilities to be in a position of authority. Constant probing into his educational background and attainment of employment, combined with the individual's tone of voice, indicated that his presence in the workplace was confusing to some people.

The difference in responses that this respondent experienced, according to the ethnicity of the individual before him, must be noted. Whereas White individuals were perplexed at his status, Black individuals, since they are subjected to unsavoury and inaccurate portrayals, do not pass up the chance to indicate that "they feel good for you." It is to affirm the knowledge to themselves, and to those in question, that Black individuals are capable of holding positions of power and making valuable contributions. This passage has shown that there is a lack of portrayals of Black men leading normal lives. Internalization of these images is what leaves some members of the public confused. This gives strength to the comment that "being a Black body carries with it certain punishments and one of them is low expectations. People are always going to have low expectations of you." Accurate depictions
of Black men would have demonstrated competency to perform tasks other than the drug dealing, dancing and dribbling images that are the norm in presentations.

Three respondents also commented on the way Black males are depicted in news stories. One man described the Toronto Sun's story of a Black man who had killed his girlfriend at McMaster University. The man had been on the run, was captured in the United States and brought back to Canada:

I remember the Toronto Sun article one day that had the caption "Home in Cuffs", they had used the word "home" for the Black male. Now these are the same bodies which are said not to belong here, as in, "you don't come from here." But when it comes to crime, and getting this body, they say "he is back home", so the contradiction is there...

(Ghanaian male, 48)

The use of expressions is what is being studied. There appears to be a contradiction with regards to when, where and who claims ownership of the Black male. When the first interview question regarding receptiveness to immigrants was asked, the response was mainly negative. With this in mind, it is not surprising that some journalists would present an uncomfortable climate for Blacks when the latter tries to accomplish things. But when a Black male is wanted for something dubious, he is said to belong somewhere, in this case jail, as revealed by the term "cuffs".

News is not only transmitted through language: the layout, graphics and length of articles; the ordering of information within the article as well as the particular sources cited, all communicate
significant information to the news reader (Henry and Bjornson, 1999). The author's observations have not gone unnotice as seen in the narratives below:

They (Black men) are usually the criminals. They always dress badly. With the Black criminals, what you see is what you get. If they dress badly, the attitude is “I am not going to pretty it up because I am going in front of a judge.” The White guys are always dressed neatly...

(Black Jamaican female, 39)

A third respondent concurred by stating the following:

…I think more often than not there is the negative portrayal of the Black male. The picture of that Lawrence Brown character (convicted murderer), was like he rolled out of bed. His hair was all disheveled and was half braided...yes he is a violent person, but do they have to picture him in that state? He probably doesn’t look like that all the time. People are going to look at that picture and say, “look at him.” You never get a picture where the guy is composed. It doesn’t have to be a glamour shot or anything like that, but at the same time you rarely, rarely see a Black guy in a suit or anything...

(Canadian female with Jamaican parents, 24)

The responses convey the frustration that is felt regarding the visual representations of Black males. According to the narratives, Black men are often shown poorly dressed which is usually displayed as evidence of guilt of violent activity. Concern about the portrayal of Lawrence Brown stems not in defense of Brown’s actions, but from the opinion that Brown’s disheveled picture may not fairly portray him. Her feelings are explained by her belief that “you never see a guy who is composed” and “...you rarely see a Black guy in suit.” Thus she is stating that the photos that
accompany the articles are highly racialized. In stating that "the White guys are always dressed neatly," the Black Jamaican female respondent also agreed that there are problems with the way Black men are portrayed.

As Henry and Bjornson (1999) state, "the page layout in general conveys meaning to the reader" and that "meaning can also be conveyed through the juxtaposition of articles and photos." The statement "...it doesn't have to be a glamour shot..." indicates that viewers and readers often make assumptions of others based on appearance. Thus a Black man who is depicted as "disheveled" is more likely to be perceived as menacing. While journalists need to discuss incidents, they must be held accountable for balance in their analyses.

It is now time to shift the focus to discuss where these images of Black men originate. Two out of nineteen respondents, both Continental Africans, gave their take on the images of Black men in the media:

...having been here for over fifteen years, this is something that has troubled me as a Black person. First of all it is the image of Africa as a whole. When I first came to this country and when I tuned on the television, I saw nothing good about Black people period. Having come from Africa, I came into a society that has a different perception of Black people due to the Black people that are found here. It has been disheartening to see how the media, print as well as television and radio, portray Black people as those who are full of trouble, as lazy people who cannot take initiative and are not hardworking. Specifically, the Black male youth have been portrayed very negatively. I would say that Black youth are an endangered species in this part of the world when it comes to being portrayed as criminals.

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)
The Continental African male added the following:

_The media portrays or treats Black people in a negative light, it is always stereotypical. There is deadly conflict in Europe and the biggest wars in the history of mankind took place in Europe and they were the deadliest... but they only depict African civil wars in a negative light. In Canada and the United States, they depict Black people in a negative light. ...The media in society is playing a negative role in terms of criminalizing the Black race and the purpose is to justify racism and discrimination. Bringing in more draconian laws to discriminate against Black people..._

_(Global-African, Somali man, 30)_

Both individuals reported that the poor images of Black men have roots in the abysmal depiction of Africa. The female participant has the benefit of comparing her country of origin with Canadian society. She admits that she learned about the animosity towards Black people in Canada from the television, radio and newspapers. The male respondent echoed concerns about Africa’s unflattering portrayal and asks why Europe isn’t portrayed in the same way. By referring to the “...deadly conflict in Europe” and “the biggest wars in the history of mankind...”, he presents a view that intense focus on Africa, as a land of confusion brought on by war, is what creates the “common-sense” belief in the dangerousness of this region of the world. Further, it feeds into the belief that Africans and their descendents carry some of these problematic traits in their respective genetic pools. It is this latter belief that the Somali male believes leads to the criminalizing of Blacks. Thus, once again, the narratives provided in this chapter suggest that an emphasis on balance, or responsibility, is needed.
Thus far, the discussion has provided an introduction to the issues. The third interview question was posed in order to provide an in depth analysis of the coverage of the criminal participation and victimization of Black individuals and White individuals. Participants were asked the following: “In your opinion, is the media’s coverage of Black assailants involved in crime different from that of White assailants?” If so, how? “Does the coverage differ if both the assailant and victim are Black versus whether the assailant is Black and the victim White?” “What about White assailants and Black victims?”

Respondents unanimously agreed that the Black assailants and their White counterparts are presented differently in crime story coverage. The narratives addressed answers to all parts of the question. A discussion of Black assailants and White assailants will proceed first. A Bajan male respondent juxtaposed two high profile Toronto murder cases, the Just Desserts murder and the Dmitri Baranovsky\(^4\) murder case, to illustrate his response. To discuss the difference skin colour makes, it is necessary to state that the former case, which occurred in 1994, involved Black males in the murder of a White female. The latter that occurred in 1999, involved an

\(^4\)15 year old Dmitri Baranovsky was beaten to death after coming to the aid of another teen.
assault and murder on a White male by other White males. The following is offered as evidence:

_No disrespect to the family of the Just Desserts victim because being shot is obviously awful, but being beaten to death is inhumane. The way they showed it (the Baranovsky murder) is almost like something went wrong and these kids beat him up. I was reading the article about Lawrence Brown and they described him like he was Scarface. They had him up as the ultimate bad guy. Don't get me wrong the courts say he is guilty, so he is guilty. But they described him as Lex Luthor, you know, the ultimate villain._

(Canadian male with Bajan Parents, 26)

The general theme that runs through the narratives is that Black assailants are more noticeable. Thus all the contributors agree not only on the focus of the crime, but also the intensity of the focus. The first narrator’s comparison of the Leimonis and Baranovsky murders proved informative. In saying "...being shot is obviously awful, but being beaten to death is inhumane" he is stating that the tone of the media was much gentler than in the Just Desserts’ case. This is evident in the Bajan male’s use of the phrase “something went wrong and these kids beat him up.” Because the Leimonis case was Black male on White female crime, the event quickly became a catalyst for the whispers of the alleged increase in “Black crime”.

Such actions reinforce the negative sentiment that double standards exist within journalistic practices, as seen here:
I would have to say so, it seems like when a Black assailant is involved, there is more of a focus on it. But there have been White assailants who have done similar or more violent crimes and it doesn't get as much play in the media. That is just how the media is set up. It is not based on what you did, but who you are.

(Canadian male with Bajan Parents, 24)

Another male adds to the discussion by first reminding readers that participation in illegal activity is not particular to Black men. Secondly, he revisits the issue of the focus or 'gaze' on Black men and makes a subtle comment which borderlines a rhetorical question:

First of all it would appear that the crimes that Black youth are involved in are more noticeable. Some crimes are more frequent, some are quite violent. The drug trade is an attractive trade and it does attract a lot of Black youth. It attracts a lot of Whites, East Asians and Indians too. But Blacks for some reason stand out and make better news.

(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)

The Black Canadian male respondent offers an answer to the last portion of the Guyanese-Canadian male's narrative:

Of course, we are outside of that community and we are a threat. There is a journalistic tradition of this that has not changed and that goes back centuries and is part of the continuum.

(Black-Canadian male, 47)

As stated before, diction is very important when one is writing or speaking about an issue. The Black Canadian man used the word “tradition” to convey the meaning that harmful images have a history to them. They have roots somewhere with some individuals.
Thus the issue of what is frightening and what needs to be controlled, acts as a recurring theme in these narratives. Examples of subtle and overt racial descriptions were described in the following contributions:

*If you listen to the television, when a Black person does something the description indicates the person is Black. The description will be tall, Afro hairstyle etc. When a White person does something his height is described and his clothes are talked about. They are not going to mention that the person is White. So you have a distinction where you have people and then Black.*

*(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)*

This respondent stated that racial neutrality is practiced when describing White assailants. This is done by describing the clothing and the height of the White male vs. highlighting racial identifiers, for example, Afro hairstyles for Black men. Indirectly saying he is Black, but referring to racial identifiers, indicates and emphasizes that he is African Canadian. The Ghanaian male identified overt biases in crime story coverage:

*If it is a Black male, and it can be for a very petty crime, they will receive front page coverage most of the time. But a lot of the time I feel that it gets almost gratuitous, just endless coverage. If it is a White assailant, I don’t see as much. They don’t seem to dwell on the case as much as they do with Black cases. Sometimes they may just show the picture of the Black male, sometimes with White people they don’t show the pictures, they just mention it.*

*(Ghanaian male, 21)*

Though the next participant agreed with the previous respondents, he spoke of attempts to remind media outlets of their need to be accountable:
Oh, yeah, they have been trying to do some things about that. Some of us have complained about the play that those crimes committed by Blacks get from the media. It pales in comparison to the way White crime is presented. Sometimes when you see images of Whites who have committed a crime you may not see them in handcuffs. The pieces you see are more flattering than what you see of Black bodies and the way they are shackled. I think that what I see now is that they are reluctant these days to connect the body with the crime. My own investigations sometimes leads me to believe that any refusal to name the race of the body, the more likely that the person is Black/minority because of the media’s sensitivity to accusations. Anytime they (media) name the race of the person or a person’s name is mentioned, the person is more likely to be White...

(Ghanaian male, 48)

Once again, a respondent discussed the likelihood of White assailants being presented in unflattering matter as minimal. Mentioning that the shackling of Black bodies in handcuffs as more likely to occur, reinforces the belief of bias. Though media outlets may have lessened the practice of using racial identifiers, the Ghanaian male has noted that the absence or reluctance to do so may inadvertently indicate the ethnicity of the suspect.

A Black female adds to this discussion by making specific reference to discourses surrounding the assailant in the Holly Jones murder case:

I think so. I think so. I think it really depends... (regarding the Holly Jones case), when the picture was released the attitude of the media and public was like “okay, where did this guy come from? Something must be wrong with him. Why is it always that something has to wrong with this person’s character?” If it was a Black person, his picture would be up and you would know what he wearing. You would have other information on him.

(Jamaican-Canadian female, 24)
Legitimate questions are asked by this respondent. She questions the presentations in the media of the assailant, Michael Briere. Such images allowed the public to ask questions which alluded to his alleged “sickness”. Sickness in this sense, refers to psychological instability rather than something sinister. By questioning media and societal inquiries of Briere’s mental state, the female respondent stated that Briere’s treatment is slightly indicative of leniency. She argues that if Briere had been Black, he would have been exposed to some more condemnatory criticisms.

Intraracial crime, involving African Canadians in Toronto in the last 5 years has brought a private issue into the public eye. When asked if there is a difference in coverage, when both the assailant and victim are Black, 90 percent of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Participants sounded off about how Black intraracial crime is dealt with. Three categories have been devised to illustrate the responses given: Apathetic, Contingent and Happiness. Apathetic is defined as any narrative which discusses apathy or indifference to Black intraracial violence. Contingent refers to narratives which discuss concern about Black intraracial crime in certain circumstances. For example, one respondent stated that coverage of such crimes occur only if the crime is brutal. Happiness
refers to the belief that satisfaction characterizes the media's response to Black intraracial crimes.

Apathy characterizes the media's portrayal of Black intraracial crime according to the respondents. The use of the phrase 'Black on Black' crime is controversial. According to Bing, (1994) "it has become fashionable to discern between crime and Black on Black crime" (p. 245). Rarely, does one read or hear about White crime or 'White on White' crime (Bing, 1994). Because of this controversy, the limited use of this term in this work reflects the author's attempts to, as Bing (1994) states, "depoliticize the terminology" in order to promote dialogue about the 'conceptualizations of problems surrounding the issue of race and ethnicity' (p.245).

One male discussed the lack of police enthusiasm in solving intraracial crimes in the African Canadian community:

*To me, regarding the police, it doesn't seem to get as much attention. Had the victim been White, they would have people working on the case 24-7. Someone like O'Neil Greenland, who is supposed to be this gun toting person and had killed two people allegedly, was already an "unsavoury character." So why would energy be put into an investigation involving his murder?*

(Canadian man with Bajan Parents, 24)

---

5 Black intraracial crime is used instead of the more popular term 'Black on Black' because the latter focuses on the ethnicity of those involved in crime. The term 'White on White crime' does not exist, thereby eliminating the racial focus on the criminal activity.

6 Greenland was the alleged gunman involved in the murders of two Toronto men. He was killed in a daylight shooting outside a strip mall in what was described as a "revenge killing". See Toronto Star article October 29, 2002.
When “known to the police”, it is speculated that treatment of the suspect or victim in media sources is worse than if one was not tainted with this subversive label. In this case, Greenland is not seen as a deserving victim considering that he is accused of killing two men in one violent weekend in Toronto. Thus, it is the respondent’s belief that such ‘an unsavoury character’ who is Black, would be less likely to have his murder solved. Referring to a ‘White victim’ and ‘24-7,’ clearly demonstrates the attention that is believed to be given to White individuals.

