

Chinese in the Maple Leaf: Renegotiating Chinese Canadian Identity Using New Media

Simon James Yee

Abstract

Following the British cultural theorist Stuart Hall's insistence that mass media is an important site from which to contest one's "politics of representation," this essay surveys and analyzes recent attempts by multi-generational Chinese Canadians — Canadians of Chinese descent who were born in this country and raised in Canadian society from a young age — to use the contemporary tools of new media and the Internet to contest dominant stereotypical ethnic representations and construct strong hybridized cultural identities for themselves. Chinese Canadians' efforts to forge a place of belonging in Canada have been historically difficult and complex. Mainstream societal influences, media depictions, and cultural representations have caused additional challenges for multi-generational Chinese Canadians wishing to integrate successfully into Canada, hampering development of a strong and unique bicultural identity. New media can create an important space for the expression of new ethnic identity in all its diversity. While new media can be employed to perpetuate dominant stereotypical discourses and essentialist identities, it also provides critical ways to resist, challenge, and undermine these discourses.

Keywords: *Chinese Canadian, constructed identities, online activism, Stuart Hall, ethnic alternative media.*

Identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.

- Stuart Hall, *Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation*

Introduction

Writing as a Canadian of Chinese descent, I place questions regarding the future of racial identity of the Chinese diaspora in Canada at the forefront of my cultural studies research. From the early racism exemplified by cheap Chinese labour and the Canadian Head and Exclusion Taxes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the subtler racial overtones in the latest Vancouver foreign investor real estate and Richmond store signage debates of the early 21st century (Clark, 2017; Lloyd, 2015), Chinese Canadians' efforts to forge a place of belonging in Canada have been difficult and complex (X. Li, 2007, p. 11; Stevenson, 2014, p. 91).

Of particular interest to me have been the struggles of multi-generational Chinese Canadians: Canadians of Chinese descent who were born in this country and raised in Canadian society from a young age. While multi-generational, immigrant, and naturalized Chinese Canadians all face the usual problems of racial and ethnic discrimination, multi-generational Chinese Canadians often find themselves in the additional predicament of either choosing to assimilate or downplay their heritage in order to fit in to mainstream Canadian society, or choosing to resist assimilation and follow fixed traditional values and identities laid out by previous generations (Lalonde & Giguère, 2008, p. 60). Traditional mainstream mass media often reinforces and perpetuates this divide, further creating bicultural conflict in Chinese Canadians' lives. As Bernie Dun (2003), a Chinese Canadian interviewed on this subject, observes:

The media portrayal of China makes it very difficult for people of Chinese descent anywhere in the world to have any positive views about China. If I did not see through a lot of the media messages, I definitely would not be so positive about being Chinese. (p. 152)

However, new media allows multi-generational Chinese Canadians, along with many other diasporic ethnic groups throughout the Western world,¹ to have their voices and concerns heard. Computer-mediated new media communication provides a space for bicultural articulation and community building, and creates a forum for the expression of unique problems and bicultural conflicts that arise between the intersections of Canadian and Chinese cultures. Although new media can be utilized to perpetuate dominant stereotypical ethnic identity representations and its

effectiveness at encouraging socio-political change and constructing authentic identities is debatable, multi-generational Chinese Canadians' use of new media as a space to construct and express their distinct identities enables the dissemination of diverse cultural experiences and subject positions, encourages social interaction, and motivates political activism between their peers and other Canadians.

Historical Representation

Before examining contemporary Chinese Canadian struggles, let's briefly review how Chinese Canadians have been historically marginalized and "othered" by the dominant representations and stereotypes constructed by mainstream mass media and other popular cultural discourses in Canadian society. From the arrival of the Chinese in the 1870s to help build the Canadian Pacific Railway to the years following the Second World War in the 1940s and 1950s, Chinese people in Canada have been treated as foreigners or members of an "inferior race," "winding through a labyrinth of discriminatory immigration legislation, head taxes, racist riots, and shattered dreams" (X. Li, 2007, pp. 26-27). Employers saw them as cheap labour, doing "what white women cannot do, and what white men will not do" (P. Li, 1998, p. 29). Newspapers tended to focus on "crimes committed by Chinese and their alleged cultural inferiority or stupidity [and] loathsome" habits (p. 28).

