« *Representations of Muslim Women in the Quebec News Print Media* »

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ABSTRACT

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Between 2006-2007 in Quebec the passage of a controversial code of conduct in the rural municipality of Hérouxville cast the debate over Reasonable Accommodation into the media spotlight. The question of integrating minorities and immigrants into pluralistic Quebec society has provoked discussions over the fragility of Quebec identity. A social crisis has been linked to the delicate majority status that Quebecois now enjoy in the province. Some Quebecois conceive that Muslim beliefs and practices threaten the social cohesion of their society based on fundamental values such as gender equality, secularism and tolerance. This social discourse effectively reinforces their identity of a tolerant superior group vis-à-vis the "Other" which must be either tolerated or "civilized" in order to accept and learn the contemporary way of life in Quebec society. Taken together, Quebec is engaging in a deep soul-searching as claims of racism, xenophobia and intolerance rise to the surface of the ongoing debate over the accommodation of *difference*.

The role of the media was central in turning the Reasonable Accommodation debate into a social crisis. The strategies and framing employed by the print media along with the selective coverage of certain issues caused polarization between minority and majority groups My inquiry asks: does a critical textual analysis of the news print media's representations of Muslim women reveal a subtle racialized discourse? I invoke an Orientalist lens to show how racializing discourses manifest in a guarded subtext over the preservation of Quebec identity which effectually reinforces hierarchical relations

between a dominant group and subordinate group. My methodology employs a critical textual analysis of 12 *Gazette* and *La Presse* news print articles in order to uncover the deeper and more nuanced implied meaning of negative dichotomization (Us-Them), inferiorization and demonization of the Other, the desire to expel the Other, along with feeling of victimization and generalization about an entire group. Identified as discursive mechanisms, this research situates and anchors the implied meaning of the representations of Muslim women in the particular historical experience of Quebecois and their distinct language and culture. My analysis reveals instances of a subtle, hidden, new form of racism which is less explicit than traditional forms of racism once were. Some of the media processes and framing which are identified allowed the reasonable accommodation debates to degenerate into a state of "moral panic"[1]. I demonstrate that Muslim women are marginalized and discriminated against on the basis of their race, gender and cultural identity. Essentially, the news print media creates damaging portrayals of Muslim women in an effort to insulate a protectionist nature in Quebec that buttresses a conviction that these representations are universal which are in fact stereotypical and mythical.

In order to counter these negative portrayals students must be taught how to think critically about the media and develop the appropriate media literacy tools so that they can understand what social equity means among varying ethnocultural groups. In an effort to decentre the dominant, white identity, developing a critical pedagogy within an anti-racism framework enables students to recognize stereotypical imagery and

[1] See also Potvin's (2008) study of factual media coverage and opinion discourses in Quebec's five major newspapers.

discrimination and at the same time it educates students about the normativity of whiteness and its powerful entrenchment in schools.

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DEDICATION

To my Father, Leslie Pichette, who has helped me immeasurably with support and unconditional love throughout the course of this thesis.

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PREFACE

The media messages we internalize each day often reinforce an uncritical, commonsensical understanding of the identities of minorities and immigrants. We are often complacent toward the media's bias against Islam and Muslims and our opinions are frequently shaped by the negative stereotypes and inaccurate portrayals we see on the television, in the newspapers, and in various online social media websites. This largely negative imagery and fixation on such symbols as the hijab/veil provoke simplistic interpretations which leave out the complexities and nuances in the stories. In the Quebec context, how does the news media frame individuals who do not identify with the dominant cultural/ethnic labels such as Francophone and Quebecois? How does one's geographical location imbue a sense of belonging and connectedness to a place?

My particular interest in this topic stems from an appreciation for critical theory and a desire to understand the ways in which power relations function to segment diverse groups in society. These divisions place one's social identity within a racialized hierarchy in which those who possess the acceptable attributes garner more power than those who do not. A person's gender, race/ethnicity and class location become seemingly irrelevant when they collide within a system of white male patriarchy and racist oppression. My work involves analyzing the machinations of this system in order to gain a clearer sense of how institutions such as the media work to perpetuate discrimination and prejudice within the minds of predominantly white Quebecers. I am not a Muslim, a Francophone or a Quebecer. I have only lived in Quebec for the past five years and I do not regard myself culturally as a Quebecer. Originally from Saskatchewan, I am a native English speaker; but interestingly I do not consider myself to be Anglophone in the Quebec sense

of the word. Although my ethnicity contains some remnants of a Quebecois history (my grandfather spoke French), I do not identify this way.

Presently, as a graduate student in the Department of Education it has become very clear to me that notions of identity and culture are intertwined with one's social reality and particular social location. Studying critical race feminist theory has allowed me to recognize that multiple voices are situated at many different sites of struggle. These sites are unique to each person's individual subject position and they are inextricably linked to one's race, gender, sexuality, ability and class. My research has led me to question the local and cultural specificity of other women's lived realities. In order to engage with "Other" lives and experiences, I believe that recognizing my social location is the precursor that is necessary to begin a conversation based on mutual exchange. That is, by naming the ground that I am coming from human need can become the primary focus above other social and political agendas. What is problematic for me, as well as to many white, Western feminists, is that we take these conditions for granted. The question is, how do white feminists engaged in anti-racist work open up spaces for women of colour without tokenizing or appropriating their experiences? It order to answer this question, Jhappen (1996) offers the following proposition for white women:

> What *is* wanted and needed is a willingness on the part of white feminists to stop pretending that all women share identical interests, and to explore in their theorizing the different ways in which social and economic structures and discourses work to subjugate different constituencies of women according to their racial/ethnic, ability, sexuality, and class positions. At the same time, white feminists need to engage in self-reflection to examine their motivations and to check any possible tendencies towards exploitation and appropriation of the stories of people of colour (p. 55).

Thus it is very important for white, Western feminists to acknowledge the problematic power of mapping, naming and ascribing agendas that are already set against an implicit white standard. In my view, embodied critical race feminist theory is the existence of a female consciousness capable of being politicized in order to challenge traditional ways of seeing and thinking about reality.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to show that the news print media in Quebec construct representations of Muslim women which are harmful to their identities. These representations contribute to racism, discrimination and distortion about their culture and religion. As well, they fail to show Muslim women as dynamic and active participants in Quebec society. The skewed imagery and essentialism perpetuate negative associations among the dominant Quebecois majority. Attendant to this, the representations are constructed through an identity discourse characterized by a people with a distinct history and cultural experience who are attempting to negotiate *difference* as immigration increases within their borders.

Research Question

Does a critical textual analysis of the news print media's representations of Muslim women reveal harmful representations? I employ an Orientalist lens that shows how the prevailing discourses contribute to and reinforce various forms of discrimination and racism. To contextualize and make sense of my analysis I use a critical race feminist lens which illuminates the positionality of Muslim women.

The case of Muslim women in the *Gazette* and *La Presse*, two dailies in Montreal, Quebec, is illustrative of how a dominant group can influence how "Others" within society are perceived. Negative or harmful representations present Muslim women as one-dimensional victims of a traditional way of life which contrasts sharply to our Western democratic norms and standards. The wider population fears difference because

they do not understand a way of life perceived to be religious or oppressive. Many of the portrayals in the media are not merely *negative*, but may in fact constitute racist imagery depending on whether they are analyzed through the lens of *new racism*.[2]

New racism in the news print media differs subtlety from the traditional conception of racism. Whereas traditional racism existed openly and legitimately in society in the form of slavery or segregation, the new racism is conveyed quietly, hidden and in very subtle ways. Identity markers such as the veil are interpreted through predominantly religious and gendered paradigms. Traditional categories of racism still persist as Muslim women become 'racialized' in the eyes of Quebecois when wearing the veil. The biological features of Middle Eastern/Arabic people are conceived of along racial lines. That is to say, this 'raced identity' is infused with other cultural or religious symbols and practices such as veiling and an *essentialized* image is formed. Many whites of Judeo-Christian tradition think of the veil as being part of the Middle Eastern race and Islamic religion which is traditionally worn by brown women.

Together, the veil and the brown skin colour constitute symbolic markers of identity that categorize Muslim females as though they are Middle Eastern and do not "naturally" belong in Quebec. Fleras and Elliot (2003) refer to new racism as "an ambiguous and disguised response to the growing presence of increasing assertive racial minorities" that are perceived to be a threat to the national identity and the social fabric of society (p. 64). Many Muslim women still receive this prejudicial treatment even if they are in fact French-speaking Quebecers who have lived in Quebec for decades. This

[2] New racism can also be referred to as "polite racism" in Canada which refers to the deliberate attempts to disguise racist attitudes through behaviour that is non-prejudicial or discriminatory in appearance (Fleras & Elliot, 2003, p. 60).

phenomenon has been especially pervasive in North American society since 9/11. This analysis employs an Orientalist interpretive framework that illuminates the contours of the power relations inherent in the perceptions that some Quebecois have of Muslim women which will be discussed in the following chapter.

I focus on Muslim women because they are subjected to racism and discrimination for multiple reasons based on their race/ethnicity, gender and religion. As well, Muslim women figured so prominently in the news print media coverage of the reasonable accommodation debates. It left me questioning why this particular female identity was targeted so frequently. In my research I found that the veil was very controversial, eliciting some of the most vehement reactions. Juxtaposed with the values of secularism and gender equality in Quebec society, the veil is viewed by some Quebecois as an overt symbol of both religion and gender oppression.

The contemporary discourse on Quebec identity is heavily dominated by understandings of *difference* in Quebec society and how this difference should be negotiated. As a historically marginalized majority within Quebec and more recently a transition to the status of a majority people (a dual majority/minority status in Canada), the Quebecois, through immigration have had to regulate the relations between ethnic groups to counter the demographic and linguistic decline of its French-speaking population. The government has put in place a civic, intercultural policy that serves as a model for the integration of immigrants into the French-speaking population.[3] In Quebec there remain guarded notions about Quebec identity especially in public opinion spaces

[3] Quebec through its own immigration system, selects and integrates immigrants into the French-speaking majority. See Lacovino & Sévigny (2011) on the 'Quebec Model' of Integration.

and among some politicians. The public debates over reasonable accommodation are illustrative of the view held by some that immigrants and minorities are *different* from the white Quebecois normativity and as such they are treated as a threat to Quebec's democratic standards and principles. Some members of the dominant white in-group do not differentiate among "Others", whether they are other Anglophone Canadians or immigrants coming to Quebec from other countries. This is problematic because this ethnic-based approach to national identity is anchored in a "homogenized notion of cultural belonging" (Juteau, 2002).

My findings speak to a dominant identity that is characterized by fear of the "Other", a fear of losing all Quebecois have worked hard to attain with respect to their secularism and gender-equal state. Beneath the surface, the news articles speak to a distinct discourse at play that reasons immigrants and minorities must adapt to our ways and beliefs or go back to where they came from. Without justification, dominant Quebecois reason that their benevolence and tolerance only extend to a certain point when accommodating immigrants and minorities. The reasonable accommodation debates reflect a symptom of this inner dialogue. Part of the inner dialogue is to what extent should Quebecers have to integrate *difference* into *their political and social space?* Heightened levels of discrimination, xenophobia and racism were expressed in many of the news articles. As a distinct ethnic group the Quebecois, formally known as French Canadians, has had a long history of needing to protect their language and culture from perceived outsiders. Currently Quebec is undergoing a *redefinition* as the society grapples with preserving its roots and identity while at the same time integrating and accommodating new minorities and immigrants into its social space. These particularities

about the Quebec case make my conceptual underpinnings all the more interesting because the news texts clearly demonstrate this sense of fear Quebecers perceive toward the "Other". Often harmful representations of Muslim women are justified by "legitimate cultural self-defence" (Barker, 1981).

At the heart of this discussion is the way in which the print news media typecasts Muslim women through images and language. The news print media habitually target the victimization of women in Islamic cultures. News reports repeatedly show a one dimensional, homogenous representation of all Muslim women. They portray them as foreigners and outsiders (even though there are almost 110,000 Muslims living in Quebec alone (Statistics Canada, 2010)) who are seen as oppressed and threatening to the Quebec nation. Most of the articles in this study represent Muslim women wearing the hijab as though this is the only relevant aspect of their identity. Often they are represented as victims who are passive, veiled and seemingly impersonal. Bullock and Jafri (2001) discuss that "because of this Western cultural fixation on Muslim women's dress as a symbol of oppression, Muslim women often have to focus on that aspect of their identity as well, even if they would rather talk of something else" (p. 36). Underlying these Orientalist images is an assumption that women in Islamic cultures are "grouped together and defined by dominant discourses of passivity and victimization, predominantly represented by various forms of the veil" (Munroe, 2009, p. 2). These representations contrast sharply to the national representation of Quebec as an open and tolerant democratic society upholding gender equality.

An Orientalist lens aids in understanding the effects of anti-Islamist sentiments in the Western world since 9/11 and the resulting War on Terror. These two events have had

a large impact on the perceptions of Muslims in Quebec as well as the rest of Canada and the United States. There has been a documented increase in negative and anti-immigrant, sometimes even racist sentiments towards Muslims (Geddes, 2009; Montgomery, 2006). They are frequently portrayed as potential terrorists, eliciting fearful reactions on the part of large sections of the population. These newer images of Muslims as terrorists and Islamic fundamentalists have become even more entrenched than ever before.

A news text is not a value-free transmission of hard facts communicated to a general or abstract, passive reader. Texts are full of meaning—values, beliefs, ideological propositions—that are ultimately interpreted in certain ways by the readership. In this process of interpretation, preconceived notions are triggered by the way particular news events are framed. Using a critical textual analysis I aim to unlock and decode the deeper, more subtle and nuanced meanings contained in the news texts.

I focus on the news print media because the printed word, through "text and talk" (van Dijk, 2001), is a powerful medium through which knowledge is produced. The ideological content affects the values and attitudes of the readership and in this process, negative representations become sedimented. The news print media are widely regarded as a trusted, reliable, unbiased and objective reporter of the facts, serving a crucial role in any modern functioning democracy (Gasher, 2005). Perhaps many readers do not believe that they are influenced or affected by the sociological processes in what they read in the news.

