Introduction: Origins of Multiculturalism in Canada
Milton Wong, OBC

Beyond the Mosaic: Canada's Multiculturalism 2.0
Alden E. Habacon

Moderated by Don McCutchan
CIPA VP, Programming

Putting Diverse Talents to Work
Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs (CIPA)
Annual Summer Conference
The Stranger Next Door: Making Diversity Work
August 9–12, 2007

Executive Summary

Overview

At CIPA's Annual Summer Conference in 2007, Milton Wong was invited to speak about "The Stranger Next Door: Making Diversity Work." Upon consideration, he realized that although his audience would likely appreciate his insights into the origins and potential of Canadian multiculturalism, he also wanted to share with them some interesting new views and ideas he had recently encountered and found intriguing. These ideas belonged to Alden E. Habacon. Milton revised his speech into an introduction to traditional multiculturalism, then yielded the floor to Alden, who described multiculturalism using modern terms and concepts like cultural mobility, cultural intelligence and cultural navigation. What follows are executive summaries of each presentation.

Introduction: Origins of Multiculturalism in Canada
by Milton K. Wong, OBC

When I first began to be intellectually preoccupied with multiculturalism, I was quite fascinated with the metaphor of the tapestry—also known as the mosaic—to describe the Canadian model. All these years later, I still think that metaphor works beautifully. We still receive a quarter of a million new immigrants every year—that's the highest immigration rate in the world, by the way—and we continue to add them to the tapestry. We are, I believe, a resilient and vibrant nation because of our immigrants. We celebrate and protect diversity in our society in a way that produces a uniquely harmonious and united result.

The foundations of Canadian multiculturalism

A question that has long preoccupied academics, journalists and political leaders interested in the Canadian approach to multiculturalism is: How did we get to where we are today? And how can other countries learn from our example?

Some people seem to have the impression that Canadian multiculturalism was a deliberate experiment based on intellectual discussions and decisions about how to shape our society. But I would argue that it has been more of a happy accident—a serendipitous outcome based on historical events. It seems to me that the Canada we know today owes much of the nature of its existence to the partnership, early in Canada's history, of Robert Baldwin and Louis LaFontaine.

Thanks in large part to them, Canada was founded on the union of two distinctly different cultures to combat a mutual adversary. The ability to embrace that which is different—to work together towards common goals, despite cultural and linguistic differences—is at the heart of Canadian multiculturalism.

Uniting Canadians for a common purpose

That is what gives me hope for the future of our planet, which at the moment looks uncertain. It is quickly becoming apparent to me that a massive cooperative effort is needed if we want to rescue our Earth from a devastating tipping point caused by climate change and environmental degradation. We will need to put our differences aside and work towards a common purpose.

That's why I feel that the challenge of saving the world from climate collapse and other environmental disasters has the potential to soften the cultural differences that once divided us. Slowly but surely, it is becoming apparent that no matter where we come from, what we look like, what religion we practice or what language we speak, we are in this together. We share the same DNA. When you think about it this way, it seems unfathomable that around the world, so many people seem to have so much trouble respecting each other and respecting the planet.

Pluralism and sustainability: a formula for world peace?

The idea of pluralism and sustainability working shoulder to shoulder to unite us in our diversity and promote cultural harmony around the world is an exciting one indeed.

Perhaps decades from now if we succeed in that lofty goal, we'll have pluralism to thank for setting us on the right path, and sustainability for keeping us there.

Call it Canadian-style multiculturalism, call it pluralism, call it Alden Habacon's vision of ethnic identity: it's essential for world peace. Or as His Highness the Aga Khan has said, "We cannot make the world safe for democracy unless we also make the world safe for diversity."

These are big, bold statements, but I believe they are absolutely true.

Beyond the Mosaic: Canada's Multiculturalism 2.0
by Alden E. Habacon

As Milton pointed out, it's important to understand where we've come from as a multicultural nation. But it's also my opinion that Canada's urban centres have outgrown both the traditional model of multiculturalism and the conventional language used to describe our contemporary reality. As a result, it is becoming ever more difficult to articulate today's complex Canadian cultural identity —while at the same time, it's still important to understand where we're going.

In my presentation today I will outline the trends that are setting the context for diversity in Canada beyond statistics and demographics; I will talk about what's new in Canada's diversity, including a new model of cultural identity and the concept of Cultural Navigators; I will discuss new approached needed to make diversity work—including cultural intelligence, or CQ, a corporate term that has been used to describe the people skills needed to manage a global business; and finally, I will look ahead to some of the "diversity challenges" that Canada's workplaces will have to solve.

The new face and voice of Canada
Today's second- and third-generation descendants of immigrants, as well as foreign-born Canadians who immigrated as young children, have an incredible combined social, economic and cultural mobility. Their experience of cultural identity is so complex that it has been challenging to articulate. They are important to note because they are a natural bridge between immigrant communities and what is conventionally considered "mainstream Canada."

Unlike their Australian and American counterparts, Canadians are not burdened by having to cut their ties to a culturally rich ancestry in order to find acceptance as part of mainstream culture, or vice versa. This emergent group of Canadians is not only the "new face and voice of Canada"—they also influence Canada's psyche as members of both Canada's immigrant communities and the mainstream collective.

Understanding Cultural Navigators
Canadians' cultural identities are an organic collection of the cultural spaces that they navigate on a daily basis, constantly changing and wildly diverse. I have come up with a term for the generation with the greatest ability to navigate through and around these cultural spaces: I call them Cultural Navigators.

This group includes urban aboriginals, those who immigrated to Canada as young children, and most second- and third-generation descendants of immigrants. What I especially like about this new model of multiculturalism is its inclusiveness. The model is not exclusive to People of Colour, either. A variety of experiences, such as travel, languages, education, friendships and marriage can provide someone with access to various cultural spaces. This model acknowledges the diversity of those who would otherwise appear to be the least visibly diverse.