Since the 1960s, as official government discrimination and legal barriers began to be removed, open and overt racism gave way to a subtler kind (P. Li, 1998, p. 142). While welcomed as hard workers and savvy investors who could serve economically, Chinese Canadians became unwanted when "perceived as threats to the normalized sociocultural order, [taking] away positions and resources from 'rightful' Canadians" (Coloma, 2013, p. 588). More recently, this subtler kind of racism has led to mainstream Canadian society commonly associating negative and stereotypical perceptions from China with Chinese Canadians (Millington, Vertinsky, Boyle, & Wilson, 2008, pp. 198, 202). For instance, Chinese human rights and animal welfare abuses are expressed through Sinophobic attacks and racist diatribes directed at Chinese Canadians, despite the fact that many ethnic Chinese Canadians lead protests against such abuses (Yeung, 2013).

Furthermore, contemporary mass media continues to “racialize” or perpetuate negative connotations and characterizations of Chinese Canadians, creating a perpetual “sense of foreignness” mentality that conceives Chinese Canadians as being outside mainstream Canada (Fernando, 2006, p. 6).² Perhaps the most influential mass media have been Hollywood television and cinematic film, which stereotype, malign, underrepresent, vilify, ridicule, or whitewash characters of Chinese descent (Kulture Media, 2017; Levin, 2017),³ greatly influencing how they are portrayed and identified (X. Li, 2007, p. 54). While there have been recent positive and genuine attempts to increase and improve representation, much work still needs to be done (Hess, 2016).

Sociological Background

In private households, many first-generation Chinese Canadian parents have attempted to enforce cultural retention on their Canadian-born children (W. Ng, 1999, pp. 88-90), criticizing them harshly if they did not follow traditional values and ideals of Chinese culture.⁴ Such interpersonal conflicts between parent and child can arise over choosing a potential mate, speaking Chinese language fluently and appropriately, and following the wishes of the parents regarding life direction and goals (Lalonde & Giguère, 2008, pp. 58-59).⁵

Bicultural and intergenerational conflicts between Canadian and Chinese culture can manifest themselves in several ways, including feelings of exclusion (Millington et al., 2008, p. 197), self-hatred (X. Li, 2007, p. 52), shame (p. 205), and a fear of or desire for assimilation (Lowe, 1991/2004, p. 1039). For instance, many multi-generational Chinese Canadian women feel the need to adopt the dominant Euro-Canadian culture’s standards of beauty in order to feel better about themselves, since their Chinese features remind them of their differences (X. Li, 2007, p. 52). Filmmaker Ann Shin’s (2000) National Film Board of Canada documentary *Western Eyes* examines this phenomenon, looking at racist discrimination experienced by Canadian women of Chinese descent. The women describe experiences where their cultures were devalued by peers or deemed unusual or abnormal by print magazines. Their decisions to undergo double eyelid surgery

in order to make their “Asian-looking” eyes wider and more “Western-looking” are based on these feelings of exclusion with no way to counter them, especially in predominantly white Canadian communities in the 1970s and 1980s. The women in the documentary knew that merely altering appearances would not make them “white,” but it nevertheless helped them cope and feel better about themselves in some small way.

These societal influences, media depictions, and cultural representations cause unique challenges among multi-generational Chinese Canadians. Sociologists Richard Lalonde and Benjamin Giguère (2008) argue that multi-generational Chinese Canadians are raised with cultural backgrounds that are “collectivistic and are often guided by clear and tight norms,” as opposed to Canada’s Western and individualistic culture, where norms are often less prescriptive (p. 59). These clashing cultural norms can cause weak identity formation (Hiller & Chow, 2005, p. 79); problematic interpersonal relationships, especially between interracial and interfaith couples and friends (Lalonde & Giguère, 2008, p. 60); and feelings of “personal discrimination and exclusion from the mainstream culture” (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009, p. 46).