Moreover, many readers would not think that newspapers, such as *La Presse* and the *Gazette*, contain underlying discriminatory or racist ideologies. Today we have many

laws that prohibit overt and explicit expressions of racism. In the contemporary era of political correctness, most people think that racism is a thing of the past. Traditional overt racism, such as an editorial tone praising the virtues of segregation, would clearly be unacceptable. But what happens if it is not *traditional* racism that is in question? Van Dijk (1991) summarizes succinctly how the new racism differs from the old:

> ...the more overt and blatant forms of legal and social structures and everyday practices that define ethnic or racial discrimination are slowly being replaced by more implicit, indirect, subtle, or otherwise less open, though not necessarily less effective or insidious, forms of dominance and inequality, variously called 'new', 'modern', or 'symbolic' racism (p. 28).

This new racism will be contextualized within the discourse of the Quebecois experience in the next chapter. van Dijk (2000) explains that the news media engage its readers in a "normal" non-racialized discourse. Herein lies the subtle power of disguised racism because it passes as common-sense through a pluralistic, tolerant interpretation of the issues. Just as the inherent normativity that underpins white power goes unnoticed, so do the claims of a non-racialized discourse.

The media have a powerful effect in reinforcing racialized discourses in the minds of readers at an ideological level (Barker, 1981; Fowler, 1991; Hall, 1981; van Dijk, 1991). The media is one of the most influential pillars of socialization, shaping people's thoughts, choices, values and opinions on a daily basis. The news print media in particular is a powerful ideological force by virtue of its long standing reputation as an objective mediator of news to its readers. It purports to disseminate the facts without engaging in a biased, value-laden reporting of events. However, many theorists have pointed out that the news is socially constructed and reflects the composition and nature of the society in which it exists (Fowler, 1991; Hartley, 1992; van Dijk, 2000). As such,

the news print media may participate in the reinforcing of racial hierarchies by imbuing its text with ideological propositions.

Many Quebecois believe that Quebec is a fair and just society in which all individuals and groups are treated equally. From this view, Quebec is a modern democratic society underpinned by fundamental values of equality, non-discrimination, openness and tolerance. This qualitative research study challenges this commonly-held belief by showing how the Quebecois identity measures itself through the presence of "racialized Others". In other words, the negative representations of immigrants and minorities serve to reinforce the superiority of the Quebecois identity. In reality there are many instances of racism and discrimination in society that function in many subtle forms. My study shows that Quebecois enjoy a position of power and privilege as a dominant group[4] that has the power to (re)present "Other" groups in ways that affirm their position of superiority. Furthermore, the Quebecois experience is an identity discourse grounded in a history of "accumulated pain" (Letourneau, 2004) that sees the "Other", historically the Anglophone, as oppressor. Their distinct historical and cultural experience has come to regard the "Other" as a threat to the Quebecois way of life. Increasingly, this "Other" within Quebec is now perceived to be immigrants and minorities who are feared to be eroding the common public culture the society now enjoys.

[4] The term "dominant group" speaks to the inherent power relations within the social and political space between Quebecois and other minority groups. Not all Quebecois share all of the views and attitudes that are developed in my analysis. I employ the term in the following way: "The collectivity of persons in society with both power and authority to preserve and promote the prevailing distribution of privilege in society. The dominant sector represents that part of society with the capacity to define itself and its culture as the standard or norm by which others are judged and evaluated" (Fleras and Elliot, 2003, p. 379).

As the news claims to present Muslim women objectively, in the same manner Quebecois believe that the media they consume really do portray fair and accurate images of Muslim women. They never ask if their newspaper is filled with subtle ideological content which reinforces their "Self" identity while constructing "Others" in negative ways. As I have already stated, in the minds of many Quebecois, it seems accurate to represent Muslim women in the veil as a symbol predominantly of religious conviction. Readers rarely question whether Muslim women are being stereotyped and essentialized in any way. Consequently, the veil becomes equated with imagery of Islam and these false conceptions become identity markers. In reality, many Muslim women do not wear a veil and if worn, the reasons can be cultural or religious and in most countries, it does not symbolize gender oppression.

We live in a society that is very conscious of race and racial differences. Daily social interactions provoke mixed-race individuals to respond to discriminatory questions about their identity because often there is very little meaningful contact between racial groups. Many ethnic and racially white Quebecois have not fully addressed the implications of a self-identity grounded in ethnocentric conceptions of white Western normativity. According to James (2010), whites tend to be indifferent to race differences because this way they can avoid dealing with the issues and the way racial minority individuals are treated (p. 265). Although whiteness is not monolithic and the Quebecois are a heterogeneous collectivity with different experiences, value systems and varying socio-economic levels; white individuals are able to choose freely to *act* on their privileges, unlike racialized minorities (James, 2010). As is currently being debated in political circles, maintaining immigration is the most feasible way of ensuring economic

growth in the province. Quebec will have to deal with more *difference* as it continues to look toward immigration to support its declining birth rate and aging work force. To account for the labour shortage, immigration is expected to provide for all labour force net growth in Canada in 2012 (James, 2010, p. 201).

What do I hope to achieve by all this? By contributing to the transformation of a system of knowledge it will help us recognize and advance an alternative way of theorizing about the news print media's pervasive influence. We must become aware of how textual power works and how its rhetoric often contains subtle ideological propositions. It is important to educate students about the complexities involved in knowledge production and how it reinforces racial hierarchies and the superiority and privilege of those at the top. Sites of knowledge production such as the news media may become sites of social change and transformation by utilizing critical methodologies to achieve these objectives.

In terms of practical application, based on my research method, a critical media literacy can be developed to counter news media portrayals. The research is especially important for white Quebec students in the classrooms. Whiteness and privilege operates as a system of dominance within social institutions such as the school. I argue that students must become cognizant of white normativity and its role in reinforcing their identity while at the same time having harmful effects on "Othered" groups. So much socialization and acculturation happens in the classroom. Should students be critical of manifestations of the traditional modes of discourse about race and identity of minority groups? Should they learn to be critical of news media sources? Will such a critical

approach pose a challenge to traditional identity narratives of a society under a perceived threat of assimilation or cultural/linguistic dilution?

Methodology

I selected 12 news print articles which appeared in two Montreal dailies: the French-language *La Presse* and the English-language *Gazette,* over a 15-month period starting in March 2006 corresponding with the reasonable accommodation debates that erupted most fervently in the press. These news stories are representative/typical of the factual media coverage during this time period and they show that the media contributed to exacerbating prejudices toward certain minorities. The news texts that are analyzed contain similar events or aspects of the reasonable accommodation debate; in particular I chose articles that dealt specifically with the following three standpoints: (1) Hérouxville's code of conduct; (2) The impending provincial election of 2007; and (3) Muslim women and the veil.

This approach involves a critical textual analysis which primarily examines the semantic structures of the news text. My methodology follows the discourse analytic approach based on the work of van Dijk (1991) that looks at style, rhetoric, structure, language and narratives of the news articles. Critical textual analysis is not quantitative in nature; rather it is about engaging in 'thick descriptions' which tease out the meaning contained in the text (Nielsen, 2009). As well, I examine the syntactic structures and the meanings implied by the quotations in order to uncover instances of discrimination and racism which escape notice in traditional content analysis. The latter normally quantifies instances such as the explicit expression of the word *racism* or traditionally *racist* sentiments. Furthermore, a discourse analytic approach that utilizes critical, sociological

reasoning is able to ground a discussion of race, ethnicity and gender relations in a pertinent theory that situates the dimensions of the discourse. In other words, my work establishes an understanding of textual structures in the news media by placing them within their cognitive, social, cultural and historical contexts (van Dijk, 1991b).

An integral component of my critical textual analysis is the notion of an implied audience and their implicit knowledge and experience. The implied audience possesses the requisite knowledge and experience which grounds the communication of *meaning* throughout the text (van Dijk, 1991). The "common-sense stock of knowledge" (Jiwani, 2006) describes a whole set of meanings, values and associations from which a reader draws while interpreting the text. The reader *activates* the meaning embedded in the article through the interpretive act of decoding the text. In a more abstract way the implicit knowledge a reader holds corresponds to the deeper meaning of the texts, *i.e.* that which is not clear and explicitly stated in the news article.

This research also recognizes that the Quebecois share a unique history and specific cultural experience which brings them together as a defined audience. In many ways the experience of this audience differs from the wider Canadian context. The cultural and historic circumstances of the Quebecois must be understood in order to identify the specific "meanings, values and associations" which influence the ways in which Muslim women are represented. This is particularly true when identifying and interpreting the role of common narratives, such as immigrants posing a threat to an already threatened people, or alternatively, posing a threat to their secular state and common public culture. It should be noted that immigrants and minorities do not have the

same implicit knowledge and experience as the in-group and they therefore do not interpret the journalists' references to this knowledge and experience in the same way.

I elaborate a set of text semantics and syntactic structures which are the analytical tools I use in the analysis of the news print articles. Drawing on van Dijk (1991) the text semantics I analyze are language, code words, associations, metaphors, generalizations, in-group designators, style, narrative structure, moral or emotional tone, topicalization and the use of authorities. Additionally, I look at the syntactic structure of the text, focusing on how quotes are arranged and how important information is organized such as the lead paragraph.

Organization of Thesis

In the following chapter I begin with a review of the relevant literature. In the third chapter I lay out the theoretical perspectives that examine media, framing and representation as they contribute to the typecasting of Muslim women. In the fourth chapter I describe my methodology and present the findings of my research. I conclude with some brief reflections and areas of further research.

CHAPTER TWO:
LITERATURE REVIEW

How does the dominant discourse of Quebec identity impact Muslim women's positionality and their identity? The objective of this chapter is twofold. I begin by examining the theoretical underpinnings of the principal discourses which show how the news print media function in representing Muslim women. I would like to refer the reader to Appendix A which outlines Quebecois cultural identity and the historical background which situates my findings. This brief historical overview discusses the most salient characteristics of Quebec's cultural identity which is necessary to understand the context in which the representations of Muslim women are negotiated.

The first section of this chapter begins with an overview of the reasonable accommodation debates and its socio-political significance. This follows with a discussion of the discourse of Orientalism which shows how the West constructs imagery and associations of the Orient which situates the negative dichotomization (Us—Them) in the news media. I follow with a treatment of new racism and the representations of minorities. I then conclude by sketching out a critical media literacy that educates students about the nature of negative or harmful representations of Muslim women.

Setting the Context: Hérouxville and the Bouchard-Taylor Commission

In the wake of 9/11, the last decade has witnessed a pervasive negative backlash toward immigrants and religious minority groups; to a great extent this phenomenon has been influenced by prejudicial stereotypes that have appeared in the media. Across Canada, as well as in other Western nations, policy makers are currently engaged in a reevaluation process over the accommodation practices of religious minorities within

society. In 2006-2007 in Quebec the issue of reasonable accommodation was cast into the media spotlight in part due to an impending provincial election as well as the sensational events which took place in the small, rural municipality of Hérouxville. The town of Hérouxville attracted international attention because they adopted a controversial code of conduct[5] which positioned Muslims and Islam as a perceived threat to the values and beliefs of Quebec society; namely the fundamental values of secularism and gender equality (Gagnon, 2007). Immigrants here were portrayed as irrational by the dominant population. Although the code of conduct does not explicitly name Islam, nor does it claim that Muslims openly practice female circumcision or stone their women, it is difficult to argue that Muslims are not the targeted minority in the minds of most residents of Hérouxville when these practices are referenced. With its explicit racially-based sentiments, the code of conduct characterized immigrants in this way because according to Goldberg (1993) "[immigrants] fail to exhibit the values, metaphysical attitudes, epistemological principles, or cognitive style of 'white males'"(p. 119).

Quebec is predominantly secular with vestiges of a Christian tradition and as such the cultural values of other groups are not easily accepted within their physical borders or within their imaginations. There is a strongly held belief that Quebec's identity and way of life conflict with the cultural and religious identities of immigrant and minority populations. The issue of accommodation in Quebec touched several emotional chords among the Quebecois majority during the reasonable accommodation debates because of a protectionist attitude toward their cultural, linguistic and historical identity. It was a common sentiment among these Quebecers that immigrants and minorities posed a

[5] Or alternatively, "Hérouxville Life Standards" or "Normes de vie".

particular threat to their identity. Although an isolated incident, the code of conduct presented an image of the town as racist, intolerant, close-minded and ignorant. The code of conduct served as an example of a clear construction of *us* vs. *them*. As well it highlighted the fact that progress must be made for certain segments of the Quebec population to adequately deal with the challenges of integrating minorities and difference in a province that is increasingly diverse. The notion of *us* is presented as a stable, uniform category that revolves around a white, Quebecois, secular identity and presents immigrants as *them*, a homogenous group that are problematic, religious, barbaric or primitive/backward. The code of conduct suggests that immigrants discriminate against women and overemphasize the importance of their religious norms, beliefs and cultural traditions. The Hérouxville case is reflective of a larger debate about national identity, race and interculturalism in Quebec today.

The debates around reasonable accommodation became a social phenomenon which dominated Quebec's attention for almost a year and a half. It stirred many passions and hostilities, as well as an incredible amount of soul-searching and inquiry into the nature and composition of contemporary Quebec society. Observers have linked the reasonable accommodation debates with what they call a "redefinition" of Quebec society and identity (*cf.* Nieguth and Lacassagne, 2009; Wong, 2011). Within this process, the issues are far reaching; they include theorizing Quebec's fundamental values and principles anchored in a homogenized notion of cultural belonging (Juteau, 2002). Consequently, the rise in immigration has turned into the primary source of tension and uncertainty, culminating in debates regarding the extent to which immigrants should be

'accommodated'. Negotiating cultural differences and which accommodations were perceived as reasonable became a hot button issue in the media throughout Quebec.

In response, the government formed the Bouchard-Taylor Commission to address racial inequality and the issues pertaining to claims of xenophobia, racism and discrimination.[6] As part of their report, Bouchard and Taylor commissioned various research reports and held public hearings throughout Quebec. By addressing these issues the Bouchard-Taylor Commission sought to confront fears generated around accommodating minorities. Moreover, Bouchard and Taylor (2008) acknowledged that reasonable accommodation has "clearly touched a number of emotional chords among Quebecois in such a way that requests for religious adjustments have spawned fears about the most valuable heritage of the Quiet Revolution, in particular gender equality and secularism" (p. 18).

