**Gendering Immigration/Integration:**
**Policy Research Workshop Proceedings**
**and**
**A Selective Review of Policy Research**
**Literature 1987-1996**

Report from the First National Conference
Responding to Diversity in the Metropolis:
Building an Inclusive Research Agenda
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**I PROCEEDINGS FROM THE GENDERING IMMIGRATION/INTEGRATION POLICY RESEARCH WORSHOP**

**In Celebration of International Women's Day**
**The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, Secretary of State (Status of Women)**
**(Multiculturalism)**

It is an honour for me to be here this morning for two reasons:  one, because I was in Milan at the very first conference of Metropolis and two, because today is International Women's Day.  But I wouldn't want to put them necessarily in that order.  Yet going to the Milan Conference and being here today has given me a sense of continuity.  As a family physician, continuity is extremely important.

The concept of Metropolis, the building of cities, of how we deal with migration in those cities, is very important.  In Milan, I was impressed by the fact that Canada is a leader in the integration of its large cities.  We have very large, diverse cities.  I understand that Toronto is the most diverse city in the world.  I know that my city of Vancouver is extremely diverse and, I think, well integrated in many ways.  While it may not be true for the suburbs, the city of Vancouver is extremely well integrated.

Canadians came to Metropolis with a system of skills gained over the years in dealing with immigration because we are a country of immigrants.  A new world country, so to speak.  Canada is, by origin, an Aboriginal country that was forged and built, and continues to be built, by many of us who come from different lands.

As Secretary of State for Multiculturalism, I can tell you that the principle of multiculturalism has a direct impact on the architecture of cities we want to build in the future.  Multiculturalism represents the vision for the future and is the infrastructure of the past.  I want to touch on that a bit.  Multiculturalism, which began about 25 years ago -- and as everyone knows quite clearly -- started here in the Prairies.  The people of the Prairies always seem to push the envelope.  It was "Prairie folk" who decided that the bilingual, bicultural nature of this country -- the two founding nations -- did not honour nor value the work they had done in building the wheatland and farmland of the Prairies to become the "great breadbasket" of the world as we knew it when I went to school in Trinidad.

Multiculturalism, therefore, began as a way of honouring other people, other than the French and the English, as outsiders of this country.  Since then, it has grown and evolved.  First, it seeks to give to all Canadians, regardless of origin, a sense of identity, a sense of belonging to this country -- belonging exactly as they are, not necessarily assimilated so they must be like everyone else -- with their own culture, language and sense of identity, yet still feeling fully Canadian.

A second precept of multiculturalism is civic participation which ensures that all Canadians participate fully in the economic, social, cultural and political life in this country.  There are many of us in the House of Commons today and in the Cabinet who stand as good examples of how successful we've been over the last 25 years in achieving that goal.  I am a first generation immigrant and I am in Cabinet.  So is Sergio Marchi; so is Alfonso Gagliano; so is Raymond Chan; and I could go on and on into the Caucus at large.  Canada is unique in that we are the only country in the world that has found a way to give our immigrants the

skills and tools they need to integrate fully into all aspects of the life of the country according to their potential as first generation immigrants.

I think that as a nation we have much to bring to the debate about integration. There is a need for more research because it is obvious that anecdotal evidence alone cannot stand as a strong reason for continuing along the way we have. As we continue to do research, we find that there are many skills we have learned over the years, as a country promoting multiculturalism.

But coming back to immigration: we have traditionally tended when we thought of immigration, or multiculturalism, to speak about the many different peoples of different origins who make up Canada.. What I want to bring to you today is that, within the many different peoples who make up Canada and continue to make Canada great, there are also two genders. The male and the female, the women and the men of this country.

Assisting women to play a full role in the social, economic, cultural and political life of this country is as important as ensuring that immigrants as a generic group participate fully. Women make up almost 51 percent of the Canadian population, and it is simple democracy that women participate. It is simple democracy that their voices be heard, for, if we are to hear from the whole population, we must allow the voices of that 51 percent to be heard.

Today, in the House of Commons, about 18 percent are women. It's true that we've come a long way since Nellie McClung -- when all the media used to talk about were her hats -- yet we have not really come a long way. Only 20 percent of Cabinet members are women. When I was at the Commonwealth Conference of Ministers for Women's Affairs last year, we talked about a target for the year 2005 -- of 30 percent of women in all levels of decision making -- at the different levels of government. It is not only for democratic reasons but for other, more important reasons.

Women are simply more than just their gender. We are different. We are different anatomically, physically and psychologically, and we are different in the way we view things. Our problem-solving modes are very different. They're not better or worse. They're just different, and they can broaden the perspective of how we look at things.

At the Commonwealth Conference, it was felt that, by bringing women into government, women will assist in conflict resolution in a way that will ensure that peace is the ultimate target. Since most women tend to reach conclusions by consensus rather than the "either or" or "face-off" in battle mode.

And while this is true, I hasten to say that it is not necessarily true for all women, because women are not a generic group, any more than men are. We are diverse. And if one is going to consider women and how we lever strategies to ensure that women participate fully in Canada's life, then we need to recognize that diversity. Women are diverse in terms of colour; they are diverse in terms of their origins; they are diverse in terms of their sexual orientation; and they are diverse in terms of their ability or disability.

In this country, we have found that in order to create equality, we must use different strategies since people are not an amorphous mass. If I talk to each one of you in this room, I am sure you will all tell me of the different barriers that you face in reaching your potential and the different solutions you will need to overcome them.

So, as you conduct research, out of this research will come assistance for governments to make public policy. We must ensure -- I hope you will ensure -- that that policy will not be a "one-size-fits-all" policy, that it will be policy that appropriately responds to the diversity of the people in our cities, our metropolis.

If we want to talk about appropriate policy for integrating migrants and immigrants -- migrants as they call them in Europe and immigrants as we will refer here -- we need to ensure that we look at their differences. For example, as we talk about family class in this country, I don't know if we've defined what a family is because around the world, families are different.

In countries that are torn apart by war, families are not made up of a mother and a father and two and a half children. In countries that are torn up by war, families are generally headed not necessarily by the biological mother of children, but by the next door neighbour or the aunt twice removed, or anyone who is prepared to take care of those children whose parents have been displaced or dislocated in war.

We must also look at the effect of war on the different genders. War tends to treat women badly: they are the victims of rape and they are the victims of displacement and homelessness, as the men go out to fight war, as the men are arrested.

So when we talk about a family, we must ensure that we do not expect to define it according to our norm of what we think a family is. If we do, we will make a grave mistake. That's the kind of thing I want you to consider when you do your research.

I also want you to consider that our cities are going to be built of second and more generation Canadians for whom the definition of a family is different. We know that there are many single families in Canada. Eighty percent of single families are headed by women in this country and 65 percent of them live in poverty, so we must consider the socio-economic ramifications of these differences.

I want to bring you back to the Commonwealth Conference that I attended last year, where many of the members of developing countries represented were making the point that the definitions of family in the industrialized world have led to a great deal of harm and discrimination. They argued that it has led to greater violence against women by isolating women and families. They believe it takes a village to raise a child and not simply two parents. They postulated that, in many instances, when two people are alone and isolated bringing up their children, that if their children are in danger from those parents it remains hidden. We know this to be a truth in Canada and other industrialized countries -- the "conspiracy of silence."

So we need to consider when we build our cities that they will not be cities in which we continue to foster isolation. Because in our cities, isolation is not simply one of ghettos, but of isolation of people which can be a breeding ground for silent abuse. Isolated people cannot and do not participate fully in the life of our communities.

When we talk about women, we want to break the demographics down into not only cohorts of young women, or young children, but we need cohorts of seniors as well. Because we know that many senior women who come into this country as immigrants are isolated. Many of them cannot learn English because they are in their seventies or eighties. They are often left alone at home, and I can tell you this from first-hand experience as a physician, they do not even know how to take a bus, because to get a bus you've got to read what it says on the front to know if its going your way. They are afraid to talk to people because they don't speak any English. So they can't ask anyone what bus to take. So they stay at home, and they begin to suffer from depression. They begin to be used badly by their families as housekeepers, as slaves who are restricted.

These are some of the things we need to talk about when we talk about immigration building communities.

Many immigrants come to this country, especially women, who do not understand fully how this country works. They do not understand the justice system. They do not understand that the police are here to serve and that the systems are here to ensure equality because many of them come from countries of the world where they cannot trust their own police force, where they cannot trust their own judicial system. We need to give that type of information to immigrants before they come into our country, not after. After they're here, they may be immediately lost, isolated within their families and within their communities, and it becomes very difficult to give them that important information, that adaptive tool.

And then there is the other side of the coin. Many women who come into Canada, especially since we now have gender discrimination as a criteria for refugee status in this country, are educated women. They are doctors, they are engineers, they are professors, yet their skills and education are not recognized. We must be careful that we do not continue to foster ghettos where we stereotype refugees and continue to keep them poor. By doing that, we give them a value based on ignorance. We do them a disservice and deny our country their skills.

So, how you factor these variables into your research, and how we convert them into policy is key. We need you to bring to us, as government, good public policy that considers the reality of the lives of the many people who will be living in this country as we become even more diverse.

I want to talk quickly about some of the other issues that face women. When we talk about the economic autonomy of women, economic strength, we talk about participating fully in the economic life of the country. Yet many women are poor. In Canada, women are poor, whether they are immigrant women or not. But the diversity of women can create double and triple barriers, so immigrant women face twice the number of barriers as Canadian-born

women.  Lesbian women face three times the number of barriers as Canadian-born women, and so do women with disabilities.

How do we lever -- these are some of the questions we need to ask -- how do we remove those barriers?  How do we assist these women to be empowered so they can participate fully?  That is a big question because the barriers are different and the strategies are going to have to be diverse and different if they are to work.

Many immigrant women who come into this country have the ability to start their own businesses.  So we need to look at how we continue to build policy to assist them to start their own businesses.  At the moment, we have Women's Enterprise Centres to assist women to start their own businesses, give them loans and help them with the resources and the tools they need to make their businesses successful.

Forty-seven percent of new businesses in this country today are started by women and they are successful because women behave differently.  Women who have businesses do not tend to take risks.  They don't tend to expand their businesses within the first two years because they happen to be balancing their books.  They tend to stay small, and as they expand, they expand in small ways, and so they tend to remain feasible, stable businesses and they last.

Women with children must have choices that will enable them to stay at home and run a business, if they wish (because many of these businesses are cottage industries) and to also look after their children.  We need policy that will given women the choices they need.

When we think about building a city or when we think about ghettos and we've become concerned about integration, we tend to think of the ghettos of Europe and the United State of America where ghettos are defined by race or by a lack of education, and poverty and hopelessness.  In Canada, we have moved away from that model.  We do not have ghettos per se.

If you look, for example, in my city of Vancouver at China Town -- yes it's called China Town and if you go there you can get good restaurants -- but not only the Chinese live in China Town.  There are many different cultures who living there.  Our ghettos may be defined as
traditional and historic places where you can go and you can learn a little about the culture, but they are not limited by race or ethnicity.  At the same time, they may be the first stop for first generation immigrants who seek their own culture in order to feel at home.

We want to be careful that we keep our cities that way.  We want to be careful that we don't also create new ghettos -- ghettos that may not be defined by race but simply by poverty and lack of education and class -- and we want to be careful that the women of our country aren't living in those ghettos.

At Beijing, in 1995, for the first time -- and I think many of you will see the bitter irony in this -- we talked about women's rights as human rights.  Imagine that! In 1929, in Canada, we found out that women were legally persons.  In 1995, we found out that we were humans and that we were, in fact, entitled to the same rights as others.

We learned a lot in Beijing.  We learned that non-governmental organizations have a role to play in public policy making and in research because research cannot always be something that is *in vitro*.  Research must have an *in vivo* quality to it.  Research must have a component which factors in the reality of people's lives.  Women in non-governmental organizations can assist in doing that.  Not only women but all immigrants, and new Canadians must participate if we are to understand the reality of their lives, if we are to do some solid *in vivo* research, if we are going to make good public policy.  Because public policy is not simply words on paper.  Public policy affects the lives of very real people whose lives can be altered by what governments do, or what you, as researchers, advise us to do or inform us with statistics.

We have many departments in the Canadian government which are participating in this Metropolis project:  Health Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Status of Women Canada, Multiculturalism, and Statistics Canada.  We should talk about how those departments work together.  We began gender-based analysis in March 1996.  It's a tool kit.  Every single department is now using that tool kit, some more than others.  Some seem to have understood the concept a little earlier and better than others, but it's a very important tool kit if we are going to make relevant public policy to affect the lives of men and women in a way that's appropriate, in a way that will, in fact, create the kind of positive change we want.

It means that we must work together as government not only in a vertical manner with NGOs and immigrant groups.  As government, we must work in a horizontal manner, with other departments.  Status of Women Canada is a little department sitting in a corner that is supposed to be responsible for women's equality.  We alone, cannot accomplish women's equality.

If we are to achieve equality for women, we have to recognize that the inequality and barriers cut across every single component of our lives, that we must factor women's equality into the policy at National Defence or Health Canada.  We must see how the policies that we make reflect the lives of women.

So, I want to ask you as researchers, to look at some sort of gender-based analysis tool when you begin your Metropolis research, to talk about how you can factor in the reality:  the differences that immigrant men and women face, and the fact that families are different, that many families are going to be headed by women only, and that we need to consider their access to work and to good, well-paying jobs, not simply work at the very bottom rung of the social strata or where you are, as many women are, left to sit in the pink ghetto, continuing to earn 73 cents for every dollar that men earn.

This is not the Canada we want to foster. We are an example to the world. Everyone is watching us. We have gone where "no one has gone before." We have experimented with human relationships. We have done a great deal to create integrated cities. We have done it well. In fact, our cities are not characterized by violence and hopelessness. But, we are not perfect. We still must battle racism. We know there is still discrimination and hate and ignorance. In order for governments to have structures to make our country work better, we need good research, not only to tell us how to implement policy or to give us statistics of where we are today, but to talk about where we will be tomorrow. Help us develop the tools to evaluate whether the strategies and the policies we're working on are really making a difference. Are they appropriate strategies?

So there is a need now, not only for governments to work horizontally and for researchers to work vertically, but for governments to work vertically, and for NGOs and researchers and governments to work together to broaden the partnership, so we share our knowledge and experiences, so we, together, can build a country that will continue to be a leader, that will continue to evolve and define how human relationships and human development should occur in a civilized country, a country that cares for each one of its citizens and seeks to assist them to gain the skills and tools they need to remove the barriers that stand in their way to full participation in society -- a country that will, in fact, help its citizens realize their fullest potential. This, I think, is what governments are for. To formulate and implement appropriate, implementable public policy that would empower citizens. I believe in the 21st century, when the world begins to look for leadership in how to create good, sustainable cities, how to create and foster a good living relationship between many people and many groups of people, they will look to Canada, -- not because we will be wealthy and not because we will have the might of a great army, but because we will have learned some lessons along the way of our great experiment. We will have gained some skills, forged some tools and strengthened our knowledge, and created a society based on accommodation, compassion and respect.

Thank you very much.

**Opening Remarks**
**Plenary: Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research**
**Zeynep Karman, Director of Research, Status of Women Canada**

The federal government is committed to ensuring that policies and legislation factor in gender. Gender in policy research is a necessary link in this process. There are gender-related implications for virtually all policy research -- and for all research in general.

The experience of immigration differs considerably for women and men. Therefore, we need research that will show us how the answers to the policy questions we are asking are different for immigrant women and men. We also need to have policy research on issues that are specific to immigrant women.

Yesterday, one conference presenter wore a button that said "Research Makes Sense." Policy research makes even more sense, especially if it is timely and relevant. By relevant we mean that it is either on (or should be on) the public agenda now, or is soon to be in the future.

Incorporating gender into the policy research framework is not easy. Some might assume that gender research means including one or two tables on gender within a paper. It is not a question of "adding women and stirring," however, or as in some cases, adding women and not stirring at all. Gender research requires new approaches and methodologies, and different sets of research questions.

Status of Women Canada (SWC) is a partner in Metropolis because we believe this project and the Centres of Excellence can contribute to a better understanding of immigration/integration issues from a gender perspective.