Four narratives fall into the happiness category and provide a varied dialogue to the issue at hand:

I remember when the Ebanks brothers were killed and it was by another Black person. Later there was all this Black on Black crime going on and I felt like there was some sort of happiness, maybe on the part of the police and any other community. It is like people are saying, “well, we (Black people) are killing each other you know,” bound to happen sort of thing.

(Jamaican-Canadian female, 24)

I don’t think they care too much. As long as you kill each other, they are not too concerned. It is when you cross over, that is where they tend to seem to go overboard. I think that they use it to emphasize how dangerous we are, that we would kill each other. It is like “we did another bad thing didn’t we?” No other reason than the fact that we are bad, Black people.

(Black Canadian female, 44)

The media can either pick it up or highlight it. They can hang it out in the public to kind of say, “you see, they are killing each other” and say, “Bravo, thank God it is not us. They are killing themselves.”

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)
When asked to explain why people would be more comfortable with Black intraracial crime, one woman stated the following:

_The feeling is fine, let them kill each other. It might be to our benefit because they might reduce the population of Bad guys within their community. To some extent, I see it as a celebration of some sort._

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

The lone male in the happiness category adds the following:

_Many times the Caucasian Canadians, who are not affected, gloss over it. You can observe it sometimes. Neither do they put energy in solving it, like when the Blacks are murdering Blacks. Sometimes it is not easy to say but, it seems as though they are happy that we are killing one another. ..There is not that societal interest because they are not real people, not a part of society._

(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)

What is most prevalent is the feeling of societal relief that the perpetrators and victims are from the same ethnic group. This opinion is due to the respondents’ belief in societal racism. One response from the Jamaican-Canadian female is the expectation of society that Black intraracial crime is “bound to happen.” The Black Canadian female stated that as long as the pot of intraracial crime continues to simmer, but not boil over, then things are seen as normal. That is there should be no spill over effect to other communities, especially White communities. She draws attention to the element of risk by describing certain media reports as saying we are “bad Black people.” Extremely blunt, describes the Kenyan woman’s claims of “media highlighting and celebrating the removal of bad, Black men and claims that it will be beneficial to the larger
society.” Cries of “thank God it is not us”, points to the respondent’s belief that Black intraracial crime is seen as acceptable.

Whereas his female counterpart did not shy away from speaking, the Guyanese-Canadian male showed some reluctance to speak about the media’s celebration of Black intraracial crime. Looking back at his statement and recalling his body language, it was painful for him to say, “sometimes it is not easy to say but, it seems as though they are happy that we are killing one another. There is not that societal interest because they are not real people, not a part of society.” As he said these words, his speech became slower and punctuated with breaths and slight pauses. This is an indication that he had a hard time with the idea that many people have died and energy is not being put into solving the crimes.

Contingent characterizes the first two narratives. The importance of numbers in the coverage of crime is discussed:

_I think that if it was a series of three murders then, by the third one, they’d start to focus on the fact that it was a Black man killing Black man. If it was the first one, it would be viewed as not deserving anymore coverage than normal._

_(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)_

_I think it depends on how and what is done. If it was like a cold-blooded shooting and murder, they are more alarmed at the shooting than the fact that it is Black on Black crime. They are like, “oh shootings are happening again.” When you get a situation where 500 people witness an incident, you’ve got to print it in the papers._

_(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)_
In the former case, the respondent states that numbers are important in the publication of an issue. Further, the fact that a third killing would have to occur indicates the media's complicity in determining what a social problem is. In fairness to television and newspaper journalists, they have to screen stories to determine what should be shown and/or printed and what shouldn't. In the second narrative two points are discussed. Firstly, the focus on the crime being 'cold-blooded' indicates that the news needs some aspect of sensationalism to be deemed newsworthy. The people who are involved are not much of a concern, as is the weapon that was used to commit the crime. Secondly, the numbers issue becomes important when many people witness a certain event. It is then that the situation is covered. This is because the number of witnesses adds to the pressure to discuss events.

Other elements that were mentioned include the following:

*I think with Black and Black crime, you don't find much coverage unless it is something that is brutal.*

*(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)*

This also adds to the belief that Black intraracial crime is unimportant unless it is sensational enough to qualify for publication. One woman voiced her discontent about the assumptions of the principal players in crimes:
With Black on Black crime, why it is assumed that it is gang related or drug related? Not an innocent person who wasn't doing anything and then something occurred which led to a shooting?

(Black Jamaican female, 39)

According to this respondent, there is a tendency to assume the worst of Black intraracial crime. Suspicion, rather than sympathy, is what greets the reader/viewer when media sources describe such incidences.

Criminal encounters involving White Victims and Black Assailants.

Respondents give their opinions on this pairing and refer to a growing sense of societal concern. The first respondent discussed the preoccupation of the skin colour of the assailant:

That is clearly what went down with ViVi Leimonis. The Blackness of the suspect was a prime feature in the coverage and not the crime itself.

(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)

Another participant discussed the presence of perspectives shown by the media:

With Black on White crimes, they seem to almost romanticize it. The article about Greenland and his alleged shooting of two innocent guys, just mentioned their names in that article. There was no perspective from the victim's family or anything. If you contrast that with the Georgina 'ViVi' Leimonis case, the articles showed her father kissing her corpse at her funeral. That favouring one side over the other, I see that a lot.

(Ghanaian male, 21)
The Ghanaian male indicated that the White victim's perspective in one article was 'favoured' over that of Black victims in another article. He used the word 'romanticize' in regards to the discussion of Black assailants and White victims. This is done to show importance that White victims hold in Canadian society. For example, showing Leimonis' father kissing her corpse, provokes tremendous emotion to the reader. It also forces people to demand justice for the suffering of the White victim.

The last six respondents discussed many issues surrounding this pairing:

If the victim is White, he is always the ultimate victim. He never saw it coming. If two guys get into a fight and the White guy ends up dead, he was the best White guy ever. The Black guy had a history. They will find everything on this guy. They will say that he was violent from preschool. If a White guy does something to a Black guy, for the most part people will say, "I wonder what that Black guy did?" He must have pushed the guy to the limits. If the assailant is Black, we are given the feeling that he can flip at any time.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)

If it was a Black man killing a White person the coverage is different, that gets front page coverage. That gets the first few minutes of coverage on news channels right away. I think it depends on the nature of it, just how violent it is.

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

If it is a Black on White crime, it is blown out of proportion and they make race an issue. They say that it is Blacks who are criminals. It is to do with their race, culture and way of life.

(Global-African, Somali male, 30)
I think that would be blown out of proportion. ...If it is put in a certain way, you can measure the pain they are feeling. You can almost tell that there is so much hurt given the kind of coverage they give to that scenario. The length of time they take to go through painstaking details as to how it happened, and how it affected the community is different compared to Black on Black crime. Much more weight, urgency and importance are given to it. They look at it as outsiders coming to invade and attack us in our own communities...

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

It was an accident, the person did not mean to do it, or he was crazy or it was because of stress. They always have beautiful excuses for White people, that is what I notice, beautiful excuses. But when it comes to Black people there are no excuses, they are just vicious animals.

(Black Jamaican female, 39)

Then it is big deal because that stems from slavery. Like people consider a Black person to have low status and harming a White person is like harming someone who is above him. That is how it is classified.

(Ghanaian male, 43)

Words such as "ultimate victim", "front page coverage", "it has to do with their race", "blown out of proportion" and "Black people are just vicious animals" further indicate the value that is placed on White victims. In contrast, Black assailants are treated with disdain. The last narrator explained the origin of this difference in treatment when he said, "...people consider a Black person to have low status and harming a White person is like harming someone above you."
Criminal encounters involving White female Victims and Black male Assailants.

Usually, it is this combination of assailant and victim which is the most controversial. This is due to historical definitions of Black male sexuality as “unbridled” and “threatening to White female purity”. Pieterse (1992) argues that part of the racial politics that occurs goes hand in hand with sexual politics. Certain myths were propagated, such as that of the Black male as being hypersexed, and of the White woman on the pedestal—the idolization of the White female in the American South (Pieterse, 1992). Such sentiments of Black men helped to promote them to become ‘America’s most fearsome sex symbol’ (Pieterse, 1992). Because of these constructions, Black men were often subject to lynching as a way of dealing with the new crime of ‘rape’ against the White female (Pieterse, 1992). Prior to that, in the 1890s in the United States, the main concern was the rebellion of Blacks and their potential to assault White males on their property (Pieterse, 1992). All this information sets the stage for the narratives on this particular coupling:

...When it is opposite, especially that combination of Black man, White female...it dates back to so long and laws that were put in place not so much in Canada, but in the USA. They placed the White female as this entity that was so precious and in need of protection from the Black male. In many people's minds the Black male is subhuman. So when you have this White, virginal princess type figure being attacked by this terrible Black monster, it almost makes people rationalize those laws that were put in place.

(Ghanaian female, 26)
This respondent concurred with the depictions of White females and Black males and the violent history that unites the two groups. The Bajan male goes beyond the historical aspects of the relationship between the two groups and identifies the ramifications of Black male on White female, crime:

*Oh that is the worst, the worst. The chain of things is White male, White female, Black female, Black male. Their (the media’s) job is to make it look like the White guy didn’t do something right. The White guy did not protect his woman. The Black guy? Well, he is just doing what comes naturally. He did something awful. Black people are just used to doing these things. Suddenly, it is society’s fault that she (White female) got hurt. She is the perfect victim... just in the wrong place at the wrong time.*

*(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)*

Both participants indicated that this is the worst combination that can exist. The Bajan male explained the reason for this sentiment. He described a hierarchy that he believes exists in society which sees White males at the top and Black males at the bottom. Because White males are seen to be the protector of White women, a White female who is hurt by a Black male is seen to have lacked a guardian. This is what is meant by "...the media’s job is to make it look like the White guy did not protect his woman." Thus any type of attack on a White female is met with strong emotional, and sometimes, physical reaction.

The next individual describes how the Leimonis murder became an event:
When that Black guy killed Ms. Leimonis that story went on and on, okay. They just wanted to blame the Black community. They did not want to look at the problem. But it involved a White, middle class person's community, by a Black person, then there is something wrong with the Black community.

(Jamaican-Canadian female, 24)

Repetition is what the Jamaican-Canadian female alluded to with the words "on and on." Besides identifying this journalistic tool, she also displayed her dismay at the blame heaped on the Black community and the social class influenced concern for the victim. Her critique of the focus on the social class of the victim stems from what another respondent termed 'crossing over.' That is, only when a crime hits a middle-class person by one from a presumably lower class and stature, is attention drawn to it. Such actions led to the Ghanaian male, female and Jamaican male to make the following comments:

If a Black male is alleged to have committed some offence against a White female everything is turned upside down.

(Ghanaian male, 43)

That (Black male assailant on White female victim) is even worse. For this, the publicity will be great. It would be shown in a sympathetic way for people to feel sorry and the publicity would be far different.

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)

They (crime stories) are blown up when White people are the victims of crimes such as murder or robbery, some particular form of violence. If the victim happens to be White and female and it is a sexual crime yeah, it is totally blown out of proportion and everybody gets involved in it.

(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)
One man sees the Just Dessert Case as reminiscent of the O.J. Simpson case because of the ethnicity of the people involved. He also referred to journalistic devices in an attempt to describe how a crime story is kept fresh and current:

*It depends on the crime. I mean the crime with Georgina Leimonis was like our O.J. Christie Blatchford uses your standard journalistic approach. She is a relatively good writer. She knows how to use prose, get people hot and then sell papers. That is what a journalist does today. Unless it has those components to make it highly charged, it becomes a backroom story to just keep the pot bubbling a bit...*

*(Black Canadian male, 47)*

Illustrations are used to further explain the horror of the event. In terms of the latter, as one respondent stated, Georgina Leimonis’ father was shown kissing her corpse. Leimonis’ family was described as "hardworking, Greek immigrants" (Cannon, 1995). Leimonis’ was described "...as a ‘good girl’ who never caused anyone a moment of grief" (Cannon, 1995). While no one can find fault with the Greek custom for deceased, unmarried women, the focus on Leimonis’ funeral attire, added to the controversy. Leimonis was buried in a wedding dress as a virgin ‘Bride of Christ’ (Cannon, 1995). This, combined with the slaying and parental descriptions, unwittingly contributed to the moral panic of ‘Black crime’.

* African Canadian fears of racial denigration are real. As vigils were kept and a shrine was created on the steps of the café, a plea for racial harmony was made. Cannon (1995) describes the scene:
...the largest sign was a message printed in black marker on white board. It read: "we grieve for our lost sister, Georgina ViVi Leimonis. Don't let this tradegy (sic) be marred by racist issues. When a White man murders it is not a reflection on the White community. This murder does not reflect the Black community..."

This message, however did not reach everyone's ears. As Cannon (1995) explains, across the side of the sign someone had written an answer to this plea for tolerance:

"Kill your own. Leave us alone."

Michael Valpy of the Globe and Mail expresses this virulent sentiment in his column when he says, "the barbarians are inside the gates" (as cited in Cannon, 1995). His reference is to the Black assailants of Ms. Leimonis and their intrusion into the upscale area that "houses much of the Canadian intelligentsia" (Cannon, 1995). The meaning of the term barbarians is self-explanatory. Using this phrase in a newspaper column not only indicates one's understandable outrage, but also indicates a tendency to use harsh language for certain groups of people.

Strong displays of fury are displayed in both examples. The Kenyan and Black Jamaican women are correct in their analysis of crimes involving Black assailants and White victims. In both examples, terms are used to describe the assailants involved in the crimes. Disparaging names such as "barbarians" and phrases such as "kill your own" indicate how Black male assailants are viewed.
Criminal encounters involving White Assailants and Black Victims.

The majority of respondents, 84.2 percent or 16, noted the scarcity of media coverage when the assailant is White and victim is Black. Two respondents did not give an answer to the question, thus 10.5 percent had no opinion. One respondent, or 5.26 percent of those interviewed, believed that the issue would be fairly dealt with in the media. Narratives seen below reflect some of the majority opinions:

*If it is a White on Black crime, most people don’t even see that as an issue, because it doesn’t happen. You don’t have White people stealing from Black people. It is just something you never hear of because the media don’t report those sorts of things. When these things happen, (e.g. White individuals stealing from Black individuals) no attention is paid to it or it is described as an incident resulting from being at the wrong place at the wrong time...*

(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)

*I don’t even see that. It’s either a Black person assaulted a White person or a Black on Black issue. I rarely, to be honest, see a White person take on a Black person. I don’t think they put that out. Maybe it is me not catching it, but I have never seen it. It is the focus. I don’t think it is focused on...*

(Jamaican-Canadian female, 24)

*I can’t remember anything in the media about a Black person being killed by a White person and that is very interesting. That is not to say that it doesn’t exist, that it doesn’t happen. It is another way of hushing the perception that White people can’t kill...*

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

*The funny thing is that you don’t see much of that at all. In a sense, I have to say that it hardly exists, especially in those hideous crimes.*

(Jamaican male, 58)
What is noticeable about the first four narratives is the invisibility of the media presentation of White assailants and Black victims. Whereas the last participant only acknowledged the invisibility, the other three offered reasons for this phenomenon. Beliefs that Black individuals belong to the working class makes it less believable that a White individual would, for example, rob a Black individual. Since such schemas guide one’s interpretations, a belief such as the one just explained, would not prove to be credible, let alone newsworthy. Further, there is less focus on Black victims of White assailants because Black lives are not seen as important as those of their White counterparts.