Applying Cultural Intelligence (CQ)
Cultural Navigators, of course, possess (varying levels of) Cultural Intelligence, or CQ. I define CQ not in relation to how successfully a person can adapt to a foreign environment, but rather as "a person's

accumulation or use of relevant *insider* information, so as to be intuitively familiar with a variety of cultural contexts."

At CBC, we need this insider information to make choices about programming, remain relevant to culturally diverse communities, and reflect all points of view. Rather than using CQ to approach a "new culture," the application of CQ in Canada is more about gathering information, consulting and connecting with community, and hiring or developing management in possession of genuine familiarity with—or having *intel,* in the military sense of the term—of the target audience you wish to reach.

In Closing…
I would like to share an anecdote from Trevor Phillips, of Britain's Human Rights commission. In May, at an address to European Public Broadcasters, Phillips claimed that Europe is tackling a big question: Can we share a planet?

Phillips went on to talk about South Asians moving into an elderly care facility that was predominantly white. Despite some high tensions, the South Asian and white elderly women found one thing in common: each believed their son had married the wrong woman. Simple anecdotes like this one remind us that it is through the universal that we are all connected.

Milton Wong
Introduction: Origins of Multiculturalism in Canada

It's a tall order, being asked to speak at length about cultural diversity, the survival of the planet, and how pluralism and sustainability may be the emerging common moral sentiments that will lay the foundation for a positive future for mankind. There's something a little bit "War and Peace" about such a weighty, daunting topic.

That's why I'm going to step aside in a moment and turn the job over to my friend Alden Habacon.

But seriously—I've been thinking and speaking about multiculturalism for many years, and never has it been more important to understand the contribution it can make to a peaceful world. So I'm going to offer some opening remarks that will, I hope, give you the background and perspective you'll need to fully appreciate what Alden Habacon is going to talk about after me.

When I first began to be intellectually preoccupied with multiculturalism, I was quite fascinated with the metaphor of the tapestry to describe the Canadian model. And all these years later, I still think that metaphor works beautifully. We still receive a quarter of a million new immigrants every year—that's the highest immigration rate in the world, by the way—and we continue to add them to the tapestry.

Their unique identities are what make the tapestry attractive in its entirety—yet we never fully lose sight of the individual strands, either. That's the beauty of it. We are, I believe, a resilient and vibrant nation because of our immigrants.

Canadian multiculturalism has also been called a mosaic. Either way, it's about celebrating and protecting diversity in our society in a way that produces a harmonious and united result.

You might wonder how multiculturalism is different from pluralism, another often-discussed term. A standard definition of pluralism is this: a state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in, and development of, their traditional culture or special interest within the confines of a common civilization.

We could quibble over the subtle differences between multiculturalism and pluralism. Personally, I believe pluralism is more specific and less nebulous than what is implied by multiculturalism. Pluralism takes a stronger position. It clearly assigns diverse cultural groups autonomous identities to which they can adhere while at the same time living in agreement with some of the ground rules that describe Canadian citizenship. For some time now, I've believed pluralism is the direction we've been taking in Canadian society—and I believe it's the right direction for Canada.

Of course, not everyone agrees with me. Some people lean more towards a more American-style melting-pot concept. Some would prefer a model in between—more cultural intermingling than what pluralism describes, but not quite to the "melting point." And then there's what I'll call the post-modern view of ethnic diversity, which Alden is going to talk about soon.

But personally, I have always found wisdom in the writings of Charles Taylor, a Canadian philosopher and writer who has studied the formation of human identity, and who believes in the necessity of multiculturalism. Taylor distinguishes between two traditions in liberal democratic theory: on the one hand, the politics of equal dignity, based on the notion that all humans deserve respect and equal rights universally and equally; and on the other hand, the politics of difference, based on the notion that all humans—including individuals and groups—need and deserve recognition of their unique identities.

These two perspectives might appear to contradict each other at first. The former requires treating people in a difference-blind manner, while the latter demands differential treatment. Yet Taylor maintains that these perspectives are compatible because they are both built on the notion of equal respect.

Taylor has written that humans create their identities dialogically: that is, in relation to others. According to this theory, since human identity is at least partly shaped by recognition, when recognition is withheld it can damage a person's dignity. The same can be said for groups of people who share a common identity. To extrapolate, for instance, if we fail to recognize the Aboriginals' claim to a unique identity, we injure their dignity.

Due recognition, according to Taylor, is not simply a courtesy, but a vital human need. Taylor's multiculturalism is a logical extension of the politics of equal respect and recognition. In his own words, "All human cultures that have animated whole societies over some considerable stretch of time have something important to say to all human beings."

My impression that immigrants make us stronger as a nation also seems to be supported by research done recently by Environics president Michael Adams. In his latest book, Adams shows that the percentage of ethnic groups participating in the political process is higher here in Canada than in other countries. To me, that's proof that our process of accommodation works. And it's evidence of how we differentiate ourselves from other countries that are perhaps less welcoming of immigrants or less accommodating of differences.

Because of this success, a question that has long preoccupied academics, journalists and political leaders interested in the Canadian approach to multiculturalism is: How did we get to where we are today? And how can other countries learn from our example?

Some people seem to have the impression that Canadian multiculturalism was a deliberate experiment based on intellectual discussions and decisions about how to shape our society. But I would argue that it has been more of a happy accident—a serendipitous outcome based on historical events.

Before I elaborate, I will tell you that some of these ideas are not all mine; many come from John Ralston Saul's book, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century*. So I want to give him credit for that.