SWC also recognizes the important contribution of all participants in the policy development process -- researchers, Centres of Excellence, policy-makers, women's and other organizations. The challenge is to ask the appropriate questions and formulate the appropriate analytical procedures which will lead to policies that advance gender equality.

SWC, therefore, has sponsored this workshop on gendering immigration/integration policy research with four specific objectives in mind:

- to define approaches and strategies that will result in gender immigration research;
- to identify current policy questions;
- to identify knowledge gaps and suggest priorities;
- and to contribute to the future work of the Centres of Excellence on Immigration and Integration, as well as the research program of SWC.

<span style="color:magenta">**Gendering Policy Research on Immigration**[1]
**Plenary: Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research**
**Dr. Roxana Ng, Department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto**</span>

It is often assumed that policies are necessary features of state and other bureaucracies because they provide objective guidelines for organizational action, especially in large institutions.  Take immigration policy, for example.  A points system was developed in 1967 as an integral part of immigration policy to eliminate previous racist biases in the selection of immigrants and to tie the selection process closer to labour market needs (see Elliott and Fleras 1990).  The administration of this system purportedly ignores the gender or ethnicity of applicants by focusing on their fit with occupational demands in Canada.  While this may be the intent of policies, feminist scholarship has revealed that because many policies are formulated by men, they contain male biases that may not take gender differences into account; worse, they may work to the disadvantage of women (e.g., Ferguson 1984).  Thus, instead of treating policies as neutral and objective, in re-thinking policy analysis from the standpoint of women, we must consider how sexism, racism and class biases (among other axes of biases) have shaped the thinking and design of policies.

In this paper, I want to display what a gender analysis may look like and is capable of when we take into account sexism and racism as systemic features of our society, i.e., when we begin from the *standpoint* of those who have been marginalized historically in Canadian society.  I will return to this methodological point later.

First, let me explain what I mean by using the term "systemic" to describe sexism and racism.  I want to go beyond the common sense understanding of these features as individualistic and attitudinal, although of course they are embedded in peoples' attitudes.  Sexual and racial harassment policies provide an example of treating sexism and racism as individual and attitudinal characteristics.  The assumption in these policies is that sexism and racism, albeit social problems, reside in an individual's attitude and, consequently, in that person's behaviour.  Thus, remedies are developed to regulate and change the behaviour.  This strategy leaves the situational and relational properties that anchor social hierarchy and inequality in place.  Treating sexism and racism as attitudinal and behavioural characteristics is thus a necessary, but not sufficient, starting point.

By suggesting that sexism and racism are systemic, I begin with the premise that these are *systems* of oppression and inequality based on the ideology of the superiority of one gender and/or race over others.  These are historical processes.  In Canada, ideas and

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practices supporting the superiority of "white" European men over women and other minority groups originate in the colonization process.  A blatant example of this is the confinement of Aboriginal people to reserve and the development of the residential school system for Aboriginal children.  Over time, ideas about the superiority and inferiority of different groups become accepted ways of thinking and being.  Certain behaviour and modes of operation are eventually taken for granted, i.e., they become the "normal" ways of doing things.  In fact, they serve to marginalize and exclude those who do not belong to the dominant groups.[2]

My understanding is derived from Gramsci's analysis of ideology and of how certain ideas become hegemonic and "common sense" over time.  Common sense thinking is uncritical, episodic and disjointed, but it is also powerful because it is taken for granted (Gramsci 1971:  321-343).  Stuart Hall (quoted in Lawrence 1982:  46) observes:

> [Ideologies] work most effectively when we are not aware that how we formulate and construct a statement about the world is underpinned by ideological premises; when our formulations seem to be simply descriptive statements about how things are (i.e.  must be), or of what we can "take for granted."

Collin Leys[3] suggests that when an ideology becomes completely normalized, it is embedded in language.  Some examples of common sense statements are:  "Blacks are good at sports but not at academic subjects," "women are nurturing," "unemployed people are lazy," "immigrants take jobs away from Canadians."  Although these ideas may have been developed by the dominant group, they have become ways of thinking about cohorts of individuals; they are popularly held beliefs (see Ng 1993b).  The issue is not simply whether these statements are true or false.  It is that they are common sense understanding of groups of people and, as such, taken for granted and not ordinarily open for discussion.

Taking up the standpoint of women means taking a position outside the dominant paradigm within which much of our knowledge of the world has been constructed.  It does not refer simply to looking at the world from the perspective of women, as opposed to men.  It is a *method of inquiry* that begins with peoples' experience in the everyday world, and directs the analyst to the myriad relations (institutional, social, political, economic) that give rise to and shape these everyday experiences.  It is a way of thinking that interrogates the world from subjugated positions and recreates knowledges from these positions (see Smith 1987).[4]  This method is thus capable of deconstructing ideological thinking and common sense knowledge, and providing an alternative basis for re-thinking our world.

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2. For a detailed development of this argument, see Ng (1993a).

3. Special lecture by Collin Leys organized by Tuula Lindholm for a Gramsci study group on March 21, 1993.  I thank Tuula for inviting me to the lecture.

4. Sandra Harding (1986) has grouped a number of approaches under the rubric of "feminist standpoint epistemologies," including the works of Dorothy E.  Smith, Mary O'Brien, Nancy Hartsock and, later, Patricia Hill Collins.  This is misleading because these are actually quite different approaches with different epistemological presuppositions and methodological procedures.  In this essay I follow a method of inquiry developed by Dorothy E.  Smith (1987).

With the understanding of sexism and racism and the standpoint method described above, I will display, in the rest of this paper, how systemic sexism and racism are embedded in immigration policy and go beyond the biases of immigration officers in implementing the policy. I focus on two specific areas of the policy: the definition of the family and the classification of immigrants.

**The Family as Ideological Construction**

One primary basis used by Citizenship and Immigration Canada in the determination of landed immigrants and designation of classes of immigrants is the family and the relative status of individuals within the family. The *Immigration Act* defines family in terms of "close" relatives including the husband, wife and children under the age of 19. In other words, family is defined in a way that corresponds to our common sense notion of a nuclear family. I want to show, in the following discussion, that this notion of the family is an ideological construction that emerged out of the postwar economic boom. This archetype is, in reality, a rare phenomenon.

In her research on women's work as mothers, feminist sociologist Dorothy Smith (1993) calls this idealized family form the "Standard North American Family" (SNAF), and shows that this is an ideological construction of the family that has tremendous consequences for people who do not live in families that conform to SNAF. She calls SNAF an ideological code, and likens it to a genetic code in the following way:

> Genetic codes are orderings of the chemical constituents of DNA molecules that transmit genetic information to cells, reproducing in the cells [at various sites in an organism] the original ordering. By analogy, an ideological code is a schema that replicates its organization in multiple and various sites ... that is a constant generator of *procedures for selecting syntax, categories, and vocabulary in the writing of texts and the production of talk and for interpreting sentences*, written or spoken, ordered by it (pp. 51-52, emphasis in original).

Smith identifies SNAF as a conception of the family with a legally married couple sharing a household. The adult male is in the paid labour force. His earnings provide the economic basis for the family/household. The adult female may also earn an income, but her primary responsibility is to care for the husband, household and children (p. 52). Smith calls our attention to the language of typification and its atemporal usage in this conception: married adult male, female, children. It functions as an ideological code in that it "is not identifiable with any particular family; it applies to any" (p. 52). Once established, the SNAF code operates as a set of conventions selecting vocabulary, as well as relations posited syntactically (p. 58). It becomes a universalizing concept against which all families are compared. Rather than treating family forms that do not conform to SNAF as different ways in which families and households are constituted, they are treated as deviant or problematic.

Although Smith does not discuss the origin of the SNAF code, it is easy to see when it was developed: during the postwar economic boom period in North America. It is also easy to see how the work of sociologists, notably Talcott Parsons and his colleagues, contributed to the refinement of this ideological conception of family through his extensive research on the roles of family members. Once in place, this conception of the family is *naturalized* so it is treated as what a *normal* family should be/is like. Indeed, whole suburbs, with single family dwellings organized around the nuclear family, were designed based on SNAF. This is not to say that in the everyday world *all* families conform to SNAF; nor does it imply that people do not adopt ways of living consistent with their material conditions, cultural patterns, etc... The notion of an ideological code draws attention to the way a particular conception organizes the way we think about and organize reality discursively.

Education is a sphere thoroughly organized in accordance with SNAF as a fundamental unit, illustrating how an ideological code functions in ways similar to a genetic code, namely its replication at different sites. In her research on mothers' work in relation to their children's schooling, Smith (1993) discovered and described how she and her co-investigator unwittingly designed their interviews with mothers with the notion of "intact family" (another variation of SNAF) in mind. The power of SNAF lies precisely in the way in which economic, social and educational policies are developed around the notion of SNAF as normative. Indeed, much educational policy is designed with the assumption that the mother's primary responsibility is the caring of the child (rather than as breadwinner) and that she is able to meet the demands of the school in preparing her child for the school system. Children from single-parent and immigrant households are seen as problematic when they don't operate according to the expectation of the school (see Griffith 1984, Griffith and Smith 1987).[5]

**Immigrant Classification**

Returning to immigration policy, it can be seen that this conception of SNAF also operates here as a device that defines family membership in the determination and assignment of immigrant status. I have described, in detail, the sexism implicit in the classification of applicants for landed immigrant status elsewhere (Ng 1992, 1993c). I will review this briefly below.

In Canada, immigrants are considered according to four major classes: independent immigrants (including nominated relatives), business class immigrants, family class immigrants (who are sponsored by either the independent immigrants or family members who are already residing in Canada) and refugees (who are further subdivided into two classes) (Segal 1994).

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5. For a detailed discussion of the variety of, and changes in, family forms, and the policy consequences thereof, see Eichler (1988).

The economic orientation of the policy is reflected by the use of a points system to determine eligibility. Immigrants are selected on the basis of points they earn in nine areas such as education, language and occupation. The points assigned to different areas are constantly revised to reflect the demands of the Canadian labour market.[6] The discussion here focuses on the relation between independent and family class immigrants, because it is by looking at this relation that the ideological and sexist character of the policy comes fully into view.

The *Immigration Act* establishes a multi-tiered system of rights and privileges among immigrants based on the aforementioned system. An independent applicant is granted landed immigrant status on the basis of the accumulated points earned for education, work experience, occupation and economic resources under the points system, which reflects the needs of the labour market at a particular point in time. A family class immigrant is someone who cannot or does not qualify to enter Canada under the points system, and is granted this status through the sponsorship of an immediate family member who is either an independent landed immigrant or a Canadian citizen. The family class category usually includes the spouse and children under 19. While parents over 65 can be sponsored to enter Canada as family class immigrants, recent regulatory changes have made this more difficult.

Usually, when a family applies for landed immigrant status, only one member in the family is granted the independent status. In most cases, it is the husband who is so designated, because he is perceived to be the head of the household, and the wife is categorized as a family class immigrant along with the children. (Notice how SNAF operates as an ideological code here.) Statistics released by Employment and Immigration Canada up to 1988 showed that the majority of family class immigrants were female (59 percent) (Employment and Immigration Canada, 1989). Although this figure does not specify a breakdown of the male and female immigrants by age, it is likely that most male immigrants in the family class category are children and retired parents of the independent class immigrant.

This classification system ignores the fact that the wife may have comparable education and work experience to the husband, and may have made an essential contribution to the family income before immigration. For example, among industrial workers in Hong Kong and other Southeast Asian urban centres, which are among the major sources of immigrants to Canada, a family of two income earners is the norm (Salaff 1981). Moreover, once immigrated, the financial security of many immigrant families often depends on the labour force participation of the wife initially and, later, of both spouses. This has to do with the structure of the Canadian labour market where there are more demands for cheap labour in the marginal sectors of the economy. This, coupled with the increasing necessity for Canadian families to survive on at least two incomes, means that in fact, most immigrant wives join the paid labour force as wage earners. Yet, the

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6. In this sense, I would argue that the class bias of Canadian immigration policy is deliberate and explicit, in that the express purpose of the policy is to address Canada's economic and labour market demands. Thus, I have focused on explicating the more insidious and systemic sexist and racist biases, rather than the class bias, of the policy in this paper.

assignment of family members according to the classification of "independent" and "family class" negates this reality. The official view of the immigrant family, according to Canadian immigration policy, is that of one "independent" member on whom others depend for their sponsorship, livelihood and welfare. It can be seen that the immigration process systematically structures sexual inequality within the family by rendering one spouse (usually the wife) legally dependent on the other (see also Eichler 1988).

This system does not distinguish between white and non-white women as such. However, immigration officers have a great deal of discretionary power, and they exercise this power according to their assumption of certain gender and racial stereotypes. These stereotypes, together with the accreditation process which gives more weight to education and training obtained in the Western, English-speaking world, may mean that non-white women from the developing world are more disadvantaged in the immigration selection and assessment process. Thus, racist practices are implicit in the provision of the policy.

Furthermore, the sponsorship system places many immigrant women in a totally dependent and subordinate position vis-à-vis the sponsor, who is legally responsible for their financial welfare for a period of five to ten years. First, a woman's entry into Canada is conditional on the financial support of her sponsor. If, for some reason, the sponsor should be deported, she may be deported also.[7] Thus, before an immigrant woman enters the country, her legal status as a dependant is already established. It can be seen that this dependence is built into the institutionalized (sexist) practices of the policy. The apparent neutral language of the policy renders invisible this difference, thus eclipsing the situation of women in the immigration application process.


**Conclusion**

In the above discussion, I have shown how, in the adoption of SNAF as the basic unit for determining who belongs to a household and who holds the independent status in the immigration assessment process, the policy creates and reinforces immigrant women's subordination *in Canada*. This is systemic sexism.[8] By using SNAF as the norm in assessing immigrants and by imposing the SNAF conception on newcomers, the policy is implicitly racist because first, it treats other family forms as deviant. The applicants and families most disadvantaged in this schema are those most removed from the European and English-speaking contexts which do not live according to SNAF. Second, it creates and reproduces the nuclear family form as universal by rendering members of families not belonging to the SNAF conception as non-family members (such as grandparents and other relatives).[9]

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7. In reality, this situation is rare, especially when it can be proved that there has been a break in the sponsorship. A sponsorship can be nullified if the sponsor cannot or will not support the family class immigrant (as in the case of unemployment or abuse). Nevertheless, many family class immigrants are kept captive in abusive situations due to the threat of deportation.

8. I emphasize that this situation arises in the Canadian context because it is commonly believed that women from non-European and non-English speaking countries are more oppressed.

9. There have been some changes made to the assessment of refugees, particularly women refugees. But again they are treated as exceptions, rather than as different ways of re-thinking the refugee assessment process.

This bias goes beyond the attitude of immigration officials (although of course they, as front-line workers, also participate in the production of gender and racial inequality). These inequalities are inherent in the policy itself, in how ideological notions are adopted because policy makers have taken certain things for granted. This is why I refer to these as systemic features. Thus, there is a lag between our policies, such as immigration policy, and peoples' lived reality.

Meanwhile, once we recognize that the concepts that are the foundation for policy formulation and development are not given, but are rather ideological, we can re-think ways in which policies may be designed that do not reproduce systemic inequalities. Given the structure of the labour market where women make up an increasing proportion of the work force, and given that most Canadian families are sustained by at least two incomes, does it make sense to continue the practice of assigning only one member within an immigrant household independent status? Why is it not possible to define a family according to the *relations* among household members, rather than strictly in terms of gender roles? The latter question opens up policy options for sponsorship of extended family members and same-sex couples, as is the case in Australia and Sweden for example (see Knocke and Ng forthcoming).

In conclusion, a gender analysis of immigration and other social policies goes beyond identifying gaps in the literature, or including women, minorities and so forth as variables in statistical and other analysis, although of course these are necessary additions. Doing gender analysis calls for a radical re-examination of sexist, racist and class-based (among other) assumptions and biases that have become "natural" in how we think about society. It requires that we interrogate how our own thinking has been shaped, and continues to be shaped, by the ideological processes that have become "common sense" and therefore not normally open for investigation. It requires that we venture outside the intellectual and experiential confines we take for granted, to imagine a different world, one where all people (be they women, men, children, coloured, white, able-bodied or not) truly live in harmonious interdependence.