Other respondents also provided their opinions about crime coverage involving these key players:

There would not be much coverage as it would be if things were different. The media does not want to taint the White community. They don’t want people to know that there are bad apples in the White community. Sometimes these situations are portrayed like the Black person deserved to be killed.

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)

I would say that they would portray the White person as defending himself from the bad, Black person. They don’t want to be viewed as having a malignant type of situation in their type of community...

(Black Canadian female, 44)

When there is White on Black crime, race is irrelevant. They will not depict the White criminal in a negative light or try to criminalize the entire White race because of the actions of that one individual.

(Global-African, Somali male, 30)
Malignancy, taintedness and criminalization are three terms that arise from the four narratives. The absence of these elements, in the discussion of White on Black crime, results in a lack of a cultural explanation for the behaviour of White assailants. The new racism, as it is referred to, involves the remoulding, disappearance and re-emergence of racism in subtle forms. Henry and Bjornson, (1999) state that “the new racism cites pathological cultural patterns as major reasons for criminal behaviour...” By studying this form of racism, Murji (2000) concludes that “Black culture is treated as being indistinguishable from a culture of crime” (p.188).

White individuals do not have these traits imposed on their ways of dressing, methods of speaking and music that is listened to etc. Their actions are not scrutinized and judged. Also, there is no link established to White crime, skin and culture. Though the intention is not to wish poor treatment on the various White communities, it is important to show why “beautiful excuses” and burial of “malignancy” are afforded to White communities. Because they form the dominant group and have positive characteristics applied to them, their misdeeds are often ignored.

A unique twist to this issue was provided by this respondent:

*I don’t think it would get any coverage unless there was a racial aspect to it. ...That stuff is going on all the time, but it is not newsworthy for the media. If it turns out that the White guy is a thug, they will probably find the hip-hop aspect...while still maintaining White innocence and the notion of the White victim. They still have to racially contextualize it by blaming rap, Black music, Black savagery... I think they are trying*
to deny any type of Black voice... They haven't been able to dismiss us quickly, but they are trying to do that.

(Black Canadian male, 47)

The invisibility that the other respondents discussed is explained in the Black Canadian male's contribution. While the lack of newsworthiness has been discussed thoroughly, his mention of racial contextualization is intriguing. In chapter five, the term Afro-Americanization was used to discuss the adoption of "Black" hairstyles, slang, music, fashion and culture. It is discussed once again by referring to the White individual's lifestyle. The phrase "if it turns out that the White guy is a thug, they will find the hip-hop aspect," means that the White male's behaviour will be seen as a result of "Black influence" which is seen as unattractive. "Black" music and culture, that is rap and hip-hop, etc. is to blame for violent outbursts and its corresponding mischief. This remains a way to blame Black individuals, in this case, for their own victimization.

Two contrasting viewpoints can be found below:

A typical example is that of this young girl who was killed (reference to the Holly Jones case). She is a White kid so you know more attention was focused on her. In the opposite way, if she had been simply a Black kid, although there will be attention focused on her, it would have been limited to a certain number of articles. That is the way it is. It exists in the United States and in Canada. In Canada it is more invisible.

(Ghanaian male, 43)

---

7 High profile case of a 10 year-old Toronto girl who was murdered by Michael Briere in 2003.
In the Toronto media that doesn't happen often. In the American media, you still have the notion of Black person inferior, White person superior etc. It is here too, but it is more overt in the States. Here it is subtle. If you are looking from a Canadian perspective, I think the media would try to be as fair as possible and try to give you as much facts as they could. I think that they would treat it with some decency. They wouldn't try to forget that it happened or anything like that.

(Canadian man with Bajan Parents, 24)

According to the Ghanaian respondent, skin colour demarcates who is important and who isn't. The fact that a child is used as an example does not increase his confidence in the intentions of journalists. The Bajan male does concede that racism exists. However, he believes that these players would receive fair treatment in the media. Though it isn't evident as to where his confidence stems from, he still displays hope.

Chapter Seven discusses the ideas surrounding intragroup conflict and how it is affected by intergroup dynamics.
CHAPTER SEVEN: ANXIETY

Anxiety, a state of being uneasy,

apprehensive, or worried about what may happen;

concern about a possible future event.⁸

This chapter is divided into two parts: experiences and consequences.

EXPERIENCES

Eleven respondents identified themselves as parents. Given this, it was necessary to explore what effects, if any, impact the children of these respondents. These respondents were asked a two part question, however only the first part is displayed here. The participants were asked the following: “As a parent, do you have any concerns about the effects of negative media portrayals on how others view your children, especially Black males?” See Table 3 below.

TABLE 3- PARENTAL CONCERNS ABOUT NEGATIVE IMAGES AND THE EFFECTS ON HOW OTHERS VIEW THEIR CHILDREN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>PARENTS REPORTING CONCERNS</th>
<th>PARENTS NOT REPORTING CONCERNS</th>
<th>TOTAL N=11</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁸ Definition courtesy of the Webster’s New World College Dictionary.

* Refers to parents who did not report concerns
As the Table shows, 36.4 percent of the female parents expressed concern about how other people view their children. Of the male parents surveyed, 54.5 percent of them reported concerns. However, 9.1 percent of male parents were not concerned about media influenced views of their children. Though this chart discusses the gender divide on this issue, 90 percent of the parents asked reported having concerns. A sample of these narratives explains their positions more clearly. An incident at her place of employment sets the stage for a 49 year-old Ghanaian-Canadian women’s concerns about her children:

Yes, as a parent I have concerns as to how people view my children. I have two Black sons ages 17 and 14 respectively, and I am Black. I remember at work a colleague of mine, who is a white-skinned Spanish woman, and I were talking about how children behave these days. The person made some comments about Black people and Black children to the extent that she labeled all Black young men as criminals. I said to her "you are here and you work with the courts and you see young, White men who are brought to court for criminal activities everyday. So don't just single out Black men to be criminals because there are bad apples in every basket"....

The Ghanaian woman's colleague, in realizing that her prejudices had been exposed, attempts to save face. The respondent's narration continues:

She just apologized and said "oh, I am not just saying that Black people are bad, I know it is everywhere and it depends on the community you live in..." That conversation was cut short. If this person did not know me and she saw my children outside somewhere, she would have treated them the same way. She was a nice person to me before the topic came up, but now I know her stand with Black people....
This contribution contains many elements of interest. Firstly, the setting for this incident is the woman's workplace. What makes it more troubling is that the place of employment is one in which many people of varying linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds interact. Secondly, prior to this conversation the respondent did not know that her colleague feared Black men. Because the respondent is Black and female, the colleague did not feel threatened. Thirdly, feelings of anger and betrayal arose from the participant. Anger stems from her colleague's racially insensitive remarks and the reality of her lack of respectfulness towards her, as a Black mother and as a human being. Feelings of betrayal stem from the respondent towards the colleague whom she considered a friend. Finally, the feeling that one cannot escape such sentiments, even at work, leaves a mark on this respondent. She worries about what might happen should her sons come into contact with others who hold such attitudes.

The Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40, gives her opinion about media images and her children:

Absolutely. Of course, I do. Every moment it crosses my mind. But as a parent, I have a responsibility to make sure that I not only protect them, but be proactive in doing things within their surroundings. This will ensure that they are safe and perceived like any other kid and treated as such.
It is clear that this respondent is aware of the issues that can affect her children. Her statement "every moment it crosses my mind," indicates that it is something that this participant often thinks about. She takes great measures to make sure her children don't suffer.

This woman has three children, two sons and one daughter ages 22, 6 and 5 respectively. Though all three children can be influenced by these images, it is the youngest children who are the most vulnerable. This is because they don't know about the significance of skin colour and how it shapes their world.

A 42 year-old Ghanaian woman, with a nine year old son, responded to the question in the following manner:

Yes, you know when they (Black people) are babies, they (society) admire the child whether he or she is Black or White. But when the (Black) child grows up they (society) look at him or her and think "how is this child going to be?" Is this going to be a good person or a bad person?

This woman is referring to the colour blindness that exists when the children are young, but disappears as they age. Karen, a respondent in Lawrence Hill's (2001) book Black Berry, Sweet Juice, agreed with the respondent and reiterated the Ghanaian woman's point:

Black children are treated as colourful things that people will ooh and ahh over when they are young, and soon as they grow up, they do not ooh and ahh any more. The children are then treated in a racist manner and have to deal with all kinds of problems. The same people who were oohing and ahhing have changed and are now talking about vandalism and Black kids. Black babies are cute. Black teenagers are not.
It is this body of knowledge that Black parents work with which causes them to wonder about the future of their children. In their infancy, Black children are seen as harmless until they grow up and are put under surveillance.

One male respondent also expresses concern about how other people view Black children:

*Of course!! I feel for every Black kid. Of course, the images that are projected make people look at your children in a bad light. They expect the Black child to be bad and they treat them with suspicion. That coupled with the negative images, make other people feel that “my child shouldn’t mix with those kids”...and that creates a lot of confusion.*

*(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)*

Isolation that develops from negative publicity affects the making and sustaining of friendships by Black children. Though this individual has adult female children, he is still cognizant of the pain that younger Black children endure.

The Ghanaian male, 48, reveals his fears of what can happen to his son:

*...particularly living in this society, the most endangered species are Black males/youth. I have a 16 year-old son and anytime I go home and he is not home I get concerned especially, since this is the age that they get into all these kinds of things with the police, legal and justice systems.*
Similarly, a Jamaican male, 58, stated that he is very protective of his sons:

*I am always afraid for them. If I am out and I come home and my sons who are 34 and 35, are out at night, I wake up in the morning and want to make sure that they are home.*

The fear that both the Ghanaian and Jamaican male exude, refers to their knowledge that Black children are subjected to increased attention. What is interesting about the two is that they both referred to their male children and the how they might be treated by the outside world. The former referred to his 16 year-old son, and his vulnerability to conflicts with the police and legal system, due to his age. The latter’s preoccupation with his sons’ whereabouts is similar to the reasoning of his Ghanaian counterpart. Even though the Jamaican man’s sons are in their 30s, he still has serious concerns for their welfare.

Eight of the nineteen participants identified as single and without children. Though this is the case, these men and women shared their concerns about media influenced views of themselves, siblings and other family members. The question posed to these individuals is as follows: Are you concerned with how these images will effect how people view you? What about family members or friends? Samples of the narratives follow below:

*Well, yes. It used to bother me when there was any type of crime and I would hear the description. On the news it would say: male, Black, 5'8-6'1", wearing a grey t-shirt. I am thinking “that could be me.” Are people looking at me on the street saying, “hey, that could be the guy who did*
that." When they (media) give descriptions, the way I see it is, if it is too vague, don’t even leak it. Don’t even say anything.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 24)

Bulletins looking for suspects in criminal cases, often give vague descriptions that result in a one size fits all description. Such actions put young, Black males at risk of misidentification. The last sentence offers a suggestion in that unless the description is clear, don’t release it.

One woman also discussed the issue of group responsibility and how images impact how she is perceived:

Oh, of course. Yes. They are Black men, but I am also Black. So there is that small degree of separation, you know what I mean. So it is still a reflection, it is still portrayed as a reflection of me as a member of the Black community. Definitely.

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

The employment setting serves as the site for the Jamaican-Canadian female’s knowledge of other people’s perceptions:

I do. Because even though I am not a Black male, I still represent the Black community whether I am Canadian or whether I am Jamaican. The way the media portrays us, does have an impact on me regardless of being female and young. There is one time at work for instance, this girl who I used to work with, who is White, asked my manager who is Greek, a question. My colleague asked my boss "if she (boss) saw me in a line and I butt in front of her, would she say anything? And my boss said "no, I would be too scared." Why? I did something wrong, what do you think I am going to do? ...you see that is one example. I am not portrayed as gun-toting or anything like that, yet I am still feared by the people I work with? That does not sound right...
These two women have shown that they are constantly reminded of their 'outsider' status. These narratives further demonstrate that Black women can be seen as socially threatening, though it is not as obvious as the 'gun-toting gangsters' image.

The Black Canadian female, 44, was asked if she has concerns with how images affect how she is perceived. She acknowledged having concerns, but not only for herself:

You know it is part of growing up in this country. I already know that when I walk down the street, when people look at me, no matter what I say, how educated I am, how articulate I am, they will still view me as a potentially dangerous individual. You know, we have access to guns, we are out of control.

In regards to her relatives.....

I have a brother....I have lots of male cousins who are like my nephews and when I see this, it scares me because they are out there and they are young men. You think, man, it does not matter whether I have children or not. I have that absolute understanding that this is a possibility and you have to take responsibility for it.....

The focus of the 26 year-old Ghanaian female's fears is her 21 year-old brother. When asked if she is concerned with how people view him, she answered in the following manner:

Absolutely, absolutely. I am afraid that my brother will take the bus one day and the driver will look at my brother and associate him with the last Black boy he saw and treat my brother in a negative way. Young Black men face a lot of pressures in this society. Every chance I get, I tell my brother how proud I am of him because he has overcome soo many pressures. These pressures come from everywhere....
In the second part of her narrative, she discussed her brother’s fashion sense:

*It is funny because I watch my brother and I notice that he does not, and sometimes I think it is intentional, dress in these ways that are described as wearing baggy jeans and a basketball cap. For many years my brother has never worn a baseball cap. Some part of me wonders if there is a subconscious effort to not fall into this description, so that when racial profiling does occur, he won’t have the baggy jeans etc. I wonder but I never asked him directly....*

To the question do you have any concerns about media portrayals and how other people view you? A Ghanaian male, 21, stated the following:

*Yeah, because they generalize it. They see the trends, they see the fashions, the clothes that the suspected assailant or the assailants wear and they associate it with crime. So anybody wearing those clothing is automatically assumed to be one of those people who engage in such activity.*

His views, once again, refer to the clothing of the hip-hop generation. The trends and fashions are usually not only associated with crime, but with a certain type of criminal. When asked if he thought it affected his behaviour at school? He agreed and said the following:

*It has not been direct though. But gradually as I have matured and I have grown up, I just, I guess it has become more aware to me that if I dress like that, if I use slang and all that, it is going to be a reflection of who I am. So I have strayed away from following those trends. I think it has worked to my advantage. It is something that I had to do eventually because I know the way that people are thinking out there...*

Avoiding certain clothing and watching speech patterns are two ways in which this male avoids the scrutiny of the others. Though it
may seem like an overreaction, one must pay attention to his use of
the word 'advantage' because is not accidental. Considering his
feeling that he cannot escape the scrutiny and suspicion that greet
him, he changes parts of his life to avoid conflict. His evaluation of
his actions show that he feels that he has benefited from modifying
his behaviour.