When I opened that book and started reading more about some of the early events in Canadian history, I realized that they give us a "sneak preview," so to speak—or call it a foreshadowing—of modern multiculturalism. It seems to me that the Canada we know today owes much of the nature of its existence to the partnership of two men: Robert Baldwin and Louis LaFontaine.[i]

Both men were lawyers. LaFontaine's political career began at the age of 23, when he was elected to the Lower Canadian Assembly. He was known for his dedication to French Canada. Baldwin also entered politics early in life, motivated by a desire to change the Canadian political system.

Early in 19th century Canada, elites dominated the British colonies of Upper and Lower Canada. They were smugly content with their positions of privilege, supported by British governors, and paid scant attention to the elected assemblies of the colonies. I will simplify things a bit here, but essentially, the complacency of these elites, their lack of willingness to engage with the elected assemblies, eventually generated a great deal of resentment among the colonies. When that resentment peaked, rebellions broke out in Upper and Lower Canada. Rebellion was quickly defeated in Upper Canada, but it was long and bloody in Lower Canada.

When the fighting ended, the British government sent a representative to investigate the colonial grievances. The report that went back to the government prescribed greater power and autonomy for the colonial assemblies—exactly what the Lower Canadian rebels had been fighting for. But it also recommended that Upper and Lower Canada be united, a proposal that many Lower Canadians adamantly opposed. If this story is starting to sound familiar, you probably know that Lower Canada is now known as Quebec.

Nevertheless, in winter of 1841, a union between the two areas was proclaimed and elections were called. LaFontaine ran in a Quebec riding called Terrebonne. But on election day, 200 armed thugs prevented his supporters from voting, and he lost the election.

Meanwhile, Baldwin had been elected in two different ridings in what is now the Toronto area. He met with constituents in one of those ridings—Fourth York—to see if they would agree to elect LaFontaine in his place. Then he sent LaFontaine a letter asking if he would agree to run in a by-election in Toronto.

LaFontaine agreed. He campaigned in Toronto on a platform of French-English cooperation, and easily won his seat. Meanwhile, Baldwin's gesture of good will garnered him francophone support in Lower Canada.

And that is how, in the absence of any specific designs on uniting the French and English in Canada, Baldwin and LaFontaine unwittingly sowed the first seeds of a nation that would eventually celebrate the relatively peaceful co-existence of two cultures and two languages. A respected francophone journalist of the time, Etienne Parent, wrote: "If all the inhabitants of Upper Canada are like [Baldwin], I predict the most brilliant results of the Union of the Canadas."

My point is that whether they knew it or not, Baldwin and LaFontaine planted a seed when they shook hands. That seed grew into an unusual, uniquely Canadian form of multiculturalism. It grew into a Canada founded on the union of two distinctly different cultures to combat a mutual adversary. The ability to embrace that which is different—to work together towards common goals, despite cultural and linguistic differences—is at the heart of Canadian multiculturalism.

By Confederation in 1867, accommodating the French language, culture, laws and religion was a matter of fact, not a matter for debate. Canada had been built on a revolutionary commitment to co-operation and compromise.

The requirement for accommodation was an inherent feature of the Baldwin-LaFontaine agreement. That requirement was built into our constitution officially in 1982, but what's more important is that it is also built *intuitively* into our behaviour. Multiculturalism in Canada has truly been an organic, grassroots process.

It might not be a stretch to suggest that as Canadians, cultural tolerance is one of the defining features of our national "collective unconscious." In other words, it isn't something we make a conscious effort to practice or think about every time we get up in the morning. Instead it's just there, invisible in the background, framing the way we think about our lives, our country and our common value system.

There never was a grand, deliberate experiment. No, Canadian multiculturalism really defies reductionism. Its beauty is in its complexity.

However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't take some pride in how we've managed the unique brand of multiculturalism that evolved from historical events. History may have created it, but as a society we have made choices about how to support and encourage it.

And perhaps no one is more interested in how we've pulled this off than the Aga Khan.

As a member of the board of directors of the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, I've had lots of opportunities to familiarize myself with the Aga Khan's work in international development around the world. The Aga Khan has looked at multiculturalism in Canada and concluded that the Canadian way of life is a model that should be studied and copied in other parts of the world to promote peace.

He believes, and so do I, that countries around the world have much to understand about how we've fused a diverse nation together so peacefully here in Canada.

That's why he is establishing the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa. The centre is founded on the idea that "tolerance, openness and understanding towards the cultures, social structures, values and faiths of other peoples are now essential to the very survival of an interdependent world." One of the central reasons

for the centre's existence is the Aga Khan's belief that "pluralism is no longer simply an asset or a prerequisite for progress and development. **It is vital to our existence.**"

The Aga Khan's interest in Canadian multiculturalism was sparked back in the 1970s, when many Ismailis, seeking refuge from ethnic strife in East Africa, were welcomed by Canadian communities. As the Ismailis' spiritual leader, the Aga Khan was interested in understanding how Canada had succeeded so well at managing diversity.

Ten and 20 years ago, he began asking Canadian leaders about it. Then, several years ago, he launched a formal Pluralism Initiative to better understand how Canadian multiculturalism works and how its lessons could be shared with other culturally diverse societies.

The Global Centre for Pluralism is meant to function as an international centre of excellence for the study, practice and teaching of pluralism. Because of his belief that Canada "epitomizes what can be achieved through a commitment to pluralism," the Aga Khan has committed $30 million of his own money towards this project, describing the Canadian commitment to finding unity in diversity as "Canada's gift to the world."

Of course, pluralism needs the right context to establish itself successfully, to grow strong roots and blossom. It has to be based on dignity and equal opportunity—on population-based health care and education systems, for example. Values and systems like these are what allow pluralism to develop and thrive. Without them, pluralism cannot exist.

I believe the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada and the Global Centre for Pluralism offer Canadians concrete ways to participate in sharing what we have and what we have learned. They are a way for the future.