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<span style="color:magenta">**Methodological Issues in Gendering Immigration Research: Generation(s) and Regeneration**
**Plenary: Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research**
**Dr. Yvonne M. Hébert , Faculty of Education, University of Calgary**</span>

A few words of caution: this paper is, in a very real sense, a preliminary work in progress as much remains to be considered and discussed. Nonetheless, I will proceed. however tentatively, to engage in a reflective and critical discourse on methodological issues in gendering immigration research.

Reflecting the intertwining of gender, ethnicity and culture, we address the following questions:

- How have methodological issues changed over time? Why is this the case?
- How do methodological issues concerning feminist pedagogies, practices and process, as integral to gender research, parallel methodological shifts in research on ethnicity and (multi-) cultural studies?
- How are these to be integrated into immigration research?
- Where do we go from here and why?

These questions lead us to draw broad parallels between *generation(s)* and *regeneration* of research in studies of gender, ethnicity and culture/multiculturalism, then to discuss methodological issues. These are identified within four generations of briefly sketched gender studies: antecedents of gender research, generating gender research in modernist times, shifting paradigms, and finding new ground. This summary of the background paper focuses on an identification of methodological issues for each generation.


**Antecedents of Gender Research**

Questions of what constitutes an appropriate education for females are central to the academic and practical study of gender as well as to methodological issues. Within the context of assimilative and segregative traditions of female education, we note that the androcentricity underlying these models has very long roots and wonder to what extent a non-sexist research tradition and women-centred knowledge base would even be possible. What are the possibilities when two centuries ago, the debates on the rights of man were followed soon afterward by clear statements on the need for rights for women? The development of social concepts, such as class, gender and culture, of anthropological concepts, such as context of situation and the importance of having an exquisite sense of self when studying others, and of ethnicity studies around the turn of the century foreshadow emerging academic strands of research on gender, ethnicity and multiculturalism. Methodological issues concerning their distinctiveness and interrelationships are of great significance for immigration studies within the Metropolis

project. We wonder how research can deal with these notions as analytic concepts and as socially constructed lived experience. We also wonder how the biological distinctions of

researchers themselves affect their ability to study and construct knowledge in a world that is sexist in its far-reaching roots.


**Generating Gender Research in Modernist Times**

In modernist times, essentially from the 1950s through the 1980s, the main developments were of an academic nature with the emergence of a corpus of studies on gender. Rooted as these were within polarities and in seeking to define concepts, boundaries, roles and means of guaranteeing validity, early gender research focused on the inequities derived from the patriarchal past and present, by adding to the Western canon, developing social analysis, and promoting political action and self-knowledge. A number of concerns were widely debated: the sexist nature of society and of knowledge making, the nature of femininity, the power relations between women and men, the socialization of children and the dynamics of desire. The 1980s also saw the emergence of feminist pedagogies and critiques of curriculum content as androcentric and reflective of the political interests of white, privileged males. Sophisticated critiques challenged the very foundations of knowledge, the methods for creating knowledge and for deciding what counted as knowledge.

Beyond the theoretical difficulties of modern gender research, several fundamental methodological problems can be identified. One problem is the predominance of the empirical research paradigm which permits the objectification of others; ascribes averages, tendencies and characteristics to a gender category as inherently male or female; permits the overgeneralization and overemphasis of research results to gender differences; and negates the patterns of differences that occur within categories. Since this approach to knowledge making is also an example of a categorical approach to social theory, the empirical/quantitative paradigm typical of positivism has since been surpassed for much of feminist research, as inadequate, assimilative and limiting.

Another issue is the continuing dominance and pervasiveness of a male-constructed world, social roles, research and knowledge. The arrogance and authority within the *researcher's gaze* is now critiqued as essentially coming from a male stance and posturing, objectifying and exploiting the other for his own purposes. The *researcher's gaze* would soon be met by the voice of "insiders" from among the groups being studied, just as the *male gaze* was met. Similarly, the distance between the researcher and those being researched, the lack of involvement and of an ongoing relationship that is mutually beneficial was critiqued as unfeeling and inappropriate.

In seeking to rectify these issues, some feminist scholars in the late 1970s turned to the renewal of oral history methods to develop a truly feminist approach to research centred on women. Feminist research would be codified as being "research by, about and for women". Researchers tried to overcome limitations of the male/female dichotomy by re-situating their discourse and analysis with an accent on the masculine and feminine qualities in each individual. Researchers were encouraged to personalize their approach to interviewing by reconsidering interviews as common interactive moments, leading to

the sharing of experiences and insights; the term "informant" was replaced by "participant"; and life histories were embraced as feminist method. By engaging in the documentation of women's lives and contributions, feminists considered their work to be political and to be of benefit for women individually and collectively.

In studies of culture and multiculturalism, methodological critiques focused on questions of appropriate content and the issues of selection, gradation and order of presentation, as well as questions concerning the nature of underlying theories of curricular reform and teacher transformation. By the mid-1980s, multicultural studies were diffuse, research paradigms were beginning to shift toward ethnographic and narrative approaches, in a search for new directions that saw discussion of the convergence between anthropological culture and education, links between culture, communication and cognition, the appropriate education for minorities, and the underlying problem of language education in multilingual settings. While there are few discussions of methodological issues in the bilingualism and multiculturalism literature, an important connection was drawn between a researcher's group membership, ideology, choice of research questions and paradigms. Thus, the raging debates about language in multilingual settings crystallized the methodological issues around what counts as data, as scientific undertaking and the generalizability of narrowly focused quantitative data as opposed to the breadth and depth of qualitative data. These strike at the very essence of research methodologies, and it is significant that a feminist scholar identified the link to ideology, as feminist scholarship typically includes self-reflection and knowledge of self/others.

**Shifting Paradigms in Gender and Cultural Research**

In moving toward another generation of gender research, critiques of the previous forms and foci were voiced. Additive forms of gendering research were now critiqued as taking, as cultural and scientific norms, the patriarchal world view and extending it to the present, demonstrating that women cannot easily gain prominence in overtly patriarchal cultures, past or present. Social analysis, political action and self-knowledge are critiqued as being ineffective in attaining the major societal transformation necessary to achieve gender equality, although powerful in terms of sensitizing and building awareness. Thus, success in adding women to the Western canon and promoting women within traditionally male-dominated professions are considered important in ground breaking but are also seen as limited in terms of societal and institutional transformation and of the power of the social theories developed and evoked. Similarly, women's studies in North American institutions are considered successful in gaining ground within academia, but largely ineffective in achieving any significant change in the pervasive sexism of the social sciences.

A third generation of gender research raised a new set of questions on gender equality that need resolution, and focus on the reform of disciplines, the nature of gender difference and the implications for research and education. Also characteristic of a third generation of academic studies, gender research experienced a shift of paradigm, moving toward qualitative research with increasingly significant emphasis on the use of life histories as a form of research. And like much social science research, gender studies moved toward postmodernism as this philosophical approach offered ways of deconstructing the overwhelming patriarchy of contemporary and past societies.

Characteristically, the inter-/multiculturalism scholarship of the 1980s to mid-1990s was multidimensional in its perspectives and methodologies, attempting to link theory, practice and advocacy; thought and experience; the policy and pedagogical manifestations of educational struggles to create a more just and equitable world; the personal and the political; and communities and states. In retrospect, while previous work seemed simplistic and narrow in its orientation toward advocacy, later scholarship sought to create an inclusive society in which difference is positive and central, encompassing gender, race/ethnicity, social background and cultural difference. This new scholarship stressed the politics of difference and alliances, in calling for the redefinition of inequalities of power relations in social and educational institutions. It sought to relate intercultural and multicultural education to recent challenges of the traditional construction of knowledge and meaning in the social sciences, emerging largely from the field of gender studies, to set the importance of difference firmly at the very core of the new construction of knowledge.

With the third generational move from female oppression to female agency and with the recognition of the moral basis of scholarship and activism, gender and cultural research attempted to centre the marginalization of women, minorities and the poor, by transforming the basic concepts and values that have held sway in academia for so long. In doing so, researchers attempted to examine the important intersections between gender, race/ethnicity, culture and poverty. Educators and researchers alike reconsidered the value assignment of concepts currently held in high esteem, moving from the categories of male and female toward the qualities of masculinity and femininity, reclaiming our bodies and assigning positive values to the cultural capital of tradition, convergence, group dependence and imitation, rather than exclusively to the masculine values of individuality, innovation, divergence and independence.

The transformative assumptions of much of ethnographic and feminist scholarship came to be seen as problematic and as needing to be reconsidered. At the centre of our reflections was the assumption that ethnographic research on our own and other cultures will somehow transform them and make a difference to their oppression. Taking feminism seriously committed us to social transformation yet our privileged position as researcher and our obligation to objectify so we could analyze and interpret may consist of using others for our own purposes and possibly even exploiting, all in the name of

research.  This provided us with a serious ethical dilemma and placed us in a contradiction.  Engaging in a feminist discourse does not protect us from the possibility of exploiting and oppressing other women, no matter how sensitive routine research practices become, no matter whether these are characterized as dialogic or empowering.

The mere fact of working with the poor, the minorities and powerless women especially from or in the Third World, changed their social status within their communities and their own eyes.  In collecting lengthy narratives, an intimacy may appear which blurs the distinctions between a research relationship and a personal one, for we ask for revelations which normally occur in the familiar, private and sometimes emotional realm.  The feminist research model which sought to lessen the distance between researcher and those being researched, by personalizing the interactions, may in its own way be ill-advised for it may create dependencies and expectations for those being researched which cannot justifiably be met and which may lead to feelings of disappointment and betrayal.  The exchange of stories and confidences between the researcher and those being researched as part of personalizing the interactions may in fact not be wanted on the part of the research subjects.

In some research situations, the researcher's agenda may be co-opted by the research participants whose own agendas take over the research project in spite of an overt acceptance to participate in the researcher's agenda; this is quite different than a research project that is mutually negotiated between researcher and participants.  The 1960s concern to protect the anonymity of "informants" gives way to a recognition that some research participants may wish to be identified as befits their own agenda and agency.  Moreover, a feminist and ethnographer's concern to engage in community development or outreach brought a similar recognition that communities are heterogeneous with competing segments that have their own agendas and that these may or may not mesh with the researcher's.  It may be wiser to recognize the material and social inequalities and complex realities in which much feminist/ethnographic research is situated and to draw attention to the cracks between feminist theory and practice.

The appeal to sisterhood in non-hierarchical interactions as the proper way to interview women, in the mistaken belief that it lessens the insider/outsider distinction and leads to better research results, may misuse sentiment and women's traditional nurturing role.  Moreover, the collection of narratives and other forms of data may be, in part, an economic matter, in a two-way street between a provider and an extractor.  This muddies the waters, with shifting roles as capitalist and labourer, serving as an inappropriate basis for feminist models for understanding responsibilities and duties of the personal interview situation.

The feminist precept of returning the research to the individual and/or to the community became similarly problematic.  Questions of how this can be done, to whom, in what form and for what purpose are silenced by claims of empowering others, of giving them a voice, of validating others.  But where does the researcher get the power to give to others?  On what moral can a researcher validate others or even self throughout the research process?  Has the material being returned not been appropriated earlier in some

other form?  Our desire to act out our own feminist agenda by supposedly relinquishing control and involving others may, in fact, project our own need for affirmation and validation.  Having others tell their story does not result in empowerment nor does it assure consciousness raising.  Researchers are not therapists nor community developers; and unless there are special circumstances such as relevant background, we should not attempt to take such roles.  We need to recognize that research requires some measure of objectification, of separation and distance; that this is inevitable and even desirable in most research situations.

Thus, the third generation of feminist research is characterized by shifting research paradigms, reflections on self and others as part of the research process, and problematic assumptions of transforming and empowering others by personalizing research interactions which may be both inappropriate and unethical.  Also characteristic of the 1990s is a move toward postmodernism which provides feminist scholarship with the theoretical tools to pursue its social analysis, a theme continuing from an earlier period of gender studies.  It may, however, also present a danger to gender research as well as to research on race, ethnicity, culture and inter-/multiculturalism and, thus, to the Metropolis project for research on immigration and integration within urban contexts.


**Finding New Ground within the Metropolis Project:  Integration, Collectivity and Centreing**

Confronting the impositional nature of traditional research paradigms, we as researchers deal with four basic research issues:
- Why and for whom do we do research?
- What counts as valid and useful knowledge?  How is that knowledge acquired, verified and textually represented?  Accepting that knowledge is socially constructed, how do we represent multiple viewpoints that emerge in the research process?  How do we deal with subjective experience as data?
- What is the nature of the relationship between the researcher and those being researched?  Why would individual persons choose to participate in research?
- How is knowledge to be constructed so that gender, race/ethnicity, language and culture are central, and their complexities integrated and yet recognized as part of a process?

As we move toward a fourth generation of gender research, we face these dilemmas, trying to balance our roles as researchers and our concerns with social transformation. Sensitive to issues of voice, agency, subjectivity and participation, we as researchers move to those paradigms which allow for multiple truths and nuanced interpretations, toward postmodernism which deconstructs Western forms of knowledge and allows for the valuing of non-Western forms of expression, however problematic this may be for gender and minority research.  We attempt to respond to postmodernism by reconstructing society making use of feminine images such as lace and the web, and by centring those that heretofore have been marginalized.  We return to the issue of voice to study feminine discourse to renew and reconstruct knowledge on the basis of equal but

different participation, and to recognize and enlarge women's space in the official culture. We reconsider sexist language to propose a strategy based on the principle that sexual difference is universal. Having gendered language would allow us to think of gender in new ways, to render visible and audible that which is feminine, to place feminine discourse in its rightful place next to male discourse, so both may hold discursive authority and celebrate their status of universal subject. As women and as researchers, we recognize our complementary multiple identities, celebrate our multiple voices and construct new realities with our multiple understandings and realities, seeking to assure difference and specificity on one hand and equality on the other.

We seek out alternative qualitative research methodologies in participatory, collaborative, life-history, narrative and autobiographical approaches to research. We turn from empty notional categories to fill these as rich, purposive and agentive lived experience. We distinguish between minority groups which are defined historically and geographically, such as linguistic and cultural ones, and those which are defined structurally and categorically according to individual characteristics, such as age and sexual orientation, in order to better understand their overlapping interrelationships. As researchers, we abandon the highly individualistic, competitive and secretive approach to research and reach for co-operative team approaches -- an approach which gives well-established research groups as well as researchers from the emerging Centres of Excellence for research on Immigration and Integration, who consciously work together at team building, a very real advantage in securing research funds, in carrying out complex research programs and in presenting and publishing the results.

In conducting research with humans, estranging ourselves from taken-for-granted assumptions about subjectivity, ethics and textual production, we as researchers place ourselves as well as research participants within relevant time, experience and ethnocultural contexts, respectful of their agency in negotiating and conceptualizing research projects, in developing research proposals, in implementing research projects and in analyzing, interpreting and writing the results. We are mindful of the selectivity and agency of participants with respect to their participation and information provided. As researchers, we take the time necessary to gain credibility in ethnocultural contexts and to recognize our own informed subjectivity as the road to objectivity. We permit ourselves to analyze and interpret our own subjective research experiences as part of the process of knowing. As researchers, we also reflect on our ascribed power to enact imposition on others, constantly interrogating ourselves as researchers as a means of relocating sites of power and privilege.

In following up on second and third generations of researchers and in recognizing truths as partial, contested, inter-subjective and illusive, we are also called on to present knowledge in non-linear, non-progressive perspectives and to fill the important gaps of research on the heterogeneity of immigrant and refugee women, thus integrating key concepts as experiences to be discovered. As researchers, we are involved in ascribing culture, not just describing it, and we struggle constantly with issues of power, authority and knowledge. We attempt to establish collaborative, non-exploitive relationships with research participants, while sensitive to unequal power relations; to understand our own

standpoints and categories without imposing these on the participants, their data and meaning making; and to represent inter-subjective processes in our text by including multiple voices without superimposing our own story or our own assumptions about sisterhood.  Setting into perspective the significant contribution of White males to the construction of research and knowledge, we as researchers, women and educators, are called on to accord equal status to women's, immigrants', refugees', minorities' voices, ways of knowing, being, becoming, reflecting and doing, while recognizing that femininity and masculinity are realized differently in different cultures and that immigration may have a strong impact as contexts change.  As strategies for change, we as researchers and educators move toward the collective power of communities within a centric and lacy web of communities of differences, emphasizing the role of institutions in transforming research, education, knowledge and society.