New Ethnicities and the Chinese Subject

However, as the British cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1996) argues in his influential paper “New Ethnicities,” there is an opportunity to contest the “politics of representation” of people of colour (p. 446). In the same way, he argues that there is no “essential black subject” (p. 444), there is also no “essential Chinese subject.” Hall suggests ethnicity is not essentially fixed; it can be “constructed historically, culturally, politically” (p. 446). He argues we must recognize “the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities ... which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial categories” (p. 443). By doing this, he hopes we can achieve a decoupling of ethnicity “from its equivalence with nationalism, imperialism, racism and the state” (p. 447) in order to posit a “more diverse conception of ethnicity” (p. 447). Thus, Hall’s work conceives of a diverse conception of ethnicity which does not essentialize and homogenize the multi-generational Chinese Canadian subject, but instead recognizes the subject’s heterogeneity and cultural hybridity.

Chinese Canadian ethnic studies scholar Xiaoping Li (2007) agrees with Hall, arguing that “it is imperative Asian Canadians⁶ act as creative subjects, using words, images, music, dance, and theatrical performances to express themselves” in order to “deliver themselves from their mental imprisonment, reclaim their subjectivity, and restore their human dignity” (p. 14). The new media on the Internet is an example of a

“space for interaction” in which local identities are constructed out of resources which may not be at all local in their origin, but are nonetheless “authentic” ... [and] in which people in particular places make their identities out of things ... transformed, so as to function as cultural resources. (Morley, 1996, p. 330)

While Hall, in his work, focused on traditional film and cinema as a site for ethnic decoupling, today the tools of new media, such as online articles, blogging, video streaming, and social media, can provide additional space for multi-generational Chinese Canadians to express themselves. Ethnic identity formation via new media provides “wider access to the means of representation and the supporting social morphology of swift response to perceived social injustices” (Parker & Song, 2009, p. 599), which provides valuable opportunities to create strong, firm, and unique hybridized constructions of Chinese Canadian identity.

Thus, following media theorist David Morley’s (1996) suggestion to research ways communication technologies can “recreate and sustain [migrant communities’] senses of identity and community, across the geographical spaces of their dispersion and migration” (p. 330), let’s now turn to examine new media’s benefits and drawbacks with reference to the literary, visual, and political online activity of Chinese Canadians.

Articulating an Identity in the 21st Century

According to University of Alberta communications professor Marco Adria (2010), there are two major types of media activities: consumption and community (p. 170). Traditional media, like

print-only newspapers, television, and radio, are characterized by a one-way transmission of messages usually mediated by corporate and media elites where users merely search, retrieve, and consume information (p. 170). By contrast, new media enables two-way communications between the producers and consumers of knowledge, leading to a community of users connected by the user's (and content creator's) values, norms, and meanings (p. 171). Video streaming, blogs, social networks, and online newspapers available on computers and smartphones are examples of new media vehicles that make possible decentralized and interactive communication allowing for an interactive audience. Adria argues that global diasporic communities are making use of the Internet's media tools "in ways that are likely to change how national identity is developed and expressed" (p. 171).

One of the major uses of new media is to undermine and challenge the power and control traditional mass media has in determining or influencing the contents of a media product and its message (Fenton, 2007, pp. 11-12). In 2010, Maclean's magazine published an article originally titled, "Too Asian: Some frosh don't want to study at an Asian university," which was later retitled, "The enrollment controversy: Worries that efforts in the U.S. to limit enrollment of Asian students in top universities may migrate to Canada" (Findlay & Köhler, 2010). This article argued white Canadians were reluctant to attend the University of Toronto, the University of British Columbia, and other Canadian universities deemed to be "too Asian" (having high Asian student compositions), and that "there is a problem on campus caused by so many Asian students" (Yu, 2010). The article has since been criticized for being anti-Asian, xenophobic, and enacting irresponsible journalism (Coloma, 2013, p. 579).