Similarly, the veil has come under close scrutiny in the Quebec provincial legislature as evidenced by the tabling of Bill 94 in March 2010. This bill calls for a ban on face coverings within government and public institutions. The bill names "public security, communication, and identification" as the primary reasons to deny essential services to women who wear the niqab (Bill n°94, p. 5). This bill would prevent women from accessing hospitals, daycares, schools, universities and other public services as well as bar women who wear the niqab from working in the public sector. Many critics of this bill have claimed that there are in fact clear prejudicial underpinnings to this legislative

[6] The Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (commonly referred to as the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, after its co-chairmen, Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor. The commission of inquiry was appointed by the Charest government to examine the issue of reasonable accommodation in Quebec. The Commission was instructed to formulate recommendations to the government to ensure that accommodation practices conform to "Québec's values as a pluralistic, democratic, egalitarian society" (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008, p. 39).

project (Choudry *et al* 2008; Mahrouse, 2010; Olwin, 2010). What is even more alarming is that a public opinion survey in 2009 (Leduc, 2009) revealed that 64% of Quebecers were in favour of banning the hijab, which is merely a modest head covering as opposed to the niqab which covers the full face. The passage of this bill would clearly undermine women's rights in such public spaces as the workplace because they would be denied the right to dress in the manner in which they choose.

Numerous critiques of reasonable accommodation show these debates are about much more than merely the "accommodation" of religious minorities and immigrants. Often the controversy around the appropriate level of accommodation have portrayed minority groups in negative or harmful ways along lines of race, gender, identity and the politics of difference (Choudry *et al*, 2008; Mahrouse, 2010; Mookerjea, 2009; Nieguth and Lacassagne, 2009; Sharify-Funk, 2010). Notions of accommodation and tolerance stem from taken-for-granted assumptions over who holds the power to tolerate and who must be accommodated. The dominant group possesses an inherent ability to set the standard of "toleration" against their standard of cultural normativity and superiority. The discourse points to the new reality that immigrants and racialized minorities are increasingly replacing Anglophones as the new "Other" through which Quebecois construct and articulate their identity.

The French Canadian cultural identity underwent a sociological transition after the Quiet Revolution; as a majority people, the Quebecois have asserted a civic, intercultural normative discourse vis-à-vis integrating immigrants into their population (Potvin, 2008). Now that Quebecois have begun to assert their own political and economic power, they can freely set the terms of the discourse. They determine who is

accommodated and on what terms, leaving minorities with little space for participation or even protest. One of the primary means of setting the terms of the discourse is through a Quebecois dominated media. van Dijk (2000) states that the role of the media in ethnic affairs is such that minority groups are not able to publically oppose biased reporting because they do not have the requisite power to influence media discourse (p. 37).

Quebecois control the media discourse by determining how reasonable accommodation is defined and understood. The reasonable accommodation debates have distorted the original meaning and use of the term. Reasonable accommodation has become something different from its original intended form as a legal concept applied in labour law. The Bouchard Taylor Commission (2008) define reasonable accommodation as "an arrangement that falls under the legal sphere…aimed at relaxing the application of a norm or statute in favour of an individual or a group of people threatened with discrimination for one of the reasons specified in the Charter" (p. 289). The idea behind reasonable accommodation is to provide special treatment or flexible compromises for various individuals or minority groups who require exceptional treatment which diverges from the common standard. However, reasonable accommodation has become politically charged, synonymous with a need to protect French language and culture and reaffirm their position of superiority. The discourse on reasonable accommodation has become an instrument to redefine Quebec society as it grapples with the changing demographics of its ethnic and racial composition.

But how have representations of minority groups in the news print media within the debate on reasonable accommodation been damaging or harmful to groups such as Muslim women? In the next section I begin addressing what is problematic about the

contemporary redefinition of Quebec identity—in an attempt to figure out who they are in light of the changing ethnic and racial makeup of the province. The dominant representations falsely portray other cultures and people and by understanding the negative ways that Muslim women are portrayed in the media, we can better understand how these representations fit into the needs of Quebecois to reinforce their identity.

Orientalism and Civilizational Discourse

An Orientalist framework underpins the theoretical foundation in understanding how the negative representations of Muslim women function in Quebec society. Orientalism shows how Quebec society, in the position of the Self enjoying inherent Eurocentric-based superiority of gaze, freely represents Muslim women in the newspaper articles as they wish to see them, in negative and essentialized ways. The Orientalist discourse is embedded in everyday life and its pervasive ideology mostly goes unnoticed.

The first major work that informs my conceptual analysis of the news print media is Said's (1979) seminal work *Orientalism*. Orientalism seeks to explain how Eurocentric academic and philosophic traditions define, represent and accord value and meaning to the Orient in the European mind. Orientalism is about the Orient as being timeless and unchanging, alien and "Other", and only knowable through close observation (p. 206). Orientalism holds that the world may be delineated into two groups, that of the West and the Orient, which are two mutually exclusive groups. Within a Self/Other construct, the West positions itself as the knowing, active Self which defines, determines and represents the "Other", the Orient. The Self constructs its identity and negotiates knowledge through the deconstruction of the "Other". As well, the interactions and power relations between these two groups take the form of multiple binaries: superior/inferior, familiar/foreign,

modern/backward or savage, active/passive. These binaries exist because the West occupies the position of observer, naturally depicting itself in the most favourable light.

One of the most salient indicators of unequal power relations is the power to *represent* the "Other". Orientalism elucidates how the representations say more about the dominant group and their racialized discourse, than they do about the content or object of the representations. In the Orientalist framework, the representations serve to position the European identity as superior in many ways to the Orient (Said, 1979, pp. 7-8). Accordingly Said (1979) characterizes the way in which the dominant group's hegemonic mindset has appropriated "Other" histories and identities, "So impressive have the descriptive and textual successes of Orientalism been that entire periods of the Orient's cultural, political, and social history are considered mere responses to the West. The West is the actor, the Orient a passive reactor. The West is the spectator, the judge and jury, of every facet of Oriental behavior" (p. 109). In other words, the relationship between the Self and the "Other" is a logical, rational interpretation of one's subjectivity. Furthermore, Islamic nations are depicted as uniformly intolerant and anti-democratic. This Orientalist framework serves to reinforce Muslim women as passive victims of their "backward" culture and religion. The news print media utilize this *power to represent* in their portrayals of Muslim women which are frequently harmful or negative.

These essentializing notions of "Othered" Muslims and their culture are problematic because they paint Islam as a monolithic entity. It is important to deconstruct this monolithic conception of Muslim identity in the Western mind. We must problematize these conceptions and ask why they are represented in the ways that they are. This is particularly true for the way in which the veil is constructed in the Western

mind. This construction shows the simplistic or reductionist value that the West accords to Muslims, their value and their history. As a result a religious paradigm is emphasized which trumps the individual subjectivities of Muslim women.

As Said (1979) relates, "…[O]rientalism is—and does not simply represent—a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with "our" world"(p. 12). The dominant group arrogates the power to speak for and define the "Other". If the dominant group associates brown skin or the typology of Arab or Middle Eastern-looking people to being Muslims, then all the other negative associations and stereotypes are triggered. Jiwani (2006) explains the effects of the representations, "In so doing, the bodies of "Others" were delineated in ways that once again deflected attention from white dominance, facilitating a complete erasure of the historical involvement of the West in the East. In this instance, religious differences were racialized and communicated through the signification of Muslims and those who 'look like Muslims' as the Other" (p. 203).

Orientalism is a Eurocentric discourse which places European values, thought and traditions at the center, relegating those of the "Other" to the margins of lesser importance. As Shohat and Stam (1994) cogently relate, "Eurocentrism sanitizes Western history while patronizing and even demonizing the non-West; it thinks of itself in terms of its noblest achievements - science, progress, humanism - but of the non-West in terms of its deficiencies, real or imagined (p. 3). How the West defines and constructs the East is rooted in the idea of an innate superiority of European-derived culture and peoples. Eurocentric thinking divides the world into the West and the "Others" in the same manner as Orientalism; a mode of thinking about the world as a hierarchical arrangement

with the West at the top defining the best that has been written and thought as based on European writers and their standards (Hall, 1992). The Rest becomes the object of the Western gaze, which is thought of and written about in terms that render the Orient as tribal, superstitious and uncivilized. Moreover the West is understood to be a white European race, which has been the dominant race since the days of colonialism. This construct establishes the category of *non-white* for all other races of the Orient. Notions of whiteness and white privilege correspond to the Eurocentrist thinking which situates white Europeans at the top of the social hierarchies of the world.

Said's (1997) more recent work, *Covering Islam*, builds on the idea of relations of superiority/inferiority and more specifically situates how the West constructs Islam and determines its news value. This work focuses primarily on the modern Western media in print and television and how it contributes to the construction of the Orient in the Western mind. It situates the media as a site of knowledge production that represents Islam in particular ways. The news print media draw from imagery reflective of the vestiges of European colonialism that have become naturalized as "common-sense". Applying an Orientalist critique to the depictions of Islam in the news media, Said situates this racial, imperialist thinking which still permeates and structures contemporary practices and representations.

Said's (1997) thesis in *Covering Islam* follows the same trajectory as his previous work, holding that the West characterizes Islam in a narrow, fixed and stereotypical way. Said develops the idea that Islam is presented as a threat to the West. He relates, "Present coverage of Islam and of non-Western societies in effect canonizes certain notions, texts, and authorities. The idea that Islam is medieval and dangerous, as well as hostile and

threatening to "us" for example, has acquired a place both in the culture and in the polity that is very well defined…" (p. 157). Further, Islam is considered newsworthy because it is depicted negatively as a threat to Western civilization. Said elaborates:

> What I am saying is that negative images of Islam continue to be very much more prevalent than any others, and that such images correspond not to what Islam "is", but to what prominent sectors of a particular society take it to be. Those sectors have the power and the will to propagate that particular image of Islam, and this image therefore becomes more prevalent, more present, than all others (p. 144).

In the same spirit, Hartley (2002) defines Orientalism as an ideology imbued with binary constructions, "[D]iscoursive conception of the Orient . . . [that] involves a binary opposition that finds the West as central in modern, enlightened thought, and the Orient as the mysterious and often dangerous Other" (p. 170). It is evident that the West prefers to describe itself as stable, familiar and peaceful in comparison with an Orient that is unpredictable and dangerous.

Nieguth and Lacassagne (2009) discuss Quebec nationalism and collective identity in their article entitled, *Contesting the Nation: Reasonable Accommodation in Rural Quebec*. Both authors are political scientists and their line of research locates these constructions of collective identity in the social and political contexts of populism and contested nationalism in Quebec. In particular, they focus on the events which took place in Hérouxville in 2007 establishing the code of conduct. The authors argue that the Hérouxville affair was a manifestation of the fear that dominant Quebecers of this community felt towards immigrants and minorities, especially Muslims. In this context the fears of the "Other" play into the notion of a "Self" whose very identity is under threat and therefore needs to be protected all the more vigorously. They characterize the incident as part of a continuing contestation over the definition of the nation in Quebec.

The article asserts that Quebec once again faces a collective identity crisis. The authors go further to suggest that, "the civic, state-oriented, inclusive habitus" that is told in elite discourses about Quebec's national identity today, is now seeing a rival "habitus" that is positioned against a multiform "Other," especially immigrants and non-Christians" (p. 13). Immigration is clearly forcing Quebec to confront tough questions about redefining its national identity that was once so clearly defined as a coherent *us* of white Quebecois.

Building on the Orientalist framework I invoke the notion of a civilizational discourse because it addresses more specifically the interactions between two groups delineated along civilizational lines. The civilizational discourse is important because it explains the need to 'civilize' an inferior social group. If the latter is not 'civilized' properly they remain a threat to the dominant group.

Arat-Koc (2005) writes about the marginalization of non-white minorities in the wake of 9/11 brought about by the US-led backlash of anti-Islamic sentiment. She notes that after 9/11 a discourse of difference arose along civilizational lines which highlighted the tension and conflict between opposing civilizations, notably that of the West vs. Islam and the Muslim civilization. Arat-Koc introduces the clash of civilization thesis in which conflict between nation-states takes place along fault lines of "culture" or "civilizations" as opposed to the traditional ideological or socio-economic paradigms that reigned during the Cold war era. Arat-Koc contextualizes the principle implication of this thesis, "In political analysis, the main influence of this thesis has been to substitute politics and history with essentialized, decontextualized, and dehistoricized notions of "culture" and "civilization" (p. 34). No longer purely conceived of difference or tension along race, ethnic or religious lines, the civilizational discourse conceives that it is the "West versus

the Rest" (Hall, 1992). According to this thesis, individuals and nation-states identify with civilizational identities which transcend national boundaries, space and time. As alluded to earlier, many Canadians as well as Quebecois identify with the Western civilization. The civilizational discourse holds that the dominant group forces "Other" groups to engage in a process of benevolent "civilizing" as a precondition to integration into the society. This process reassembles the "mission civilizatrice" of the days of colonialism where Europeans saw it as their imposed burden to bring about the "civilizing" of backward colonized people.

One of the primary motives for civilizing revolves around the perceived gender oppression of Muslim women. Hoodfar (1992) notes that colonial imagery of Muslim women and the veil frequently depicted these women as being oppressed victims of their male kin, "The primary mission of these writings was to depict the colonized Arabs/Muslims as inferior/backwards who were urgently in need of progress offered to them by the colonial superiors" (p. 9). In this way Muslim women and men needed to be educated and enlightened by the modern liberal notions of gender equality and progress of Western civilization. As Jiwani (2006) states, "women who voluntarily wear the veil are also perceived as being brainwashed by the patriarchal structures within their communities and thus having no agency" (p. 182).

Adding to this, Hall (1992) characterizes the civilizational discourse within a framework of the "West and the Rest". Hall contends that the Rest becomes defined as everything the West is not, and the "Other" is constructed as the absolute opposite of what the West *is* and *embodies*. Consequently, the West ascribes to itself all favourable attributes and characteristics and projects onto the "Other" everything that is negative.

For example, the notion of *progress* inherent in being "civilized" is the standard that is used to identify other nations or societies as backwards (p. 308). Without the possibility of deconstructing the "Other", the West would be incapable of defining itself at the summit of human history (p. 314).

Jiwani's (2006) work goes further to explain the gendered dimension of the civilizational discourse in what she calls a rescue motif. As passive victims of patriarchal oppression Muslim women must be rescued by the benevolent European colonizers. She explains the logic of the European mindset which dictates that they must "…defend our [their] universal civilization we must rescue the women. To rescue these women we must attack these men. These women will be rescued not because they are more 'ours' than 'theirs' but rather because they will have become more 'ours' through the rescue mission" (p. 181). Muslim women are constructed in this way in order to illustrate the progress and inherent superiority of modern mores of the European civilization. Saving the women justified and indicated the progress made by the European civilization. Moreover there is an ostensible clash of interest and ego between the male actors because the females become the objects of the civilizational conquest, the outcome of which reaffirms Western superiority.