This paper presents the current state of policy research literature[1] on issues related to the integration of immigrant and refugee women in Canada, including the identification[2] of research gaps and issues most likely to benefit from increased attention by researchers.

To accomplish this objective, I have used the two reports prepared last January at the request of Status of Women Canada by Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban (with the assistance of Lori Wilkinson) and Danielle Juteau and Patricia Bittar[3].  They were asked to examine the policy research on immigrant and refugee women in Canada written in English and in French over the last 10 years (1987 to 1996), to classify and analyze it in terms of the six categories used in the Metropolis project and to highlight issues and areas in need of more research.

The two literature reviews share many similarities.  While the English review includes principally books, journal articles, dissertations and theses, and research reports from community-based women's organizations, the French review focuses on books, journal articles and research reports from community-based women's organizations and government-based research in Quebec.  They both exclude materials found in the popular press such as magazines articles.  Both reports define their subject matter in similar terms and comprise principally the studies which focus specifically on women and/or systematically and comparatively on gender, thus excluding those studies where sex is a variable you control for and add on to others.  Immigrant and refugee women were defined as foreign-born.  Consequently, the reviews exclude much of the growing literature on gender and on those in racial categories who have been born in Canada but often find themselves categorized as immigrants.  Finally, the authors mention that the short time at their disposal made an exhaustive study impossible and, consequently, they view their reports as work in progress.


**The Economic Domain**

An important number of studies focus on labour force participation and income, many of which are done by or for governmental agencies.  Links are made between factors, such as education and labour force participation, and income, and provide some comparative analyses.  While both reports emphasize the existence of a double or triple negative, the French literature review discusses, in more, detail the bi-modal distribution of immigrant women within the labour force.  They both present the literature describing the difficult

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[1] "Policy literature" was defined by Status of Women Canada as research that documents the situation of immigrant and refugee women and/or that examines and identifies trends; examines the consequences of existing policies and practices on immigrant and refugee women's equality; identifies policy gaps and emerging issues; and focuses on concrete recommendations for policies and practices that would have a positive impact on immigrant and refuge women's equality.
[2] I have chosen to focus on identifying those issues in need of more research rather than on presenting a summary of the current literature.
[3] Although this document has been written by Danielle Juteau, it is based on the findings presented in the two reports (forthcoming).  As such, it incorporates, without quotations, the findings and many of the ideas suggested by Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban.

working conditions of women in employment ghettos.  Both also mention the relationship between women's unpaid and paid labour as well as the contribution of foreign-born women to the household economy.  While the review of English literature notes the work done on domestic labourers and the growing interest in the sex trade, the review of the French literature suggests a greater emphasis on articulating paid and unpaid labour.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

It is important to keep analyzing census data in a manner that systematically compares immigrant and refugee women to men and native-born women, focusing on education, labour force participation, income, etc.  The type of work, as done by Boyd, Boisjoly *et al*., and Lamotte, examines in more detail the links between these variables and explanations of the differences observed between these socially constructed categories, is crucial.

These quantitatively oriented analyses should be complemented by more qualitative ones.  In addition to the documentation and description of existing situations, it is imperative to focus on the processes underlying them.  In other words, we have to understand how such situations are constructed.  Understanding the makings and workings of the double and triple negative require moving beyond the addition of negatives and grasping how they interconnect and articulate.  This requires that foreign-born women from all occupational categories be studied, and not only those who find themselves at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder.  This would document the structural barriers encountered by all foreign-born women, as did Lamotte and Haili.  Such studies would include women who become entrepreneurs, those in professional and managerial positions, etc.

It is crucial to develop a perspective focusing on the impact of sex/gender relations (which in French are called *les rapports sociaux de sexes*, i.e., the social relations between the socially constructed sexual categories).  Rather than, or in addition to, comparing foreign-born women to native-born women we should compare men and women within the categories of foreign and native-born.  This means emphasizing the relation which seems to be most responsible for differences observed in labour force participation and income.

Emphasizing gender relations increases attention toward the relationship between unpaid and paid labour, to be seen not in terms of a unilinear continuum but as part of the appropriation of women's labour, be they native or foreign-born.  This type of research can also help make sense of domestics as "legalized slavery" and of the sex trade.  It would also shed light on the articulation between the social relations constitutive of gender, "race"/ethnicity and class.

Finally, the proposed research should link what happens on the Canadian scene to movements in the global economy and economic restructuring.

**Educational Domain**

As mentioned by S. Abu-Laban, educational issues can include educational attainment, educational settings as informal agents of socialization, anti-racist issues, curricula access and training opportunities. When defined in terms of the educational training of the foreign born, terms which are narrower than those of Metropolis (the impact of immigration on schools and the integrative process), the literature reviewed in this category is not extensive in English and, as far as we were able to assess, very limited in French.

Much of the current work in Quebec, not included in the review, focuses on the second generation, on inter-cultural relations and racism in schools, on the impact of immigration concentration on learning and on issues such as the *hidjab* and the limits of pluralism.

While the English language review focuses on the well-documented issue of the impact of the former federal program of language policy which limited women's access to language training as well as on the limits of the new program, the French articles cluster around the impact of *parrainage*. The French review also includes studies which are concerned with the difficulty for women to acquire, after a long day of paid and unpaid labour, another language. Boyd's work (1992) indicates that language plays a stratifying role in the economic and social adaptation of immigrant women, since allophones find themselves in jobs which are less attractive and less well paid.

*Recommendations for Future Research*

Much research is needed in this domain, even when defined narrowly, i.e. in terms of language skills and foreign-born women. These studies should spend less time on exploring their working conditions and more time on their trajectories in the labour market. This would help us understand how various processes of exclusion operate and structure outcomes such as job locations of foreign-born women who are allophone and who do not speak either of the official languages of Canada. In Quebec, special attention must be given to the differential impact of speaking French or English or both languages as a second language. Some studies serve this purpose but do not take into account gender. It is strongly recommended that they do so.

Studies should also explore, more generally, the life situations of these women, in order to examine the consequences on everyday life of not speaking English or French. What does this situation foster for women? Does it increase their economic and emotional dependency vis-à-vis spouses and children and how does this operate? Answering these questions would help decision makers identify the importance of investing more in second language training for those who may be isolated from the mainstream.

Finally, studies on language programs themselves are required to improve their effectiveness.

**Social Domain**

Both the French and English literature reviews indicate that a good number of studies on women, some more gender sensitive than others, focus on family and, to a lesser extent, on community life.  They emphasize spousal and intergenerational relations on the one hand, and family violence on the other.

Much of the work done in Quebec points out (more than it proves) that migration transforms gender relations in a positive way by modifying the aspirations of foreign-born women who now refuse traditional roles.  Research in English Canada centres around questions of differential power and decision-making rights, as it related to religious ideology and gender socialization.

Parenting, or more precisely mothering, is often examined in terms of changes brought by the loss of extended family networks.  Findings point in two directions, showing that the new situation produces both disadvantages and advantages.  While the burden of foreign-born mothers increases as they lose the help provided by women of the extended family, the latter sometimes benefit from the increased freedom since they are no longer subjected to the tight control exerted by the extended patriarchal family.  Increased burdens are also related to diasporic parenting and intergenerational obligations.

Research increasingly focuses on family violence and, more to the point, on violence against women, pointing to the deleterious effects of sponsoring, increased social isolation and dependency, etc..  In Quebec, this type of research is starting, and most of the work reviewed in French actually originates from the Canadian national level.

*Recommendations for Future Research*

Further research should explore the impact of diasporic ties on "women's family responsibilities." It should also focus on the specific situation of elderly women.  Additional studies on domestic violence are required.  Although they must focus on the specificities related to the status of the foreign-born, such as higher levels of isolation and dependency, lack of knowledge concerning existing institutions and resources (maybe), and pressures to maintain a good image for groups which are already subjected to criticism by majorities, they should be comparative.  In other words, they should compare the diversity of forms, both similar and different, of violence exerted against native and foreign-born women.  This could be done with women's organizations dealing with these questions.

The issue of networks must also be further explored in order to better understand their relative merits and demerits, but I recommend that such studies be extended beyond the domestic sphere to the wider community, both "ethnic" and "national." We know very little about foreign-born women's integration into these larger communities and their contribution to the public sphere.  Gender-sensitive research will focus on the interconnections between the two spheres, and explore how women participate, or are

stopped from participating, in the life of their community, its associations and organizations, social, political, cultural. It will identify how foreign-born women are included and excluded from the civil society of the broader society. Again, I stress the importance of comparative work but also of a generational approach comparing grandmothers, mothers and daughters in their relation to male power and oppression.

A final and important avenue of research is the interconnection between sexism and racism. How does the racism, ethnocentrism, essentialism and culturalism present in the larger society affect gender relations? How does it impede foreign-born women from accessing the dominant resources and institutions? How do stereotypes reinforce foreign-born women's domination? How do they induce them to be silent about the violence they are subjected to?

## Citizenship and Culture Domain

The dearth of work in French[4] indicates that work on the history of immigrant women and on their cultural contribution to the broader society seems almost absent in Francophone literature. This is true both in Quebec and in Canada as a whole, where current research focuses on Francophone women, whose long neglect has left immense gaps.

The English review identifies two main currents: the history of multiculturalism including social histories and the representation and issue of discrimination. Some research examines the meaning of multiculturalism for immigrant women and it needs to be pursued further. Little work exists on various aspects of the media, such as the ways in which it reaches women and represents them. All in all, this broad category remains almost empty and begs for new research.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Work on the institutionalization of the legal, political and social components of citizenship from a gender-sensitive perspective must be a priority. It should probe the evolution of rights for immigrant and refugee women with regards to entry, the impact of equity programs for foreign-born women and the participation of foreign-born women in the political process. Special attention should be accorded to the relationship between nationalist discourses and motherhood; the ways in which women are used to define ethnic and national boundaries; and the ways in which cultural retention and multiculturalism play out in analyses of racism and discrimination. In Quebec, such research could also focus on the interplay between language use and the construction of boundaries.

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4  We found only two articles and placed them in the section on health services.

In the Francophone world, there is an urgent need to better document, in a historical perspective, the material and ideal contribution of immigrant and refugee women to the production, reproduction and transformation of the collectivities within which they operate.

Work is needed on the representation of foreign-born women in the media (newspapers, television and radio) and in film as well as on the ways these discourses filter to them. How, for example, are foreign-born women specifically targeted during international crises involving their countries of origin? Finally, it is imperative to explore further the interconnections between racism, nationalism and sexism, on the one hand, and violence and discrimination against women on the other.


**Political and Public Services Domain**[5]

While the French literature includes work on the impact of immigration policies and on the delivery of health services, the English review indicates the presence of three broad categories: immigration/refugee policies, community activism and settlement services, and health and service delivery. Thus, a good deal of overlap can be found.

The link between immigration and refugee policies and gender-specific outcomes has been examined. So has the gender bias in these policies, as related to labour force participation and language training.

Studies on the delivery of heath services examine the mental and reproductive health of foreign-born women. They analyze the stress the latter experience and include both the perspectives of the women themselves and of the health care givers. Some work focuses on the unique experience of refugee women. Attention is also given to the in/accessibility of health services for foreign-born women. This can be linked to direct forms of discrimination or to the interactive process itself. Studies carried out in Quebec indicate that the mutual representations immigrant women and health service deliverers have of one another influence the outcome of their interaction.

The emergent work reported in the English review on the excision and infibulation of women is also under way in Quebec.


*Recommendations for Future Research*

The urgent need to collect more data on the specific trajectory of women refugees and for a more gender sensitive refugee process has been established.

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[5] The French review focused mainly on social services, including health, and placed immigration and refugee policies in the section dealing with governmental social policies.

New research in the public service domain must recognize the important and necessary input of foreign-born women on all gender and culturally sensitive issues, in the development and delivery of services, and in the political process. In this respect, studies focusing on culture must consider religion, which has been neglected in ethnic relations studies since the 1960s.

Work dealing with the "training" of *intervenants* belonging to majority groups is essential. They somehow must become culturally sensitive without falling into the trap of cultural determinism. Focusing on specific trajectories does not imply essentializing and homogenizing groups.

Finally, the emerging research dealing with the excision and infibulation of women, must avoid the naturalization of ethnic and religious groups. It must resist, equally, the temptation of homogenizing such groups, which are traversed by differences in positions and power conflicts. Research into reproductive technologies, sex selection and tubal ligations, will also further our understanding of the mechanisms underlying the interconnections between sexism and racism.


**Physical Infrastructure Domain**

One is confronted by an immense gap in this area, the findings being very meager. While the literature is almost non-existent in the French, work reviewed in English overlaps with other areas. It focuses on the use of public services and on living arrangements. The public service realm is concerned by the interaction of immigrant and refugee women in the public and community service areas, such as leisure activities, and examines, for example, the negative impact of not knowing English. The literature on living arrangements is more varied. Studies done in Quebec link women's bad living conditions to their poor economic situation, especially when they are single parents. It also discusses the effect of residential segregation on women's lives. Certain studies indicate that some foreign-born women (in Quebec) prefer ethnically mixed neighborhoods and others indicate that for them the home constitutes a place of power and spirituality.


*Recommendations for Future Research*

Many gaps have been identified and the following suggestions constitute a beginning. The impact of gender on the use of private and public space must be assessed. Here, Virginia Wolfe's plea for a room of one's own still resonates. Exploratory studies must evaluate the extent to which foreign-born women constitute uneasy tenants in private and public spaces. We must find out more on home ownership and housing patterns, on consumption patterns, on the use of leisure services, on the relation between geographic segregation and sex/gender relations. What kind of spaces are safe and dangerous?

**General Recommendations and Overall Suggestions**

Specific recommendations for further research have been expressed for each category. I reiterate that existing research on the economic and public services domains must be pursued and deepened. Studies on violence against women should also be encouraged and broadened to include other sites such as the workplace and public spaces. There is a crying need for new and innovative gender-sensitive research on the specific relationship of foreign-born women to physical and public space, at the community and "national" levels. The absence of data in the broad area of citizenship is glaring, and can partly be accounted for by the dearth of studies including sex/gender relations. Research in this domain should focus on the articulation between the construction of national boundaries and sex/gender relations, and on the specific location of native and foreign-born women in this process. It should also probe the interaction between inter- or multiculturalism on the one hand, and women's activities and positions on the other. In all cases, special attention must be given to refugee women.

Considerations of a more epistemological and theoretical nature are also called for. Gender sensitive research deconstructs the category of the supposedly universal immigrant and/or refugee. When it focuses on foreign-born women, it does not treat them as problems and does not consider them as a variable you tag on to your work.

Gender-sensitive research should focus first and foremost on sex/gender relations, tracing how they affect the life situations of foreign-born women, as they are constructed in different sites, whether they are mothers or not, married or not, gainfully employed or not, well educated or not, young or old. This means that comparative work is a must, for it would transcend the category of foreign-born women in order to uncover and explore those social relations which constitute it. This comparative work must extend beyond foreign and native-born women; understanding sex/gender relations, how they operate and influence our lives necessitates comparing women to men. Only then does it become possible to explore and comprehend the diversity of the forms and modalities of the appropriation of women's labour and bodies.

Studies which are culturally sensitive should avoid using culture as an independent variable, as static and unchanging from which behaviour automatically flows. The culturalization of gender issues, namely the redefinition of gender issues into cultural issues and differences, must also be avoided. The constant slippage from one level to the other deserves to be scrutinized.

Finally, it is strongly recommended that research be devoid from the value judgments inherent to many of its current strands. Rather than examining the stress and strains caused by the transition from supposedly traditional societies characterized by unequal gender relations to modern Canada supposedly characterized by full equality between the sexes, research should recognize the existence of gender inequalities in Canada and examine how migration alters and affects the multiple and ever-changing forms of sex/gender relations.