The second half of the narrative is significant because the
Ghanaian female and male respondents are siblings. Neither has
any knowledge of what the other has said. However, the sister is
correct in her assertion that her brother does not want any undue
attention. So he scrutinizes his clothing and the meanings attached
to them.

Charles Horton Cooley's looking glass self is appropriate to
explain the concerns about the internalization of images. The three
principal components are as follows: The imagination of our
appearance to the other person; the imagination of this judgement
of that appearance and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or
mortification (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000).

Does mortification engulf these individuals? How do these
representations affect the children of respondents, and/or the single
respondents? We will first look at the children of the respondents.
The Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54, explained how children are responding to these images:

*I think that right now, the children are beginning to accept it as natural; as part of just growing up. ..They are beginning to accept it rather than saying, like the older people say, “oh boy, I hope it is not a Black person...” They are accepting it and see it as a part of the culture and flaunting it. It is because the media puts it out there as part of a “gangsta culture.” I think what the young Black males, and some females, seem to be doing is making it part of their culture, so it is no longer a shock.*

He continued speaking and revealed a generational divide in the response to such images:

*It is as if they are saying “look,” if you are saying this is a part of my culture. I’ll talk more about it, while the older people may want to reject it, and say, ‘no, this is not us.’ What the Black child, especially the males, seem to be saying is that ‘yes, I can do that to you. I am a gangster, I can do that to you and you will read about me, so watch out.’ So it is like they embrace it and be the stereotype in order not to shock themselves...*  

Older African-Canadians, especially those who are parents, and have experienced the Canadian civil rights movements would not accept such sentiments. However some of the children born in the late 1980s, and onwards, may be more likely to feel this way. It is this generation who is exposed to distorted images and don’t have memories of demonstrations and consciousness raising music, among other things. Lack of positive examples of resistance to counteract the distortions, is likely to help encourage the adoption of negative depictions. With all these elements in place, according to Cooley, these children, knowing the judgement of their image in society, embrace the self-feeling of mortification.
These next four narratives clearly show the importance of setting high expectations of achievement for Black youth:

Definitely. I am concerned about these images on Black male psyches. I think sometimes when they are shown in a certain way they have to act that way because society expects that of them so what else? So whatever they do, they are going to be seen that way so there is a bit of that plays out and I am concerned about that...

(Ghanaian male, 48)

I am afraid for everyone of them...that it will affect them in some way. Because they see this media thing and some of the influences that they get out there concerning what the media says. This racism thing is not good for any society. If you go out and all you hear is negative vibes, it is not healthy for the upcoming ones.

(Jamaican male, 58)

Yeah. I see it where more and more of these children don't care much. They play basketball because of the image that the players make millions. I think that they want to get rich in any way that they can. They think, “If I have the money, then comes the power. Then I won't get hurt.” You are never told that being Black means that you can accomplish things. The bad images of people being arrested, drugs and shootings those are all the images they get. A lot of these kids have no hope.

(Black Jamaican female, 39)

I think these images will affect my sons in that they will think “I am Black and male and if I get into trouble or something will I get fair treatment? Will the media provide fair coverage if something happens? Why is this happening to me? I did not create myself, God created me this way. Why am I not being treated the way other people are treated. I am afraid that they will lose their self esteem. I hope it will not happen. I hope they will understand. It can affect them.

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)

Low expectations for Black youth, derived from negative imagery, lead parents to worry about children internalizing images. The
Ghanaian male’s assertion that, "sometimes when they are shown in a certain way, they have to act that way because society expects that of them, so what else?" is pervasive. This is why the issue of low expectations is very serious. It has been said that children respond to stimulation, praise and beliefs in their abilities. When these beliefs are lacking or absent, alternative means of self-worth are sought. While it cannot be said that all Black youth lack positive reinforcement, generally, there is a lack of confidence in and, concern for, Black individuals and their educational abilities. This is the reason that some youth are beginning to accept the distorted images of Black culture, which serves as a self-fulfilling prophecy of despair and criminal activity. The phrase “If I have money, then comes the power. Then I won’t get hurt”, you are never told that being Black means that you can accomplish things,” indicates low self-concept. The statement, “If I get into trouble, or something, will I get fair treatment? Will the media provide fair coverage if something happens to me?” indicates a fear of the justice system. These are also feelings that develop from the embrace of self-mortification.

Some respondents exhibited faith in their ability to combat their child’s adoption of negative depictions:

No, I am not worried about that. He can make decisions on his own. I can only advise him.

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 42)
I think that if I do my job, I control videos, movies, you know, the visual stuff, she will be okay.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)

Those without children also discussed the effects of Black imagery on their psyches:

Before I thought about that, just the way people perceive me. For example, how I keep my hair and the clothes I wear. It used to really, really bother me but now I am like "whatever." I can't dictate how people think of me, I can only watch how I portray myself...

(Canadian with Bajan parents, 24)

When asked the question, do the images affect how you feel about yourself? One woman replied in the following manner:

Urn, no. For no other reason than I know I did not do it (commit a crime). I know that there are bad people regardless of race. Unfortunately, sometimes the 'badness' of Black members is showcased more, but it is not me. I have to consciously make a separation of this fact, because otherwise I might just get consumed with those images and start to think that it is a reflection of me and start acting on what they say....

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

Striking differences exist between these two examples. According to the Bajan male, his worries about how people perceive him are a thing of the past. The Trinidadian-Guyanese female stated that she has put effort into not absorbing the images that are presented to her. Therefore she admits that there is a possibility that she could believe that these depictions reflect her. What is common to the two
is that regardless of gender, these concerns affect both respondents.

One clear indication of anxiety in the Black community is the theme of collective responsibility. When a crime is committed, Black individuals express a heightened sense of awareness of themselves and their connection to the dominant society. Respondents stated whether they thought about the race and gender of the perpetrator after a serious crime had been committed. Out of nineteen respondents, sixteen people stated that the race and gender of a suspect in a criminal act do cross their minds:

*Oh, totally. You sit there and you hold your breath and pray to God that the description does not say, 'male Black.' You literally breathe a sigh of relief when they say, you know, blond hair, blue eyes. You hope it is not a Black person because we don't want that media attack again.*

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

*I used to do that in the beginning, but once I knew what was going on, there was no point in saying, I wish, I hope. I knew once that item is on the news, it is going to be portrayed in a certain way and so on.*

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

*I do not think you can be a member of the Black community without thinking that. I think it is some sort of qualifier. Even when I was away at school and I was living with Black women and we watched City Pulse, you could just feel in the room that people were crossing their fingers, or getting very tense and praying that person on television would not be Black. When it was not a Black male, everybody breathed a sigh of relief.*

(Ghanaian female, 26)
The chance of a media inspired moral panic informs this narrative:

..In Toronto, recently we had this eleven year-old girl who was killed...and many of us were holding our collective breaths, when they said that they caught the person. We said, "oh God, please do not let him be Black." This is the thing, we have to deal with this and part of it is because of the way the media has portrayed this in the past with certain racialized bodies...

(Ghanaian male, 48)

Yup, the first thing I ask, when I hear a shooting, is, "is it a Black guy?" If somebody says that someone was shot, I say who, Black?

(Jamaican male, 58)

I always wonder about that. The thing that I say to myself is not Black again. Because then it gives a negative image to Black people. Anytime there is a crime and the assailants are mentioned, I keep praying that it should not be a Black person because then it brings that bad image to Black people, as violent people.

(Ghanaian male, 43)

I just hope that he is not Black. If he is a Black guy, it is the first thing I think about. If I turn on the news and I see a Black guy I watch the whole thing. If the victim is not Black or the assailant is not Black, I really don't pay that much attention to it.

(Canadian male with Bajan Parents, 26)

I have a problem with the newspaper articles and television reports. As soon as I hear the news and somebody gets killed or shot I think, instantly, and I am guilty of this, "it must be a Jamaican, and it must be somebody Black..." We are guilty of judging and saying things....

(Black Jamaican female, 39)

Three others did not answer in the affirmative. The responses however indicated the depth of this issue. Two of the narratives are
included here and express resilience, anguish and fatigue on the part of the male respondents:

I use to. I do not wonder about the gender, but talk about the race. I used to do this and be fearful and say, “I hope this one’s not Black” because of the possible repercussions in society. What I did is that I looked at the kids and I saw their comfort level. Oh, the kids do not care what race this person is. Those kids do not worry about that. I came to the conclusion that White people do not hide when they hear about Bernardo...so why should I hide when Black people commit vicious crimes? I am not responsible for all of my Black brothers and sisters actions.

(Canadian male of Jamaican descent, 54)

Oh, I used to until I realized that I was buying into the game. Now I just giggle if I find out that the person is Black. It is a way of me not taking on other people’s shit. You know, it is not me. Why would I take that point of view? Why the hell would I would I allow you to point me in a position of defensiveness? Why would I pay attention to that? You are a moron judging a situation with absolutely no sensitivity, no empathy ...Why would I read your point of view? That is not me ...I am tired of taking on someone else’s burden that some moron, I have no respect for, is telling me I have to. I just do not need the pain.

(Black Canadian male, 47)

The latter narrative expressed fatigue, but mainly anger. His anger is directed toward those he believes do not care about the plight of African Canadians. He uses laughter as a defense mechanism in order to deflect other people’s burdens and condemnations. The former’s disregard of other’s opinions lies in the innocence of the children in his presence and his realization that he cannot be his brother’s keeper. Both men have found ways to manage their anxiety.
Intragroup dynamics are one serious side effect of excessive media attention on Toronto's Black communities. The nineteen respondents answered the following questions: a) Are there certain groups in the Black community who are usually seen in newspaper and television depictions? b) Does this have consequences for the Black community at large?

Thirteen respondents, or 68.4 percent of those asked, stated that Jamaicans are often mentioned in news articles. Six respondents, or 31.5 percent of those asked, fall into the ‘other’ category. Table-4 summarizes the results:

TABLE-4 ARE THERE CERTAIN GROUPS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY WHO ARE USUALLY SEEN IN NEWSPAPER AND TELEVISION DEPICTIONS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNIC GROUP</th>
<th>TOTAL N=19</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAMAICANS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICANS AND JAMAICANS*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAINLY JAMAICAN/TRINIDADIANS/GUYANESE ISLANDS,</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAINLY JAMAICAN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*refers to the three who said Jamaican/Somalis, Jamaican/Nigerian and African and Jamaican. **Due to rounding, total may not equal 100.

What is clear is that Jamaicans make up the overwhelming majority of those represented in these depictions. Though this is the observation of many respondents, it is not correct to assume that
Jamaicans constitute a criminal class of individuals. Many sources indicate that Jamaicans are not valued as contributing citizens. In July 1992, a series of three articles entitled 'The Jamaican Connection' by Timothy Appleby appeared in the *Globe and Mail* newspaper (Henry, Matthis, Rees and Tator, 2000). The articles reported on the apparent upsurge of crime by Jamaicans in Canada, particularly Toronto. The articles focused on needing restraint on Jamaicans because of their increased criminality (Henry et al., 2000).

A *Toronto Star* article on Toronto Police Chief Fantino's visit to Jamaica yielded the following headlines: *Fantino forging links in Jamaica, Island's violent drug trade stirs Toronto killings.* Another *Toronto Star* article had the following headlines: 'Digging Up the Roots of Violence' and 'Understanding Jamaica.' These and other articles work together to form a proliferation of dehumanizing portrayals of the Jamaican community in general and Jamaicans in Toronto, in particular. The participants spoke out about who is featured in crime reports:

*Mostly the ones from the islands, particularly Jamaicans. Jamaicans are portrayed as criminals from robbery to drug dealing to gang activity and finally murderers.*

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)

*Jamaicans, to me it is like all you see on the news. If there is a crime involving anyone who is Black, it seems like they also have to say they are from Jamaica or they have ties to Jamaica. I am thinking that*

---

9 Headline from Toronto Star article on race and crime dated February 11, 2003.
10 Headline courtesy of Toronto Star article dated November 24, 2002.
seems to be disproportionate and that is not right. There is a large Jamaican community in Toronto, but there is a large Chinese community in Toronto. But you do not hear the police say a lot about them...

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 24)

Others attempt to explain the cultural demographic of Black people in Toronto:

What happens right now is that, you will see a lot of Jamaicans and the reasons you will see a lot of them in the media is because you got more Jamaicans than any other Black population here...

(Canadian man of Jamaican descent, 54)

People will believe that a lot of Black crime has its roots in the Jamaican community. It is not a very fair argument because if you look at Jamaican immigration versus immigration from St. Lucia, and the proportion of immigrants from that area, it would be easier to find more people in the Jamaican community than from another island...

(Ghanaian female, 26)

A Ghanaian male stated his opinion on this issue by saying the following:

I think Jamaicans. The sad thing is they are seen as the more violent community among the Black communities. They are seen more as those likely to be criminals which in many ways is very sad. But people forget a couple of things. Firstly, Jamaicans are in the majority in the Black community here. Secondly, that issue about Jamaicans committing more of the crimes, form a type of knowledge and leads to the whole thing of racial profiling....

(Ghanaian male, 48)

This respondent discussed some of the assumptions that surround Jamaicans and the Black communities:
Yeah, Jamaican names do come up or are implied. I do not think that people understand the difference. If the perception is that the people doing the crimes are Jamaicans they are going to assume that everyone is Jamaican. You may not have an accent, you may not understand patois or something, but they are going to make that assumption. They make that assumption with me...

(Black Canadian female, 44)

Assuming that every Black individual possesses a Jamaican nationality is a very common belief among individuals of European descent as well as among other ethnic groups. In her work entitled Under the Gaze, Jennifer Kelly (1998) provides evidence of this lack of knowledge of origins through her respondents. Though the individuals are students, their experiences are not limited to their age group. The students complained that the teachers and their fellow students had limited knowledge about countries that were populated by people of African descent:

Pearl: Like when you first meet them they think that you are from Jamaica...They say yeah, Jamaica man [said with a fake Jamaican accent].

Grace: They feel that they have to act different towards you...we went on the plane, the captain greets you and he shakes hands with the passengers. When we got on he says, “yeah man!” I mean why does he have to say it to us?

These are two examples of what I term assumptions of origin, once again referring to a common Jamaican nationality held by all Black people. Jennifer Kelly’s (1998) examples show that Black individuals are made to stand out. Other respondents cited ‘uneducated’, ‘violent’, ‘angry’, ‘savage’, ‘non-rational’, ‘aggressive’
and 'troublesome' as how Jamaicans are portrayed. While being a Canadian of Jamaican descent is not or should not be seen as problematic or undesirable, the lack of knowledge of the origins of African people is often taken as another example of disrespect. How these descriptions of Jamaicans and issues of violence and criminality affect intragroup relations is the subject of Section two: Consequences.