In fact, I think that because of the increasingly global nature of our world, pluralism and sustainability may join hands to become the twin central, emerging common values that are capable of bringing peaceful unity to diverse communities.

Because of the precarious state of our planet, it is quickly becoming apparent to people everywhere that a massive cooperative effort will be needed if we want to rescue our Earth from a devastating tipping point. We will need to put our differences aside and work towards a common purpose.

That's why I feel that the challenge of saving the world from climate collapse and other environmental disasters has the potential to soften the cultural differences that once divided us. Slowly but surely, it is becoming apparent that no matter where we come from, what we look like, what religion we practice or what language we speak, we are in this **together**. If I buy a Ford Suburban and drive it across Canada several times, the impact will be felt one way or another on the other side of the world.

This is a brand new phenomenon in modern history. The world has never felt quite so small.

Looking at the world through the lens of sustainability, you see that everyone has the same DNA; you realize suddenly that at the cellular level, we're all the same. When you think about it this way, it seems unfathomable that around the world, so many people seem to have so much trouble respecting each other and respecting the planet.

Years ago when I was working on land claims issues with the Nisga'a, I was at Joseph Gosnell's home for breakfast one morning. As chief negotiator for the Nisga'a people, Joseph was responsible for the signing of the historic Nisga'a Treaty in 1999. That morning I said to him, "Joe, according to some research I've seen, the Aboriginals may have come from central China, over the land bridge to Alaska and down to South America." I remarked that maybe I had a stronger right to land claims than he did. I was only joking, of course, but I thought this theory added a whole new dimension—not only to the land claims and Aboriginal rights issues we were discussing, but to my understanding of how, as human beings on this planet, we really are all related.

So yes, we all share the same DNA—science tells us that. At the same time, multiculturalism is based on recognizing and respecting social behaviours, customs and values that are different from each other. Yet I don't see a contradiction here. Socially and emotionally, there are more important ways in which we're all the same than there are ways in which we differ. For example, all human beings love their children and want the best for them. What they mean by "best" may differ according to culture. But the fundamental impulse is the same everywhere you go.

And increasingly, more of us around the world are recognizing the importance of sustainable living. It is an emerging common social value, one that I believe has the potential to unite us despite cultural differences. The need for us to work—as a united global society—towards a common goal whose achievement will mean nothing less than the survival of our planet may have a powerful harmonizing effect on the way we relate to each other.

Alden Habacon, who is about to replace me here at the podium, has some very interesting thoughts on taking multiculturalism to new and exciting places. He's going to explain how Canada is already going beyond pluralism to a whole new view of diversity, to where ethnicity begins to encompass other facets of identity such as people's values—like sustainable living.

The idea of pluralism and sustainability working shoulder to shoulder to unite us in our diversity and promote cultural harmony around the world is an exciting one indeed. Perhaps decades from now if we succeed in that lofty goal, we'll have pluralism to thank for setting us on the right path, and sustainability for keeping us there.

Call it Canadian-style multiculturalism, call it pluralism, call it Alden Habacon's vision of ethnic identity: it's essential for world peace. Or as His Highness the Aga Khan has said, "We cannot make the world safe for democracy unless we also make the world safe for diversity."

These are big, bold statements, but I believe they are absolutely true.

And on that note, I'm ready to give you Alden Habacon. But first let me introduce him properly.

As manager of diversity initiatives for the English Television Network of the CBC, Alden designs and oversees initiatives that support the CBC's commitment to accurately reflecting Canada's diversity, both on air and behind the scenes.

Outside of his work for CBC, Alden is also the founder of an online magazine called *Schema*, whose mandate is to reflect the experience and sensibility of Canada's most culturally diverse mainstream population. As a well-known cultural thinker, he regularly speaks and consults on cultural diversity, multiculturalism, youth and Asian Canadian identity. Most recently, he was a guest speaker in Kuala Lumpur at the 2007 Seminar on Cultural Diversity and Broadcasting co-hosted by the Asia-Pacific Institute of Broadcaster Development and the Canadian High Commission in Malaysia.

Please join me in welcoming Alden Habacon.

Alden E. Habacon
Beyond the Mosaic: Canada's Multiculturalism 2.0

I've called my part of this presentation "Beyond the Mosaic: Canada's Multiculturalism 2.0." As Milton pointed out, it's important to understand where we've come from as a multicultural nation. But it's also my opinion that Canada's urban centres have outgrown both the traditional model of multiculturalism and the conventional language used to describe our contemporary reality. As a result, it is becoming ever more difficult to articulate today's complex Canadian cultural identity —while at the same time, it's still important to understand where we're going.

In the same way that new technology and our relationships with the Internet have spawned what is so commonly known as *Web 2.0,* the conceptual devices we need to describe today's Canada also need to be updated. So today I'm going to expand on these conceptual devices and talk about their application to our workforce in Canada.

But first, a little more background about what I do. My work at CBC is part of the corporation's larger agenda to reflect contemporary Canada accurately. CBC's motivation towards diversity is simple: *the public is changing.* My task at CBC is to help create and test the tools that enable decision makers, programmers and content producers to reflect the face of Canada—but more importantly, to connect with the hearts and minds of today's Canadians.

Because the public is changing, CBC has also had to change. It's moving away from prescribing what Canada *should look like* or think about, and aiming instead to be a connective tissue that presents Canada as it *actually* looks and sounds.

"The Changing Face of Canada" is a reality with which all businesses and media are grappling. However, I would argue that to achieve genuine relevance with Canadians, what they should really be focusing on is Canada's "changing heart and mind"—its public psyche and sensibilities—which are uniquely Canadian and not necessarily tied to demographics. Too often, all we consider are the faces—what's on the surface— and we forget to consider what is really going on in *the hearts and minds* of Canadians. The mosaic, in all its variations, is really all about the collection of faces.