New Racism and a Racialized Discourse within the Print Media

Discourse analysis relates how these representations function within a critical media analytic framework. Founding his arguments on the prior work of Herman and Chomsky (2002), van Dijk (1991) posits that the news media exert a persuasive influence on its readership, ultimately shaping their ideologies and beliefs. By employing a discourse analytic approach, van Dijk is able to show how the structure of the discourse

has political and ideological implications (1991b, p. 110). Discourse analysis emerged during the mid-1970s in diverse disciplines such as anthropology, cognitive and social psychology, linguistics, semiotics and also in the humanities and social sciences. It is a broad field that looks at the systematic study of the organization of text and talk, that is, as written prose and as spoken conversation. The structures and strategies of discourse analytical approaches are related to the social and political context. More specifically, van Dijk's (1991, 1992, 2000) main body of work focuses on the study of news as it appears in newspapers. He analyzes how representations of minorities in the news media function as a racialized discourse without seeming to appear as such. Van Dijk develops the notion of *new racism* (Barker, 1981; van Dijk, 1991) to explain this racialized discourse. Taking a critical, anti-racist perspective, he examines how racism is reproduced in the print news media. His ideological framework shows how discourse, language and communication work together to maintain white dominance in order to "play down the prevalence of racism and to blame its victims for the persistent inequalities" that prevail in society (van Dijk, 1991, p. ix). Van Dijk's work on racism in the press is in part drawn on Barker's (1981) thesis which rests on the notion that "our" ways of life must be protected from difference that threatens the white ethnicity. In this context, new racism is not often characterized as *racism*, rather it usually likened at most to xenophobia or legitimate cultural self-defense (Barker, 1981). According to James (2010), white individuals prefer not to discuss racial and ethnocultural identity and the impact it has, "whites still wrap themselves in their protective cocoon of self-concept and do not consciously explore the extent to which race and ethnicity play a role in their lives" (p. 259).

Van Dijk's (1991) extensive body of research focuses specifically on ethnic minorities in the news print media and illuminates how racism functions and how, in recent years, it has been transformed into a new racism. Many of the every day practices which make up social relations in the public sphere are necessarily racist, but this fact goes unnoticed (van Dijk, 1991). The dominant majority is protected by a veil of ignorance that surrounds the undercurrents of such subtle racialized discourses. To reiterate, especially within Canada, a specific type of racism, *polite racism* exists that enables whites to avoid dealing with race differences so that they do not have to interact directly with racial minority individuals. Doing so would inevitably force whites to acknowledge their race privileges (James, 2010, p. 265).

Moreover, van Dijk (2000) adds that minorities are no longer racialized as an inferior biological species. Whereas the old racism took the form of formalized slavery or apartheid, "The New Racism [*sic*] wants to be democratic and respectable, and hence first off denies that it is racism. Real Racism, in this framework of thought, exists only among the extreme Right" (pp. 33-34). In the new racism, minorities are not biologically different, rather they are seen as culturally or ethnically different. They are viewed as though their cultural traits are different from the norm and hence deviant, whereas whiteness and white privilege is deemed as the preferable racial identity within society. New racism is not as overt as the "white superiority feelings, and of explicit degradation in public discourse and everyday conversation" (pp. 33-34).

Van Dijk (2000) asserts that the new racism occurs on many levels in society such as racist predicates which occur daily in conversations, board meetings, scholarly articles

and news reports in the press. He continues that the new racism differs greatly from the old because:

> They appear mere talk and far removed from the open violence and forceful segregation of the 'old' racism. Yet they may be just as effective to marginalize and exclude minorities. They may hurt even more especially when they seem to be so 'normal', so 'natural', and so commonsensical' to those who engage in such discourse and interaction. They are a form of ethnic hegemony, premised on seemingly legitimate ideologies and attitudes, and often tacitly accepted by most members of the dominant group (p. 34).

In this new form of racism, race is no longer conceived purely as biological traits which used to categorize *difference* between social groups. As van Dijk (1991) further relates, "One of the implications of this transformation of racism into ethnicism[7] is the development of an ideology that recognizes socio-cultural differences between different ethnic groups, but denies differences of power, and hence the dominance of western culture" (p. 28). This is important because Muslim women are stereotyped and racialized because of the visible markers of their cultural and ethnic background. Within the media, differential power is not acknowledged and white normativity is not scrutinized or questioned. Hegemonic institutions like the media are able to signify race through code words such as 'immigrants' and 'foreigners' and speak about Others by their language, ethnic origin and religion (Jiwani, 2006).

Adding to this, Stuart Hall's (1981) work *The Whites of their Eyes* posits how the new racism functions as a set of unquestioned assumptions that become naturalized representations in the news print media. In a more recent work, Hall (1990) defines the depth and complexity of the new racism as inferential racism,"those apparently naturalized representations of events and situations relating to race, whether 'factual' or

[7] *Ethnism* and *ethnicism* describe discrimination based on ethnicity. I employ the latter.

'fictional,' which have racist premises and propositions inscribed in them as a set of unquestioned assumptions. These enable racist statements to be formulated without ever bringing into awareness the racist predicates on which these statements are grounded" (pp. 12-13). In this manner, we can see how inferential racism is related to the common-sense stock of knowledge upon which the reader draws to ascribe a racial element to the text she reads, thereby racializing the discourse. As Jiwani (2006) writes, "[I]n decoding discourses of power and the discourses of domination, the media become a central site of inquiry, in terms of both the particular kinds of representations they deploy and the discursive devices they use to communicate the commonsense stock of knowledge" (pp. 30). Thus, we must decode the media messages in order to understand how race and racism become articulated within the hierarchies of power (p. 31).

In his famous lecture, *Race the Floating Signifier*, Hall (1997) relates that race functions like a language and one can read the physical body as text. He examines the discourse on culture that surrounds race. He contends that by analyzing the narratives woven into the fabric of cultural institutions and practices, we can see the different meanings that are attributed to physical racial differences (p. 2). Muslim women's brown skin is used as a floating signifier to convey race disguised in cultural terms. Hall has developed the notion of race as a floating signifier expressing that race is no longer "a matter of colour, hair and bone [but rather it has become] "a signifier, an empty sign, that is not fixed in its inner nature, that it cannot be secured in its meaning, that it floats in a sea of relational differences…" Thus race can mean many different things beyond the determination of biological features or typology. In other words the interpretation of race may change depending on how the dominant group wishes to represent it.

Racism is still very pervasive in many social institutions and forms a foundation for institutionalized racial hierarchies, such as in the school system, the justice system and the media (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992; Dei & Calliste, 2000; Hall, 1981; van Dijk, 1991; Wing, 2003). We must recognize that racism operates as a system of privileges and advantages (James, 2010) and that structural racism is rooted in the histories and social contexts of the dominant ethnic political authorities that possess power in society. As I have shown, the difference is that racism is no longer treated or conceptualized as *traditional* racism in the minds of people. It is colour-blind racism[8] and it is not as explicit as the mental imagery of black people working the cotton fields, in chains on slave ships or living in racialized ghettos in South Africa during the Apartheid era.

Critical Pedagogy and Anti-Racism: A Conceptual Framework for Critical Media Literacy

Situating the power relations between media imagery and the representations of immigrants and minorities can be applied through critical media literacy in the classroom. An anti-racism framework examines the issues of power and equality in society. It enables students to recognize essentialized imagery and discrimination and at the same time it educates students about the normativity of whiteness and its powerful entrenchment in schools. Anti-racism theorizing seeks to legitimate the experiences of racialized minorities. In academia it works to bring this experience and positionality to the center of academic research agendas. Furthermore, this framework identifies and problematizes pervasive racism in society which underpins many forms of social inequality. As Dei (2000) states, "Anti-racism deals with representation; that is, the need

[8] Colour-blindness according to James (2010) is a belief that a person's race has nothing to do with their experiences and their disadvantages but that their race can effect the choices they make and whether or not they take advantage of the opportunities presented to them (p. 223).

to have multiple voices and perspectives involved in the production of mainstream social knowledge" (p. 34). The dominant consensus tends to silence other voices such as anti-racism advocates who are critical of inequity and unjust privilege based on race. Dei continues, "Anti-racism also examines institutional practices to see how institutions respond to the challenge of diversity and difference; understood as the intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, language, culture and religion" (p. 34). Increasing immigration in Quebec requires the urgent adoption of policies that are sensitive to the unique interests of many immigrants and minorities.

Anti-racism pedagogy builds its origins in critical theory and pedagogy. Critical theory extends back to the beginnings of the Frankfurt School with the work of foundational theorists such as Adorno, Horkeimer, and Fromm, whose work provided the foundation for critical theory of society focusing on inequality in its broadest sense. These theorists in effect paved the way for subsequent critical theorizing by articulating alternate theories critical of the status quo and set forth the nascent contours of a critical sociological research method. As well the Frankfurt school played a crucial role in articulating new ways of understanding how schools are agents that reproduce social and cultural norms and ideologies (Giroux, 2003, in Darder *et al*, pp. 51-52).

In a more contemporary context, critical pedagogy is a philosophy of education that explores the relationship between teaching and learning. Giroux (1983) and Freire (1970) are among the foremost thinkers of critical pedagogical thought and practice. Freire articulated an integral theory grounding social change in his seminal text *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire problematized a pedagogical framework which accounts for the inclusion or acknowledgment of the role of politics, culture and oppression in the

educational space, asserting that social change is political. In addition, in order to highlight an individual's ability to affect change and social transformation Giroux (1983) proposes a mode of analysis that places human agency at the center of human experience, thereby encouraging students to better understand their own agency and their ability to participate in transformative learning (Darder *et al*, 2003, p. 12). The work of Freire (1970) is particularly important because he highlights a *pedagogy that questions*. By developing a critical consciousness we can affect change in our social world along lines which are more human, equal and just.

Critical theory has contributed immeasurably to an understanding of social inequality. It continues to provide the basis for critical pedagogy which engenders theories that are attendant to the need to bring about social change inside of the classroom. However, it must be noted that critical theory is incredibly broad and does not always incorporate more specific or specialized treatments of inequality along multiple and complex social markers of identity. Therefore, like many other traditional Enlightenment-based theories, critical theory becomes problematic because of its tendency toward a patriarchal/male centered, white bias. Anti-racist theory grew out of a necessity for racialized groups to adapt the foundations, methodology and principles of critical theory to their specific needs to combat racial discrimination.

Dei and Calliste (2000) have further pointed out the increasing need for an effective and coherent anti-racist discursive framework in an age of "race neutrality" where "[T]he rush to move beyond race is couched in a denial of racialized positionality of power and privilege" (p. 26). There has been a resurgence of political and academic interests, predominantly of the right-wing, that go as far as calling for the outright

"dismantling of anti-racist programs and initiatives" (p. 26). This is relevant in the context of representations of Muslim women in Quebec, whereby the dominant group refuse to acknowledge the racialized nature of the discourse that is embedded in the debates around reasonable accommodation. Dei and Calliste's work emphasizes the necessary link between theory and practice in order to develop useful pedagogy around race and racialized identities. Moreover, critical media literacy in the classroom appropriately positions an anti-racist discursive framework into applied, "hands-on" practice. This approach teaches students how to become aware and critical of the content and effect of the ideological messages in the media. Critical media literacy is an pedagogy that students can use to understand their social reality in a critical way.

Critical media literacy praxis underpins my thesis work because it serves as a practical application of specific prescriptions to counter the negative imagery in the news print media. Sholle and Denski (1995) posit by recognizing the "Other" we can dismantle dichotomies such as First/Third World and majority/minority: "In order to understand the media, one's self, one's relation to it, one must be able to speak (with a voice) and be able to recognize who is speaking in the media and who is not speaking" (p. 27). By using critical pedagogy in this way we can analyze the epistemological processes at work so that students become aware of how knowledge is constructed within society. I have included theorists whose work discusses how textual analysis can be used as a pedagogical tool to uncover instances of racism and other forms of discrimination (Kellner, 1998; Sholle & Denski, 1995).

I draw on the work of Kellner (1998) for his contributions toward understanding the ways that critical educators should mentor students so that they may empower

themselves. This effort toward empowerment will help students become less susceptible to the more negative effects of the news print media. Moreover, in *Multiple Literacies and Critical Pedagogy in a Multicultural Society*, Kellner argues for the importance of expanding the parameters of the conceptual definition of the public sphere in an attempt to account for the effects of popular culture and new media technologies. He articulates that the meanings and messages embedded in media representations are underpinned by a discursive framework that is structured hierarchically. At first glance, it is not easy to understand how the media determine the views we have of varying social groups, our gender roles of masculinity and femininity, along with distinguishing between right and wrong, good and bad (p. 109).

Hence, the media should be viewed as a form of pedagogy and socialization because they shape our attitudes and behavior and provide us with essential cultural and political information about our world (Kellner, 1998, p. 109). On this point, contextualizing how the news print media are understood within an educative framework requires analyzing the social production of knowledge within a liberal democratic society. Kellner notes that students must understand the persuasive rhetoric transmitted by the media:

> Grasping the construction of difference and hierarchy in media texts requires learning how they are constructed, how they communicate and metacommunicate, and how they influence their audiences. Textual and semiotic analysis of media artifacts helps to reveal their codes and conventions, their values and ideologies, and thus their meanings and messages (p. 107).

The work of Kellner (1998) is useful in understanding how I may apply the methods and analysis of my findings to a practical application within Quebec classrooms. The younger generation of Quebecers that has grown up with pervasive media in many

new forms is even more affected than previous generations. As well, many images of racialized immigrants and minorities in the media are consumed by students who ultimately internalize the ideological content of the representations. These particular representations include messages and agendas that affect the way the dominant youth conceive of their *Quebec* identity and how "Others" *relate* to this identity. This is especially true regarding representations which influence conceptions of citizenship and belonging. Furthermore, I emphasize the role of *conscientization* (Freire, 1970) to enable students to become aware and resist the racist or exclusionary messages of certain media representations. My conceptual framework forms an analytical tool which students can use to develop their critical media literacy skills that take into account their race/ethnicity, gender and class identities. In this way, critical media literacy provides the pedagogical framework in which this analytical tool may most effectively be taught to the students.