Many Chinese Canadians expressed their criticisms of the Maclean's article. On alternative media sites, online forums, and their personal blogs, they exposed and analyzed the article's assumptions and biases and told their own personal stories about their struggles to find a place in Canadian society. Many argued that the article continually takes for granted that Canadians of Asian descent are not really Canadian, and posits "white Canadian" values as "true Canadian" values (Wong, 2012). For instance, Vivian Luk (2010), a writer for the news magazine *The Tyee*, commented that the article undermines ethnic Canadians' attempts to fit in to Canadian society simply because of

their appearance and background. Rabble.ca writer Cara Ng (2012) noted how the critical Western gaze saw values of white Canadians as neutral, while Asian Canadians' values were racialized. Thus, the backlash to "Too Asian?" by Chinese Canadian social media bloggers is an example of trying to contest "the marginality, the stereotypical quality and the fetishized nature of images" in order to change the "relations of representation" (Hall, 1996, p. 442)

Another major use of new media is to provide a space to explore new ways of articulating identity, providing the tools to enable learning through communication with others and reflection of the social environment (Kahn & Kellner, 2003, pp. 1-2) in hopes of changing "the politics of representation" (Hall, 1996, p. 442). Today, there are many digital venues Chinese Canadians can visit to learn and express themselves creatively. For example, Ricepaper Magazine, a formerly print and currently digital magazine, started in 1995 in order to cultivate the development of a writing culture among Canadians of Chinese and other Asian heritages (Lin, Cho, & Chu, 2015, pp. 7-8). They publish original literature (creative non-fiction, fiction, and poetry), providing readers with access to other diasporic life experiences as well as information on ongoing long-term projects and causes. In this way, the magazine enables formative contact between younger and older Chinese Canadians, in order to create healthy connections based on similar racialized life challenges and to pass on knowledge about values and struggles to the next generation. As Ricepaper writer Hiromi Goto (2014/2017) eloquently argues:

Social media has had an effect upon how writers think about representation.... Readers and fans now have the capacity in ways they've never had before, to effect change upon what kinds of stories will reach the public sphere.... Diverse readers are demanding stories that represent far more than white middle-class North America. We want and need narratives of diversity ... not only because they're in short supply, but more importantly, these inclusive tellings are a part of everyday reality for everyone. This is realistic representation. (paras. 11-12)

YouTube videos also help facilitate the exchange of stories and shared experiences by multi-generational Chinese Canadians. In their videos, they describe their experiences of racism, discrimination, and segregation. Other themes mentioned include the history of Chinatowns (So,

2014, 2015), expectations of speaking Chinese languages (rowriness, 2007), finding love, and belonging in Canadian society (Yuan, 2013). The existence and accessibility of these literatures, videos, blogs, and other media content allow viewers to proactively engage with topics they're interested in, and the ability to interact through comments allows for a mutual learning process between users (Kahn & Kellner, 2003, p. 13).

Finally, new media provides a forum and gathering space to organize offline social events (Parker & Song, 2009, p. 597) and increase democratic participation in civic issues (Adria, 2010, p. 173; Kahn & Kellner, 2003, p. 6). In Vancouver, emerging organizational groups use new media sites to create exposure and visibility for their ethnic peers and to bring this connection offline. Alden Habacon, University of British Columbia Director of Intercultural Understanding Strategy Development and founder of the online Schema Magazine for Chinese and other Asian-born Canadians, believed as recently as ten years ago that "his peers didn't fit into any ethnic group—they were too ethnic to be in mainstream media, yet not ethnic enough to be in the ethnic media" (Hwang, 2014, para. 10). Habacon uses Schema to organize meetings in order to expand the ethnic cliques and create connections between ethnic groups.

Although new media on the Internet provides these outlets of expression and opportunities to challenge dominant narratives, there are potential obstacles to new media's effectiveness and usefulness in creating space and strong identities for Chinese Canadians. As philosophers Richard Kahn and Douglas Kellner (2003) observe, "The Internet is a contested terrain used by Left, Right, and Center of both dominant cultures and subcultures to promote their own agendas and interests" (p. 14). For instance, new media can be used to continue to perpetuate racism and white-centeredness. According to communications professor Christopher Brown (2009), various segregated online communities of white supremacists, ethnic nationalists, and religious fundamentalists can inhibit and hinder dialogue between different communities as well as spread subversive messages that "reinforce racism, xenophobia, and heterosexualism" (p. 190). Non-white physical features can be vilified and associated with criminality through the proliferation of edited online images (p. 200). Finally, these messages usually rely on the persistence of existing stereotypical discourses of racism in society, bringing these racial discourses online (pp. 203-204).

