

classism, and discrimination, racial minorities have not been able to gain access and opportunities to some occupational positions. I am not referring simply to individual attitudes (*à la identified bigots*), but to the institutional, systemic, and cultural ideologies and policies (viz: classism, sexism, racism, heterosexism etc.) that have operated over the years as barriers to access and opportunities.

Growing up and living in a society such as ours, therefore, has inculcated in us those ideologies that have resulted in us interpreting the world in relation to our position in the society; and adhering to the dominant cultural

*Race does matter
and we operate with
the meaning ascribed
to race by the society.*

values which we have learned. All of us are affected in one way or another by the same social forces. That is why a Ukrainian who is fourth generation Canadian is just as likely to identify a first generation English Canadian as "Canadian," and unknowingly identify a fifth generation African-Canadian as an "immigrant," Jamaican probably, and herself as a "Ukrainian."

Talking about identifying people by ethnicity, I have always found it ironic that some Canadians object to people calling themselves "Jamaican," "Maltese," "Portuguese," or "Jewish-Canadian," "African-Canadian," "Japanese-Canadian," "Chinese-Canadian." The question is always posed: "Why can't they be Canadians?" Nevertheless, the same people will see Canadians as Whites with last names such as Johnson, Smith, McDonald, Milne, etc.

My race helps to define me. I cannot escape the media, the magazine and book images and information, etc., neither will my twelve year old son who has already begun to experience the hidden injuries of race. And whether or not I wish to represent the population of Blacks in Toronto, I am assigned that task. Isn't it interesting that I represent an entire population of people despite our diversity?

How is it that majority group Canadians seem not to represent their entire group?

That I am a professor does not make me immune to the stereotypes and concomitant issues and problems that go along with being a racial minority, and a Black person in particular, in this society. It is what I regard as one of those "paradoxes" that we must confront as racial minorities.

Evidently, I bring to my interactions, my own socialization as a male cultivated in our male oriented Canadian society, just like the students and individuals with whom I interact bring their own gender role socialization. I have found that while White females are more likely to talk of being intimidated and feeling uncomfortable, males accuse me of being biased, defensive—"a chip on your shoulder"—having a personal agenda, and that what I am trying to communicate is merely my "opinion." It seems that males, White males in particular, are quite clear about the power and privilege accorded to them by race. They understand that as a minority my power and privileges as a male is not the *same* as theirs. Females, on the other hand, understand that in our male oriented society, while I might have male privilege they have race privilege. All of this helps to explain the paradox of power and privilege with regard to race and gender. For while I do have privilege as a male, it must be understood in the context of my status as a racial minority in Canadian society. In other words my power and privilege as a Black male educator must be seen in relation to how Black males are socially constructed in today's Canada.

There is a final point that is worth mentioning. Racism, discrimination, and racial or cultural intolerance is not necessarily based on ignorance, lack of information or exposure, they are ideologies rooted in the social, economic, political and cultural structures of society. Hence, at the post-secondary level of education, it is understandable that we would find attitudes and behaviours based on the

social construction race exhibited in the interactions of instructors and students.

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LYN LIFSHIN

German SS Officer in the Ghetto

He said after
the war he
published mountain
climbing books
he loved the sun
the pure air
he never knew
about death
camps the ghetto.
It was to main-
tain a work force.
I had no idea
you over estimate
my power it
worked for three
years, two and
a half maybe yes
the conditions
were terrible but
I didn't know was
a small part the
extermination
wasn't clear they
worked for self
preservation self
management it
wasn't death it
wasn't clear to me

Lyn Lifshin's poems, Marilyn Monroe (Quiet Press) will be published this spring.