In their work *Rethinking Media Literacy*, Sholle and Denski (1995) have linked cultural studies with critical pedagogy in order to develop a critical consciousness that conceptualizes media literacy as a political, social and cultural practice (p. 17). Media praxis is aptly defined as combining *reflection with action* in the following way: "Praxis refers to self-creative activity through which men and women create (make, produce) and change (shape) the historical human world and themselves. Praxis includes an element of critique of existing historical conditions and an element of possibility for reworking those conditions" (p. 11).

Additionally, Sholle and Denski (1995) deconstruct the common-sense ideological structure of the news print media. They describe a process which parallels the

objective of my critical textual analysis by uncovering the hidden meaning and what is supposed to pass quietly into accepted knowledge as *common-sense*. They assert, "It is in this introduction to media hegemony that a full array of rupturing practices, processes of demythologizing and denaturalizing—that is the processes of making the invisible visible—are undertaken" (p. 22). In order to understand the media, one's self, one's relation to it, one must be able to speak (with a voice) and be able to recognize who is speaking in the media and who is not speaking" (p. 27). Quebec students must begin to understand who speaks for the dominant group, and who is left out or represented in ways that serve the purposes of domination. If students do not become *critically aware*, they remain passive receptacles who blindly believe the ideological content inscribed in the news print media.

Adding to this, Sholle and Denski (1995) argue that in this pedagogical project, white students must invert their social reality to reflect on how racialized minorities and immigrants may view Quebecois whiteness as a position of privilege and normativity (p. 27). Hoodfar (1992) explains that Quebec students must become more aware of certain taken-for-granted perceptions about the veil worn by Muslim girls who may in fact be fellow classmates, "The assumption that the 'veil' equals 'ignorance' and 'oppression' has meant that young Muslim women have to invest a considerable amount of energy in establishing themselves as thinking, rational, literate students/persons, both in their classrooms and outside" (p. 5).

In what ways must students become aware of the news print media's validity, question its objectivity and essentially become more *literate* about what they consume in an effort to understand how it affects them? What factors influence the news print media

establishment and the practice of journalism? Which theorists' work can provide a solid foundation of critical analysis which would enable students to uncover hidden, implied meanings in the news print text? I will now turn to an application of the discourses within the context of the representations of Muslim women in Quebec society beginning with critical race feminism that accounts for the positionality of Muslim women within the news print media.

CHAPTER THREE:
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: MEDIA, FRAMING AND RACIALIZED REPRESENTATION

This chapter explores how harmful representations of Muslim women are formulated in the news print media. Muslim women are represented in five principle ways: (1) essentialized as passive female victims of Islamic patriarchy; (2) as a racialized minority; (3) represented as a threat to Quebec society; (4) as passive victims in need of rescuing; (5) assigned the blame for not properly integrating into society. I begin by discussing critical race feminism to better understand the negative portrayals of females who face discrimination along lines of race, ethnicity, gender and religion.The second section argues that Quebecois possess a considerable power to represent Muslim women as an "Other", setting the terms of the discourse. The remaining sections elaborate the five principle ways that the news print media portray Muslim women.

How often are readers aware that the text they are reading contains subtle ideological content which may influence and shape their attitudes towards Muslim women? Seldom do readers think of their newspaper as a social institution constitutive of a site of knowledge production that perpetuates the status quo. By critically analyzing the content and composition we can unlock the ideological propositions embedded in the news text. I contend that the ideological assumptions form and reinforce the attitudes and preconceived notions of the readership in Quebec, in effect determining how they view Muslim women. The power to represent another social group through means such as *essentialization* reveals the contours of the power relations between the Muslim women and the dominant group. Quebecois set out what is considered normal and acceptable and what is not. Ultimately my research aims to show that the dominant group, from a

position of superiority and dominance, are free to represent Muslim women as an inferior, passive racialized group, with no voice or agency for self-representation.

As I discussed above, Orientalism underpins the more specific analysis of the representations in the news print media. The discourse lays out how the West views, constructs and defines the East (Orient), or Islam in this case. In broad terms an *us* vs. *them* construct is set in place wherein the West constructs its identity as the Self through the deconstruction of the "Other". What must be scrutinized is the claim that the West simply defines the Orient in an unbiased, neutral and objective manner. Our understanding and preconceived mindsets of what constitutes a Muslim identity must be deconstructed to problematize these conceptions and ask why they are represented in the ways that they are.

Critical Race Feminism

Critical race feminism transcends the inherent limitations of traditional race-based or gender-based theoretical frameworks. Pioneer race-feminists, such as Wing (2003), Crenshaw (1994), Grillo (1995) and Collins (1990), developed critical race feminism to postulate and critique the racism and discrimination within society and its institutions. It provides a theoretical tool in which the needs and identities of women of colour take a more central position in the academic dialogue. Whereas Orientalism is a broad theory that posits the inherent power relations between two abstract worlds, the West and its general *essentialization* of the East/Orient, critical race feminism specifies the cultural/religious location of the particular experience of women of colour along race, class and gender lines. Notions such as antiessentialism and multiplicative theory of oppression deconstruct the essentialized nature of the representations of Muslim women

in the articles on reasonable accommodation. Wing (1997) explains that critical race feminism:

> [A]dds to critical race theory and feminism by placing women of color at the center, rather than in the margins or foot-notes of the analysis. It attacks the notion of the essential woman, i.e., white middle class, and explores the lives of those facing multiple discrimination the basis of their race, gender, and class, thereby revealing how all of these factors interact within a system of white male patriarchy and racist oppression (p. 341).

Furthermore, Wing (2003) explains that critical race feminism has not joined the mainstream feminist movement because the latter essentializes all women and therefore "subsumes the variable experiences of women of color under the experience of white middle-class women" (p. 7). It is important to unpack universalist notions that claim to speak for all women, yet fail to consider the limitations of race or class-based perspectives. James (2010) defines the term in the following way, "[E]ssentialism is the notion that certain traits or behaviours of racial, ethnic, cultural, or even gendered groups are both fixed and universal, hence not allowing for variations among individuals, within groups, or over time" (p. 49).

Likewise Stasiulis (1999) writes, "[E]ssentialism links racism to skin colour rather than to the structural location of particular groups in concrete and historically specific social relations and to the accompanying discourses that aid in the processes of denigration, subordination, and exploitation" (p. 367). Therefore essentialization becomes a powerful means of controlling and circumscribing an identity, which strips Muslim women of their voice and agency. They are shown to be one-dimensional victims whose skin colour is an attendant symbol of cultural oppression. Thus in the minds of Quebecois, veiled Muslim women's identity are fixed, unchanging and static (James,

2010). The skin colour is important in the process of representation as a powerful symbolic marker of difference—the *racial* difference between the white Self and brown "Other". Muslim women who have brown skin and appear Middle Eastern or Arab are racialized on the basis of their skin colour.

Integral to critical race feminism is the idea that identity, like race, is fluid and always changing. It is not a static or fixed entity of human experience; it is constantly being reformulated according to changing social and historical circumstances and factors (Hall, 1997). Within this process of identity construction, women of colour experience racism as a central feature of their existence. The discrimination an individual faces because of her race/ethnicity, culture, gender, class or religion, shapes the way in which she is socially stratified and viewed within society. In turn, this becomes articulated in a hierarchical relationship with those with privilege, status and dominant social positioning at the top, relegating the "Others" to a position of subordinance.

Like all other identities, Muslim women's lived experiences compound and overlap in time and space and the act of veiling encompasses much more than the perception provided by the news media. The practice of veiling, according to Hoodfar (1992) is a social institution capable of reformulating and changing the social, economic and political concerns women have in their respective societies. The veil functions as a visible marker that can be emancipatory and liberating as well as, in some societies, patriarchal and oppressive. It communicates in order to challenge the status quo, express resistance, and stimulate social change (Hoodfar, 2003). Veiling has a long history. The reasons for veiling have changed according to different political, social or religious

circumstances. These must be considered in order to understand its multifarious nature, countering the one-dimensional portrayal of religious-based gender oppression.

Moreover, a critical race feminist approach to the news article selection sets aside the notion of a "generic" or "universal" female and considers Muslim Quebecers from an intersectional analysis. Critical race feminism critically examines identity as it "intersects" with one's race/ethnicity, gender, class, and religion. In essence, multiplicative identity contrasts with the essentialism inherent in the representations. It shows how the religious paradigm functions in the racialized discourse to essentialize and subsume Muslim women's experience as predominantly religious. The reasonable accommodation debates turned into a debate over religious expression and what is deemed acceptable in the public sphere and more broadly about belonging and citizenship. Here then, *cultural identity* was assumed to be *race*. In the context of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission Mookerjea (2009) relates:

> I want to describe this familiar aspect of the declaration's communicative force—where signifiers of ''culture'' serve as a racializing code—with the following formula or pragmatic rule: We speak of culture and it—the signifier—means ''race.'' I propose to call this the spectral effect of the old nineteenth-century racisms as they return as culture in effect, image, stereotype, and sense (p. 4).

What constitutes the image, stereotype and sense can be clearly seen in the news print media. By *racializing* culture, it is waged as a cultural struggle in the mass media within a coded language that speaks as cultural differences instead of race. Furthermore Razack (1998) posits that cultural differences serve a similar purpose as the more biological notion of race used to, that is, in order to mark inferiority (p. 19). Without the theory of multiplicative identity, which I will explain shortly, we

cannot fully understand the layered nature of the oppression Muslim experience in relation to Quebecois dominance.

Further, a critical feminist theory is an intersectional theory that builds on the interdependence of "matrices of domination" (Collins, 1990; p. 225). It offers a theoretical lens in which to politicize personal experience, particularly the experiences of women of colour. Wing's conception of multiplicative identities is similar in many ways to Crenshaw's (1994) theory of intersectionality. Crenshaw asserts that intersectionality addresses "the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at a woman's race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately" (p. 94). Intersectionality explores the ways in which race and gender *intersect* in shaping structural and political aspects of *discrimination* against Muslim women in the news print media. Furthermore, Crenshaw's work explains the manner in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression and other discriminatory systems create "background inequalities that structure the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities and classes" (p. 95).

Wing (2003) further posits the need for intersectionality to understand that women of colour have race and gendered identities that are located on multiple grounds within a complex history that fold over nonlinearly in time and space. The representations of Muslim women are more harmful then they appear because on closer analysis we see that the oppressive nature is *multiplacative* instead of additive. She relates, "I use the term *multiplicative identity* to describe the concept that women of color are not merely white women *plus* color or men of color *plus* gender. Instead, their identities must be multiplied together to create a holistic One when analyzing the nature of the

discrimination against them" (p. 7, original emphasis). Stasiulis (1999) cogently relates that we need to move beyond the race-gender-class trinity but still make race a priority in our academic analyses:

> The salience of ethnic, nationalist, and religious types of belonging and divisions in affecting the status, wellbeing, and identities of different collectivities of women requires new approaches to theorizing intersectionality than are captured by the triadic interconnections among race, gender, and class, or in frameworks that contain other social divisions (sexuality, disability, etc.) but which prioritize race (p. 370).

So although the predominant black/white essentialist dialogue is primarily critical of whiteness, it still silences the relationship among "Others" who do not fit into either category. Jhappen (1996) notes that the black/white binary has a tendency to theorize racism in polarities and in this way race essentialist positions are unable to deal with "hyphenated-identities and hybrid realities" (p. 50). Bi-racial and multi-racial women of colour are situated at particular positions in the racial hierarchy and the black/white dichotomy that race essentialists invoke fail to adequately consider the existence of a racial hierarchy.

As an illustration, Wing and Smith (2006) conducted an informative case study into the headscarf ban in France in 2004. Bringing together the concepts of anti-essentialism, intersectionality and multiplicative theory, this study sheds light on the multiple and intersectional features of discrimination that Muslim women face in a Western, democratic and industrialized nation. Wing concludes in her study that Muslim female views cannot be essentialized because they range across a wide spectrum from those strongly in favor of the headscarf ban to those strongly opposed to it (p. 749). There are many "intersecting" reasons why Muslim females would choose to veil. Wing and

Smith note the following, “personal religious conviction, freedom of religion, acceptance as a good Muslim female, compliance with family values, neutralization of sexuality and protection from harassment from Muslim males and individual choice or religious or cultural identity” (p. 759). Likewise, Hoodfar (2003) researches veiling in the context of Muslim girls in Quebec classroom and asserts that “veiling is a lived experience full of contradictions and multiple meanings” (p. 15). While veiling is seen predominantly as an oppressive mechanism of patriarchy, Hoodfar (1992) argues that that Muslim women have used the same “social institution” to freely express themselves and advance their political emancipation.

Jiwani’s (2006) recent work *Discourses of Denial: Mediations of race, gender and violence* examines how the structures of power and privilege reinforce social relations especially around gender and race. She posits that society functions within an historical legacy of dominance and colonization (p. 4). Using anti-racist feminist frameworks, Jiwani teases out the invisibility that institutions, such as the mass media, function within. She argues that the mass media is permeated by structures of white dominance and sheds light on how inequity is experienced by racialized women of colour. This work is particularly important to my research because she explores the complex and contradictory ways that *difference* is articulated and thought about in the creation of news media representations. By focusing on how race and gender intersect in the “economy of representations”, we will understand more clearly how the hierarchies of power subtlety persuade us to see racialized groups, particularly Muslim women more negatively. This view has come to develop a mindset that consciously and unconsciously works to layer racist assumptions that we internalize as acceptable on a daily basis.

Power to Represent and Setting Terms of Discourse

Said's (1979) analysis of the ways in which a dominant group is able to establish itself as an all-knowing interpreter of the Orient forms the backdrop against which contemporary policies and practices such as the Bouchard-Taylor Commission are articulated. Both Bouchard and Taylor are white, male academics who have been criticized for delimiting the discourse in ways which Quebec denies the existence of new forms of racism (*cf.* Mahrouse, 2010; Sharify-Funk, 2010).[9] Put another way, Bouchard and Taylor fail to critique the institutional structures that underpin racial inequality. In doing so, racialized immigrants and minorities along with whole communities are constructed and given legitimacy through the gaze of the white, Quebecois. Within the news media, the latter group set the limits of the reasonable accommodation debates when they present a superior subject position regarding themselves as the ones who unquestionably belong and simultaneously determine who else is deemed acceptable to belong. This phenomenon is defined as a process of positive self-presentation by van Dijk (1992):

> …in text and talk about ethnic or racial minorities, many white people follow a double strategy of positive self-presentation, on the one hand, and a strategy of expressing subtle, indirect or sometimes more blatant forms of negative other-presentation, on the other hand. Indeed, especially in public discourse, outgroup derogation seldom takes place without expressions of ingroup favouritism or social face-keeping (p. 89).