As much as the Internet is an amazing resource and tool to create ethical spaces allowing the expressions of new identities and ideas, it is also a space that permits “forms of communication that privilege certain sets of ideas and neglect others” (Fenton, 2007, p. 25). Nevertheless, new media provides the opportunity to level the playing field, as it were, in order to combat the encroachment of dominant and racist discourses online by exposing and drawing attention to them. For every message about “Black savagery” or “too many Asians in universities,” there are dozens, if not hundreds, of articles undermining and refuting such messages, allowing marginalized voices to be heard, and revealing “a society of difference both in terms of identity and interpretation” (p. 25). As Miami University education professor Roland Coloma (2013) notes, there were two positive effects of the “Too Asian?” controversy: “it produced local and national coalitions for anti-racist, Pan-Asian and cross-cultural organizing; and it generated much-needed critical discussions on race and racism, especially in relation to Asians in Canada” (p. 593).

Critics also question whether new media is effective in overturning dominant ideologies and constructing culturally hybrid identities. Media studies scholar Jan Teurlings (2010) argues that having a savvy, informed attitude towards media “neither empowers nor stimulates critical engagement with the political economy of the contemporary culture industry” (p. 368), leading to a critical apathy (e.g., a savvy viewer being well-informed about the issues but being driven away from political action). Perhaps the most serious criticism comes from sociologist Vince Marotta (2011) in his article reviewing the literature of research work attempting to apply Hall’s ideas to the computer-mediated communication realm. Marotta argues that Hall’s idea of new ethnicities has not yet worked on a descriptive level because it is difficult to escape imitative (mimic) forms of representation: our understanding of the world is based on depicting a world we already know (p. 550). In opposition to Hall, Marotta declares, “an essentialist black, Chinese or Muslim subject is still present, and this new essentialist subject is not only constituted by the dominant white Western and non-[Chinese] self, but through the Other’s own online representational practices” (p. 551).

On Marotta’s (2011) point, much depends on the individual and “lived experiences,” rather than a generalized assessment on new media users’ ability or inability to create new identities. While

there are many new media users who are satisfied with reinforcing imitative, “essentialist” forms of representation, such as an idea of “the perfect Chinese Canadian,” on various websites, bulletin boards, Facebook, Twitter, or other online forum groups, there are others who, with passion, “define [their life conditions] and respond to them, which ... is always a struggle between cultural modalities” (Hall, 1980, p. 63). For them, there are no easy answers, no cookie-cutter essentialist form to mimic, just the struggle to make sense of one’s own experience and construct an authentic identity from it. As Schema Magazine writer Beth Hong (2010) notes, arguing against replacing one essentialist conception (“Maclean’s Too Asian”) with another (“Damn proud of being Asian”): “instead of rallying all Asians around a false flag of ethnic solidarity, I would prefer to see, read, and hear more voices about what being Asian in Canada actually means.”

For instance, take Vancouver-based social activist Claudia Li, a winner of several leadership and community service awards, who was interviewed for *The Source* newspaper in 2014 (Yee, 2014). She learned about the shark fin soup controversy in 2009 after viewing online documentaries about shark-finning practices. She co-founded Shark Truth and the Hua Foundation—organizations dedicated to discouraging shark fin soup consumption and promoting sustainable and organic food in Asian diets. As opposed to criticizing this traditional cultural practice as a problem with Chinese culture in general, she uses new media tools not only to discourage shark fin soup consumption, but to actively change how multi-generational Chinese Canadians view and respond to this practice. She argues that many were conflicted about choosing between “‘being an environmentalist’ (which is often seen as a ‘Western’ value) and honouring their traditional heritage (which seemed archaic to many diasporic and Canadian-born youth)” (Genius Generations, 2017, paras. 2-3). What Li does is to embed popular Chinese proverbs into her discussions with Chinese media to get older generations to understand her goals, while using social media to “create online networks for youth to continue to discuss environmental conservation within a culturally relevant context” (Ashoka Canada, 2017, sec. 4, para. 6). In so doing, Li wants to empower fellow Chinese Canadians to embrace both sets of values, rather than being forced to choose between them. Li’s own personal story won’t apply to every other Chinese Canadian, but her efforts to construct a hybrid identity for herself are an example of using the narratives of the past to re-experience the categories of the present (Hall, 1996, p. 448).