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**"Gender" is not a "Dummy": Research Methods in Immigration and Refugee Studies**
**Plenary: Critical Issues in Immigration Research**
**Dr. Nahla Abdo, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University**

Thanks to the impetus of the feminist movement, women's concerns are increasingly incorporated into research methodologies within mainstream sociological research in the West. This paper, however, differentiates between women and gender, and also attempts to introduce gender as a necessary analytic category for research on immigrants and refugees. Gender, within the context of this paper, can be defined as a "constitutive element of a social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes; ... gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. It is an all-pervasive social institution that establishes patterns of expectations for individuals, orders the processes of everyday life, is built into the major social organization of society, such as the economy, ideology, the family and politics, and is also an entity in and of itself"
(Kandiyoti, 1996: 6).

The processes of migration and immigration are gender-based: the decision to immigrate, choice of destination, access to knowledge and/or finance are all typically male prerogatives. The processes of adaptation, resettlement and integration in host countries have different implications for women and men. Despite the fact that over 53 percent of all foreign-born populations of Canada (and the US) are female - compared to just 40 percent in most countries in the Persian Gulf (UN, 1996) - and despite the presence of mounting evidence about the economic contributions and productive role of immigrant women in Canada (according to a number of studies, the rate of labour force participation by immigrant women exceeds that of Canadian-born females - albeit at a high cost of double or even triple exploitation), one is nevertheless struck by a serious lacuna in studies on immigrant and refugee women and by the total absence of gender analysis in mainstream research on immigration.

Most conventional research methodology is gender blind, if not gender-biased, whether produced by government policy researchers or academics (male or female). Such bias/blindness obstructs a true knowledge of research subjects and distorts the history and materiality of their life experiences. To redress this problematic, this paper reevaluates both the conceptual and practical implications of existing research methodologies and offers an alternative theoretical conceptual and methodological approach to the study of immigrants and refugees.

Unless we seriously consider changing the existing conceptual and methodological frameworks of mainstream research and open them up to integrate gender analysis, research on women by women alone has the potential of ghettoizing women. By remaining outside of the mainstream, feminist or gender analysis can yield few results, as the findings of these studies are rarely translated into new policy approaches.[1]

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1 For an example of gender analysis of immigration see Chant (1992).

This paper attempts to contribute to what I refer to as the "mainstreaming" of gender analysis. Mainstreaming gender analysis involves the de-construction of **"male-stream"** research on immigrants and refugees and its re-construction through the infusion or integration of gender as an analytical tool. This process involves two levels of analysis: the first is epistemologically grounded. This level entails re-thinking existing a priori assumptions and taken-for-granted notions about gender relations and replacing them with the knowledge that sex-relations are socially, culturally, and historically constructed. The second level concerns a methodological implication, which entails re-thinking existing techniques of collecting data.

## A: Why Gender Analysis: Theoretical/Conceptual Implications

Before dealing with specific issues, I would like to make two brief qualifying statements: Firstly, while I am cognizant of the heated debate by Third World feminists, I suggest, as have other feminists (for example, Kandiyoti), that Amero-and Euro-centrism must not inhibit us from conducting research among Third World women. Secondly, although patriarchy is culturally and historically constructed, with variations among and between cultures, there are certain elements contributing to the inferior status of women which tend to remain common to all women across cultures. It is these commonalties to which much of this paper will be addressed.

This paper argues that gender analysis can alter the very epistemological status of research by revealing a fuller and more truthful picture of the social group or social phenomenon under investigation. One of the major contributions to research of feminist social scientists has been, among other things, the removal of the illusion that social science is "objective" or "neutral". We know now that the researcher's gender, class, race, ethnicity, etc., reflect and are reflected in the research at every step.

Another major epistemological area that has been challenged due to feminist debates and contributions to social science is related to the notion of reproduction and the relationship between production and reproduction. We know now that the dichotomous nature of these notions -- that allocates wage labour/profit-making labour to the "public" economic and productive sphere, while relegating reproductive labour and a host of different forms of work to the "private" domestic sphere -- is at best, false.

Using gender as a analytical category, however, makes us re-think the artificial separation between male/female, private/public, and production and reproduction. The newly acquired knowledge that women's reproductive labour is indispensable to wage labour and the economy, and that without it labour power and capital cannot be maintained, let alone reproduced on an expanded scale, can have a major impact not only on the way we conduct research, but also on our findings and on the policy implications of these findings.

Such newly acquired knowledge has significant implications to research on immigration and refugees. This is true also in the context of comparative research, particularly when

comparisons are made between the host country and the Third World country or origin. Many studies, including UN reports and others, have demonstrated that most productive work in the Third World has been done by females. Yet, women's work -- which is largely the agricultural sector and other domestic and informal sectors -- is hardly recognized as labour and is often absent from recorded history or official statistics.

Re-thinking our assumptions about reproduction and domesticity as non-economic activity because they are performed by women, can, among other things, alter our notion of women as dependents. The implications of this knowledge are tremendous as they are articulated at every structure within which women are found.

Third World feminists, particularly those arguing within the context of the (Gender and Development) GAD approach, have long criticized the mainstream liberal approach which assumes that integrating women in the labour market would alleviate their inferior status. The GAD approach argues that bringing women into the labour market is not the issue. Women, they contend, are not outside of the economic process, the real issue is a structural one. Namely, it is the powers that are behind the structure -- the design, the planning and the execution of economic activities -- that ignore women's participation, marginalize their contributions and minimize their value.

While more research is needed to examine the gender implications of the relationship between immigration policy, education, and labour participation, there is evidence suggesting that immigrant women entering under the category of "dependents" or "family sponsorship" suffer more than say, "independent" immigrants -- often the wealthy class -- or "government sponsored" immigrants. Sponsored or "dependent" women have, for instance, no access to federally sponsored language skills programs. The inability to improve their language skills tends to place them in jobs characterized with longer hours, less attractive, and with lower wages. Combined with their domestic roles and responsibilities, these women are often trapped in a cycle of double-bind or even triple-bind. It is important to note that for some women in the "dependent" category, immigration can have the effect of lowering their status, particularly if one adds to this picture the existing policy of accreditation -- namely not recognizing credentials from outside of North America and Europe as legitimate indicators for skills and experience.

To produce a second and inclusive research on, for instance, of immigrants' economic integration or social/cultural integration, one cannot ignore the very structural inequalities -- particularly in the area of gender -- that are embedded in our economic, political, educational, and legal systems.


**B: Why Gender: Some Methodological Implications**

To elaborate on existing methodological implications regarding gender inequality, this paper critiques the existing scholarly works. These include government documents based on consultation with "academic experts" and other refereed publications. In brief, I suggest that much existing scholarship is, if not problematic in its reference to gender,

then distortive and far from reality.  Most literature concerning immigrants and refugees fails to distinguish between gender and women.  If present, women are tokenized and or considered simply as a "sex" without accounting for gender, or historical or cultural specificity.  The language in most of this research is either masculine or so-called neutral.  If women are discussed it is usually within the framework of the family, or the domestic or the cultural/traditional spheres.

Such research, I argue, ignores already existing knowledge about gender inequalities as well as about immigrant women's contributions and participation in the host society and economy.  Existing evidence suggests that, for instance, immigrant female labour participation rates, in general, exceeds that of Canadian-born females' and that "foreign domestic workers comprise the largest segment of females within Canada's temporary work group" (Canada, 1995).  The problem is not exactly one of integrating them into the Canadian economy, as much of the conventional literature would have us believe, but examining the conditions of their "integration".  Such a realization can have dramatic implications for existing immigration policies.

For practical reasons, and shortage of space, I will confine this section to two examples of the mainstream/"malestream" work on immigration and refugees.  I will try to deconstruct their maleness and attempt to re-construct the studies by bringing gender into the framework.

**Example A:**

The first example refers to a government document which is a product of "high level consultations between the Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council and "academic experts".  The document produces valuable recommendations and well-though out questions.  It recognizes racism and suggests ways to tackle these problems and recognizes the Canadian discriminatory policy vis-à-vis credentials from outside North America and Europe and suggests means to alleviate such discrimination.

Yet, in striking lacuna of this document is its gender-blindness.  Entitled**:** "Immigration in the 1990s" (1991), the document begins with the following statement:  "Without immigration, the continuation of Canada's below replacement fertility rates would eventually lead to Canada's disappearance", and that the population will stop growing 2021.  Ironically however, the same source that is responsible for the maintenance and reproduction of any nation, including Canada -- namely women -- are totally absent from this document.  In fact, very few of the "academic experts" included in the consultations with the Council, were women.

The document recognizes the fact that over two-thirds of immigrants are from the Third World, and highlights a variety of important issues as recommendations for policy purposes.  These include, social environment, aging, integration, public education programs and "vigorous race relations programs"..., etc..  Yet, nowhere in this document is there any mention of immigrant women.  Quite the contrary, the language of the document is masculine.  For example, in addressing the issues of integration of

immigrants, one reads: "In the integration model, the immigrant brings his culture with him, and its traits- be they food, dancing, meditation or music...". The fact that women in most cultures are the bearers of the symbols of culture (whether this culture is expressed in food, dance, clothing, etc.) has apparently escaped this document. In fact, the whole language of the document is, to say the least, very problematic. For example, without showing any sympathy to poor women or even a recognition of the heated debate in both the Third World and in North America around reproductive technologies, the Council recommends "foreign or international adoptions" as a means to increase immigration to Canada. It is ironic that the only three "obstacles" the Council finds in facilitating "foreign adoption" are those placed by the federal, provincial and foreign governments (p.5). Yet, much of the debate within the area of reproductive technologies is focused on the gender and ethnic/racial implications of such methods as population growth.

Or, for example, take the Council's recommendation on increasing immigration by giving "bonus points for family heads with more children under 12" (p.7). A gender-conscious "counseling" or "advice-giving" would re-think the existing traditional notion of the "male head of the family", and would qualify this recommendation by pointing to the need of changing existing policies about "dependent" women, particularly when we expect them to be "reproductive machines", responsible for larger families. In fact, one can go on and on de-constructing the whole gender-biased content of this document.

The final issue that I would like to raise here is that, while the document recognizes the dramatic increase in the category of refugees entering Canada, still no mention is made to the fact that refugee women often undergo hardship just for being women, e.g. rape, sexual harassment and persecution on the basis of gender, which in some cases adds to the trauma of flight.

The flow of Somali refugees in the past decade or so provides a major illustration of these gender-based difficulties. While research on this ethnic community is almost non-existent, there is some evidence to suggest that most Somali families, at least in the Ottawa-Carleton region -- where initial research is currently being undertaken by Somali graduate students -- are composed of female-led households, and that there is a relationship between immigration and divorce. Without a gender lens or perspective it is difficult to imagine how we can get to the truth or reality of refugee or immigrant life in this community. It is even harder to imagine how policies of integration or adaptation can be drawn up without the gender aspect.

The cultural construction of women's roles, responsibilities and rights within the same community, let alone between communities, varies dramatically according to sex. Failure to use gender as an analytical tool can only conceal part of reality.


**Example B:**

The absence of gender consideration, let alone gender analysis is true to most mainstream research on immigration. Gender or "sex" is used as an "add on women and stir"

technique.  Gender relations are not seen as having a central explanatory role.  To illustrate a case of mainstream academic research's neglect of the gender component, let's consider research undertaken by Randall Montgomery (1996) as typical survey research on immigrants and refugees and one which provides a case-in-point of the problem of gender-blindness/bias.

The hypothesis he wished to test was that "sociocultural measures of adaptation, labour market or financial variables, and subjective measures require separate analysis with regard to causal or predictor variables" (Montgomery 1996:  679).  The author begins his study by informing us that he and his assistant (a survivor of a refugee camp) trained a team of six newcomers to administer interviews of 250 questions and collect information on components of refugee adaptation by interviewing 450 residents.  Adaptation is defined in terms of:  1) satisfaction with Canadian life, 2) sociocultural adaptation and 3) economic status including labour force participation.  Independent variables used include:  English progress, education, sex, age and ethnicity.  Immediately one notices the problematic decision the author has made with regards to the statistical variants he has chosen in order to illustrate his research in tabular form:  at the very outset the variants of ethnicity and sex have been marked with "One Dummy" each.  Despite this immediate evidence of the decision to neglect both the female and gender components of research, we will go ahead and try to de-construct and then re-construct this research.

Firstly, one must content with the problem of the unnamed research assistant -- was this person's role significant or just a cultural "add on" component.  We do not and cannot know, for neither his name, not his actual role or contribution to the study are mentioned.  Moreover, we are not informed about the sex of the "six trained interviewers".  This information or lack thereof can raise very serious concerns, among which is the wrong assumption that ideas and opinions about adaptation are the same, or even similar, for both sexes.  Revealing the sex of the interviewer is very important because it can alter the very construction of the whole research and affects the process at more than one level.

Feminist critiques of conventional survey methods are abundant and I do not intend to examine this in detail here.  What is worth mentioning, however, is that the role of "intersubjectivity", to use Rose-Mary Sayigh's term, in interviews is very important.  Sayigh differentiates between "intersubjectivity" and "rapport".  While the latter refers to the technique of entry into a field, the former is a "concept that calls into question all stages of research, from conceptual to writing up".  Intersubjectivity "focuses critical attention on the theory and politics of the representation of 'other' cultures, and on the meaning and consequences of the research for the researched" (Sayigh, 1996:  146).  Indeed, the responses of the interviewed are very much influenced by the gender, race, social class, and education of the interviewer.  While this scenario might have addressed the race/ethnicity issues, the sex or gender of the interviewer, particularly if "he is interviewing women, must not be overlooked.  For a questionnaire can read lips, but it cannot read facial expressions, feelings, or actual reality.  In other words, it cannot go beyond the surface.

Reflecting on her experience in interviewing camp refugee women in Lebanon, Rose-Mary Sayigh (1996) reported an incident whereby a male researcher came to the house she was staying at and asked the father whether he would force his daughter to marry a man against her wishes.  The response of the father was "No".  Sayigh's comment was that anyone who looks at the face of the daughter, who was about to marry, would see her unhappiness.  The point made here is that the "father" -- who was "progressive" and belonged to the same social and political group as the researcher -- recognized that his answer was the only appropriate one, as both he and the researcher shared similar values.  Later, Sayigh learned that the daughter had consented to the marriage not out of free choice, but because of cultural norms.  What we learn from this incident, among other things, is that gender-based cultural norms cannot be answered quantitatively or statistically, nor can they be easily revealed to "foreign" men.

A further gendered aspect of research that needs to be examined is the nature and types of questions asked:

The types of questions asked during the interview process are also important as they themselves can be gender/sex biased.  Unfortunately, Montgomery's 1996 article, like most surveys, does not inform us of "What" or "How" questions were asked.  However we do know, for example, that a question which asks:  "Do you think that women doctors are as good as men," would only allow a "Yes" or a "No" answer but not a response that women doctors can be better! And that the answer "No", should not be taken to mean lack of ability, as much as an indicator of structural obstacles.  Such obstacles might not be understood unless gender consciousness is invoked.

Or, take for example my experience of doing research in Gaza Refugee Camps during the summer of 1996.  I found that a question such as "Does your wife work?" is useful only if asked in a workshop intended to discuss the value of unpaid domestic or informal work.  In a survey of 60 respondents all, except for one man responding to this question, answered "No".  The one different answer was "Not Really".  The "Not Really" referred to a case of an educated wife who was raising seven children and did part-time work as a nurse.  Admittedly, camp refugee life is different than life in Canada, but the cultural constructions of gender relations -- of relations between women and men -- is not easily altered after the flight from country of origin and resettlement.  To reach an understanding of the quality of life and the meaning of integration for immigrants or refugees, the question of representation must be addressed.  Namely, a man can talk about women but he cannot represent or talk for women, which is often the case in immigration research.  To achieve true representation of a refugee group, we need to also access the 50% or more of its female population.  This mission can be hampered by the male-sex of the interviewer.