CONSEQUENCES

One point must be made clear: the discussion of this 'family drama' should not be taken as proof of Black cultural inferiority. Before the respondents are heard, it is necessary to present evidence of the cultivation of divisions within Toronto's Black communities. In his column, editor Arnold Auguste of Share, a community newspaper serving the Black and West Indian community in Toronto, presents an example of divisionary journalism. Auguste (2003) quotes former editor and Toronto Sun columnist Peter Worthington, regarding race and crime in Toronto:

...In a curious way, these articles and others, do Black citizens of Toronto a tremendous disservice. The disservice to Blacks is that they are often unfairly and wrongly believed to be shooters or prone to violence, even though the media does not come right out and say so. Black people in general are innocent. Those who do most of the shooting and committing of violent acts in Toronto have links or roots in Jamaica as have their victims. Refusing to acknowledge that the Jamaican link is connected with violent acts in greater proportion than their numbers in Toronto warrant, we are not showing tolerance or a colour blind attitude. We are de facto accusing all Black people of these crimes.
Worthington continued and stated the following:

Not giving the origins of the criminals is a huge mistake, and grotesquely unfair to citizens whose origins may be the United States, Nova Scotia, Trinidad, St. Lucia, Ghana, Nigeria, Somalia, wherever...it is also unfair to law abiding Jamaicans, who comprise the majority....

Worthington's comments are interesting. At first he seems to say that crime is racialized and that media outlets are guilty of it. He then slowly begins to unveil his agenda to his audience. He accuses Jamaicans of being the culprits in regards to criminal activity, thereby separating them from the "good Blacks". He is clear about who the "good" Blacks are because he mentions them specifically, that is, Nigerians, Trinidadians etc. Paradoxically, or perhaps intentionally, he then mentions that "law abiding Jamaicans" constitute the majority of the population. It is clear that his attempt at racial harmony is not genuine. Further, it is fair to say that he is cleverly using the old divide and conquer technique to pit Black individuals against each other. His intention is to highlight that Jamaicans are the problem, and that their criminal activities are creating problems for African Canadians of different origins.

Respondents sound off on the divisions that exist in the African Canadian community and how depictions influence these dynamics. One respondent begins by discussing Jamaican portrayals and Continental African response:
Yeah, that is probably one of the saddest parts of all of this. You have Africans who believe that Jamaicans are at the root of crime. They believe that Jamaicans are wild and are criminals. I can only speak about the Africans that I have contact with. ...If their (Continental African) daughter came home with a Jamaican male, it would not be acceptable...

(Ghanaian female, 26)

This narrative accomplishes two things: Firstly, it shows the characterization of Jamaicans. Secondly, it shows how deep the need to separate oneself from a particular group is. The parents, of which the Ghanaian female speaks, have a fear of Jamaican men and do not wish their daughters to enter romantic relationships with them. In a city like Toronto, where many different cultures exist, it is highly likely that these Black women will interact with Jamaican men. Such accusations of Jamaican men as ‘wild’ works to discourage the women who wish to pursue relationships with these individuals.

Another Ghanaian woman concurred with the points made by the first respondent. However, her contribution is from the point of view of an adult, of the kind that the 26 year-old Ghanaian woman discussed:

Yes there are definitely consequences to how we relate to each other. As an African, my relationship to West Indian Canadians will be different. Because of how the media portrays them, I am even afraid to get close to them, Jamaicans specifically, for fear that they can harm me or get me into trouble. ...You will not get an African woman who will enter a marriage or common-law relationship with a Jamaican man....

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)
Admitting that her lack of reception to West Indian Canadians is due to media portrayals is significant. It is significant because it shows that she adheres to the characterization of Jamaicans as 'trouble prone.' Lastly, she discusses a perceived tendency for African women to avoid intimacy with Jamaican men.

Another perspective on intraracial dynamics is discussed by an Afro-Caribbean female:

_I think within Toronto, a lot of times the media tends to focus on Jamaicans. It is so unfortunate because Jamaicans are, as a group, such a strong people. But many times they are targeted. Another reason why it is so unfortunate is because many times the criminal is not Jamaican... so the mainstream media might be reporting inaccurate information. I am going to be honest, I have heard members of the Black community say, “oh, those Jamaicans are always doing this.” I have heard things like “Jamaicans always make Black people look bad.” But I have also heard Jamaicans say, “those criminals are making all Jamaicans look bad,” so there are two levels of it. It is not just a reflection of all Black people, but is also a reflection of Jamaicans..._

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

Once again the issue of mistaken identity is part of the problem. People often hear an accent and assume it is Jamaican when it may not be. More importantly, as a member of two other Caribbean communities, this respondent can attest to anger that other Afro-Caribbeans have towards Jamaicans. What is also notable is that within the Jamaican community there is a split with some accusing others of slandering the entire group. However, this discontent is not limited to interpersonal relationships. Conflict also occurs in
places of employment. One man discussed how some Black people at work view Jamaicans:

Yes, even amongst your own Black people, Africans, Guyanese, Trinidadians...everybody, they have negative things to say about Jamaicans. The first thing you hear about Jamaicans is "yah man," or "they are some drug puppies" or they are some high rollers who drive fancy cars and wear rich clothes, sell drugs or kill people.." That is why when you go to a workplace and someone hears that you are Jamaican they do not want to hire you at all...

(Jamaican male, 58)

This participant is perceived by his co-workers as being into narcotics, fancy cars, flashy clothes and crime. Such perceptions of Jamaicans not only reduce respect for them at their places of employment, but make Jamaicans believe that their chances for employment are severely reduced.

The Ghanaian male 21, also discussed the animosity towards Jamaicans:

Oh yeah, I see it all the time with people I know and people I do not know. They see any activity, any disruptive activity, it is the Jamaican people who are scapegoated. You may see people playing loud music, you may see people hanging out at the corner, and others say, "oh look, those damn Jamaicans why don't they go and get a job or something." ...I say that within various African Canadian groups there is almost a hatred of Jamaicans...

Another Black male agreed with the analysis above and stated the following:

...When I hear about shootings and stuff like that they say, "oh, it is Jamaicans who are doing that." Oh yeah, other islands look at Jamaica and they will automatically have the same feelings... Jamaica has a lot of history and obviously it is not all good, but people will not talk about the good stuff. ...The other islands do not care about what they have
done positive, they just say, "Jamaica is the next isle and that is where the criminals have their roots. ...The other islands have always had that image.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)

An older male also commented on the portrayal of Jamaicans:

_But what is happening is the blur in the distinction in the eyes of the Canadian press and even with the Police because Jamaicans are more notable. They stand out, they are proud of themselves. They do not try to hide their accent or imitate other people. A lot of things, bad things, are being pointed to people who are not really Jamaicans. ...Among Black people, it causes a lot of stigmatization and factionalization. It divides the Black community into two: pro Jamaican and anti-Jamaican and that is not good._

(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)

This respondent, along with the Bajan and Ghanaian male, reported that the word Jamaica has been made synonymous not only with the term Black but with the term crime. It is important to note that not all respondents reported personal dislike of Jamaicans. Many expressed favourable comments about the Jamaican community, but noted a harsh anti-Jamaican climate.

What is also of interest is fact that the diversity of African Canadians is not widely known/and or acknowledged among the various African Canadian groups. A brief look at the conflicts between the three groups provides insight as to how these conflicts impact this overall discussion.
Continental Africans and Afro-Caribbeans

Because of the history of the slave trade, there is still lack of knowledge and awareness amongst the various groups of Black people in Toronto. With regards to Continental Africans and Afro-Caribbeans, there have been some conflicts. A partial reason for the tension is given below:

Historically and presently, the Black community has been the most fragmented. There is a distinction between the groups that are traditional African or non-enslaved sector and those who are descendants, the distinction the latter just realized recently... We the West Africans from the Western world think ourselves above those Africans too. ...The African descendants, those who have been enslaved, have a different mindset, personality, belief, persuasion from traditional Africans...

(Guyanese- Canadian male, 57)

This succinct explanation serves to discuss the sensitive issues between 'traditional Africans' and 'descendants of enslaved Africans'. A 43 year-old Ghanaian male participant agreed that some Afro-Caribbeans believe they are superior to Continental Africans. He discussed encounters that fellow Africans have had with some Jamaican individuals:

...When we have the example of the Jamaican and an African, the Jamaican looks at himself or herself as superior to an African. ...Well a Jamaican woman would just insult an African, saying, 'you African' in a demeaning way. I have not seen name calling on the part of Africans to Jamaicans. I believe that since they (Jamaicans) are close to North America and North America is a powerhouse, they feel that they are closer to a superior region....

While not all Jamaicans, or Afro-Caribbeans, subscribe to feelings of superiority, some have a difficult time relating to Continental
Africans. The Kenyan female with Canadian culture, 40, stated that "we seldom talk openly, but the Continental African is absolutely and totally different from the Caribbean persons. We have a different culture." This comment is not to say one culture is better than the other. The intention is to show that due to forced migration, traditional African culture was transformed to suit those Africans who were taken to the Western hemisphere. The lack of connection to the motherland is understood and discussed in detail:

...I have always taken the position that I do not blame African peoples from the Caribbean who find it difficult to identify with the continent. The school system never portrays anything good about Africa and so people are trying to get away from that. In trying to get away from that, they disassociate from that image of Africa and that creates some tensions between the two groups that need to be resolved.

(Ghanaian male, 48)

This serves as a major reason for discontent between these two groups. Identifying school curriculum as lacking in accurate representations, shows that negative imagery permeates many institutions. It is here where intra-cultural prejudice develops. Coupled with the media's construction of African Canadians as 'destructive Jamaicans,' Blacks experience powerful feelings of exclusion, anger, hostility and distance.

Caribbean Island Rivalries
Some respondents described inter-island rivalries and conflicts as lasting issues that carry over from the Caribbean region into the
host country. Different islands have traits attached to them that aid in their respective conflicts. Jamaica is usually referred to as the crime prone island and blamed by other islands as stigmatizing the Caribbean.

Black Canadians and Afro-Caribbeans

What about Black Canadians? It seems that they remain invisible to both Continental Africans and Afro-Caribbeans. However, Afro-Caribbeans and Black Canadians also have had issues with each other. The Black Canadian male explained the relationship between the two groups:

I have had all kinds of stereotypes applied to me, especially in the seventies when West Indians first came in. I have had all kinds of problems with West Indians and a lot of Jamaicans around their perceptions of who I was and how they stereotyped me ... I was coming from a place of ignorance about West Indian culture and completely stereotyped them. .. There was a time in the seventies with Black Canadians, especially Nova Scotians, and Jamaicans were like enemies...

His female counterpart recalled a situation in which a West Indian woman complained about Continental African women:

When I went to the hairdresser, she was saying how loud they are and how pushy they are. I looked at her and said, "do you know that is how we viewed you when you first came to Canada?" She looked at me like, really?

(Black Canadian female, 44)
When asked whether the women in the salon knew that the respondent is a Black Canadian woman, the respondent made the following comment: "No, they never understand that. That takes years of explaining. You have no idea how much I have to explain who I am."

Once again, the lack of knowledge amongst these groups results in the neglect of relationships. Regardless of their issues, both the immigrant and non-immigrant groups do not escape negative labels. The media construction of the 'Criminal Jamaican,' and its corresponding interpersonal anxiety, demonstrate that, to a large extent, the Black communities in Toronto have "been just as bamboozled by the media as anyone else." Chapter Eight discusses justice and policing issues.
CHAPTER EIGHT: TO SERVE AND PROTECT WHOM?

Though this brief conversation occurred more than a year ago, I believe it to be beneficial to you, the readers. It took place between myself, the investigator of this study, and a co-worker of mine. It went a little something like this:

Co-worker- So what are you writing about?
Investigator- It is a thesis on race and crime.
Co-worker- Oh, so are you going to talk about "just us"
Investigator- um, "just us?"
Co-worker- you know, "just us." Haven't you
    heard of the "just us" system?
Investigator- oh, okay, the justice system, I get it. ...

This little anecdote serves as an introduction to the chapter and a peek into the feelings about the justice system. Thus 'just us' is a play on the word justice and indicates the belief that lady justice is not blind. "Just us" is an inside joke that some African Canadians are aware of and use as commentary on the overrepresentation of Black males in the Canadian penal system. To gauge the feelings about the criminal justice system, the question put forth is as follows: the Canadian criminal justice system does not discriminate
based on the race of the accused. Please give a response to this statement. Table five shows the results in detail.

Table 5- The Canadian Criminal Justice system does not discriminate according to the Race of the accused. Please give a response to this statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL N=19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL*</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*due to rounding, numbers may not equal 100

As shown in the table, many disagreed with the statement put forth. Two men commented on the sentencing of Black males convicted of crimes with the first expressing confidence in the system:

I would disagree. I think that a Black male and White male, if convicted of a crime, would get the same sentence.

(Ghanaian male, 21)

The second male participant identified connections and finances as factors which can help some individuals “beat the system”. This respondent believes that a second class citizen status invites harsher sentences for Black men:

Sometimes what applies is who you know. Sometimes money is the key to being convicted. There will be differences in sentencing because the Black person, being the minority, whether he is born here or not, is considered a second class citizen. So automatically he gets more.

(Ghanaian male, 43)
One female participant disagreed with the statement and was very specific about her skepticism of the police:

...I think that for petty crimes the police officer would bring in a Black assailant. The officer would talk to the White assailant and spend a few minutes to say, “hey, you really should not be doing this, you should not be here, you do not want to go to jail.” With a Black man he would not even give him the time of day, he would just put the handcuffs on him. That is my perception anyway...

(Ghanaian female, 30)

In contrast, she expressed belief in the impartiality of the courts:

...people in the higher position when it comes to sentencing, such as the judges and prosecutors, are more knowledgeable and they do not have any preconceived notions. They will try the case and judge using the evidence provided. They would not give longer sentences to Black men because of their race....

(Ghanaian female, 30)

This respondent is one of the three who agreed and disagreed with the question. Frontline enforcement officers are not trusted, but courts of law are. One diverged from the belief in the courts and expressed concerns:

I do not agree. I think that with lawyers, prosecutors and judges there is some form of conspiracy, maybe not an organized conspiracy, to deny Black boys justice. ..With lawyers and prosecutors, whether or not Black males do the crime, there is an underlying assumption that somewhere along the line this kid committed a similar crime.

(Canadian male of Jamaican descent, 54)
When asked why a conspiracy, intentional or not, might exist he explained in the following manner:

...they see young men in general as troublemakers at this age. They (justice system) understand that men, will drink, smoke, do dope, steal a bit. They (justice system) handle young Black men differently from White men because with the latter it seems like pranks. With young men who are Black, it is taken as a crime to plea bargain over and register as a conviction...