Thus, new media is a very important site for changing the relations and politics of representation and for future struggles for meaning and identity. New media enables multi-generational Chinese Canadians like Li to dismantle and deconstruct binary relations like Western/Eastern, Us/Them, and Environmentalist/Traditionalist, helping to “destabilize taken-for-granted ways of looking at things and open up imaginative spaces for new practices” (Ang, 2006, p. 194). In so doing, new media provides new discursive strategies to articulate one’s identity.

Concluding Remarks

Many Chinese Canadian identities are shaped by media representations of the dominant Canadian ideology and media elites in the public sphere and by first-generation immigrant parents at home. These potentially conflicting values and ideals can lead multi-generational Chinese Canadians to accept the dominant representations of mainstream Canadian culture or retreat into traditional Chinese culture, both of which can cause bicultural conflicts and weak identity formation. New media provides avenues through which multi-generational Chinese Canadians, particularly youths, can connect, learn from one another, and gain the support and confidence to articulate stronger (bi)cultural identities.

In an interview with the Taiwanese cultural studies professor Kuan-Hsing Chen (1996), Hall argues that cultural identity is always hybrid because it comes out of “very specific historical formations, out of very specific histories and cultural repertoires of enunciation.... [W]e have to live this ensemble of identity-positions in all its specificities” (p. 502). The rise of new media on the Internet, the growing population of Chinese Canadians, and the interaction between them are just some of the specific historical formations of our times. New media, although not without problems, provides a visible (cyber-)space for multi-generational Chinese Canadians to redefine and express their unique ethnic and cultural identities, challenge dominant representations of Chinese ethnic identity, and negotiate the terms of belonging and representation in Canadian society through political movement and organization.

References

- Adria, M. (2010). *Technology and nationalism*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Ang, I. (2006). "From cultural studies to cultural research: Engaged scholarship in the twenty-first century," *Cultural Studies Review*, 12(2), 183-197. doi:10.5130/csr.v12i2.2350
- Ashoka Canada. (2017). *Claudia Li*. Retrieved from <https://www.ashoka.org/en/fellow/claudia-li>
- Brown, C. (2009). WWW.HATE.COM: White supremacist discourse on the Internet and the construction of whiteness ideology. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 20(2), 189-208. doi:10.1080/10646170902869544
- Chen, K. H. (1996). The formation of a diasporic intellectual: An interview with Stuart Hall. In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 484-503). New York: Routledge.
- Coloma, R. S. (2013) "Too Asian?" On racism, paradox and ethno-nationalism. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 34(4), 579-598. doi:10.1080/01596306.2013.822620
- Dun, B. (2003). Chinese Faces. In W. Djaio (Ed.), *Being Chinese: Voices from the diaspora* (pp. 148-155). Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
- Fenton, N. (2007). Bridging the mythical divide: Political economy and cultural studies approaches to the analysis of the media. In E. Devereux (Ed.), *Media studies: Key issues and debates* (pp. 7-31). London: SAGE Publications. https://www.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/19334_02_Devereux_Ch_01.pdf
- Fernando, S. (2006). Race and the city: *Chinese Canadian and Chinese American political mobilization*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