The reasonable accommodation debates conceived of Islam as irrational, backward and static. These characteristics disallow an accurate account of the complex,

[9] Choudry *et al* (2008) write, "The invisible, systemic forms of racism perpetuated by the state through the implementation of the Bouchard-Taylor commission are far more serious than the more blatant forms of racist expression that have been heard in it. At the heart of this issue is the unquestioned exaltation of the white French or English speaker as the "true" Canadian/Québécois and associated claimed rights of state processes for determining who can or cannot belong according to perceived differences of values" (p. 16).

dynamic and multifarious nature that Islam embodies in many different countries and societies (Said, 1997, pp. 44-45). As Said (1997) relates, "For Muslims as for non-Muslims, Islam is an objective and also a subjective fact, because people create that fact in their faith, in their societies, histories, and traditions, or, in the case of non-Muslim outsiders, because they must in a sense fix, personify, stamp the identity of that which they feel confronts them collectively or individually" (p. 44). In this way, Quebecois appropriate and determine what Islam "really" is, in their attempt to confront what they hold as a threat to their identity. Thus from the position of this subjective perspective the dominant group imposes the terms and controls the discourse. The way in which Quebec society essentializes women says much about the needs and agenda of their own identity. By representing Muslim women as foreign, non-white immigrants who do not belong, the homogenous in-group identity of Quebecois is strengthened.

Likewise, in the Quebec context the power to represent the "Other" plays an integral role in the affirmation and validation of the dominant group's identity. For centuries the Anglophones in Quebec, as well as in the rest of Canada, were perceived as the "principle Other" against which the Quebecois constructed their identity. Today the role of "principle Other" has shifted onto immigrant and minority groups. Anglophones occupy a lower profile as they have changed to fit new post-1970s Quebec. The contemporary construct of the Self requires the existence of immigrants as "Others". This process forms an integral part of the current identity reformulation of "soul-searching".

Akin to the power to represent is the power to set the terms of the discourse and ultimately determine who is "tolerated". Quebecois are able to set the terms of the discourse by defining and legitimating their control of political, social and cultural space.

The dominant group operates from a position of entitlement that immigrants and minorities do not have. Quebecois ground this entitlement in their superior sense of ownership, historical and cultural belonging to "Quebec" and the land. The dominant group feels justified in determining the terms of inclusion of citizenship. The clearly defined group of legitimate citizens then provides the foundation for the structure of who "tolerates" and who is "tolerated".

Legitimate claims of belonging and ownership, and thus claims to citizenship, have broad and far reaching implications in the cultural, political and social space of Quebec. These considerations have been a major preoccupation in historical interpretation of Quebec history that goes back to the first *colons français*. Ownership of space is inextricably linked to claims of belonging and setting the terms of inclusion. Being able to trace lineage and occupation for many centuries has engendered a distinct sense of ownership over all of Quebec by the dominant group.

When two spaces, a "here" where we belong and are in charge, and a "there", i.e. wherever immigrants come from, these notions of ownership may apply. It is easier to make references about how *they* should go back if they do not like it here regardless of how long they may have been living in Quebec. Secondly, the ownership of space contributes to the prevailing sentiment that "you are only here because we tolerate your existence and it has to be on our terms, if not go home to where you belong". At best it is an exercise of benevolent "tolerance" by the dominant group. The sense of ownership and control of the space is echoed by Mahrouse (2010) who writes about the reasonable accommodation debates:

> It was the invisible and inaudible ways in which positions of superiority and hierarchy were reinforced. The superior subject position of Quebecois was reinforced as they came to think of themselves not only as the ones that unquestionably belonged, but also as the ones who could determine who else could and could not belong (p. 89).

Essentializing Muslim Women

The most predominant form of representation is the *essentialization* of Muslim women's experience, along with their religion and cultural practices. For example, the representations of the veil stressed its inherent symbolism of religion and gender inequality. At the same time such a portrayal emphasizes how Muslim women clash with Quebec society's values of *secularism* and *gender equality*. There is a reason why the media offers no balanced treatment of the veil. They fail to identify its cultural functions or discuss the fact that many Muslim females who wear it do so by choice. In this way Muslim women are portrayed as diametrically opposed to the values of Quebec society. They pose a threat which reflects how the *racialization* of the discourse functions. By essentializing the veil, it clearly illuminates the subtle contours of the racial dimension of the discourse. As elaborated above, the Orientalist discourse explains how these representations buttress the preconceived notions and negative imagery of Muslim women as the "Other" identifiable by virtue of their brown skin.

All Muslims are labeled, judged and categorized without differentiation. Likewise no attempt is made to reconcile the vast comparable diversity in a religion spread throughout countless countries and societies. With 1.5 billion Muslims in the world, Islamic religious and cultural practices vary considerably (Pew Research Center, 2009). In some cases the veil does in fact reinforce widespread patriarchy; however it has also been used as a means to bring about change and progress for women in a vast number of

ways (Bullock, 1999; Hoodfar, 1992, 2003). The veil is not exclusively a religious entity; it has multiple meanings that depend on the values and beliefs of the Muslim who wears one. As a widespread cultural practice, veiling can be interpreted as both a religious and political symbol but in the context of the news media the dominant representations evoke Islamic fundamentalism as well as female subordination to women's empowerment and equality (Hoodfar, 1992). The news articles would fixate on the niqab as though it were a symbol of something threatening, whether that be culturally, religiously or politically (Bullock, 1999; Hoodfar, 1992; Wing & Smith, 2006). Both the *Gazette* and *La Presse* seemed unable to consider the many different meanings the veil has for women in the context of Western society.

The dominant group continues to regard Muslim women who veil in the same traditional static colonial imagery of the past (Hoodfar, 2003; Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 1998). This view does not consider the progress and change that has been made over the decades. This is related to the idea of difference. It is easier to gloss over the fact that most Muslims are not fundamentalists. This fact contradicts the entrenched categories and stereotypes rampant in the Orientalism of the post-9/11 discourse between the West and Muslim countries that support terrorism. In the media coverage of reasonable accommodation Muslim women were often presented in an essentializing manner during the lead-up to the provincial election. They were portrayed as if a great number would show up to vote wearing a veil. This was particularly the case with respect to the reaction toward the *niqab,* the most complete covering of the woman's face. It seemed that this image of the niqab applied to all Muslim women; this was problematic given the small percentage of Muslim women who wear the veil, let alone the niqab in Quebec. To be

sure, the prominent associations in the Quebecois mind regarding veiled Muslim women is that of being oppressed, passive, traditionalist or backward.

Essentializing the identity of Muslim women is not only a form of racism, but also a form of social domination and control. As the white dominant group, Quebecois set the terms of the discourse which influences how important considerations, such as race, identity and citizenship, are ultimately defined and represented. If Muslim women spoke for their own representation they would assert the fact that only a small minute percentage actually wear the niqab and that wearing the veil is not necessarily *oppressive* with respect to their relationship with men. (*cf.* Bullock, 1999; Hoodfar, 1992, 1999; Wing & Smith, 2006).

Essentializing Muslim women shows a lack of willingness to understand the experience of Muslims and the nature of Islam as a religion. In relation to the process of positive self-presentation, it is always easier to present the "Other" in a negative light if there is limited general knowledge on the part of the dominant group that is necessary to counter prejudicial representations. As well, it is easier to downplay the positive aspects of Muslims and the shared similarities they have with Quebecers such as family, values, hopes and community aspirations.

Muslim Women as a Racialized Minority

Some Quebecois are quick to point out their democratic values of equality and strict laws that prohibit any type of explicit racism or discrimination. They deny that they are racist, and they would reject claims that representations in the news media of Muslim women are racialized or racist in nature. Indeed, they ascribe to themselves the attributes

of "democratic and tolerant" which supports an image of benevolence and acceptance toward the "Other". As I will discuss later in my findings, I found that this was the prevailing mindset among academics and political leaders who were reluctant to acknowledge that the reasonable accommodation debates could be *racially*-based.

Muslim women are effectively *racialized*[10] as a minority group and therefore categorized as outside of the dominant conversation within the news articles. Therefore they are not accorded the right to have a voice to determine their views on the issues. They are treated as objects to be dealt with as opposed to legitimate subjects who participate in the discussion. The fact that Muslim women are seen as different because of their religion or discriminated against because of their gender, excludes *racism* as any grounds for discrimination. Along with the media, the public vehemently refuted accusations of racism; their argument holds that they are not treating their *race* but other socio-cultural aspects such as their "different culture". Choudry *et al* (2008) poignantly relate that the "true" Quebecois is seen to be a white French or English speaker who has the requisite right to participation in state processes, "for determining who can and cannot belong according to perceived differences of values" (p. 16).

How does the discourse become racialized in the context of a predominantly white society where the values and norms of the dominant group reflect white normativity? Hage (2000) explains that whiteness is a "fantasy position" and by possessing the "correct" physical characteristics, in-group membership is sustained in the

[10] Dei (2000) aptly characterizes the process of racialization in the following way: "Racialization of society and its subjects distinguishes and subjects social groups to differential and unequal treatment on the basis of supposedly biological, phenotypical and cultural characteristics…The new social markers or indicators of difference are evident in the discourse of language, politics, culture, religion and social difference" (p. 27).

same way as the Eurocentric discourses of Western civilization escape necessary scrutiny and critical analysis. Consequently, the boundaries of whiteness are in part defined through a civilizational discourse that relies on deemphasizing difference in order to construct the new racism we see in the press.

Moreover, whiteness functions as an invisible, non-raced identity that is interpreted as common-sense on the part of the white individual (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008; Clarke & Garner, 2010; Dei, 2000). I have asserted that Quebecois identify with the Western white race and this informs how they interact with Muslim women. However this identification occurs on a mostly subconscious level because real *de souche* Quebecois are, for the most part, all descended from white European stock. They do not see their whiteness consciously, rather it is the subtle norm against which Muslim women are measured as different, and hence inferior, because of their skin colour. Substantiating this assertion, Clarke and Garner (2010) state, "The argument is not that whiteness is actually invisible but that it appears so unmarked to the majority of white people that in their eyes it does not function as a *racial* or ethnic identity…the process of constructing whiteness as normal and otherness as abnormal occurs through selective understandings of culture as static" (pp. 39, 41). Differences between cultural identity and values are drawn along racial lines and the subtle forms of racism serve to illustrate the power relations inherent in the discourse.

Muslim Women represented as a Threat

As I explained above, a fundamental tenant of the Orientalist framework holds that the West enjoys a position of unquestioned superiority while relegating the Orient to a position of inferiority. Such binaries play a critical role in reinforcing and legitimating

social inequality. The superior position of the dominant group goes unquestioned because the justification for protection of its distinct language and culture trumps the needs of "Other" cultural and ethnic groups.

The feeling that Quebecois culture is under a threat is nothing new. For centuries Quebec has felt disempowered, marginalized, ignored by the rest of Canada, living under a constant threat of assimilation or dilution. Quebecois identity continues to be heavily contested and the news print media effectively construct the boundaries between this *us* vs. *them* distinction. This treatment substantiates the view that Quebec's cultural heritage is under threat from an "Other". Here the "Other" is portrayed as unwilling to accommodate the traditions of the majority and, at the same time, demanding accommodation for its own values and traditions (Hall, 1990; Jiwani, 2006; van Dijk, 1991). In this way, it is a common sentiment that the foreignness and difference poses a direct threat to the cultural integrity of Quebecois.

As I elaborated above, Muslim women are essentialized in particular ways which portray them as a threat to the progressive gains enjoyed by Quebec society. The news print media are aware that Quebecois will react with hostility toward Muslim women if the former detect a threat to their secular state. Muslim women who insist on wearing a veil when voting for example, fail to respect the most elementary rules of democracy and are deemed a threat to the democratic process. Especially in this post-9/11 climate of fear, Muslims are frequently portrayed as enemies of democracy who come from fundamentalist and totalitarian regimes and must be both contained and controlled.

In the same manner, Muslim women are also perceived to be gender oppressed by their religion and culture. Quebec fought long and hard to get rid of gender oppression and anything deemed as religious poses a distinct threat to the hard-won secularism of the society. Evacuating religious symbols from the public sphere demonstrates Quebec's progress and commitment to modernity. In many ways Muslim women are perceived to erode these fundamental values and the existence of a defined and imminent threat spurs moral panic as a reaction to the fear that immigrants and minorities weaken the moral fabric of society (Clarke & Garner, 2010; Jiwani, 2006).

When the news print media highlight controversial and oppressive cultural practices of Islam, such as stoning, it strikes the moral or emotional nerves of the populace. An imminent threat which justifies moral panic is based on a moral sense of what is *right*, in terms of the dominant group's sensibilities and attitudes. As Clarke and Garner (2010) illustrate relating to the fear of invasion or dilution, "…we not only have people who are going to flood the country moving from outside to inside, but also these people may destroy us from within" (p. 133). There are often particular moral overtones that are supported by images or language of deviance of the "Other" (Jiwani, 2006). That is, Muslims like many immigrants or minorities, are inherently morally deviant and not upstanding citizens. This is particularly true with some of the moral codes that practices such as stoning elicit in the population, as evidenced by Hérouxville's code of conduct.

The portrayal of Muslim women as a threat necessitates immediate action. By threatening the social order immigrants are stereotyped as not following the normative rules because they want to adhere to their own social codes. There is often a type of alarmist urgency that accompanies the representation of threats. There arises an urge to

contain and control the threat before it becomes unmanageable. This view favours a rash and emotionally-charged reaction as opposed to a calm and rational dialogue with the "Other".

Furthermore, the way Quebecois see themselves has an impact on why they perceive immigrants as a threat. According to Dumont (1996), "an ethos of chronic inferiority has resulted in an inability on the part of francophone Quebecois to foster an open and trusting relationship with difference because they exhibit a negative self-awareness" (p. 324). As members of a minority this insecurity appears at different levels ranging from anxiety over values, language, traditions and customs, as well as collective memory and identity.