**Analysis and Writing of the Research**

I refer back again to the article by Montgomery (1996). While the author informs us that he gives both sex and ethnicity "one dummy" each -- as he considers both factors to have little impact on adaptability -- I believe that it is still worthwhile to examine the discussion and analysis of the findings. Referring to sex, the author found that "sex was not a significant predictor of adaptation to Canadian life nor of Sociocultural Adaptation". As to socioeconomic status and adaptation, the author in one single line, suggests that sex was significantly related to scores on Economic Adaptation, with females scoring below males, overall. We are not told why, how or what does this might mean. In the absence of information on the ratio of male/female participation in the interviews, it is possible that male respondents spoke not only about women but also for women -- we cannot know. From a gender perspective, researchers should make equal space for the voices of women and men.

Referring to ethnicity, the author found that, like sex, ethnicity was not a significant predictor of sociocultural adaptation. A partial explanation provided is "sample differences between this study and the many others which did emphasize the role of ethnicity." Once again the author neglects to inform us of the nature of such differences, so it is not clear whether it is the class origin of his sample -- which incidentally is not mentioned at all -- or other factors that constitute the alleged differences.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, existing quantitative methodologies on immigrants and refugees are, in general, gender biased. Those studies that do incorporate women or sex tend to treat the latter as either "one dummy" -- where its incorporation into the body of research is considered irrelevant to the "predicted conclusion" -- or they tend to treat sex or gender as peripheral issues, "another" element, or just a factor. It is important to realize that research, quantitative or qualitative is not just about interpreting reality. Research can also make a new reality by constructing new concepts, new theories, and new knowledge. Such new knowledge can have many functions, of which policy or political action is only one, albeit a significant one. Another function of research, as most feminists have noted, is one of empowerment. The empowerment of the poor, structurally inferior, and women must be taken seriously by researchers of the 21st century. To do this, we need to go beyond the conventional methods of research and begin incorporating other methods used at the micro level, such as feminist anthropological and ethnographical research as well as action-oriented research. The fact is that often the latter is conducted by NGOs or community activists whose research has traditionally not been seen as valid "academic" or "scientific" research. I believe that triangulation methods and methods that can bridge the micro and the macro can be more effective in studying immigrants and refugees.

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**Discussion Group 1:  Methodology Issues in Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research**

The discussion groups for this session were structured around the following questions:

- What are the research methodologies currently in use in the area of immigration/integration policy?  What are their strengths with respect to "gendered" research?  What are their weaknesses?
- Have any methodologies been developed in other countries, that would address concerns with current research?
- When is it useful to include research on immigrant women within mainstream immigration research, and when it is not useful?
- How should "policy research" be defined?
- How can the links between research and policy development be improved?

Participants responded to these questions in a broad sense.  This approach included their interpretation of the concept of methodology, which was viewed as the whole process of defining the agenda, and carrying out and disseminating research.  Participants believed that thinking about methodology should include thinking about ways of making links between research and policy, and between knowledge and the power to use it to effect change.  The group discussions were thus very wide-ranging but can be grouped into three broad themes.

**Representation and Accountability of the Different Partners in the Metropolis Project**

There was considerable discussion about the progress of gendered perspectives within the Metropolis project to date.  Participants noted the discrepancy, at the present conference, between the dominant gender composition of the academic researchers and senior administrators (only 10 out of 38 conference presentations were by women) and that of the community representatives (predominantly female).  This could be seen as a telling indicator of the current marginalization of women and of gendered perspectives in immigration research and policy.

Others pointed out that it appears, from the circulated descriptions of research projects funded under the first phase of Metropolis, that a number of projects do not seem to be taking account of gender issues, or are doing so in an inadequate or biased way, e.g., where a research project on the contribution of immigrants to economic growth may include only immigrant women in professional paid employment, but not immigrant women performing unpaid work, which is also an economic contribution.  The gendering of research was a criterion in initially funding the Centres of Excellence, and participants

felt that there was a need for accountability mechanisms to ensure that this is implemented in terms of how the agenda is set, how questions are framed, the criteria for prioritizing projects to be funded, how findings are disseminated, and how they are fed into the public policy process.

Several of those present were concerned that questions of race, especially systemic racism and their negative effects on the life chances of immigrant women of colour (and their daughters), are not side stepped in the Metropolis project.  It was stressed that research agendas must be fundamentally concerned with the ways racism differentially shapes immigrant women's experiences and confines many, although not all, to the margins of Canadian society.  A methodological dilemma is posed by the need to disaggregate data according to "race" while keeping the focus on how racism as a social process constructs the categories one is measuring.  It is crucial not to "essentialize" (naturalize) racial or cultural categories, while at the same time recognizing that they have real effects on people's lives.

Another area of considerable debate concerned the relationships between the academics and the grass-roots community organizations in the Metropolis project, as well as the representation of the latter in the research and administrative processes of Metropolis.  A number of community representatives expressed concern that, while academic researchers needed grass-roots partners in order to conduct their research, it could be difficult, within the administrative structure of Metropolis, for researchers from community organizations to have their professional qualifications and competencies fully recognized.  Since most of these community-based researchers are immigrant women, some participants saw this issue as part of the wider problem of the lack of recognition of immigrant women's professional credentials in Canadian society, especially those of poor immigrant women of colour.  It was stressed that this issue must be resolved in the research process and that academics will have to support their community organization partners if Metropolis is to contribute to high quality policy recommendations and policy change to better the lives of immigrant women.

University researchers present pointed out that their employers are in fact gradually coming to recognize the need for researchers to be connected to the community and are coming to accept the validity of action-oriented research.  This shift is due in large part to activism *within* the academy by feminist scholars who have established links with community organizations over the years and have worked hard to achieve legitimacy for this kind of research.  Several participants emphasized commonalties between feminist academics and community activists involved in the present discussion, including a commitment to research in which gender is central to understanding the nature of problems and what needs to be changed.  The often-problematic nature of academics' own relationships with policy makers was also pointed out.

More broadly, a number of participants expressed concern that the underlying policy goal driving the Metropolis project seemed to be *"management"* of the increasing diversity that immigrants bring to Canadian society and its institutions.  This emphasis which some participants felt would likely fail to consider the new visions of Canada being constructed

by immigrants and their positive contribution to its institutions has generated suspicion among some grass-roots organizations about the underlying agenda behind the current interest in immigration research, to the extent that *management of* is equated with *control over*. Such a "managerialist" approach would represent a failure to go beyond seeing immigrants and their communities as objects to be worked *on* rather than people to be worked *with*, and would lead to the development of policies of limited relevance to immigrants' daily lives. Such an approach would also distract from the need to focus on the role of *non*-immigrants in the integration (or otherwise) of immigrants into Canadian society. A representative from the Metropolis team stressed that the project was not aiming to define a policy or set of policies, but rather it was an initiative to gather *scientific* research which policy-makers would draw on rather than the anecdotal fragments they tend to use at present. *All* the partners should be able to influence the research agenda. Another participant stressed the need to "network" into and within the policy-analysis and policy-making bureaucracy.

It was also pointed out that community organizations are structurally disadvantaged in the formal management and discussion processes of the Centres of Excellence. Especially in the current context of government cutbacks to resources for front-line services, time spent on attending meetings imposes a significant opportunity cost on community partner organizations and, in some cases, involves volunteer labour. This problem could be alleviated with a system of per diems -- the question was raised as to how this can be done within the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada budget guidelines for Metropolis.

In spite of these concerns, some of which are very serious, a number of participants felt that the Metropolis project could nonetheless be a great opportunity to influence "the establishment", and could foster a real three-way learning process (academics, community organizations and policy-makers) provided that mechanisms of *accountability* are built in to ensure that community groups are genuine partners in the various stages of the research process. This means negotiating (in culturally and gender-sensitive ways) the modalities of partnerships for defining research priorities, developing research projects, contributing to research instruments (e.g., ensuring cultural sensitivity of questionnaires, promoting focus groups as a useful methodology), determining methods of circulation of findings, developing the policy recommendations/implications and assessing the policy implications of findings. The partners' advisory councils set up by the Centres to review their research goals on an ongoing basis and the involvement of community representatives on adjudication committees are mechanisms that will help ensure community input.

**Representivity of the Communities Essential to the Research Process**

There was extensive discussion about the way "community" is defined within the Metropolis project. Participants' views can be summed up by saying that it is one thing to recognize that researchers must draw on the knowledge base and experience of "the communities" but it is quite another to establish which are the appropriate communities of reference when it comes to defining research agendas or seeking answers to the research questions being asked.

A representative of one of the Metropolis Centres of Excellence pointed out that the Centres have necessarily only established formal partnerships with a range of *existing* community organizations. However, many immigrants are excluded, or exclude themselves, from participation in these recognizable communities. Researchers and policy-designers should not make *a priori* assumptions that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are representative of the diversity of the immigrant communities they claim to represent. Participants were reminded that within different "ethnic" communities some groups are socialized to be non-vocal while others are trained to speak for the community. In particular, the perspectives of those who are non-urban in origin, not middle class or not of the male gender may not be represented.

In addition, individuals may identify different facets of their daily lives with different communities (including both those associated with the region or culture of origin and those seen as part of the Canadian "mainstream," while community identification can be associational, religious or geographic.

It is particularly important, therefore, to bring in immigrant women's organizations as formal partners to help overcome this problem. There is also a need to reach out to those with no links to formal organizations, since there are differences between cultural identity and membership in a formal associational community.

Participants also underlined that ethnic communities, often presumed to be homogeneous, may be simultaneously cross cut by class and race as well as gender. Serious debate about class divisions tends to be obfuscated by census data categories which lend themselves more to indicators of social status than of class position, as well as by a dominant discourse based on the belief that Canadian society permits infinite social mobility. The extent and conditions under which middle- or upper-class membership can enable immigrant women and men of colour to overcome social barriers caused by racism was seen as an important research question.

Representatives of grass-roots organizations in smaller communities were concerned about the "big city" focus of Metropolis. They stressed the variability of immigrant experiences according to the density of one's ethnic community in a particular place, and the importance of studying problems related to isolation in small communities.

Including umbrella organizations, multi-ethnic organizations and groups representing immigrant women as partner organizations, as some of the Centres of Excellence are

doing, will help ensure that a diversity of communities of identity, interest and geographical scale are represented in the Metropolis project. Moreover, individual researchers may develop their own, perhaps broader, notions of who constitutes the community of reference for a particular project. It is hoped they will use appropriate research methods to reach those not represented in formal organizations, including "the non-communities of the excluded."

**Mechanisms for Ensuring that Gendered Methodologies are Implemented**

One group channeled its discussions about methodology into specific suggestions that, participants believed, should be conveyed to all the researchers and administrators in the Metropolis project.

- The Edmonton Conference should produce a workbook on gendering immigration/integration research; a guide for policy-oriented research. This document would be modeled on more general documents produced by Status of Women Canada, Margrit Eichler and others. It would include considerations such as how questions are framed and how questions are used. For example, measuring gender and race difference, although necessary, is not sufficient. Ways must be found to convey to those whose research techniques focus on "variable manipulation" that race and sex are not simply unproblematic variables. Researchers, (including quantitative analysts) must examine how opportunities and inequalities come to be socially and historically constructed along race and gender lines. Further, if Metropolis is to have a tripartite approach to thinking through policy implications of the research, i.e. involving policy people, academics, and the community sector then we must find ways to bridge the gaps between the macro level at which policy is generally defined and the micro level at which community activists generally experience policy implementation and interpretation.

- The Edmonton Conference should produce a gendered ethical checklist. This checklist would be for use by administrators of the Metropolis project, adjudicators of research projects and researchers themselves. It would be compatible with existing ethics guidelines of the major research-granting councils but would go beyond them in certain respects. The checklist could cover points such as ways of making the management structures for Metropolis more gender-inclusive and how to involve community organizations *specifically representing immigrant women* in the research process, from the formulation of questions right through to working out tools and mechanisms for dissemination of results, e.g., making it easier for community representatives to contribute time by paying per diems.

Participants suggested that these two tools include case studies or concrete examples of Metropolis research currently under way to illustrate their points. These examples should be rooted in the experience of communities, and communities should be involved in formulating some of these examples.

**Discussion Group II: Priorities in Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy Research**

Discussion group participants were unanimous that virtually all issues in immigration/integration policy research have a gender dimension. They also stressed that researchers must understand that gender issues are not reducible to family issues and vice versa.

Participants came up with a diverse and extensive list of issue areas that were seen to be priorities. It is important to note that there were varying degrees of unanimity in the themes considered crucial. Perhaps most important, participants were divided as to whether research oriented toward overcoming social and economic disadvantages among poor immigrant women should have complete priority or whether Metropolis should also fund projects focusing on the contributions and progress of middle-class immigrant women.

Moreover, the list of issue areas generated in these discussions was seen by participants as being far from exhaustive, representing work-in-progress based on a short period of brainstorming. Issues will be better identified as more and more women participate in the Metropolis structure and research teams. In considering the (non-hierarchical) list given below, these caveats should be borne in mind.

**Research Priorities List**

Policies to foster immigrant women's economic independence:
- Recognition of foreign professional credentials through accreditation bureaux.
- Internship programs to help women gain "Canadian experience" (international policy comparisons, e.g., Israel).
- Gender differences among immigrant small business owners, and policies and support mechanisms for women.
- Monitoring the situation of women after their requisite two years in the immigrant domestic worker program is completed (especially in light of the 1992 changes to selection criteria for this program).
- Measures to assist immigrant women who are the sole supporters of their families and who work in low-wage sectors.
- How geographic mobility (or lack thereof) at the intra-urban level shapes paid work opportunities.

Impact of immigration policy (notably, family reunification) on immigrant women's lives and on family structures:
- How the immigration category affects, directly and indirectly, access to paid employment and their financial security/economic autonomy

- Research on the impact of immigration policy on family structures, on family formation, and the implications for the definition of "family" in other policy areas.
- Research on the particular situation of refugee women.

*Note: extended and expanded panel studies tracking women's experiences during the first five or more years of the settlement process would shed light on the above issues.*

Health:
- Mental health issues over and above family violence (the latter is very important but is not the only concern).
- Health promotion -- how different groups of immigrant women make health-related decisions.
- Health care cuts -- their impact on immigrant women's lives in different provinces.

Aging:
- Elderly immigrant women's housing conditions.
- The viability of extended family support networks for the immigrant elderly.
- Financial security in old age.

Children of immigrants:
- Educational attainment of daughters of immigrants compared to their mothers.
- Cultural transmission of gendered values and their effects on girls.

II  **IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN IN CANADA:  A SELECTIVE REVIEW OF POLICY RESEARCH LITERATURE 1987-1996**

**IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN IN CANADA: A SELECTIVE REVIEW OF POLICY RESEARCH LITERATURE 1987-1996**

## Introduction

A significant amount of research has been undertaken on various facets or domains of the lives of immigrant and refugee women in Canada over the last number of years. This literature review provides a summary of themes that have emerged in the field over the last 10 years (1987-1997) in work conducted in both English and French. As such, it represents a synthesis and summary of two reports prepared for Status of Women Canada in January 1997[1] where the authors were asked to examine policy research literature on immigrant and refugee women in Canada, in terms of the six categories used in the Metropolis project[2], and to highlight issues in need of further research. Works related to issues of methodology were also considered.

Policy related research is defined as research that documents the situation of immigrant and refugee women, or examines and identifies trends; examines the consequences of existing policies and practices on immigrant and refugee women's equality; identifies policy gaps and emerging issues; focuses on concrete recommendations for policies and practices that would have a positive impact on immigrant and refugee women's equality.

The authors approached their task in very similar terms. While the English review includes principally books, journal articles, dissertations and theses, and research reports from community-based women's organizations, the French review focuses on books, journal articles and research reports from community-based women's organizations and government-based research in Quebec. Both reviews exclude materials found in the popular press such as magazine and newspaper articles. Both reviews define their subject matter in similar terms and comprise principally the studies that focus specifically on women and, systematically and comparatively, on gender. Immigrant and refugee women were defined as foreign-born. Given this, the reviews exclude much of the growing literature on gender and racialized categories of women born in Canada who often find themselves categorized as immigrants. Authors of the reviews both indicated that time constraints and the wealth of literature necessitate that this document be regarded as a work in progress.

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[1] Sharon Abu-Laban, with the assistance of Lori Wilkinson, reported on the English literature, and Danielle Juteau and Patricia Bittar reported on the French literature.