- Findlay, S., & Köhler, N. (2010, November 10). The enrollment controversy: Worries that efforts in the U.S. to limit enrollment of Asian students in top universities may migrate to Canada. *Maclean's*. Retrieved from <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/too-asian/>
- Genius Generations. (2017). *Hua Foundation*. Retrieved from http://www.geniusgenerations.org/hua_foundation
- Goto, H. (2017, April 18). A bending light: Thoughts on story, diversity, and social responsibility. *Ricepaper*, 19(4). Original work published 2014. Retrieved from <https://ricepapermagazine.ca/2017/04/a-bending-light-thoughts-on-story-diversity-and-social-responsibility-by-hiromi-goto/>
- Hall, S. (1980). Cultural studies: Two paradigms. *Media, Culture and Society*, 2, 57-72.
- Hall, S. (1989). Cultural identity and cinematic representation. In R. Stam & T. Miller (Eds.), *Film and theory: An anthology* (pp. 704-714). Malden, MA: Blackwell. Retrieved from <http://academic.uprm.edu/mleonard/theorydocs/readings/SHall.pdf>
- Hall, S. (1996). New ethnicities. In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 441-449). New York: Routledge.
- Hess, A. (2016, May 26). Asian-American actors are fighting for visibility. They will not be ignored. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/29/movies/asian-american-actors-are-fighting-for-visibility-they-will-not-be-ignored.html>
- Hiller, H. H., & Chow, V. (2005). Ethnic identity and segmented assimilation among second generation Chinese youth. *Sociological Studies of Children and Youth*, 10, 75-99. doi:10.1016/S1537-4661(04)10005-6
- Hong, B. (2010, December 8). The “Too Asian?” debate: Why I don’t support Maclean’s or TooAsian.ca. *Schema Magazine*. Retrieved from http://schemamag.ca/2010/12/08/the_too_asian_debate/

- Hwang, F. (2014, February 4). Young Asians lead the way for social changes. *The Source*. Retrieved from <http://thelastsource.com/en/2014/02/03/young-asians-lead-the-way-for-social-changes/>
- Kahn, R., & Kellner, D. (2003). *Internet subcultures and oppositional politics*. Retrieved from <https://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/internetsubculturesoppositionalpolitics.pdf>
- Kulture Media. (2017). *About Kulture*. Retrieved from <http://www.kulturemedia.org/page-about-us.php>
- Lalonde, R. N., & Giguère, B. (2008). When might the two cultural worlds of second generation biculturals collide? *Canadian Diversity*, 6(2), 58-62.
- Levin, S. (2017, April 11). “We’re the geeks, the prostitutes”: Asian American actors on Hollywood’s barriers. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/11/asian-american-actors-whitewashing-hollywood>
- Li, P. S. (1998). *The Chinese in Canada*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Li, X. (2007). *Voices rising: Asian Canadian cultural activism*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Lin, J., Cho, A., & Chu, J. W. (2015). *AlliterAsian: Twenty years of Ricepaper Magazine*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.
- Lloyd, M. (2015, November 5). Is the debate over who is buying Vancouver real estate steering into racist territory? *News 1130*. Retrieved from <http://www.news1130.com/2015/11/05/vancouver-real-estate-racism/>
- Lowe, L. (2004). Heterogeneity, hybridity, multiplicity: Marking Asian American differences. In J. Rivkin & M. Ryan (Eds.), *Literary theory: An anthology* (2nd ed., pp. 1031-1050). Malden, MA: Blackwell. (Original work published 1991)

- Luk, V. (2010, December 3). "Too Asian?": Why I don't accept the apology by Maclean's. *The Tyee*. Retrieved from <http://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2010/12/03/TooAsianApology/>
- Marotta, V. (2011). New online ethnicities and the politics of representation. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 32(5), 539-553. doi:10.1080/07256868.2011.603883
- Millington, B., Vertinsky, P., Boyle, E., & Wilson, B. (2008). Making Chinese-Canadian masculinities in Vancouver's physical education curriculum. *Sport, Education and Society*, 13(2), 195-214. doi:10.1080/13573320801957095
- Morley, D. (1996). EurAm, modernity, reason and alterity: Or, postmodernism, the highest stage of cultural imperialism? In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 326-360). New York: Routledge.
- Ng, C. (2012, September 27). "Too Asian?" anthology takes Maclean's to task. *Rabble.ca*. Retrieved from <http://rabble.ca/books/reviews/2012/09/too-asian>
- Ng, W. C. (1999). *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The pursuit of identity and power*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Parker, D., & Song, M. (2009). New ethnicities and the Internet. *Cultural Studies*, 23(4), 583-604. doi:10.1080/09502380902951003
- rowriness. (2007, January 24). On being Chinese-Canadian [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KK059xkbEkk>
- Shin, A. (2000). Western Eyes [Video file]. *National Film Board of Canada*. Retrieved from <https://www.nfb.ca/film/western-eyes/>
- So, N. (2014, December 16). 4 reasons why you should care about Vancouver's Chinatown [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMVRQo3KSOk>
- So, N. (2015, November 3). Why I care about Vancouver's Chinatown - #ThisIsChinatown [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33xhANwaAcc>