A belief in the Black culture of deviance often results in harsher consequences. The new racism cites pathological cultural patterns as major reasons for criminal behaviour (Henry and Bjornson, 1999). Two other respondents gave opinions on the issue:

..Okay, the overall system does not, but the system has people who work for it and those people are a part of society. Say what you want, but there are racist officers working in a jail or working somewhere, even if he is working for a system that is neutral. I think in theory yes, (Black accused would get same sentence as White accused) but in reality it would depend on the judge and jury etc.

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

I would say that I disagree with that statement (Justice system does not discriminate). Quite some evidence that has come about on that issue. If you look at the Ontario Commission on Systemic Racism, there are so many examples. Recently there was one Appeal court judge who said that the law is not blind. There have been studies that have shown that when certain bodies go into court, the chances of lawyers advising them to plea bargain is higher for certain groups than for others. It is no accident that when you look at the jails it is predominantly a particular group, I refuse to say or think that it is because they commit more of the crime...

(Ghanaian male, 48)

Many studies have shown that the criminal justice system does discriminate against African Canadians. The Ontario Commission
on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System (1995) confirmed the perception of racialized groups that they are not treated equally by these institutions (as cited in Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2003). Two significant findings were revealed:

- Blacks accused of drug offences or robbery were three times more likely to be refused bail than Whites facing the same charge.
- White people were significantly more likely to be released after their arrest than Blacks and sometimes Blacks receive longer sentences upon conviction. This is true even after criminal records and other legal variables have been taken into account.

It should be noted that with the latter finding, police records were used to determine the results. Individual academics have also made similar conclusions. For example, Criminologist Scot Wortley studied the treatment of people in two Toronto bail courts and found Blacks were 1.5 times more likely to be detained than Whites (Rankin, Quinn, Shepherd, Simmie and Duncanson, 2002). Kellough and Wortley (1998) found that in Toronto Bail courts, Black suspects are more likely to be denied bail and have large numbers of conditions applied to their pre-trial release. All these factors play a large role in the Canadian incarceration rate of 146.37 individuals per 100,000 people. African Canadians make up

---

2% of the general population but are 6% of the prison population (as cited in Wortley, 1999). The United Nations refers to these statistics, as "the problem of access to the justice system" resulting in "an unreasonably high proportion of African Canadians in detention" (Foster cited in Share, 2002).\[12\]

These findings show that there is strong evidence of racial bias within the justice system. One man takes issue with the question of bias in the Canadian Criminal Justice System:

\[i \text{ would have to disagree, that is too much of a broad statement. All people are not alike, I think some judges would be sympathetic and some would be very fair...}\]

(Guyanese-Canadian male, 57)

To illustrate the Guyanese-Canadian male's point, one must look at the 2001 decision by Mr. Justice Brian Trafford. He presided over a case in which he found that police had stopped a man, who was walking near the Eaton Centre, because of his race (Small, 2004). In writing his decision, Justice Trafford made a clear and strong statement:

\[\text{stereotypical assumptions, including those concerning young Black men and narcotics, have no proper place in a properly conducted investigation. The inherent worth and dignity of all people, regardless of their race or ethnic origin, must be respected by the police at all times during the investigation of even the most heinous crimes (Small, 2004).}\]

Though there are many problems with the system, there exist those who are willing to recognize, acknowledge, and correct racial bias. However, much work in this area is needed.

DEPORTATIONS

In Canada, permanent residents, also known as landed immigrants, can have deportation orders issued against them if they participate in criminal activity. According to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act of Canada 2004, deportation orders apply in the following circumstances:

Section 36(1) Serious Criminality- a permanent resident or a foreign national is inadmissible on grounds of serious criminality for
a) having been convicted in Canada of an offence under an Act of Parliament punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of at least 10 years, or an offence under an Act of Parliament for which a term of imprisonment of more than six months has been imposed.

This section of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act is significant because it is used as a rationale for terminating one’s residency in Canada. Returning to the Just Desserts case in 1994, the discourse of a problematic immigration system was widespread.
These discourses were explicitly racialized with headlines describing the assailants as outsiders who encroached on Canadian soil. Coverage of the Just Desserts case reignited a discussion about immigration laws being too lenient. According to the commentaries that followed, Canadians were "Betrayed by the system", or lived in a city where journalists reported that 'Black crime rates are the highest.' Is it not possible that policymakers would also heed such concerns and act?

According to Henry and Bjornson (1999), 'once it had been established that this (read Black crime) was imported, then the source of the problem could be pinpointed at the border... and crime prevention becomes synonymous with immigration controls. Politicians definitely headed the call to act when in 'June of 1994, the federal government introduced Bill C-44 into the House of Commons' (Henry and Bjornson, 1999). Bill C-44 was introduced two and a half months after the Just Desserts shooting and made it easier to deport criminals who are convicted of serious crimes. From its introduction in June of 1994 to its passing in February of 1995, parliamentarians cited facts or statistics reported in the news media in support of their arguments (Henry and Bjornson, 1999). Reform MP Philip Mayfield cited a Globe and Mail reporter in saying that "an unprecedented clear majority of Canadians...thought
immigration levels were too high" (Hansard, 19 September 1994:5805 cited in Henry and Bjornson, 1999). Thus it is safe to say that to restore confidence and to weed out problems, Bill C-44, or the ‘Just Deserts Bill’, as a reporter dubbed it, came into effect on July 10, 1995 with ‘Black Crime’ as it’s battle cry.

With the topic of deportation on hand, it is important to note that security of a nation is of the utmost importance. However, with this subject also rises the issue of citizenship. As discussed, Bill C-44 came into effect and allowed the immigration department to deport those who posed a threat to the nation. A section of the Bill known as the ‘danger to the public clause’ is the section that was specifically created in reaction to the Just Deserts case. Since the assailants in the Just Deserts case are landed immigrants who came to Canada at young ages and grew up on Canadian soil, is it right to deport such individuals? The balancing act between national security and individual rights is a controversial one as the respondents explained:

If they were here from when they were young and eligible for citizenship status before they committed a crime, why wasn’t it done? .... I think it is easy for the Canadian government to get rid of them than to say, okay let’s develop a program to find out what is going on. They are so quick to have programs for sex offenders and say it is a psychological problem, but are quick to have these people (Black individuals) deported...

(Jamaican- Canadian female, 24)
I do not think anyone should be expelled after staying here for all that time. It is crazy to send somebody away after 30 years living in one place to go back to Jamaica, for instance. It is an alien country and they will not even fit in and it will bring other compounded problems by itself...

(Canadian female with Kenyan culture, 40)

I think wherever you do the crime is where you serve the time. All they do is breed smarter, better criminals then the send them back to where they came from.

(Canadian male with Bajan parents, 26)

Thus far, every respondent has indicated that expelling immigrants who have lived in Canada for years, is wrong. A female participant agreed with her counterparts but adds the following reasons for her disapproval of such government policies:

...The criminal activities were learned here in Canada, so it is not fair for this person to be deported to a country that he or she does not know. Let's say for arguments sake, the person did a good thing would the government of this country have split it up with the other country? Do not deport the person, just give the person the punishment...

(Ghanaian-Canadian female, 49)

This participant feels that the government needs to avoid deportation of individuals that Canadian society helps to create. Other opinions given ranged from deportation being 'morally wrong' and 'racist' to 'I think it is a good idea.' Those who adhere to the last view point are in the minority, but have important contributions to make. One male acknowledged both the need to feel safe and the unfairness of the deportation process:
The government’s idea to deport them to keep our streets safe, I think is a good idea. If the government feels that you are a risk to society they have every right to withdraw that residency… Well it is hard to deport a person to a homeland that the person does not know, it is really tough…

(Ghanaian male, 43).

Security is a salient issue for this respondent and he emphasized this throughout the interview. He also acknowledged that leaving a nation one was raised in is no easy feat. However, at the end of the interview, the scale had tipped in favour of security.

A second male believed that the following should occur:

They have got to be sent back. They have got to be deported...because I strongly believe in the idea of immigrants coming here to better the country. If you don’t take advantage of it and you screw around and you commit crimes and stuff and you know you are not a citizen in the first place, you have got to go back to your country...

(Ghanaian male, 21)

This is by far the participant with the strongest views towards deportation. His standpoint is that people come to a country to serve a purpose. If the purpose is not fulfilled or the opportunity is abused, by say, committing criminal acts, then no mercy should be shown. He is by far very tough in his assessment, decision making and judgement. His position, however, is very sincere.

This section will enter its final stage with a discussion about racial profiling. The Toronto Star Race and Crime series published in 2002, exposed many feelings about police/ Black community
relationships. Letters to the Toronto Star, specifically describe how members of the public, Black, White and others feel about this phenomenon. To illustrate these views, samples of letters in response to the Series in the Toronto Star are provided:

If one wants to stop being overrepresented in crime statistics, the easiest method of doing this is to stop committing crimes. It is more difficult to 'profile' a group if they stop exhibiting characteristics that draw the attention of authorities.

-Blair Herd, Police Officer Outside Toronto

There needs to be a real perspective in your pieces. From the street officer's point of view, you must look at the psychological components of policing, especially with certain societal groups. From my experiences, it became quite clear that certain segments of societies had, or have, individual propensities to evoke investigative triggers within law enforcement.

-Roy Smith, Retired Toronto Police Constable, Lethbridge, Alberta

We have a Black friend with a son in his late teens. They live in fear every time he takes out the family car of what might happen if he is pulled over. The police leadership denies, denies, denies. Hopefully, factual reporting will get some results

-Jim Russell, Retired Engineer, Newcastle.

I am a Black man with a car. To most people, I am a guy in a car. To the Toronto Police, I am a target. I commend the Star for releasing the truth about racial profiling implemented by the police. Ask any Black man and he will tell you a story about the impertinent attitude of police when stopped. It is common knowledge in our circle that if we are driving a luxurious car, the chances of being stopped by the police increase. On more than one occasion, while driving my BMW or SUV, the first question asked by the officer is 'Is this your car?'

-Paul Redley, Toronto

..I take umbrage with Mike Whelan's letter when he states that suspects wanted for committing the most violent crimes in this country are Black males. Where does he obtain these skewed statistics? He must realize that by spewing this vitriol and stating that he is a police

---

13 Letters courtesy of Toronto Star dated October 23, 2002
officer, gives powerful credibility to an inaccurate statement. With that, he becomes in my eyes less of a respected member of the constabulary and simply a bigot with a badge....

-Jeremy Smith, Toronto

This is a small sample of letters which the Toronto Star received and describes the issues that are still present. Some of the letters are from police officers who agree with racial profiling as a tool of the trade. Other writers vehemently disagree with the tactics and discuss the decrease in their respect of the policing profession. What some officers forget is that "the worst enemy of effective policing is the absence of public confidence" (Ontario Human Rights Commission [OHRC], 2003, p. 9). When the officers express particular beliefs about the Black community, they ignore the essential ingredient of public confidence in the work they do.

What is not mentioned by these officers is that there is a distinction between racial profiling and criminal profiling. Racial profiling differs from criminal profiling in that the latter isn't based on stereotypes, but rather relies on actual behaviour or information about suspected activity by someone who meets the description of a specific individual (OHRC, 2003). Further, criminal profiling definitely includes one's race or ethnicity as that is one feature that everyone possesses. However, using race as a primer for approaching individuals is cause for concern. Such actions are
upon which racial profiling is based. The officers who approved of such actions either confuse the two concepts or actually subscribe to such blatantly discriminatory actions. This issue is discussed by respondents who were asked if they believe that the Toronto police force engages in racial profiling practices:

*I think that individual police officers do and it is not just White officers...I think that as a unit they do not want their officers to...*

(Trinidadian-Guyanese female, 26)

*Well, it is everywhere in North America. But I believe that racial profiling is something which occurs on a daily basis. But what I believe is that being a good citizen, going about your normal, daily routine, not interfering with any crime, nobody bothers you and you are free to do everything without problems.*

(Ghanaian male, 43)

These two narratives expressed ideas about individual actions. Both acknowledged that profiling occurs, but the former states that individual officers engage in this practice. The latter believes that being a good citizen will prevent police contact. The problem with the Ghanaian male’s belief is that it negates the entire purpose of racial profiling. That is, law abiding Black people are stopped in their cars on suspicion of being law breakers because of their race. Thus being stopped has nothing to do with whether the person is good or bad, but depends on the motives of the officer conducting the stop.
One Ghanaian male, 48, had the following to say about the conduct of some police officers:

Oh, yes, oh, yes. There is no doubt about that. They can deny it all they want. I do not need them to validate that for me. I know it. I have been in the vehicles of friends and I have seen the way sometimes, people have been stopped and the reasons for that. You may say, 'well it just happened by coincidence,' but those are too many for those to be coincidences. I would not enter into a debate or discussion with anyone about whether the police do it...we know it in the community. We do not need the Toronto Star to tell us it exists.

Adamant would be the term to describe this participant's statement that racial profiling is real and not imagined. The narratives describe how the fear of being racially profiled affects everyday behaviour:

A friend of mine was sharing with me a story about how his mother bought him a licence plate cover that says 'Reggae boys' and he hesitated to put it on his car. This is because he was concerned about how he would be perceived by the public and particularly the police. It is one thing to be driving a nice car and another to place a bulls-eye on your car to say, "Here I am, I am Jamaican..."

(Ghanaian female, 26)

Given the lengthy discussion on how Jamaicans are perceived, it is not surprising that one would experience anxiety over such a mundane action. Since this incident occurred around the time of the World Cup finals, it seems unfair that this individual would not feel free to participate in activities that others were involved in.

Two other respondents provided specific accounts of being stopped in cars, or recounted stories of friends or acquaintances

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
who had been stopped by officers while driving vehicles. Their stories are both profound and troubling:

A man told me about an incident that occurred to him when he was driving a gold convertible with Black sunroof and tinted windows. This man was young and in his thirties. A police officer approached the man and said, "is this your car or is it rented?" the driver said, "it is mine." The officer said, "this is not a Black person's car." The officer then took pepper spray and sprayed it into the man's eyes. He then proceeded to handcuff the man and his passenger and took them to the police station. The officer accused the man (driver) of assaulting him. I think the case is still in the system....

(Ghanaian female, 49)

Another case is discussed by the 24 year-old Jamaican-Canadian female:

It was with a friend and we were coming off the highway and we were making a left hand turn. She made her turn and a cop pulled her over. She was driving, I had a friend in the passenger's seat and three of us sat in the back. It was not like we were rowdy or anything, but she (police officer) could see that only Black females were in the car. She pulled us over into the gas station, and we were thinking "okay, why are we being pulled over?" She pulled us over and asked for identification, licence, etc. and didn't explain the reason for the stop. When she asked the driver for her name, the driver said, "Marsha." The cop said "my daughter's name is Marsha" and that is what saved the driver from getting a ticket.