The other project that has informed what I will speak about today is *Schema Magazine.* About three years ago, with Milton's support, I began to develop a magazine that would describe Canada's diversity without ever actually saying so. It continues to be a work in progress and currently lives online. Here's a description:

> "Using a new model for cultural identity, or "schema", we envision individuals as dynamic identities that move through a complex web of cultures. Cultural Navigators see themselves as the product of these networks, available to them through immigration, family roots, and residency in diverse cities all over the world. [Schema] explore[s] this unique evolution and experience of Canada's diversity."

In the rest of my presentation today, I will cover four areas: (1) The *Trends* that set the context for diversity in Canada beyond statistics and demographics; (2) *What's New in Canada's Diversity*, including this new model, or "schema" of cultural identity and the concept of Cultural Navigators; (3) *New Approaches* needed to make diversity work; and (4) *Looking Forward*, some of the coming "diversity challenges" that Canada's workplaces will have to solve.

One of the *New Approaches* I will expand on is Cultural Intelligence, or CQ. CQ is a corporate term that has been used to describe the people skills needed to manage a global business. For example, the need to understand the different meanings of cues and tips in order to interpret new situations. However, I would argue that the most important piece of *intel* is actually knowing your own bias—the unique lens that colors and filters everything you see.

In fact, this presentation has a bias: first, much of the evolving discourse around diversity in Canada is primarily focused on the metropolitan reality. The trends I will be speaking to are based on the experiences of those living in Canada's growing cities. (The mosaic model of multiculturalism remains intact and relevant in most rural centres.) Secondly, the experience of ethnicity and cultural identity that I will refer to is more readily observed in the lives of second- and third-generation children of immigrants, Canadian youth and young adults. That is to say, there is both a regional and generational inconsistency to the experience of cultural diversity in Canada, and these are certainly worth discussing at a later time.

1. *Trends*

I said I would begin my four-part presentation by talking about trends that set the context for diversity in Canada beyond statistics and demographics. Cultural diversity today is part of many larger and more influential trends affecting North America. The problem with trend-watching, however, is that it is very easy to forget the interconnectedness between trends. Generally, at most diversity seminars and workshops, recently gathered data on Canada's demographics receive the greatest attention. Diversity professionals are bombarded with statistics on migration and projections of when the term "visible minority" will cease to be useful.

This is certainly important, but it is equally significant to note that this is not how most Canadians operate. How changing demographics will live, move and relate is more influenced by the progressive changes in technology and technology usage. As Patricia Aufderheide, professor in the School of Communication at American University in Washington, D.C. has pointed out, "The blogosphere is doubling every six months. It is a multilingual and multicultural environment. What has happened is that the audience is gradually being supplanted by a new entity—a wildly fluctuating set of networks of people engaged in issues and topics and passions—among them clusters of publics—who seize upon communications media to make their networks real and make things happen."

There are a number of reasons why technology exerts a greater influence than demographics. For the most part, technological change is moving at a rate much faster than demographics. Moreover, advances in technology are being driven by industry and commerce. Yesterday Yahoo was the number-one website; in a blink, Facebook has become the staple of everyone's discussion. For the first time in the Internet's history, something other than pornography is driving the Web—namely, social networking.

The impact of technology on our lives is especially apparent in the way we consume media and culture. When I first began working on *Schema*, podcasts did not exist – and we faced the challenge of trying to produce and deliver a print magazine to interested readers in the farthest corners of Canada. In the broadcast industry, Internet consumption is having an impact on conventional television and radio usage.

Canadians are getting their entertainment and information via a more complex mix of platforms, and demand greater control of their time and media. Many might argue that Canadians are, in fact, losing control of their relationship to gadgets and web usage.

The proliferation of the Internet and the reduction of *manufacturing costs to processing power ratio* has made computer technology even more accessible. These two developments combined have increased Canadians' mobility as well as their connectedness. Imagine a new immigrant population that is not only proportionately larger than ever before, but also more technologically savvy than previous waves of immigrants—staying more connected, *in real time*, with family and loved ones overseas than previous waves.

The delayed gratification of letter writing has been replaced by the instant gratification of email and text messaging. What this enables is a virtual transnational reality of traveling without moving. It has empowered Canadians to feel connected to news, culture and interests in their country of origin. This is, in fact, the everyday life of many foreign-born Canadians and immigrants who have moved back. It also means the world's issues increasingly weigh on Canada's psyche. As an example, the villanization of Muslim men in Europe media has intimately affects Muslim men in Canada.

The most Internet-savvy new immigrants who arrive in Canada have better survival skills and have done more real research before they arrive. Many already have friends they have met online, and have found a place to stay on Craigslist. They may even have found a job before landing in Canada. The new immigrant of 2017 will be more savvy, more virtually mobile, and more connected as industry-driven advances in communication and media technology continue to rocket forward.

Canada's *demographics* and *the impact on our labour market* are the next two major trends to note. Demographic trends play such an important role in the dialogue about diversity, simply because unlike a shift in Canadian values, they are the easiest to measure.

What demographic data cannot necessarily tell us is how people interact and move through a city on an everyday level. For example, according to the 2001 Census, Richmond BC has a visible minority population of 59 per cent. But these residents don't just live and work in Richmond—they are mobile all through the Lower Mainland. The result is that all of Vancouver and its surrounding municipalities share the impact of Richmond's visible diversity.

The Canadian corporate response to Canada's demographics—the third trend—is really worth examining, because it is here that we stand in contrast to business practices in Asia and the U.S. In many ways, the business sector in Canada is far ahead of academia, media, the public sector and professional fields in responding to our changing population. From both a labour and market perspective, businesses in Canada want and need to tap into *all of the available talent pool and all the available market in Canada.* To achieve this, banks, for example, have had to provide services in the languages their clients want to use, which requires hiring a diverse workforce. In this way diversity is being used as a competitive advantage. Business in Canada is moving beyond accommodation, and competing for culturally diverse customers and talent.