[2] The Metropolis Project is a six-year international project promoting policy research on the effects of immigration on urban centres. This literature review was undertaken in preparation for Canada's first National Metropolis Conference in Edmonton, March 1997, hosted by the Prairie Centre of Excellence, one of four Canadian Centres of Excellence for Research and Integration being funded under the Metropolis Project by a consortium of several federal departments and agencies, led by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and including Status of Women Canada.

**Economic Domain**

By far the majority of work that has been conducted on immigrant and refugee women with respect to the economic domain, focuses on issues linked to their participation in the paid labour force. Such work includes studies on the specific barriers that women face in entering the paid labour force as well as research on working conditions.

Both French and English language research have identified the important ways in which Canada's immigration policy -- particularly the aspects of family sponsorship -- have had an impact on the participation of immigrant and refugee women in the paid economy. Related to this is work that has addressed Canada's recruitment of "foreign" domestic workers and the problems that are germane to their employment experiences.

In the 1980s and early 1990s the impact of economic restructuring and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) were examined for their gendered consequences. Some attention was also directed to the specific implications of such broad transformations for immigrant women workers.

**Paid Labour Force**

A number of studies used Census data to examine the location of immigrant women in the paid labour force. Not surprisingly, the data indicate that immigrant women are concentrated in certain sectors of the labour market. Using 1986 Census data, Lamotte and El Haili (1991) Lamotte (1992) for example, show that 38.8% of immigrant women in Quebec hold blue collar jobs, while slightly more than 29% occupy managerial or professional positions and slightly more than 31% are located in the intermediate/white collar occupational categories. Such findings are supported by Ng (1990) who also notes that immigrant women, particularly non-white, non-English speaking, tend to be clustered in three occupational categories, namely, private household domestic labour; lower level service jobs such as fast-food restaurants, cleaning/janitorial work and food preparation; and light manufacturing.

As is commonly known, such occupational categories are characterized by low salaries, part-time, term or temporary employment, low levels of unionization and few employee benefits such as pension coverage, dental insurance and extended health coverage. Such characteristics contribute to Sarawasti's (1996) finding that poverty rates for immigrant and visible minority women are much higher than poverty rates for the nation as a whole and to Detwilaire and Gusse's (1993) findings of blocked occupational mobility. A significant trend is also noted by several researchers (Labelle, 1990; Detwilaire and Gusse, 1993; Seward and McDade, 1988) whose work indicates that, in general, immigrant women tend to be found at one of two polar extremes in the labour market; either in the types of jobs noted above or in highly skilled/professional positions.

Some emerging work with respect to women as entrepreneurs has also noted that immigrant women are over-represented (5.3% compared to 3.3%) among entrepreneurs relative to native-born Canadian women (Helly and Ledoyen, 1992; Juteau et al., 1992).


**Obstacles, Barriers and Conditions of Paid Employment**

Immigrant and refugee women are confronted with significant barriers that block their access to employment opportunities and confound their opportunities for advancement. Studies conducted in both English and French have raised the notion that immigrant women deal with multiple layers of discrimination based on their gender and on their race or ethnicity. Basavarajappa and Verma's (1990) examination of occupational distributions of immigrant women by birthplace as compared to immigrant men, and Canadian born men and women suggests occasions of multiple negative status.

Identifying the source of such multiple layers of disadvantage or discrimination is a complex task. Often, immigrant women come to the paid labour force through the use of informal networks such as family and friends. While such networks provide them with an opportunity to partake in paid employment, the types of jobs to which they are admitted are often temporary, poorly paid, afford few health and safety protections, characterized by low levels of unionization, and rarely offer pensions and other benefits.

Labelle et al., (1987) examines the experiences of Colombian, Greek, Haitian and Portuguese women working in Montreal's informal sector and in various forms of work that are typically paid on a piece basis, involve dangerous and unhealthy working conditions, and afford none of the social protections available to regular salaried employees. These women are subjected to exhausting schedules, split shifts, expectations of overtime work, little personal autonomy and cannot look forward to any meaningful job mobility. They typically move from job to job -- perhaps within a certain sector -- and are pushed out and pulled into jobs as plants close, reorganize or shut down. Such findings are supported by Villefranche (1991) and by Bolaria (1990) who pays particular attention to the unequal power relations between management and immigrant workers -- the by-product of no union protection, inadequate labour legislation, sketchy health and safety protection, and no protection from physical and sexual harassment particularly for agricultural, garment and domestic workers. Often isolated in ethnic employment ghettos, immigrant women workers also experience labour relations that are characterized by tensions between ethnic groups, fueled by the push for performance and the arbitrary nature of wages. The solidarity of employees in one ethnic group may be used by unscrupulous employers against employees of another ethnic group in order to reap higher outputs and ensure greater compliance among workers.

Language facility and the failure to recognize foreign credentials and various dimensions of job experience and expertise acquired in a country of origin, present significant barriers to higher quality paid employment for immigrant women in Canada (Man, 1994, 1996; Ralston, 1991; Sorensen, 1993). Lamotte and El Haili (1991), for example demonstrate that the path of young professional Latin American women in the medical

field is problematic.  Because their credentials are often not fully recognized, they are often forced to enter the labour market at a lower salary and then take additional courses to "upgrade" themselves over time.  Several studies have emphasized that recognition of the particular obstacles facing immigrant women in Canada needs to inform the development and redesign of existing labour adjustment assistance programs (Seward, 1990; Tremblay and Seward, 1991).

It should also be recognized that immigrant women are not well targeted by government affirmative action programs since those programs apply only to areas of government jurisdiction from which these women are largely absent.

In "Les femmes des communautés culturelles" [Women of the cultural communities] (1989), Westmoreland-Traoré emphasizes the importance of action by these groups concerning pay equity and proposes that the analysis consider both racial and gender-based discrimination.


**Paid Domestic Workers**

Over the last decade the issue of immigrant women working as paid household "domestics" has received a fair amount of attention.  Women have been brought to Canada to perform such work throughout history.  Between 1870 and 1930, the state recruited white European women -- from England and Scotland -- to perform domestic and child care duties for single men and future mothers "homesteading" in Western Canada.  Cunningham (1995) lays bare the contradictory nature of the state's claim that such opportunities would improve the social position of immigrant women by affording them new opportunities.  In reality, the practice reproduced existing social relations and placed many of the immigrant women in vulnerable situations.

Research has also focused on the situations of domestic workers brought to Canada from the South, both historically and contemporarily (Calliste 1991; Harris, 1989; Mackenzie, 1988).  Some studies look at the lived experiences of domestic workers (Rans, 1988; Macklin, 1994; Neal and Neal, 1987; Cohen, 1987; Arat-Kroc, 1989; Boti and Smith, 1994; D'Amours, 1991) through the use of qualitative interview and historical data.  Such work reveals the conditions of domestic work:  long hours, little privacy, high vulnerability, separation from home and family, few worker protection benefits and a high degree of dependency on employers.  Despite these conditions, Cohen (1991) and Boti and Smith (1994) emphasize the ways in which domestic workers have formed alliances among themselves and sought to challenge prevailing conditions and redefine themselves and their work situations in ways that seek to establish greater autonomy. This movement came about as a result of alliances among women brought to Canada as part of the Live-in Caregiver Program, which has been criticized for the way in which it imposes restrictions on the lives of women who come to Canada as live-in domestics and nannies (Boti and Smith, 1994).  Over time, groups representing domestic workers have also become involved in women's organizations.  The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), for example, passed a resolution in 1993 demanding the

freedom for domestic workers to choose their place of residence and the opportunity for them to be granted admission to Canada as permanent residents.

As new trading patterns and the impact of large scale economic restructuring came to be felt in Canada, Boyd (1992;1996) undertook to analyze the specific impact of such transformations on immigrant women workers. The increasingly interconnected global economy and the search for cheaper labour will continue to increase labour flows and restructure the labour process over time. Such trends have resulted in a growth in non-union work, an increase in part-time employment, the practices of more sub-contracting and piece work, and have resulted in a higher level of "de-skilling". Boyd's data show that recency of arrival and the tendency to be located in low-paying and low-skilled jobs places immigrant women workers in particularly vulnerable positions. These trends suggest the need for effective training and labour market adjustment policies, particularly in light of NAFTA (Boyd, 1996).


## *Gaps in Research*

An initial assessment of the literature suggests that research that adopting a framework that looks at the specific ways in which gender, race and class oppression intersect in the economic lives of immigrant and refugee women is important. Research that uses both qualitative and quantitative data is useful in that it links larger macro trends with the day-to-day experiences of individual women. This approach facilitates the transition from empirical research into policy development.

Historical work exposes the ways in which state immigration policies have reproduced both sexist and racist ideologies over time (Mackenzie, 1988; Silvera, 1993; Boyd, 1991; Calliste, 1994). Work that identifies the continuity or disruption of such trends may have important policy consequences and could be useful if pursued.

Because much of the research in the economic domain has focused on the world of paid employment, we know relatively little about the economic lives of refugee women who are seldom found in the "traditional" paid labour force. Their participation in more unstable or underground work makes research more difficult but nevertheless important.

Despite the fact that immigrant and refugee women have made important historical contributions to the larger Canadian economy, relatively little work has, thus far, been undertaken to document the social historical importance and the scope of their labour in building the country.

A key source of data for understanding the economic lives of immigrant and refugee women is the Canadian Census and it will be important to ensure that attention is directed to both 1991 and 1996 Census data, paying more attention to the professional and white collar categories in order to gain a better understanding of the location and experiences of immigrant and refugee women in these occupational settings.

As entrepreneurship becomes a more frequent employment option for both men and women, it will be important to monitor this trend among immigrant and refugee women. What kinds of services and products are they involved in? What is the source of their start-up capital? What are their rates of success/failure compared to other male and female entrepreneurs? To what extent are they accessing existing support funds/programs for small businesses in Canada and what changes would make existing programs more accessible to them?

**Educational Domain**

Areas of research with respect to the educational domain of immigrants and refugees have included education as an agent of socialization; levels of achievement; and access and opportunities for further training. However, research in those areas that focuses specifically on immigrant and/or refugee women has not been extensive.

Much of the work has focused on "language learning." There is no question that facility with language has a significant impact on the adaptation of immigrant and refugee women. Such impacts range from the ability to access simple instructions to the ability to engage in their children's education. In this domain, one of the consistent concerns has been the problem of accessibility to language training for immigrant women not in the paid labour force or for those working in the "informal economy." Over the years, Boyd (1990; 1991; 1992) and others (Baril, 1992; Burnaby, 1989; Estable and Meyer, 1989) have consistently critiqued the shortcomings of Canada's language policy for newly arrived immigrant and refugee women. While recent changes to federal policy have made for some improvement, problems still remain. The "new program" does not provide for training allowances and is aimed at language instruction for the labour market and for newcomers generally (Boyd, 1992).

The specific instructional programs are, in large part, limited to newly arrived immigrants and government-assisted refugees. Refugee claimants, those who have been in Canada for more than a year, and Canadian citizens are not eligible. All women previously ineligible because they did not require one of Canada's official languages in their work have no recourse to federal training even if the requirements of their work have changed.

Frideres' (1989) study of the change in language skills of Spanish-speaking women and Vietnamese-speaking men found that some people who had taken second language training had experienced very little improvement in even the most rudimentary of language skills. As such, his work recommends that language training be rolled into settlement services, rather than treated as an academic exercise or part of vocational pursuits.

The lack of language training further enhances social stratification among immigrant women and severely hampers their ability to integrate fully into Canadian society (Peirce, 1994). It has also been argued that it is important for facilitators and participants in language training programs to be cognizant of the importance of "anti-racism" as part of

the curriculum, and to be aware of the links between racism and sexism (Moreno and Persad Vashti, 1990; Harper et al., 1996).

## *Gaps in Research*

There is obvious room for research in the context of education.  As the new language policy becomes fully implemented, it will be important to monitor its component parts and assess the extent to which it speaks to the criticisms and shortcomings of previous language training.

There is a need to understand how various processes of exclusion operate and structure outcomes such as job locations of foreign-born women who do not speak either of the official languages of Canada.  In Quebec, special attention must be given to the differential impact of speaking French or English or both languages as a second language.  Some studies serve this purpose but do not take gender into account.

Women in Canada have made significant inroads in increasing their educational levels. More and more women are attending university and other post-secondary educational settings, and women are graduating in unprecedented numbers.  However, there has been little attempt to assess the extent to which children of immigrant and refugee families face specific barriers in access to post-secondary educational opportunities.  As the structure and nature of the Canada Student Loans Program transforms in the years to come, it will be important to monitor its differential impacts on these individuals.

Qualitative studies that examine the impact of racism and other forms of discrimination on students of immigrant and refugee families in educational settings would provide some insight into the kinds of challenges they face, and may be useful in developing strategies to confront racism and educate both the public and the educators.

## Social Domain

For the most part, work focusing on the social domain has tended to concentrate on a range of issues linked to the nature and quality of family life for immigrant and refugee women.  Taking a very broad view, this research has examined such things as care of children and the elderly, the impact of immigration on marital relationships, support networks in the nuclear and extended family, and the issue of violence.  In addition, researchers have been interested in the larger issue of community and in the ways in which the experience of immigration has an impact on social integration for immigrant and refugee women.

## Family Life

Family life presents challenges for most people.  Immigration, and the stresses attached to changing location, being surrounded by new and different cultural patterns, being separated from existing supports and, often, family members adds an additional dimension to family life.  Researchers have demonstrated that, in terms of family life, there are both benefits and costs associated with such fundamental change.

There is little question that immigration alters the relationship between couples.  Often, immigrant women come to Canada "sponsored" by their husbands.  Although their residency status is permanent once they arrive, and although this status gives them the right to seek paid employment, they remain subject to the conditions of the sponsorship agreement for 10 years; this enhances women's vulnerability.  Researchers have indicated that some women suffer dramatic consequences within their marital relationship as a result of their sponsored status.  In some instances, husbands use this status to bully, control and dominate their partners physically, emotionally and financially.  This realization has given rise to a number of research studies on the issue of violence against women in immigrant and refugee household and family relationships (MacLeod and Shin, 1990,1993; Guberman and Hum 1994).  However, there is also a recognition among researchers that not enough work on the specific nature and consequences of violence in immigrant family relationships has been undertaken thus far.

Such research has points out that cultural differences may inhibit immigrant and refugee women from seeking shelter and support in transition houses.  If they do seek such support, the extent to which services are sensitive to the needs and concerns of this group of women and their children is also called into question (Boyd, 1987).  Language barriers are of particular importance in this regard.  Research also indicates that cultural peer pressure and the shame that may be perceived to befall a community and a family in instances of violence, keep many immigrant and refugee women silent (MacLeod and Shin, 1993).  Moreover, women are often not familiar with their legal rights and are subject to threats and manipulation by their partners if they cannot access legal and immigration information services that can help them with their concerns (National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women, 1993).

A number of researchers have looked at related questions around equity, decision making and gender socialization in immigrant and refugee families.  They point to the importance of religion and religious ideology and the ways in which these beliefs may reflect on the power and decision-making practices in families.  Dhruvarajan (1988, 1992, 1996) examines marital power, religious ideology and gender socialization among first-generation Asian-Indian immigrants.  She stresses the contrasting patterns of gender socialization and the heavy pressures on female children of immigrant parents.  Gill (1995) suggests that migration from one culture to another and specifically from the Punjab to western countries, can result in "damaged" male self-esteem lead to more authoritarian patterns of behaviour, and a diminished sense of family cohesion and solidarity.  This, of course, has implications for the nature of family life.  It should also be noted that research reports instances of an increase in the sharing of decision-making powers after migration for some working-class immigrant couples (Haddad and Lam, 1994).

**Community and Social Integration**

Several researchers note the potential for social isolation in the immigrant Canadian experience. The networks that immigrant and refugee women have left behind in their country of origin, like the networks of many women, provided assistance and support in domestic labour, child bearing and rearing and other forms of community activity. Researchers indicate that in some cases these networks also played an important role in controlling the behaviour of their male partners. Without these networks, the possibility of social isolation, and isolation and loneliness within the household, is intensified (Labelle et al., 1987; Duval, 1991; Lamotte, 1991). Immigrant women may also find themselves isolated, in terms of community contact and support, and leisure activities, by factors such as language barriers and the absence of affordable and good quality child care (Rublee and Shaw, 1993). On the other hand, research also indicates that some women enjoy greater freedom in the absence of their networks, as a result of their immigration, by being able to divorce more easily and having greater reproductive control (Duval, 1991).