The respondent continues and discusses the argument that ensued in the car later that evening:

The cop said, "okay, have a nice night" and drove off. The rest of us in the car said, "why didn't you ask her why you were pulled over?" and she said, "I couldn't be bothered." I was like, "NO!! you shouldn't be, couldn't be bothered, you should have asked her." I was sooo mad, I was like "Marsha" why didn't you ask her why you were being pulled over? The cop didn't go back to her cruiser to check the information. She just stood there and said "um, where are you coming from, Where are you headed to?..."
During the rest of this segment the respondent stated that six Black girls in a nice car was the problem. Though she acknowledged that there are good cops, she also was very angry about the incident. This incident served as an eye opener to both interviewer and respondent because of the gender of those involved. The participant was asked if, prior to this incident, she believed that only Black men were subject to racial profiling. She answered in the affirmative and said "how dare I even think that we (Black women) are immune to this. I always thought, 'it could not happen to me.' When it happens, your whole perception of the police changes ..."

This portion of the interview shows that though many Black men report being stopped while "driving while Black," it can also happen to Black females. If, as the Ontario Human Rights Commission states, confidence is needed to legitimize a system or process, those who are part of the system must work hard to investigate claims of racial bias. Instead of denials and maintenance of the status quo, acknowledgement of and political will to ensure that the pains of racial bias do not remain, are needed. This will ensure that the question: To Serve and Protect Whom? Can be answered this way: everyone.
DISCUSSION

The consequences of media influenced perceptions of Black males and crime on the African Canadian community was the focus of this thesis. Achieving this goal necessitated the voices of African Canadians living in Toronto to describe their lived experiences as racialized men and women. Several major findings were discovered during the research:

- Majority of respondents, 68.4%, stated that they are not welcomed to Canadian society. Participants also reported that immigrants of African descent are seen as the least desirable of all immigrants.
- Sixteen of the participants reported that images of Black men were overwhelmingly negative. Many reported ‘criminals’, ‘trouble’, ‘lazy’ and ‘dangerous’ as media driven constructions of Black masculinity. Four of the narratives referred to typologies and included those above and discussions of exceptions to the rule.
- Eighty-four percent of respondents stated that newspaper and television reporting of crimes, especially those of a serious nature, provoke an acute awareness of self and leads to anxiety about the gender and race of assailants. Fifteen percent said that they used to be concerned about the race and gender of the assailant.
- Sixty eight percent said that Jamaicans are the ones who are often negatively depicted in news reports. An overwhelming
majority, 94 percent, agreed that intraracial conflict arises from portrayals of all Blacks as ‘criminal Jamaicans’ and impacts romantic, employment and interpersonal relationships.

- Seventy-eight percent of respondents expressed a lack of confidence in the Canadian criminal justice system. Specifically, they believe that the legal system does not adhere to its colour-blind mandate.

- Eighty-four percent of respondents believe that the Toronto Police force engages in racial profiling.

- Sixty-eight percent of respondents agreed that Black male immigrants who are raised in Canada and are facing deportation should remain in Canada.

- Ninety percent of respondents with children reported concerns about the effects of negative images on how others view their children.

CONNECTIONS TO LITERATURE

Welcome to Canadian Society

Thirteen of the respondents debunked the belief that immigrants, regardless of country of origin, are welcomed to Canada. These findings are consistent with the literature’s examples of the dislike of people of African descent. Many identified Africans, regardless of origin, as seen as originating from less
desirable regions. The focus on the Caribbean origins of the Just Desserts assailants, the insistence that the criminal acts of Black male assailants represented a “foreign outside threat to the principles of law and order” and the demonization of Jamaicans are just three examples of the fear of the African presence in Canada. The common denominator with these examples is the repeated implicit and explicit assertions of African people belonging elsewhere. Two respondents identified depictions of the African continent “as problem prone” as a reason for the hesitation to welcome its citizens to Canadian soil. This lack of enthusiasm sets the stage for other challenges that Africans in Canada endure and must overcome.

Depictions of Black Males by both Print and Visual Media

Sixteen respondents stated that the presentations of Black masculinity in the print and visual media are generally negative. Four respondents, or 21.1 percent, identified typologies of representations of Black men. Included in these constructions are the criminal, the athlete, the musician, the community worker and others. Seven respondents, or 36.8 percent, identified the image of the criminal, that is, robbers, drug dealers and gangsters, as one prototype seen. The opinions of four participants, or 21.1 percent, fall into the societal threat category. Contributions which stated
'angry', 'hip-hop', 'gangster', 'Jamaican' and 'societal threat' as prototypes, are classified as belonging to the societal threat category. Three other participants, or 15.7 percent, fall into the 'negative, slightly specified' category, which is composed of opinions that include the words 'negative', and 'lazy' to describe the images of Black men. The last category is the 'other' in which one participant's contribution, or 5.26 percent, falls. This category contained the opinion 'a little positive and negative' in relation to Black male representation and concludes the categorization of Black masculinity.

The findings of the study concurred with the literature in the following ways:

- Wortley, Hagan and MacMillan (1997) referred to written forms of racialization when discussing the news coverage portraying the shooting as a tragedy and social crisis. The media reported the use of terms such as 'American style lawlessness' and 'Urban Terrorism' to describe the assailants. Within these terms lay the images of Black men as 'societal threats' and 'criminals'.

Greenberg and Hier (2001) stated that labeling a crisis as significant at the structural level, also needs the added component of narratives that would resonate with the public. Cohen (1972)
adds that the impact of 'euphemisms is strong and that newspapers use 'exaggerated attention', 'exaggerated situations', distortion and stereotyping' to tell stories. This study has shown that fears of Black men lead to the understanding of this group as folk devils.

- Rankin et al. (2002) reported that there is evidence of racial profiling by Toronto Police officers. The study indicated that 84 percent of the respondents confirm that racial profiling is a reality. The use of this practice corresponds to the belief in Black males as symbolic assailants. Racial profiling has roots in 'the gaze', or surveillance component which serves to monitor the actions of potentially dangerous men. Evidence that women are also recipients of this treatment is present. This shows how widespread racial profiling is in that it can affect both men and women, though men often report being subjected to this.

This discovery adds to the issue regarding the effects of this practice. The effects of racial profiling include decreased confidence with the police service, feelings of insecurity and changes in everyday activities. This discussion relates to Goode and Ben-Yehuda's (1994) comment about some moral panics becoming routinized or institutionalized. In this case, the moral concern about
target behaviours, that is, Black men dealing drugs etc., are continually dealt with in the form of enforcement policies.

Coverage of Ethnicity, Victimization and Criminal Participation

Chapter six explored the question of bias in the media reports of criminal participation and victimization of Black and White individuals. A strong bias against the former is reported by the respondents. Many reported that Black assailants face harsher treatment in the press than White assailants. As proof of these allegations, some male participants offered the intensity of the focus on Black rather than White assailants as their reason for discomfort. The rationale for the stronger perception of bias is bolstered by comparisons of Blacks with people of other ethnicities. A Guyanese-Canadian male respondent referred to the drug trade as an attractive trade which attracts “a lot of Black youth, it also attracts a lot of Whites, East Asians and Indians too. But Blacks for some reason stand out and make better news.” A Black Canadian male answered the previous question and stated that Black people “are a threat.” The use of words, both subtle and overt, and the presentation of shackled Black bodies worked together to present Black males as “threats”. The words used are racial signifiers that describe traits in subtle ways to express the ethnicity of the assailant. The unflattering depictions contribute to the creation of
these folk devils that permit 'instant recognition'. Because of these factors, these men are “stripped of all favourable characteristics and imparted with exclusively negative ones” (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). Their White counterparts are subjected to passing mentions, non-racial descriptions and neutral criminal depictions.

Responses to the analysis of Black intraracial crime are troubling. Ninety percent of respondents stated that Black intraracial crime is covered differently in the media. Apathy, contingent and happiness were the categories created to understand the overall lack of concern of Black intraracial crime. Though this particular dynamic is not discussed in the literature, it is possible to make some connections between its absence and the marginalization of the Black community. As stated before, written forms of racialization such as the Toronto Star’s headline, Black Crime Rates Highest, essentialized the belief that criminal tendencies are natural in Black men. This belief influences the lack of concern of Black intraracial crime. Perhaps this is why one respondent said that Black intraracial crime is not seen as a problem “unless it crosses over.” That is, until it hits the White community, it is not a pressing issue.

What is clearly a problem is the scenario involving Black male assailants and White victims, females in particular. Many participants indicated that this combination is the most problematic
out of all the pairings discussed. Just as Black males are “put on a pedestal in this culture as a representation of ignorance, passion and raw physical ability”, White females are held up as precious entities which need to be protected. Such was the reason for the ‘moral panic’ of Black crime when the media revealed that the Just Desserts suspects were Black, male immigrants and ‘Jamaican’. In contrast, White male assailants and Black victims are not afforded the same concern. Sixteen respondents stated that there is scarcity of media coverage when the assailant is White and victim is Black. Many reported not hearing of any such cases. Others stated that possible reasons for this is to reinforce that “bad apples” don’t exist in the White communities’. Over all, White crime was not seen as problematic.

Parental Concerns about Children

Ten out of the eleven parents in the study expressed concerns about how their children are or will be viewed by the outside world. One discussed an incident at her place of employment in which a co-worker expressed a racist analysis of Black masculinity. A second parent expressed fear for his 30 year old sons going out at night for fear of run-ins with police. Another father concluded that Black youth are beginning to accept the images they see, as representations of Black culture. Adopting these images of crime
prone Black individuals, acts as shields that protects the youth from
the habitual rejection of portrayals that show a 'gangsta' like culture.
Three respondents exhibited resistance tendencies in saying that
they, as parents, would be able to counteract the images that their
children are exposed to.

**Individual Concerns about Relatives, Friends and Self**

Participants without children also expressed concerns about
how others view them in light of media constructions. Five
participants stated that they felt that they were under a microscope,
whereas one participant denies being worried about others' opinions. The Global-African, Somali male respondent stated that
he felt that portrayals would affect him economically and socially in
terms of employment opportunities and general respect. The
Jamaican-Canadian female participant stated that "I do feel that I
have to act a certain way, but at the same time, you have to be
yourself," to indicate that she does experience pressures at work.
Though she has the knowledge of how being Black is seen, she
utilized a type of resistance and stated that remaining true to
oneself is important. The Black Canadian female concurred with the
former and stated her awareness of others' perceptions of her. She
stated that "...no matter how educated I am....how articulate I am, I
am still seen as potentially dangerous." Finally, in response to the
question, do you feel that you have to modify your behaviour at work? The Trinidadian-Guyanese female answered “Oh, yeah definitely, I think I make the stronger effort to enunciate my words and stuff like that...sometimes I feel like an ambassador for our people...” Thus she stated that she watched her speech patterns in order to prove her intelligence and also felt pressured to represent Black people at her workplace. This resonates with the earlier theme of the lack of recognition of Black intelligence. Further, it concurs with the literature on the concept of compensation tactics used in the workplace in order to re-define the stigma surrounding oneself.

Two participants cited that they worry about their brothers, future sons and male cousins because of the representations that are put forth. This concern for close and distant relatives indicates how pervasive the concern is for the well-being of those closest to the respondents. When asked if the images affect one’s view of self, three individuals answered “no.” The Jamaican-Canadian and Trinidadian-Guyanese female participants indicated that family influences and other support systems are what keep them balanced. The Global-African, Somali male respondent also said that “pressure is put on him to change his behaviour to conform
when dealing with other people." Those who were interviewed utilize various coping methods to deal with societal pressures.

Intraracial Dynamics

The literature contained miniscule information on problems that outside forces have on 'family dynamics' that is, within the Black communities. The unflattering depictions of Jamaicans are caused by a saturation of constructions of Jamaica as 'crime prone', 'violent' and 'dangerous'. From these constructions come three problems: the most salient issue being the resentment law abiding Blacks have against those perceived as being non-law abiding. The former feels that the latter make their lives difficult. This point was explicitly shown by a female respondent who stated that some Jamaicans turn on their counterparts and accuse them of instigating scorn against the entire Jamaican community.

Secondly, given the images of Jamaicans, some respondents reported that intimate relationships with Jamaican men are not desirable and/or would be met with disapproval. Fears of alleged, 'wild', 'irrational' and 'criminal behaviour' affecting the quality of life of other Black women, served as the rational for building walls instead of bridges, between communities. What both the literature and the study did not discuss is the feeling that other Africans, Caribbean, Black Canadian etc., feel about Jamaican females and
their relationships with non Jamaican men? Do these women also have the same constructions applied to them?

Lastly, friendships with Jamaican individuals are seen as potentially problematic according to a female respondent. The fear is, once again, of the potential for law breaking behaviour and how it could impact the life of the non Jamaican individual. Such virulent beliefs are formed because of the adherence to the belief in folk devils, even if the devil's reflection mirrors one's own. Employment situations were also mentioned as a site of discomfort. One male respondent referred to "your own Black people" when discussing how Trinidadians, Guyanese and Continental Africans consider Jamaicans to be 'drug puppies' and 'murderers' among other things. His encounters make him feel like he is under scrutiny by 'relatives' as well as members of society.

These issues are further complicated by three factors:
1) Misunderstandings and conflicts between Afro-Caribbean groups; Afro-Caribbean and Continental African groups; and between Afro-Caribbean and Black Canadians.
2) The dominant society's lack of knowledge of the diversity of the African Canadian population in Toronto.
3) The label of 'criminal Jamaican' that is applied by the dominant society to the African Canadian population.
The conflicts between the Afro-Caribbean groups are those that exist prior to and upon arrival in Canada. The other conflicts are those which manifest themselves when Continental Africans and Afro-Caribbeans arrive in Canada and interact with other people of African descent. It is the lack of knowledge of different Black cultures, as well as their inaccurate portrayals, that help influence relationships between the Black communities. Similarly, the dominant society’s ignorance concerning the cultural, linguistic and religious differences among Black groups also cause problems. As Cecil Foster (1995) states, "no matter how much these individuals strut their perceived differences, most Canadians see us as forming one homogeneous group.” This lack of understanding of the Black population, coupled with the label of Blacks as ‘criminal Jamaicans,’ manifests itself in statements such as “send them back to Jamaica.” Headlines such as the Toronto Sun’s ‘manhunt’ and ‘dragnet,’ indicate that a thorough search is needed when White female victims are involved.

Immigration Laws and Deportations

Georgina Leimonis’ murder was the catalyst for the ‘danger to the public’ clause to the Immigration Act of 1995. As Henry and Bjornson (1999) state, “parliamentarians were influenced by media reports of public anger.” An internalized knowledge of the
dangerous Black male, guided by media characterizations, fuelled the passing of this Act. Many participants felt that sending individuals to places where, as Foster (1995) claims, "...their navel string is buried" and have no other ties, is wrong. Those who considered individual rights to be paramount were dismayed at the government's eagerness to send Black male immigrants to their countries of origin.