In contrast, Malaysian businesses have responded to their country's diversity very differently. As Canada will in the future, Malaysia relies heavily on immigration for growth in the labour force—since the 1990s, migrant workers have accounted for more than half of the growth in the less-skilled labour force in Malaysia. But unlike in Canada, it is still common to see job postings that are exclusively for Malays, or postings that specify "Chinese only."

At first glance, this appears to be simple racial segregation. But in fact, the Malay government has initiated tax breaks for Malay businesses that are meant to protect the Malay workforce from becoming disadvantaged. Businesses owned by ethnic Chinese are taxed differently, creating an environment that, while peaceful, is protectionist and reactionary. Malaysia's business legislation has had an enormous impact on the hearts and minds of the diverse residents of Malaysia that defies the sheer reality of their demographics. As a result, Malaysia's model of cultural diversity is much more segregated as efforts to create a 'Malaysian' national identity have clashed with a political and economic structure still organized by ethnic identity.[ii][1]

Meanwhile, the U.S. corporate response to demographics has been all over the map. The impact of affirmative action in the workplace remains debatable. The assumption in the U.S. is that *all Americans are similarly American*, and therefore, businesses have not felt the need to adapt to meet the needs of the changing U.S. market as defined by demographics. Rather, the diverse population of the U.S. is expected to adapt to American ways of doing business. American companies are spending millions to recruit diverse professionals, but not in the strategic way seen in Canada. For example, in previous years' national conferences of the National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP), large engineering companies have been out in full force —driven primarily by a demand for engineers needed for the war in Iraq.

In Canada, the motivation is market relevance. In other words, "It's good business." This has required a shift away from "diversity hiring" towards "strategic hiring" of talent with access to (or CQ of) the market a company wants to be relevant to. Most public broadcasters know this to be the case—otherwise, "You are always second-guessing." That's not to say it's perfect. Visible diversity tends to decrease the higher up the corporate ladder you look. However, diversity and community connectedness have become a common corporate value in Canada and are generally endorsed by the highest levels of management. As new

generations of young professionals learn to navigate the system that seemed impenetrable to their immigrant parents, this will inevitably have to change.

The other contributing trends to Canada's cultural diversity are socio-cultural. There is an emergent sensibility in Canada that I have already referred to as New Canada. I have co-opted this term from a study conducted by the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC) and the *Globe and Mail* in 2003, which attempted to measure and articulate what many Canadians intuitively know to be contemporary Canada. The CRIC published a valuable report called "A New Canada: An Identity Shaped by Diversity," and the *Globe and Mail* published a book called *The New Canada*. I will highlight two key trends from the findings.
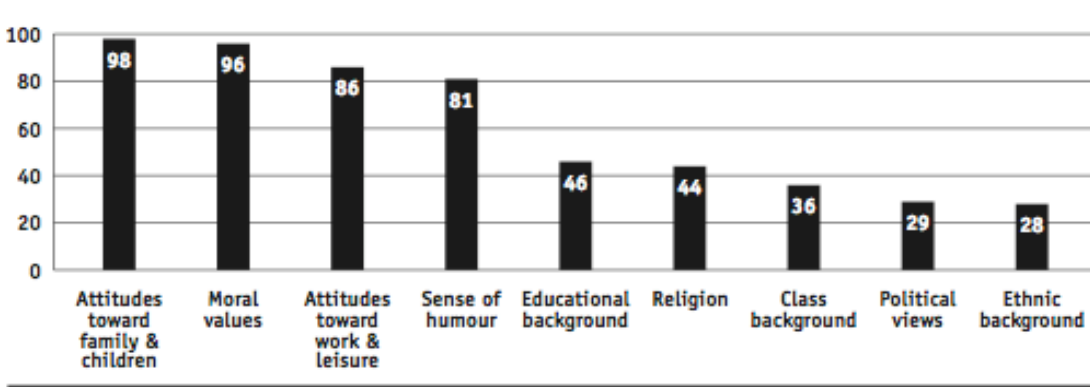
First, the research affirmed that second- and third-generation descendants of immigrants as well as foreign-born Canadians who immigrated as young children have an incredible combined social, economic and cultural mobility. Their experience of cultural identity is so complex that it has been challenging to articulate. (This complexity is at the core of *Schema*'s inception.) They are important to note because they are a natural bridge between immigrant communities and what is conventionally considered "mainstream Canada."

Unlike their Australian and American counterparts, Canadians are not burdened by having to cut their ties to a culturally rich ancestry in order to find acceptance as part of mainstream culture, or vice versa. This emergent group of Canadians is not only the "new face and voice of Canada"—they also influence Canada's psyche as members of both Canada's immigrant communities and the mainstream collective.

Second, there has been a major shift in attitude towards ethnicity: it isn't seen as a core value. We take this for granted in Canada. But for countries like China and Japan, or Indian and Pakistan, ethnicity is everything. According to the survey conducted by the CRIC and the *Globe and Mail*, when asked how important ethnic background was when choosing a spouse, it was the lowest on the scale. "Attitudes towards family & children" were considered the most important factor. (See chart below).

FIGURE 2 | **IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN CHOOSING A SPOUSE**
FIGURE SHOWS % SAYING IT IS "VERY IMPORTANT" OR "IMPORTANT"

When choosing a spouse, is it very important, important, not very important or not at all important that both people share similar...

Factor	%
Attitudes toward family & children	98
Moral values	96
Attitudes toward work & leisure	86
Sense of humour	81
Educational background	46
Religion	44
Class background	36
Political views	29
Ethnic background	28

Source: A New Canada: An Identity Shaped by Diversity. (Centre for Research and Information on Canada, October 2003).