Calliste's (1996) work on Black families in Canada is interesting for citing "racial socialization" practices used by many Black families to teach their children to "develop positive self-concepts and a racial identity" in a racist society. Linked to the larger issue of social and community integration, her work points to strategies that are used to confront dominant messages portrayed and reinforced in the media and in the larger society.

Some work has been directed at the experiences of older immigrant women in Canada. Boyd's (1989, 1991) work underscores the potential for poverty among this group of women as they age. Over one quarter of Canada's population, 65 years of age and older, are immigrants. However, their incomes are often lower than those of other Canadians and this has a direct impact on their pension incomes after they cease working. Immigrant women who have spent less time in the labour force, often in jobs which pay low wages and perhaps with no pension coverage whatsoever, will have low pension incomes in their later years (Meintel and Peressini, 1993). As the population ages, Boyd (1991) argues that policy makers will need to be aware of such trends.

*Gaps in Research*

There is no question that additional work needs to be directed to the particular experiences and issues that confront immigrant and refugee women as they age. Such work would need to address both the economic dimensions of aging as an immigrant woman in Canada (e.g., as in the area of pensions) and the issue of access to services within the community. We also know that elder abuse is a problem that continues to require more research and policy development. As such work is undertaken, it will be

essential to explore the specific issues that compound the problem for elderly immigrant and refugee women.

Researchers also indicate that not enough is known about the ways in which immigrant and refugee women participate in community life in order to influence decision making and break down ethnic barriers for themselves and their children. How, for instance, do they confront the challenge of racism in their social and work lives, and do they bring such practices into their home lives and their parenting patterns?


**Citizenship and Culture Domain**

The literature on citizenship and culture falls into two broad categories: history and multiculturalism, and representation and discrimination. A fairly broad array of work chronicling the history of immigrant women in Canada also exists (Jin, 1992; Conway, 1992; Lacouceur and Spence, 1995; Mendoza, 1990; Moussa, 1993). Certainly, the importance of such social histories is not to be underestimated: they often provide important avenues for further research and help to enrich public understanding of contemporary issues.

Along with social histories, the mass media also provide insights into the situation of immigrant and refugee women. However, there is, as yet, little extant research on the "media images" of women who are newcomers to Canada.

In their study of attitudes toward multiculturalism, Moghaddam and Taylor (1987) found that women in their study had a rather ambivalent attitude toward "heritage cultural maintenance" in general. The authors concluded that for, the 104 Indo-Canadian women surveyed, the retention of heritage culture was influenced more by perceptions of discrimination and isolation than by their support for multiculturalism.

In their research, Adelman and Enguidanos (1995) raise questions concerning the links between racism, sexism and violence against women. Fear of violence may be compounded when one is defined as a visible minority. It has been suggested that during times of social and political tension, immigrant and refugee women may become more likely targets of violence and discrimination. This is one area in which more research needs to be done before firm conclusions can be drawn.

*Gaps in Research*

There is considerable scope for additional work in the culture and citizenship domain. For example, we know very little about the role of the media in filtering Canadian culture to immigrant and refugee women. At the same time, little work has been undertaken on the images of immigrant and refugee women in the media and the ways in which those images may reproduce existing patterns of discrimination and sexism. How, for example, are immigrant and refugee women able to access the media and influence dominant representations of themselves and their culture? In this regard, what role is played by

community network channels and what is their level of effectiveness? How might changes in technology, particularly increased access to the Internet be used most effectively by immigrant and refugee women?

There is also some potential for research to be undertaken on the role of the federal state in the field of citizenship promotion and citizenship education. What specific programs are sponsored by the state, and to what extent do women influence or have input into their development? Do existing citizenship education and promotion consider the issue of gender and gender relations in Canadian society? How might existing programs be "rewritten" to reflect feminist work on citizenship rights and responsibilities and on human rights in general? How might the work of social historians and their understandings of the intersection of class, race and gender be incorporated into a feminist framework for citizenship?

## Public Policy and Services Domain

Within this rather broad category, work of the last 10 years can be grouped under immigration and refugee policy, community activism, and health and service delivery.

## Immigration and Refugee Policy

As was indicated in the discussion of the economic domain, immigration and refugee policy has far-reaching implications for women attempting to make Canada their new home. As changes to Canada's immigration policy continue to evolve, it will be important to assess their specific impact on women. Of late, the introduction of the Right of Landing Fee for new immigrants and the tightening of definitions of "family" are important changes that have particular consequences for women.

The literature on immigration/refugee policy makes a clear link between the criteria used in selection and gender-specific outcomes. Abu-Laban (1995) examines past and contemporary federal immigration policies and argues that specific conceptions of race, gender and class have shaped and continue to shape immigration policy and that such practices tend to reflect and reproduce existing inequalities in Canadian society. This argument is supported by Fincher et al. (1994) who undertook a comparative examination of immigration policy in Canada and Australia, assessing its implications for women. They argue that specific assumptions about "masculinity" and "femininity" permeate the policies of both countries. Gender biases assume a superiority of male labour and male labour force skills, and this results in more limited opportunities for immigrant and refugee women. Such findings, germane to Canada, are supported by Boyd (1987;1990;1991) and Labelle (1990).

Davidson (1994) points to the need for gender sensitivity with respect to the definition of "refugee" and an understanding of what might constitute persecution. In 1993, Canada became the first country to distribute guidelines that took into account the specific ways

in which women's experience of persecution might be different from that of men's and the importance of recognizing those differences in the refugee determination process. Gordon and Boyd (1994) emphasize that, even in the presence of such guidelines, the refugee process still needs to be more attentive to women. Moreover, they underline the need for the collection of better data in this regard.

## Community Activism

The literature suggests that women's groups have been active in attempting to address the support and settlement needs of immigrant and refugee women and to challenge unfair practices. Estable and Meyer (1989) suggest that women's activism has been more than simply helping women to cope with new surroundings; it has been much more proactive and aimed at eliminating inequality and inequities in the settlement process.

Work in this area has also addressed the question of inclusivity and representation of difference and diversity in various women's organizations. Tobo-Gillespie et al. (1996) identify three factors that seem to characterize organizations that are working to address these issues. These include the presence of strong, influential group leaders from the "dominant" group who are committed to the importance of respecting diversity; accessible funding and a policy that promotes equity and inclusivity; and a concern with appearing sensitive to, and progressive on, these issues.

## Health and Services Delivery

With respect to specific health topics, a number of articles have pointed out that immigrant and refugee women are subject to depression and that health care givers in the mental health field are often not sensitive to the specific experiences of these women that contribute to depression and anxiety. Educating and sensitizing workers in this field has been identified as an important strategy in making mental health services more accessible and more appropriate for immigrant and refugee women (Franks and Faux, 1990; Moghaddam et al., 1990; Szekely and Skodra, 1991).

In a study of Latin American refugee women in Canada which examined the consequences of torture, Allodi and Stiasny (1990) found that, compared to their male counterparts, the torture of women was more often sexual and the after-effects of such abuses were related to sexual adjustment and repression of experiences. Such findings reflect the need for specific expertise in dealing with the traumas of these women.

Cultural sensitivity in the delivery of services is an important issue for immigrant and refugee women. In a series of studies focused on sexual beliefs and health practices among Cambodian refugee women in western Canada, Kulig (1988, 1990, 1994) found, for example, that women who had received a tubal ligation since their arrival in Canada were very poorly informed about the procedure and its implications. She suggests that there is a significant need to be able to deliver health information in a culturally sensitive

manner and this process may entail bringing community "elders" in various population groups into the process of developing such practices and linking them with medical practitioners.

Along similar lines, Matuk (1996) argues that the greater national, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity of the more recent immigrant and refugee women population increases their disease risk. Cultural practices and beliefs of these women are more likely to emphasize curative rather than preventive approaches to medicine and health. As such, these women are less likely to access regular screening tests such as Pap tests, cholesterol tests and mammograms, increasing their risk of mortality and morbidity.

*Gaps in Research*

Although some studies have examined issues linked to the health of immigrant women, there is ample space for more research that looks at the specific health problems suffered by immigrant and refugee women. Without question, it will be important to specify the differences by age and by region as there has been little attempt to distinguish between the experiences of urban and rural women in this population.

Some work has been directed at the perceptions of social workers with respect to their encounters with immigrant and refugee women (Laaroussi Vatz et al., 1996). However, the importance of examining perceptions of social service professionals and the impact of these perceptions on the experiences of immigrant and refugee women is important. Since service professionals in health, employment, child care and social services are often key to the ways in which immigrant and refugee women integrate into Canadian society and since the decisions and actions of these professionals may have fundamental implications for newly arrived women, research in this area may be significant for future policy and program development.

As movement occurs in the field of new reproductive technologies, it will be crucial to monitor the ways in which immigrant women use these services. Is their access to such services equitable, should they choose to use them? Or, alternatively, are immigrant women being "forced" to avail themselves of sex selection clinics, particularly in cultures where the birth of a male is so highly valued? Thobani (1990, 1992) has begun work in this area but as technology and legislation reshape the field, its affects on immigrant and refugee women will bear watching. These and other questions will become more important as services and programs become increasingly decentralized.

Although, as we have seen, some attempts have been made to analyze the ways in which women's organizations have responded to issues of diversity and inclusivity, little attempt has been made to assess the extent to which immigrant and refugee women and their concerns have been drawn into the "formal" political process and arena. How involved are these women in the political process? At what levels -- federal, provincial/territorial, municipal -- is their participation most apparent? What factors contribute to their active involvement in politics? How do formal political parties

encourage the participation of immigrant and refugee women?  What kinds of mechanisms would make their participation more likely?


**Physical Infrastructure Domain**

Literature in this area is very sparse and tends to focus on particular ethnic groups such as Caribbean immigrants or Japanese-Canadians.  Such studies also tend to concentrate on the large metropolitan areas, namely, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.  Studies addressing the utilization of public and private services, housing patterns, and recreational and leisure activities accessed by immigrant women are equally rare.  Sometimes, the physical infrastructure domain is touched on in studies of labour market research, public policy, health care services and education.

The literature which exists (Miedema and Nason-Clark, 1989) suggests that the lack of language skills is a strong barrier preventing foreign born women from accessing many vital community services.  As well, even when fluent in English, many immigrant women still find themselves discriminated against by virtue of their origin.  Similarly, Rublee and Shaw (1991), point to English language deficiency as a strong barrier to the utilization of relevant services, by Latin American women, in Halifax.  Full community participation by these women was also significantly hampered by the lack of adequate day care and limited support within their own communities.

Of particular concern are those women who are low wage earners and subject to domestic violence.  Lack of income and the shortage of shelters make it very difficult, if not impossible, for these women to escape abusive situations (Novac, 1996).

With regard to research done in French, there are virtually no studies on housing access for immigrant women.  The Conseil du statut de la femme (1991) in Quebec has done some limited work in the area and found immigrant women to be subject to the racial prejudices of landlords, poor economic conditions and the lack of child care facilities.

Even when informed about their housing-related rights, immigrant women prefer to remain silent because of their fears of reprisal by landlords.  Indeed, when it comes to housing, "visible" minority women born in Canada face the same obstacles as recently arrived immigrants (Novac, 1996).


*Gaps in Research*

A major gap in the literature relates to the lack of discussion on home ownership and housing patterns among immigrant and refugee women.  Existing work focuses exclusively on the experience of males.  One exception is an article by Moghaddam et al. (1989).  While some may discuss patterns of home ownership and the effects of residential segregation among immigrant populations, they generally fail to deal with the question of how these factors affect immigrant and refugee women.

In recent years, activists in the field of housing have expressed significant concerns over the diminishing role of the federal government in the area of social housing. As the provinces move increasingly to devolve this area to municipalities and as availability of funding decreases, it will be important to assess the impact of these moves on the female immigrant and refugee population. There may be some room for international comparative research in this regard and for the development of potential model pilot projects to ensure immigrant and refugee women have adequate and appropriate access to housing and other community services.

## Methodological Issues

In recent years, a greater amount of attention has been directed to the issues of feminist methodologies in both the natural and the social sciences. This work has emphasized that gender must be central to both research and analysis. Such a proposition entails asking different questions as well as asking the same kinds of questions in a different way. With respect to immigrant and refugee women, a few publications have suggested important issues that might contribute to methodological advances.

*Learning from Diversity: An Information Tool on, by and for Racial Minority Women in Canada* (Martin, 1992) is a compilation of community-based reports and studies from researchers in several major cities across the country. It provides an interesting inventory of studies that are often hard to locate and therefore remain relatively unknown and underutilized.

Burt and Code's (1995) edited collection grapples with how a feminist-informed consciousness and a commitment to feminist activism shape research methods and ethics of contemporary social scientists working on issues of importance to immigrant and refugee women. In a similar vein, Stanfield and Dennis' (1993) work encourages critical reflection on why researchers study the ways they do and how the production of knowledge can be ideologically determined and culturally biased. Ristock and Pennell (1996) underscore the importance of making connections between researchers and those people who become the "subjects" of research. Emphasizing the ways in which research can be empowering for women and for all those involved in the research process, they provide practical guidelines and cautionary observations to ensure that research is respectful, contributory and empowering.

## Conclusion

As we have seen, there is a significant body of work that has been undertaken by researchers, academics, government and community groups on the lives and specific issues that are relevant for immigrant and refugee women in Canada. Despite this fact, this literature review has also demonstrated that there are some important gaps in

knowledge that need to be addressed, particularly as they relate to policy development in this area.

There is no question that some of these gaps are the reflection of real constraints that researchers in all fields confront when they attempt to address these issues. Perhaps one of the most obvious gaps is the virtual absence of research -- in almost all of the key domains that have been identified -- on refugee women in Canada. Refugee women come to Canada with a particular set of experiences that may set them apart from other immigrant women, and it is important to gain a better understanding of their labour market experiences, educational needs and the various social and emotional barriers that they need to overcome in order to be fully integrated into Canadian society. Reflecting their particular concerns into the policy process will go some distance in this regard.

Researchers have also indicated that attention needs to be paid to the "processes of exclusion" that texture the lives of immigrant and refugee women. It is not enough to know in a statistical form, that they are excluded from certain labour market positions or that they are concentrated in certain low wage sectors. It is important to understand the ways in which this exclusion is manifested in their families, their communities, the educational system and the labour market, and the ways in which it might be supported or reinforced in government policy. This information will be gathered through a more qualitative approach to research including interviews, life histories, anthropological work in communities and questionnaires, etc. Such approaches add an important dimension to the kinds of information that can be gleaned from census and other quantitative research. We need to understand how culture, family relationships, ideology, religious and social customs and practices, racism, etc. combine with objective labour market, educational and economic factors to create a particular mix of conditions for immigrant and refugee women. Parallel with this is the need for researchers to study the ways in which immigrant and refugee women are actively engaged in addressing these challenges in their lives.

Part of this kind of approach also requires that greater attention be paid to research that examines the relationship between immigrant and refugee women and their male counterparts. It is critical to develop a perspective that focuses on the impact of sex-gender relations (referred to in French as les rapports sociaux de sexes). Rather than, or in addition to, comparing immigrant and refugee women to Canadian-born women, it is also important to compare men and women within the same categories. This would allow for an understanding of the relations which seem to be most responsible for differences observed in, for example, labour force participation and income.

Emphasizing gender relations also turns our attention to the relationship between paid and unpaid labour. Such a stance breaks down the artificial barriers between the "public" world of work and the "private" world of home and gives recognition to the immense economic contribution of women's unpaid work. In the long run, it will also shed light on the articulation of social relations that constitute gender, race and class in contemporary society.

Gender-sensitive research of this kind deconstructs the category of the "universal" immigrant or refugee.  Further, studies which are culturally sensitive should avoid using culture as an independent variable -- as something that is static and unchanging from which behaviour automatically flows.

Finally, research should also recognize the existence of gender inequalities in Canada and examine how migration alters and affects the multiple forms of sex/gender relations in this country.