Two points mentioned by two female respondents proved crucial to the question of whether Black male immigrants, who were raised in Canada should be deported. Firstly, the Jamaican-Canadian woman stated that government officials are quick to develop programs for sex offenders and said that their problems are psychological. Black males are not afforded such liberties and are more likely to be dealt with harshly. Finally, the second female stated that the criminal activities learned are a result of Canadian conditioning and not an unwelcome foreign influence. Further, the 49 year-old Ghanaian-Canadian female stated that if something good had been accomplished, it would not have been shared with the donor nation. Thus deporting long time residents should not be done, but dispositions should be meted out. Those who identified security as an issue for deportation are not without merit. However, as Falconer and Ellis (1998) report, "between July 1995 and
December 1997, almost 40 percent of all persons declared a 'danger to the public' and deported from Ontario under the new amendment have been Jamaican nationals" (as cited in Barnes, 2002). Further, Falconer and Ellis (1998) cite this statistic as proof that the Canadian government developed the legislation to 'target a specific racial group with the specific aim of cleansing the community of those perceived as a 'danger to the public' (as cited in Barnes, 2002). The opinions indicated that a belief in symbolic assailants and folk devils exist and severe punishments should be meted out to protect the dominant society. The varying opinions show that the issue of deportation remains controversial.

Racial Profiling

Sixteen respondents, or 84.2 percent of those asked, agreed that the Toronto Police force engages in racial profiling. This confirms the literature's findings that racial profiling is a real phenomenon. Some participants described incidents where male drivers of expensive vehicles were stopped by police officers. An unexpected finding showed that females can and are subjected to stops by police officers. However, how often Black women are subject to stops, is unclear. Considering the central concept of Black males as symbolic assailants, it is safe to assume that Black males bear the overwhelming brunt of unwanted law enforcement attention. For
some individuals, the existence of this phenomenon is enough to engage in behaviour modification.

The issue about behaviour modification exposed a point of intersection with chapter seven's discussion of the constructions of Jamaicans. The criminalizing of Jamaicans in the media discussed the relationship of these individuals to Canadian society. Police officers are part of the general public who engage in a type of knowledge production which is influenced by television images. This knowledge production turns into a set of schemas that officers use when in contact with Black individuals. These schemas form the 'perceptual shorthand' that Skolnick (1966) discussed when mentioning symbolic assailants. It is this perceptual shorthand that resulted in the following comment from a retired officer: "certain segments of societies had, or have, individual propensities to evoke investigative triggers within law enforcement." The question is what are these individual propensities that this retired officer is talking about? Such comments help officers justify racial profiling tactics.

When asked the question about racial profiling and Toronto Police, one respondent stated that "individual officers do and not just White officers." The Trinidadian-Guyanese female respondent, in stating where police officer's stereotypes originate, stated that "more Black officers would definitely change stereotypes, but some
Black officers believe it is acceptable to hold some of the same values as their White counterparts." According to the Canadian male of Jamaican descent, 55, it is "weakness when trying to confront the system," which leads some officers to act in such ways. That is, Blacks feel that they don’t have much power within the institution in which they work and so adopt some of its questionable policies. Such comments call for a need to debate the ‘rotten apples’ theory of racist police practices. According to this theory, a few problematic officers soil the reputation of the rest of the workers who are generally good. This however, does not completely address why Black officers might engage in racist practices.

Part of the answer lies with the participant who mentioned the lack of power in an officer’s workplace. Another piece of the puzzle is provided by Dobbins and Skillings (1991): "...people of colour do not act in racist ways unless they are acting as agents for the dominant power structure" (as cited in James, 2003). Thus a lot of weight can be taken from the ‘rotten apples’ theory and used to bolster the impact of institutionalized racism. As written in his book, Seeing Ourselves, James (2003) states the following:

Institutionalized racism exists when the established policies, rules, regulations of an organization or institution systematically reflect and produce differential treatment of various groups within that organization or institution and in society generally. There is a reciprocal relationship between institutional and individual racism. The racist policies and practices of institutions are developed and implemented by individuals who, because of their training and allegiance to the organization, understand that they must adhere to the norms and sanctions to maintain the order of things.
Thus according to this statement, it is possible to be Black, enter an organization such as the police service, and continue to perpetuate racism by utilizing the technique of racial profiling. Therefore it is not only individuals who come to 'serve and protect' and bring their societal induced racist beliefs with them. Individuals can also be tainted by the employment atmosphere they work in. In this sense, colour does not matter.
CONCLUSION

While all crime is said to be abhorrent, certain groups of people are stigmatized more so than others for their criminal participation. African Canadian males are those on the receiving end of such treatment. The research focused on understanding how the African Canadian community is affected by media portrayals of Black male criminal participation. This is a unique perspective because there is a paucity of Canadian literature available that reflects the affected community's feelings of racialization. In depth interviewing was utilized to provide a forum to discuss this subject while the social constructionist framework contextualized the study.

Symbolic Interactionist theory was used to demonstrate how ideas about media constructions of Black masculinity and crime, dictate the relationship of the African Canadian community to Canadian society. Information is created and messages are disseminated to the public to describe truths which form public knowledge.

The findings of this research are also consistent with the moral panic theoretical perspective. The atrocity tale, which is an essential ingredient to the moral panic, is the Just Desserts robbery and murder case. These tales are examples of events which are viewed as 'flagrant violations of a fundamental cultural value' (Ben-Yehuda,
Further, these tales served to ignite the flame of the moral panic. Media constructions of Black crime connect with Cohen's (1972) definition of moral panic. It is presented in a stylized fashion through written and pictorial forms of the racialization of crime. Society casts Black males as rule breakers who hail from an 'inherently, criminal Jamaican' culture. Because of this label and the belief in the angry, Black male as a societal threat, his actions are interpreted as potentially problematic. Since Black males are identified as 'dangerous rule breakers', their labels serve as reasoning for moral panics. Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) identified five components of the moral panic: concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality and volatility.

Concern arises of a heightened level of concern over criminal actions of Black males. The origins of these heightened concerns stem from ideas of Africans, regardless of nationality, being from problem prone regions of the world. Further, the perceived propensity for criminal behaviour makes them undesirable citizens. Concrete expressions of concern come in the form of letters to the editors of newspapers etc. which discussed concerns for the community's well-being.

Hostility is evident in the statement, 'send them back to 'Jamaica' in reference to the anger that resulted from the Just
Desserts murder case. Phrases such as 'the Barbarians are at the Gate' and 'Too many of the wrong immigrants,' created an 'us versus them' division. Such divisionary tactics ensure that those who are descent and good cannot be Black men.

Consensus involves a need for substantial or widespread agreement by society that the threat is real and serious. This was confirmed by the media frenzy that occurred after the Just Desserts murder.

Disproportionality refers to the degree of public concern over the behaviour itself, the problem it poses, or conditions it creates is far greater than is true for comparable, even more damaging actions. The terms referred to in the hostility section indicated that exaggerated claims were made and referred to alleged 'imported' Black criminal activity as more dangerous than crime committed by people of other ethnicities. Comments such as 'our culture is not accustomed to this type of savagery' (Wortley, Hagan and MacMillan, 1997), confirmed the effects of the 'new racism' which ties, in subtle ways, crime to Black culture.

The research confirms that the volatility criteria connects with Goode and Ben-Yehuda's (1994) statement that 'some moral panics may become routinized or institutionalized'. Chimonas, (1997) in a similar analysis to that of Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994), stated that panics do not emerge from abnormal social
conditions, but that they represent, in this case, historical struggles of the Black community over the dislike of their Canadian presence. The ongoing struggles over the stereotypical portrayals of Blacks, being good at crime or sports, and the disregard of their positive contributions to society, form an ongoing part of everyday life. These struggles do not emerge and disappear, but instead flare up, reduce and leave remnants behind. The danger to the public clause is an example of the concrete forms that moral concerns can take.

The negative depictions of Black men also lead to enforcement practices such as racial profiling because of what Skolnick (1966) referred to as a belief in symbolic assailants. Threat is a term that served as a general theme throughout this project and is how Black males are seen to relate to society, especially law enforcement. So great is this belief in Black males as symbolic assailants and folk devils, is that racial profiling is often disguised as criminal profiling. These representations of Black men trickle down and impact the Black community in several ways:

- Lack of recognition of intellectual competence
- Modification of everyday behaviour
- Fear of being subjected to racial profiling
- Feeling unwelcomed to Canadian society
- Ethno-cultural group conflict
- Unfair subjection to immigration laws and deportations
- Scarcity of positive depictions of Black men and Black individuals.
- Parental fear of the harassment of their children
- Internalization of negative imagery
- Harsher treatment by the criminal justice system
- Overemphasis on the criminal activities of Black men and lack of concern of their victimization

The importance of this study is the introduction of these issues to document the polarization and dehumanization of citizens based on ethnicity. This work provides sociologists and criminologists with new insight into the field of race, crime and intergroup relations by creating room for such discussions from the perspective of those who are marginalized. The policy implications of this study are many. Of particular interest is how Black law enforcement officers are able to reconcile their membership in their respective ethnic and professional communities. Finally, this study indicated that, contrary to Hall et al's assertions (1978), ideological construction resulting from the media, is not created as a mere distraction of another societal phenomenon. Constructions discussed in this study worked to reinforce the otherness of those it depicted. In
doing so, the media not only influences the nation about their African Canadian citizens, but negatively impacts the identity formation of those labeled foreign.
APPENDIX A

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH


You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Phyllis Kumi, from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, at the University of Windsor.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the Faculty Supervisor, Dr. Subhas Ramcharan, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Windsor at 519 253-3000 ext. 2205.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to assess the impact of media portrayals of Black men and crime on the everyday lives of the African Canadian community.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

- analyze some media accounts (newspaper articles)
- participate in a tape-recorded, one-on-one interview

Length and Location of Session

The entire session will take approximately one hour and thirty minutes and will be conducted in a location of mutual convenience.

Access to Research Findings

Should you request information regarding the findings of this project, you will be provided with a telephone number to access the findings.
POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are some minimal psychological risks to participating in this project such as loss of privacy and possible feelings of fear and anger. Should you experience any serious discomfort you will be provided with the contact numbers for organizations such as the Organization of Parents of Black Children, African Canadian Legal Clinic to help manage this discomfort.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no specific benefits to be gained by your participation in this study. However, there are potential benefits to the Academic community such as inclusion in the scientific literature of the impact of racial stereotypes on the lives of African Canadians.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There will no payment given to you for your participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Personal names will not be used during the interview or on transcripts of the interview; the data will be coded and used for researcher's analysis only. Transcripts, questionnaires and tapes will be kept in separate, unmarked cases and will have combinations that are accessible to only the researcher. Tapes will be destroyed upon transcribing interviews.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. You can ask that the tape recorder be turned off at any time. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so. You may need to be contacted for further questions at the investigator's discretion.
RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact:

Research Ethics Co-ordinator
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4

Telephone: 519 253-3000, #3916
Email: ethics@uwindsor.ca

Please tear along the straight line and keep the top portion

SIGNATURE RESEARCH SUBJECT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study "Guilty by Association" as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

__________________________
Name of Subject

__________________________  ______________
Signature of Subject          Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

In my judgement, the subject is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent to participate in this research study.

__________________________  ______________
Signature of Investigator     Date
APPENDIX B

Demographic Questionnaire

Please read carefully and fill in the blank or circle the most appropriate option.

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age:

3. Country of Birth: _______________________

4. How do you identify yourself? for e.g. Jamaican-Canadian ______

5. Marital Status:
   a) Single
   b) Married
   c) Common-Law
   d) Divorced
   e) Widowed
   f) Separated
   g) Other (please specify): ______________

6. Do you have any children? Yes No
   a) if 'yes' how many? Males _____ females _____

7. Level of Education Attained
   a) none
   b) Primary (elementary school, middle school)
   c) Secondary (high school)
   d) Vocational
   e) College
   f) University

8. What is your occupation? __________________________

9. How long have you lived in Toronto? ______________

10. What is your legal status in Canada? ______________________
    a) Canadian citizen
    b) Landed immigrant
    c) Visa student
    d) Refugee claimant
    e) Other (please specify): ______________________
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Canada is a nation that is made up of immigrants. Are all immigrants, regardless of their countries of origin, welcomed to Canadian society?

2. What images of Black males are depicted by both the print and visual media?

3. In your opinion, is the media's coverage of Black assailants involved in crime different from that of White assailants? If so, how? Does the coverage differ if both the assailant and victim are Black versus a Black assailant and a White victim? What about White assailants and Black victims?

4. As a parent, do you have any concerns about the effect of negative media portrayals on how others view your children, especially Black males? What about how your children view themselves? For single or married participants, without children, do you have any concerns about the effects of the media portrayals on how people view you, personally? Or friends or family members?

5. Are there certain groups in the Black community who are usually seen in newspaper and television depictions? Does this have consequences for the Black community at large?

6. When you hear that a serious crime has been committed, do you ever wonder about the race or gender of the perpetrator? If so, why?

7. Is Black male criminal participation a concern of yours? Why or why not?

8. Have you ever experienced a change in the behaviour of friends, neighbors etc. after Black male has been accused of committing a crime? Or after being convicted of a crime?

9. What is responsible for Black male criminal participation?

10. Are there consequences for the Black community when males commit crimes? If so, what are they?
11. The Canadian criminal justice system does not discriminate according to the race of the accused. Please give a response to this statement.

12. Should the Black community suggest solutions to combat Black male criminal participation?

13. What should become of Black male immigrants who were raised in Canada, have committed crimes and are facing deportation?

14. What is your opinion on the collection and use of race based crime statistics?

15. Do you believe that the Toronto Police force engages in racial profiling?

(b) To Serve and Protect-How does this statement relate to the Black community?
APPENDIX D

CHARTS

Does the Toronto Police Force Engage in Racial Profiling?

Do the Portrayals of Jamaicans have consequences for how the Black Communities relate to each other?
APPENDIX E

CONTACT ORGANIZATIONS

African-Canadian Legal Clinic
111 Richmond Street West, Suite 503
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2G4
(416) 214-4747

Black Action Defense Committee
944A St. Clair Ave West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 656 2232

Jamaican Canadian Association
995 Arrow Rd.
Toronto, Ontario M9M 2Z5
(416) 746-5772

Black Inmates and Friends Assembly
2518 Eglinton Ave West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 652-3131

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
REFERENCES


VITA AUCTORIS

Phyllis Kumi was born in 1977 in the city of Kumasi, in the West African country of Ghana. She attended high school at Emery Collegiate Institute in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. She completed her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Honours Criminology and Family and Social Relations, at the University of Windsor in the year 2000. She is currently a Master's Candidate at the University of Windsor and will reach the finish line in May of 2005.