This is very important to note, as one of the places where xenophobia will often organically manifest itself is in families at the prospect of inter-racial marriage. As you know, marriage for East and South Asian families is a *very* big deal. The battle of whose village's traditions will be observed at the Chinese tea ceremony can drive prospective couples to wish they had eloped. In most East Asian countries, mixed-race Asian couples are often "not allowed" or not openly acknowledged.

A couple of years ago, I gave a talk at Simon Fraser University to a very mixed, U.N.-looking class of students. I asked the class how many were in, or had been in, a mixed-race relationship. EVERY student raised their hand. Then I asked how many *would be OK with* having a mixed-race child. Again, every student raised their hand. That day, my intern happened to be an ESL student from an East Asian country. Out of the corner of my eye I saw her, frozen in terror. After the lecture I apologized for putting her in an obviously uncomfortable situation. She confessed that she was mortified at the thought of not having a "pure-*blank*" child. I shared this same story with an audience of broadcasters in Kuala Lumpur and asked, "What Asian Pacific country do you think she was from?" There was a strange silence, as the representatives from over 20 different countries in Asia assumed it was their own.

Vancouver, on the other hand, has the highest percentage of mixed-race marriages in North America. At first, this doesn't seem to make sense. Many people consider Vancouver to be part of Asia; it's often called North America's Asian city. So you might assume Vancouver would reflect Asia's xenophobic tendencies with regards to ethnic relationships. But actually, it's quite the opposite. Overall, mixed-race relationships are mainstream in Canada. Not necessarily any easier to manage, but much more accepted as a common Canadian reality.

The data about ethnicity do not suggest, however, that cultural similarities are unimportant. In fact, they indicate that cultural values, like "attitudes towards family" and "humour" (which are often very culturally specific) are more important than ancestry, race or skin colour to Canadians today. The data also indicate that the most universal cultural values, like family and humour, survive over time.

The intersection of technological, business and socio-cultural trends has heightened our awareness of, and response to, Canada's diversity. Combined, these trends are creating the tipping point needed to make diversity a priority in all industry and to make Canadians acutely aware of the lack of diverse representation in our media, schools and public sector. They also lead to new ideas about multiculturalism and diversity in Canada—which brings me to the second area I said I would touch on today: *What's New in Canada's Diversity.*

2. *What's New*

I've already mentioned some of the "new features" of Multiculturalism 2.0, such as: the heightened degree of global connectedness that many Canadians have (in real time); the fact that Transnationalism is now commonplace; and the fact that cultural diversity is at the core of mainstream Canada. I would like to expand more on a new model for multiculturalism—one I have called the *Schema* model.

There are three fundamental assumptions that distinguish this model from the mosaic that Milton described earlier. The first assumption is that *ethnicity informs one's cultural identity, but does not define it*. In the mosaic model, by contrast, you are defined by your ancestry, regardless of how little or how much your ancestry is actually part of your everyday life. As I explained earlier, the traditional mosaic model is problematic for Canadians who occupy multiple cultural spaces.

Secondly, *cultural identity is fluid*. For example, if, in the next few years, you learn to speak Mandarin and as a result you make a few friends in the growing Taiwanese community—and if this leads you to progressively internalize Taiwanese mannerisms and CQ—then your cultural identity will also change. The same is true if you are promoted to another department of a company with a slightly different work culture. Our identities adjust to our surroundings, influences and interests.

Third, *the Schema model includes all forms of culture*: work cultures, music sub-cultures, academic cultures, virtual on-line cultures, media consumption cultures, and the most commonly shared Canadian cultural space: sports.

The "schema" model of multiculturalism is based on the Internet. Imagine each one of the websites you use on a daily basis as an online space you occupy. Using this, you could draw a map (or schema) of the spaces you navigate through and essentially create a snapshot of your online identity—which, like your cultural

identity, is fluid and is not limited to "websites about websites." It's easiest to describe when drawn out, so I will draw out my schema for you (see flip chart).

Our cultural identities are an organic collection of these cultural spaces that we navigate on a daily basis, constantly changing and wildly diverse. I have come up with a term for the generation with the greatest ability to navigate through and around these cultural spaces: I call them Cultural Navigators. This group includes urban aboriginals, those who immigrated to Canada as young children, and most second- and third-generation descendants of immigrants. What I especially like about this model is its inclusiveness. The schema (or Cultural Navigator) model is not exclusive to People of Colour, either. A variety of experiences, such as travel, languages, education, friendships and marriage can provide someone with access to various cultural spaces. This model acknowledges the diversity of those who would otherwise appear to be the least visibly diverse.

3. *New Approaches* Needed to Make Diversity Work

This now brings me the third area I said I would cover: *New Approaches*. How do you create a work culture that values, encourages, thrives on and can manage differences of opinion, perspective and cultural background? This past March, Adrienne Clarkson delivered a lecture called "The Society of Difference" as part of the annual Lafontaine-Baldwin Lectures. Her answer to this pressing issue is an attitudinal shift from the traditional "them vs. us" paradigm to an "us and us" position. This is much easier to talk about than to implement.

My adaptation of this is redefining the "perfect family picture." Family pictures are a great indicator of how open a society is to diversity. At the level of family—the most basic organisational unit—issues of difference are experienced intimately and meaningfully. The mosaic model would celebrate a diverse range of family pictures. However, within each picture, there is very little visible diversity.

For many, the family picture is a symbol of harmony. About 10 years ago I met a young woman who had just immigrated from Taiwan with her family. But her parents were not too fond of me. Initially, their complaint was that I could not speak their language and that we would never be able to communicate. I responded by learning Mandarin quite quickly. A great example of not having the appropriate CQ, I was quick to show them I was learning Mandarin faster than they were learning English. Rather than being impressed, they felt that they had lost face. Frustrated with my determination, they said my skin colour would ruin their family picture.