- Stevenson, G. (2014). *Building nations from diversity: Canadian and American experience compared*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Stroink, M. L., & Lalonde, R. N. (2010). Bicultural identity conflict in second-generation Asian Canadians. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 149(1), 44-65.
doi:10.3200/SOCP.149.1.44-65
- Teurlings, J. (2010). Media literacy and the challenges of contemporary media culture: On savvy viewers and critical apathy. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13(3), 359-373.
doi:10.1177/1367549410363202
- Watson, M. D. (2013). Self identity and the distant daughters of China: A phenomenological study of Chinese born females adopted into North American families. *Athabasca University Digital Thesis and Project Room*. Retrieved from <http://dtp.r.lib.athabascau.ca/action/viewdtrdesc.php?cpk=0&id=49442>
- Wong, C. (2012, November 28). The segregation of Asian Canadians from mainstream society in Maclean's "Too Asian?" *The Empress Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://theempressmagazine.com/2012/11/28/the-segregation-of-asian-canadians-from-mainstream-society-in-macleans-too-asian/>
- Yee, S. (2014, April 29). Ashoka Fellow incorporates environmental sustainability into Chinese cultural traditions. *The Source*. Retrieved from <http://thelastsource.com/en/?p=8939>
- Yeung, K. A. (2013, March 28). The politics of shark fin soup [Blog post]. *Paws for Hope Animal Foundation*. Retrieved from <http://pawsforhope.org/the-politics-of-shark-fin-soup/>
- Yu, H. (2010, November 27). Macleans offers a nonapology for writing a nonstory called "Too Asian?" *Georgia Straight*. Retrieved from <http://www.straight.com/article-361680/vancouver/henry-yu-macleans-offers-nonapology-writing-nonstory-called-too-asian>

Yuan, P. (2013, February 12). Being a Chinese-Canadian [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfDPploXR2M>

Simon Yee holds a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Philosophy from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C. He completed a Master of Arts - Integrated Studies program from Athabasca University in 2017, focusing on Cultural Studies and Writing & New Media. Simon's interests include computer technology and society, futurism, and the philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard.

¹ See Parker & Song (2009) for an example of a cultural studies study examining how new media engagement by British Chinese youth enables formative identity creation and the negotiation of difference

² Political scientist Shanti Fernando especially accuses news media of playing a central role in perpetuating Chinese Canadian racialization (p. 33).

³ Instead of portraying Asian characters as downright villainous, Kulture Media describes four common themes used to depict Asians today: as perpetual foreigners, as deserving targets of open denigration, as inferior or subordinate, or as exaggerated gendered types. A white hero is needed to counter these kinds of characters.

⁴ Athabasca University scholar, M. Watson (2013), wrote an interesting study examining North American (white) family adoptions of Chinese Canadian youths. As opposed to the strict cultural upbringing typical for children of first-generation Chinese parents, Watson argues that Western families “try to ensure that ‘feeling Chinese’ is positively supported by downplaying its importance in relation to the child being first and foremost, their ‘daughter’” (p. 7). Watson contends this helps foster positive identity formation in Chinese Canadian youths.

⁵ See Lowe (1991/2004) for a similar depiction of Asian American intergenerational conflict (p. 1041).

⁶ The terms “Asian” and “Asian Canadians” are used in this paper when a source is talking not just about Chinese and Chinese Canadians, but the broader ethnic group.