It has been claimed this identity-related anxiety that once targeted Anglophones on the basis of language has shifted to focus on immigrants and racial minorities on the basis of religious difference. Nieguth and Lacassagne (2009) write:

> [In Quebec], fears of the Muslim "Other" have certainly played a role in the assertion of a national *habitus* that distinguishes between "Us" and "Them" primarily on the basis of religious affiliation and secondarily on the basis of language. Fears of the "Other" play into the notion of a "Self" whose very identity is under threat and therefore needs to be protected all the more vigorously (p. 10). [original emphasis]

How the dominant group's identity is asserted, reaffirmed, negotiated in the cultural or social discourses at play in contemporary Quebec society has an impact on how they represent "Others".

Muslim Women as Passive Victims

The West assumes the responsibility of a distinct "civilizing" function "in order to rescue the women from their brown brothers and husbands and the patriarchal clutches of

the men" (Jiwani, 2006, p. 34). In this way, it reinforces a sense of agency that contrasts with the passivity of the one being "rescued". As well, the dominant group claims an inherent sense of superiority because they must rescue, educate, and civilize the backwards "Other". Quebec society views Muslim women as passive victims who are in need of rescuing. The rescue motif (Jiwani, 2006) speaks to the perceived necessity by the dominant group to address the tradition-bound existence and the oppression Muslim women face. The object of rescue, always a woman of colour, must be saved from the primitive and savage ways of her cultural traditions (Razack, 1998). This perspective is bound up by a civilizational discourse between these two groups. The *modern* Quebecois are in a superior position to rescue Muslim women from their barbaric and oppressive husbands and brothers. As I discussed earlier Quebecois regard Muslim women as being mistreated by their male kin (Hoodfar, 1992, 2003). Moreover Razack (1998) speaks of the veiled woman as an "arch symbol of Southern inferiority" and when this symbol appears in the news as an oversimplified cultural practice, it becomes a marker of difference that identifies Asian women both in East and the West as women that need to be saved by benevolent, civilized Europeans (p. 7).

With the aid of oversimplified, binary representations Quebecois have been able to appropriate the meaning and essence of Muslim women's experience. In this way they control the discourse by speaking for Muslim women and denying them voice and agency. Muslim women cannot counter the prevailing portrayals of the veil as backward and oppressive. Quebecois determine the value and essence of the veil through the prism of their common-sense standards of "progress", "civilized" and "modern". Thus, the rules of the game are unfairly fixed and the playing field is not even. The Western gaze

maintains its position of the inferior "Other", thereby continuously *remaking* the Orient in the idealized image of Western standards.

Ironically this phenomenon hearkens back to the centuries of "mission civilizatrice" of the European tradition, yet Quebec has always claimed that it was the colonized and subjugated people. However, certain notions of the colonial and post-colonial theories are applicable here in that the minorities, i.e. those that have to be "integrated/accommodated", which may be likened to "civilized", will never be able to achieve the requisite "Quebecness" necessary for full inclusion into the dominant group. Muslim women must unequivocally adopt Quebec's values and way of life as a necessary precondition for acceptance and inclusion.

Rescuing the "Other" is directly tied to commonsense notions of modernity and progress in Quebec. It affirms their history and experience and emancipation as an historically oppressed people. In addition Quebec women feel that they need to educate "their sisters" about their rights and about what progress really is. It is more difficult for Quebec women to see Muslim women who wear the veil as being emancipated and enjoying the same modern rights and freedoms as in Quebec society. As Mahrouse (2010) cogently relates, "[T]he image of the veiled woman has long been captivating to the western imagination because she epitomizes the oppressive practices of the Muslim world, thereby enabling westerners to understand themselves as liberated and perhaps more importantly, as liberators" (p. 92). Hoodfar (1992) explains this phenomenon best when she draws from her personal experience in Canada faced with this racism and prejudice:

> [A]ll members of the Muslim community, and in particular veiled women, are suffering the psychological and socio-economic consequences of these views. This situation has created a high level of anger and frustration in response to the deliberate racism toward Muslims in Canada and the unwillingness, despite ample examples, to let go of old colonial images of passive Muslim women (p. 5).

This refusal on the part of the dominant group to let go of a static image of Muslim women as oppressed passive victims furthers the divisions and perpetuates the status quo. Implicit in this civilizing agenda are the value-judgments based in secularism and modernism of Quebec identity. Muslim women are viewed as immigrants in need of rescuing for their own good, as opposed to an *object* used by Quebecois to reaffirm their identity and assert their superiority.

Muslim Women Blamed for not Integrating

Muslim women are frequently blamed by Quebecois for not integrating into Quebec society and not adopting Quebec's values and way of life. Quebecois argue that Quebec is a tolerant society toward minorities. Quebec frequently depicts itself as an open, democratic and acceptant society that embraces immigrants, encourages them to participate in all aspects of civic life. By law, all immigrants enjoy the same rights of equality and freedom from discrimination that all other citizens enjoy.

By placing the blame on immigrants' inability to integrate into Quebec society, Quebecois are able to absolve themselves of any responsibility and refute accusations of intolerance or racism. This reversal of blame enables Quebecois to mask their inner difficulties with difference, their anxiety and inferiority complex due to their experience as a threatened and marginalized people (Dumont, 1996). By blaming the victim they are able to reinforce their self-presentation of tolerance and benevolence. As Mahrouse (2010) relates, "Quebecois lamented the loss of the mythical days when Quebec identity

was untainted by the threat of cultural differences; in response members of immigrant and minority communities were expected to sooth such fears" (p. 89). Again we see that the responsibility to change, adapt and integrate begins with immigrants. They are expected to become sensitive to the exigencies of life in Quebec and to adapt as necessary. They should not question the legitimacy of the project of *Quebecization* of the Quebec collectivity (Letourneau, 2004).

Quebecois argue that it is in the interest of the protection of their distinct language and culture that various policies, such as Bill 101, must take priority over the needs and interests of immigrants and minorities. However, they do not always realize that these policies ultimately reinforce their position of dominance and white normativity. Van Dijk (1991) asserts, "One of the main strategies of the ideological framework keeping white dominance in place is precisely to deny or play down the prevalence of racism and to blame its victims for the persistent inequalities that are its outcome" (p. ix). These beliefs and ideologies are apparent in the news making process. In essence, the Quebec news print media does not want to be racist any more than it wishes to portray Quebec society as intolerant or racist.

What is more, immigrants have to justify their presence in order to earn the validation and approval of the dominant group. Mahrouse (2010) states, "The process followed a pattern in which minorities and immigrants were always on the defensive, having to justify their presence, and commitment to Quebec values, while Quebecois were in a position of granting validation and approval, in effect, acting as judges of what was tolerable and what was not" (p. 89). Part of earning the approval and validation is blindly accepting the terms and conditions, i.e. the values and beliefs of Quebecois

culture and quietly accepting the responsibility to change. Moreover, Mahrouse (2010) citing Hage (2000) relates that discourses that encourage a dominant group to assert what they deem as the tolerable level of acceptance toward racialized "Others" ends up reinforcing subordinate group domination which underlines "the distinction between those who do the accepting and those who are accepted" (p. 90).

Quebecois do not openly consider that Quebec may be a difficult society to integrate into; they deny the existence of racism toward Muslim women that typically impedes integration. Within the broader Canadian context negative portrayals of Muslim women based on colonial imagery explain to a large degree the difficulties that Muslim women experience integrating into Canadian society. As Hoodfar (2003) states, "[I]t is not the veil or Islam that has prevented the Muslim community from being fully integrated into Canadian society; rather, it is, to a significant degree the colonial image of Muslims and the veil, along with the continuous demonizing of Islam, that has proved a major obstacle to such integration" (p. 39). Quebec differs greatly from the "melting pot" approach in American history. Invariably the French language and common culture are nonnegotiable terms that, once embraced, signify inclusion and citizen participation in public life. Blaming the immigrants' failures or shortcomings at integration is easier than facing their own internal anxieties. This is another example of reductionism on the part of the dominant group and a reflection of its predilection toward positive self-presentation.

Quebecois naturally identify with the cultural values and philosophic traditions of the Western European civilization. It is these deeper philosophic underpinnings which inform their identity. They trace the roots of their cultural heritage to French and European traditions. More recently many Quebecois have come to identify with Canadian

or North American culture, which is still nonetheless predominantly white and is itself derived from European traditions. In this construct Muslim women "belong" to the *Orient*, and are therefore "Othered", regardless if they are full citizens of Quebec who speak flawless French and ascribe to a Quebecois identity. The simple act of veiling or having brown skin means that all the images and associations of the Orient automatically apply to them and they can never achieve enough Quebecness to be considered full citizens.

Moreover, Sharify-Funk (2010) asserts that although the Bouchard-Taylor Commission acknowledges Islamaphobia on the part of Quebecois, the resulting limits it imposed on religious expression, was the most harmful recommendation from the Bouchard-Taylor Report:

> Despite Bouchard and Taylor's efforts to dispel certain prejudices against women who wear hijab, their choice to equate the hijab with other religious symbols (rather than treat it as a form of culturally normative dress) that ought not to be worn by certain public servants played into currents of thought in Quebec that draw upon the legacy of French *laicité*… the Report's support for banning religious symbols worn by judges and police officers was being used by anti-Muslim voices as a basis for legitimizing discrimination against "backward" or "oppressed" hijab-wearing women—that is, for broader efforts to stigmatize the hijab in all contexts (pp. 548-549).

The Commission clearly highlighted the religious paradigm thereby depriving Muslim women of their very *being* or self-presence. The Commission's work, therefore, did not contribute to increasing or broadening the understanding of the veil and why Muslim women in Quebec society choose to veil. For example, the Commission could have discussed how veiling can be an agent of emancipation and that it can contribute to reclaiming Muslim identities as *women* and not necessarily always as *Muslim women*.

The hijab is stigmatized in the news print texts in the same way, signifying backwardness and oppression regardless of what the context is.

I have shown there are a number of ways in which Muslim women are portrayed in harmful or negative manners. Quebecois are largely unaware of this phenomenon because the affirmation and reinforcement of their identity is permeated with white normativity and notions of cultural superiority. Muslim women face discrimination on multiple fronts being essentialized for their religion as well as their gender, leaving them in a perceived position as weak and passive victims in need of rescuing. In the next chapter I examine the role of the news print media in propagating these harmful representations. I will show that a critical textual analysis of news print texts reveal racist subtle discourses that speak to the implicit knowledge and historical anxieties of the Quebecois identity. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the news print media wherein these negative representations seemingly occur naturally as though they are accurate and common-sense.

CHAPTER FOUR:
NEWS PRINT MEDIA: METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided into sections which treat the news print media and present my analysis of the news texts. Section one begins by sketching the parameters of the news media establishment and discusses how they habitually represent ethnic minorities in harmful ways. The next section lays out my method of critical textual analysis with which I uncover the subtle meanings and negative representations. Then I explain the methodology I used in selecting the articles, and finally I present my findings.

Objectivity and the Representation of Minorities

How do the news print media influence its readers with ideological content and implied meaning? Are most readers aware of the powerful role the news print media play as a site of production, validation and transmission of knowledge? Ideological propositions serve a crucial role in creating the images, associations and meanings which influence how Quebec society views immigrants and minorities. Often this content or imagery is negative and damaging to Muslim women; it perpetuates a racialized discourse that preserves the social stratification of Quebec society along racial lines. A critical approach to the news print media's perceived objectivity is crucial so that we may problematize the commonly held belief that the news media is impartial, fact-based and unbiased.

Newspapers make particular kinds of claims based on a "wedom" and "theydom," mindset in order to persuade readers and add journalistic flair to news stories (Hartley, 1992). In the news media this *us* vs. *them* dynamic creates domains of inclusion and exclusion. Hartley (1992) writes, "[T]here are people and actions which cannot be

rendered in the news as "we" and "ours", but which instead are only intelligible as "they". Such persons include criminals, political extremists, drug traffickers, pedophiles, juvenile offenders and in certain circumstances, immigrants (p. 207). Borrowing from Anderson's (1991) classic analysis of nationalism, Gasher (2002) writes that the news media function, at the most general level, to create a sense of belonging for a nation and their readers and audiences are an "imagined community". Furthermore Hartley (1992) explains how these distinctions are produced by the relationship between the news organization and its target audience:

> [N]ews is organized around strategies of inclusion and exclusion from 'our' community…Their readers and audiences are an 'imagined community'…So news includes stories on a daily basis which enable everyone to recognize a larger unity or community than their own immediate contacts, and to identify with the news outlet as 'our' storyteller (p. 207).

Along these lines, it is easy to understand why so many Quebecois rely on the news to tell 'their' story. Through the news media they make sense of the issues and interpret events that provide meaning in their everyday lives. However, because the media constitute some of the richest organizations in society they wield a great deal of control over knowledge production by selecting and editing what kinds of news Canadians receive about themselves and their nation (Jiwani, 1995). Jiwani (1995) distinguishes between this *us* vs. *them* dynamic in a more critical manner than Hartley (1992) when she relates how the news media shape public opinion by setting the parameters of the debate:

> "They" are the illegal immigrants and bogus refugees; they are the reason we have crime; their cultures are backward and traditional; they oppress their women. By contrast, "We" Canadians have a progressive, dynamic, and egalitarian culture. "We" are honest and law-abiding, and "We" as a nation had no crime until the arrival of these immigrants of colour (p. 4).

Jiwani's (2006) words cogently relate how the information we get from the news media provide us with the categories of language in order to make sense of the issues (p. 37). These categories of language are often painted in an adversarial way in order to elicit emotion and even fear in the populace.

The work of Entman (2004), Fowler (1991) and Hartley (1992) explain how the news print media structure the news and determine what is newsworthy. If there is a common perception among the public that the news print media is objective and fair there comes a responsibility with respect to how they portray people, ideas and events. Van Dijk (2000) asserts that the power of the media is "discursive" and "symbolic" in orientation:

> Media discourse is the main source of people's knowledge, attitudes and ideologies, both of other elites and of ordinary citizens. Of course, the media do this in joint production with the other elites, primarily politicians, professionals and academics. Yet given the freedom of the press, the media elites are ultimately responsible for the prevailing discourses of the media they control (p. 36).