The imagined family picture marks the boundaries between *them* and *us*. What these parents were saying was that I could never be *one of them*.

The family picture is an indicator of where our comfort level is. When I conduct diversity workshops, I begin by showing these pictures, and I say quite frankly, "If you are not comfortable with diversity in your own imagined family picture, you may not be ready to make diversity work." And that's OK. Not everyone is comfortable with that kind of change, and it takes time to get to that point where "The Stranger Next Door" is no longer a stranger. Organizations that are not mentally prepared for a labour force where at least 50 per cent of members are foreign-born Canadians and Indigenous Peoples are more likely to respond to our changing demographics by closing the doors even more tightly—as in the case of Malaysia, where segregation was the preferred solution.

This is the one area where social policy, Heritage Canada and our school systems can play a role. Deconstructing conventional notions of "the family picture" and replacing them with more inclusive, visibly diverse models for young children can create a familiarity with diversity—an early childhood CQ— that equips young Canadians for the Canada of 2027.

Our use and understanding of Cultural Intelligence or CQ also requires a slight adjustment. The book *CQ: Developing Cultural Intelligence at Work*, published in 2006 by P. Christopher Early, Soon Ang and Joo-Seng Tan, defines cultural intelligence as "*a person's capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context.*" This is an informative book full of practical information. However, what has changed for Canada is that the multi-national or multi-ethnic workforce described in this book is no longer a 13-hour plane ride away. It is not about managing a "global work assignment." For the most part, the book positions the culturally diverse workforce as the *other,* as *foreign and not one of us.*

CQ as it is being used in Canada is quite different. While I was conducting a diversity workshop at ABS-CBN in Manila, one of the journalists asked me, "If you are increasingly cultural sensitive, can you become overly sensitive to the point where you are afraid of offending everyone, thereby compromising your journalism?" That was the best question I have ever been asked. I responded by saying, "Not offending cannot be our goal. We have the potential to offend even the people we are closest to. Therefore, the mere fact of *not* having offended someone cannot be used as a measure of success." Our goal at CBC is to cover the issues with the broadest range of perspectives and to do so as intelligently as possible.

I would like to modify our definition of CQ. Rather than defining it as the successful adaptation to a foreign environment, we should define it as "a person's accumulation or use of relevant *insider* information, so as to be intuitively familiar with a variety of cultural contexts." We need this insider information to make choices about programming, remain relevant to culturally diverse communities, and reflect all points of view. Rather than using CQ to approach a "new culture," the application of CQ in Canada is more about gathering information, consulting and connecting with community, and hiring or developing management in possession of genuine familiarity with—or having *intel,* in the military sense of the term—of the target audience you wish to reach. Real CQ means having familiarity.

Lionel Laroche, President of MCB Solutions and an expert on cultural intelligence in the workplace, has conducted considerable research on how cultural background can inform what is considered an acceptable level of emotional expression in the work environment. His research has found that a misunderstanding of both employers' and employees' acceptable range of emotional expression is a major cause of turnover.

CQ can also affect the success of recruitment. The desirable Type A personality model does not fit all cultures. What is needed in the workplace is a deeper understanding of how people's cultural influences can affect their workplace expectations, including acceptable forms of communication. It will also require greater education around what cultural norms to expect during hiring and staffing of new immigrants, and educating new employees about Canadian corporate culture.

The fourth and last area I said I would talk about is how *cultural innovation needs to take the lead*. Many Canadians generally overlook the roles played by artists, writers and cultural producers. Canadians don't want to read instructional books or attend didactic workshops about making diversity work. Although many Canadians claim they want more educational programming, in reality Canadians want to be entertained and creatively stimulated. Artists and writers have the potential to create innovation.

In May, Jen Sookfong Lee's first novel, *The End of East*, was published by Random House. Does Canada need another Chinatown story? Of course it does—as long as it's not the same old story. It's cultural innovation that makes our cultural diversity interesting and accessible to all Canadians. What Canada can provide the entire world is a safe place to experiment, the creative space to challenge notions of identity and convention. We have the potential to export to the world the creative expertise to intelligently subvert the imagination—and in this way, expand our imagined family picture.

The recent success of the TV show *Little Mosque on the Prairie* is a great example of this. Likewise, preparing our managers and work cultures for an increasingly diverse workforce should begin not with educational strategies, but with creative stimulation. Creativity breeds diversity.

4. Looking forward (conclusion)

Looking to the future of Canada, a number of challenges are looming that should be part of our "Newcomers Plan"—and there are dozens of unanswered questions. For example, as many new immigrants come from countries where People with Disabilities are institutionalized at home, how will we prepare newcomers to accept and protect our ongoing efforts to integrate People with Disabilities into the workforce? How informed are newcomers of Aboriginal issues?

Here's a pressing one: "How do we deal with Canada's unionized environment?" As diverse talent tends to be newer or younger, they lack seniority. They are therefore the most vulnerable during budget cuts. How are unions responding?

There is no shortage of questions. As I have run out of time. I would like to close by sharing an anecdote by Trevor Phillips, of Britain's Human Rights Commission. In May, at an address to European Public Broadcasters, Phillips claimed that Europe is tackling a big question: Can we share a planet?

Phillips shared a memorable anecdote about South Asians moving into an elderly care facility that was predominantly white. Despite the high tensions, the South Asian and white elderly women found one thing in common: each believed their son had married the wrong woman. Simple anecdotes like this one remind us that it is through the universal that we are all connected.

Thank you.

Notes:

---

[i] Much of the section on Baldwin and Lafontaine is paraphrased from John Ralston Saul, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century*. Toronto: Penguin, 1998.

[ii] Amy L. Freedman in "The Effect of Government Policy and Institutions on Chinese overseas Acculturation: The Case of Malaysia." Published in Journal of Modern Asian Studies (2001).