Corporate ownership plays a large role in the ways in which the news is constructed. According to the dictates of their interests and agendas, news elites make decisions based on their bottom line. During the 2006-2007 period, the *Gazette* was owned by the CanWest Global, part of the Asper empire in communications. *La Presse* was owned by Groupe Gesca, which is itself a subsidiary of the Power Corporation of Canada. The profit motive is a very important factor in determining which stories or issues become newsworthy because they want to sell papers above all else—including journalistic integrity. Corporate interests distorted and exacerbated the reasonable accommodation debates. These corporations have less interest in objectively reporting the

events and issues than they do in manipulation and tactics that drive media frenzy. A fuller understanding of how the profit motive works would counter the common perception that the press is objective, politically neutral and credible in its reporting.[11] Fowler (1991) posits that the news media preformulate a complex set of criteria based on newsworthiness so that "news is not simply that which happens, but that which can be regarded and presented as newsworthy" (p. 13). Largely unconscious in editorial practice, Fowler relates these news values filter and restrict certain aspects of the news (p. 13). Hence, if a particular event qualifies as more newsworthy it is more likely to receive greater coverage.

Racism is perhaps one of the strongest forms of negative representation conveyed in the news print media. Racist discourse is likewise driven by newspaper owners and their particular interests and agendas. Van Dijk (1991) argues that they enjoy an elite position in society from which they have an ability to preformulate a "special set of racist ideologies and practices" that reflect those of the wider population, and thus contribute to perpetuating the white ethnic consensus (p. 43). In my work I have found that there are elite actors who represent the interests of the white dominant group. The media conglomerate Quebecor is a lucid example of a corporation under complete Quebecois control. These elites were able to infuse their news print media with racist ideologies and practices in their treatment of immigrants and minorities in sensationalized coverage of the reasonable accommodation debates. Negative representations of non-white immigrant "Others" reinforced the cohesion, unity and whiteness of the Quebec identity.

[11] The profit motive in modern journalism is very complex with journalists being under constant pressure to publish new stories as well as newspapers which are increasingly constrained by their need for advertising dollars.

Critical media literacy skills are an important asset especially when one sees how the representations clearly function to racialize and single out Muslim women as a deviant out-group. Journalists are not always aware that the ways in which they represent Muslim women constitute a subtle racialized discourse as I have elaborated above. Hall (1981) posits that:

> …the media construct for us a definition of what *race* is, what meaning the imagery of race carries, and what the 'problem of race' is understood to be. They help to classify out the world in terms of the categories of race. The media are not only a powerful source of ideas about race. They are also one place where these ideas are articulated, worked on, transformed and elaborated (p. 35).

Journalists must become more aware of the presence of race in media discourses and how their reporting may contribute to the dominant ethnic consensus where difference is subtlety depicted along racial lines which corresponds to affirming white normativity.

Within journalism schools, the curriculum does not include much theoretical teaching. A deeper understanding of how sociological processes function would be a valuable asset to a journalist's ways of thinking about news construction. Gasher's (2005) work focuses on educating student journalists to be more critical of the ways in which they learn and acquire the skills to be journalists. He notes that journalism schools are uncritical of their current teaching practices, "[They subscribe] to a theoretical framework that informs even the most practical courses; the problem is that these theories are rarely made explicit, they are rarely called into question, and when they are identified at all, they are rarely presented in the context of competing, alternative theories" (p. 668; *cf* Skinner *et al*, 2001). In this way it is imperative that students are taught to be critical not just of the media that they consume, but also as agents that participate in its creation.

The ways in which newspapers portray minorities is reflected in the dominant group's values and beliefs. Immigrants and minorities are perceived as "Others", and they are often represented in reductionist, essentialized and stereotypical ways. [12] As well, minorities are seldom portrayed as belonging to the in-group (Fowler, 1991). This point will be further elaborated in the next section of my textual analysis.Van Dijk (1991) explains how the dominant group may deny racism in an effort to present themselves in a more favourable way. In other words, they disclaim being racist by engaging in positive self-presentations while simultaneously presenting the "Other" in negative ways. Van Dijk explains that, "The denial has a strategic function of being able to say something negative about others without running the risk of being categorized as being racist" (p. 188). As long as the subtle racialized discourse remains ubiquitous, the white normativity and dominance of Quebecois can persist.

The representations of minorities are further illuminated by the qualitative framing analysis elaborated by political communications theorist Entman (2004, 2005, 2007). How the media texts are framed impacts how the stories are told about other nations and people. To illustrate, Entman explains that "Framing works to shape and alter audience members' interpretations and preferences through priming. That is, frames introduce or raise the salience or apparent importance of certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel, and decide in a particular way" (p. 164). In this way, particular characteristics about Muslim women are highlighted that produce an emotive response regarding the stories presented. Entman (2004) also notes that the term

[12] See Appendix B for theorists' work focusing on minorities in the print media within the Canadian context.

framing is often an unclear catchall phrase that varies from researcher to researcher, however he does advance a general definition which I have found very useful in my understanding of the journalistic process: framing refers to "selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and solution" (p. 5).

Methodology

The first consideration was to decide what type of media I should analyze. Print news media is readily available and searchable online through databases. Print was particularly interesting to me because in an era centered on information technology, the printed word is a medium that is increasingly losing its relevance to other forms of online news media. Many people however, still view their newspaper as a primary source of information as it provides citizens with the means to make sense of their world each day. I decided to limit my analysis to two Quebec papers, the *Gazette* and *La Presse*. I wanted one English-language and one French-language newspaper for equal representation from Quebec's two principal linguistic communities. As well, I wanted to analyze two major dailies that had at least a province-wide readership within major metropolitan centers that situated the reasonable accommodation debates.

It was important to be sure that I was comparing two sources that were not owned by the same media conglomerate such as Quebecor. As previously discussed CanWest Global owned the *Gazette* during the 2006-2007 period while *La Presse* was owned by Groupe Gesca, which is itself a subsidiary of the Power Corporation of Canada. Today large corporations own vast media empires and the owners/have the ability to exert

incredible influence or pressure on what news is covered and how it is covered (Entman, 2005; Fowler, 1991; Hartley, 1992; van Dijk, 1995).

I decided not to analyze news print sources, such as *Le Journal de Montreal*, since they are more populist in their orientation and have a tendency to sensationalize any type of controversial topic. As well, I preferred not to analyze overtly discriminatory, sensationalized and highly manipulated coverage such as found in the tabloid press. Tabloids often speak to a certain cross-section of the populace that may not be an inclusive demographic because many of whom may arguably be inclined to racism, prejudice or xenophobia in their views.

I read some articles a number of times in order to draw out the subtle racist undercurrents in the representations. My assumption therefore in choosing to use the *Gazette* and *La Presse*, both mainstream liberal, centrist papers, is that they are less likely to engage in language that is explicitly discriminatory against immigrants and minorities (such as the right wing or partisan press). In effect, the negative portrayals would appear more subtle because the newspapers take a more objective, "neutral" and indirect stance in contrast to tabloid journalism that amplifies emotionalism and sensationalism. For example references to code words such as "immigrant" can already have an implied meaning in the imagination of the dominant group. The implied meaning carries with it value judgments that may be prejudiced or biased against certain groups depicted as immigrants. For example, in one article of the *Journal de Montreal* about Muslim women voting during the election without removing their veil, there were images of Darth Vader, Youppi and Halloween costumes. The sinister and/or ridiculous parallels being drawn in the article left little room for the type of analysis and interpretation of more subtle text

semantic and syntactic structure. For instance, deconstructing implied meaning in code words involves much closer and complex analysis. The tabloid-style sensationalist imagery in *Le Journal de Montreal* is particularly egregious because no reasonable attempt was made to employ journalistic objectivity.

Since my methodology takes a qualitative approach, I chose six articles from each paper for the critical textual analysis. A qualitative analysis enables me to uncover nuances and deeper meanings found in the articles. Effective textual analysis involves exploring the depth and complexity of the investigation and not merely concentrating on sheer numbers as in traditional content analysis. I must reinforce that the analysis is highly subjective as it is based on my interpretation of the articles and my positionality. It is possible that other researchers or readers may not garner exactly what I have found in the news texts.

For the *Gazette* articles I used the search engines of the *Ebsco* and *Proquest* online databases of Canadian Newsstand. I searched the terms "Muslim", "reasonable accommodation". I did not keep "Muslim women" as a search term because it was too limiting. I used the same 15-month time period, from March, 2006, to June, 2007, as the Bouchard Taylor Commission. This time frame corresponded with the eruption of the reasonable accommodation debates into one of the most followed and reported-on subjects in the press. I did not randomly select articles. I chose articles that contained instances of negative representations and discrimination of Muslim women in the context of reasonable accommodation. I read different articles to see if they had the representations I was looking for. I did not include Op-ed pieces or editorials for they were not as "balanced" as conventional news reports tend to be. Editorials are typically

written by one journalist with her/his own personal views taking a much greater place in the article (Entman, 2005; Hartley, 1992; Van Dijk, 1991).

For the *La Presse* articles I used the online database *Eureka*. I searched for "accommodements raisonnables" in conjuction with "femmes", "hidjab", "niqab", "musulmane", "élection", "droit" and "Hérouxville". It was necessary to use this many search words in order get a sufficient number of articles that included the particular themes that I targeted such as veiling and Hérouxville. Next I selected the particular articles for analysis according to the same considerations of choice as the *Gazette* articles. I consulted French dictionary references for particular idiomatic expressions and familiar language such as "mettre ses culottes". I also reread the articles in French numerous times. It follows that the methodology for these articles was somewhat different from that of the *Gazette* articles. I am not as fluent in French as I am in English, my mother tongue. Many idiomatic expressions may have various meanings to a native speaker. I had to carry out the necessary research in dictionaries and consult native/fluent speakers in order to be very precise in determining the possible nuanced meanings. For example, the term "culotte" used to refer to pants, but now most often is used to denote feminine undergarments. Yet the idiomatic expression still has the gendered connotation of a man putting on/wearing the "pants".

Once I had the search results for each paper, I then chose which articles to include in my analysis. For both papers my article selection revolved around picking articles that included particular representations relevant to the principle discourses I discuss. I found many more than twelve articles which spoke to these discourses, but I limited myself to only choosing those that spoke predominantly of Muslim women. Muslim women were

situated in various articles such as the Hérouxville affair, the provincial election and those that contemplated Quebec identity.

My conceptual focus centered on articles that had representations of Muslim women that were gendered and racialized. I concentrated on the symbolic representation of the veil, either the hijab or the niqab, as well as the dominant essentialist images of Islam. I chose articles that depicted the voice of the dominant group expressing their sentiments towards Muslims and immigrants. In particular, I attempted to find instances where Muslim women were marginalized in the discourse.

Additionally, I selected a number of articles that covered Hérouxville and its notorious code of conduct. In the Hérouxville articles there were many explicitly racist predicates, such as "I don't think that we're going to have Muslims moving here …[if we do, they are] more likely to be European" in the article *Town's Norms*. These types of explicit racist sentiments made these articles very fertile analytical ground. Focusing on multiple articles that centered on the veil and Hérouxville provided a more adequate treatment of these topics than merely one story would demonstrate. In this way I was able to get a fuller and more rounded treatment of the issues. I decided to concentrate on a very limited number of events in the overall reasonable accommodation coverage because I did not want the analysis to be too diffuse. As well, by focusing on articles that covered the same events I was able to compare them in different instances, therefore serving as a common frame of reference. The length of the articles in the search results varied on average between 200-1000 words. I chose longer articles that tended to have more detail and more coverage of the debate, hence more material for analysis. I found that short articles, roughly 200-300 words did not contain as much context or

information. Therefore it was easier to have longer articles as opposed to twice as many shorter ones.

I began reading the articles with a few critical questions in mind. I had a list of questions, based on the work of Mike Gasher (2009), which served as a guideline for my point of departure. For instance, I asked myself, "What is the level of emotion in the story? To what extent is the reader expected to *feel* something with respect to the subject matter (e.g., anger, sadness)? Or does the story adopt a more detached tone? Is the story sensationalized in any way?" As well, who is the dominant speaker in the story? Who speaks first, or most often? Who doesn't speak, or is marginalized? What might this mean? Does the story establish any binaries – left/right, men/women, us/them, right/wrong, normal/abnormal, good/evil, civil/uncivil? As I analyzed more and more articles I found that there was a distinct Orientalist discourse apparent in the representations of Muslim women. I found that it was necessary to elaborate my own critical textual analysis tailored to the discourses embedded in the news texts. I developed this analytical approach drawing on numerous sources that have considered racialized minority groups and their representations in the news print media (*cf.* Bullock & Jafri, 2001; Fleras & Kuntz, 2001; Hartley, 1992; Jiwani, 2006; Mahtani, 2001; van Dijk, 1991).

I decided to draw from a number of theorists in the domain of discourse analysis as opposed to basing my approach on a single theorist. Since I drew heavily from van Dijk (2000, 1991, 1995) I could have arguably simply used him solely. However, I found that my analysis was rounded out with the additional elements from the work of Hartley (1992), Fowler (1991) and Entman (2005). van Dijk focused much more on

deconstructing text semantics and syntactic structure, while other critical theorists such as Wing (2003, 2006), Sharify-Funk (2010), Mookerjea (2009) and Neiguth and Lacassagne (2009) included important racial, political and social considerations in their work. The latter helped me to explain the levels of a racialized and gendered discourse in the representations.

As well, I looked at how the article's subject matter was framed (Entman, 2005; Fowler, 1991), what type of language the author used and the structure of the article. For example I looked at the voice of the author, particularly the tone, to see if there was a tendency to adopt a tongue-in-cheek tone that appeared at face value as objective. However, further analysis revealed other, more subtle and nuanced tones such as irony and sarcasm. Were the news texts framed as adversarial between two social groups? Or were they more objective? These types of questions guided me in ascertaining the deeper text semantics as well as the syntactic structure to better understand the organization of the sentence. What types of symbols were used and what types of implicit knowledge or experience were referenced by the journalists? What are the agendas of news media companies which may compromise objectivity? Who are they addressing and what type of common-sense knowledge do they reference?

I must address here, a list of the considerations that I did not take into account in my analysis of the articles. Firstly, I did not take into account all the possible text semantics and syntactic structures because there are so many different levels and ways of interpreting the contents of news articles. Being a very subjective process, the angle with which the researcher takes has a large bearing on what is treated and what conclusions are drawn. Though very important, I chose not to research the ethnicity or perspectives of

the journalists because I felt that not only did I not have space, but also this would require focus group and one-on-one interviews beyond the scope of this study. As well it is difficult to know the exact relationship between the corporate interests which influence the editorial environment in which the journalist must write. It is not an easy task to undertake, while respecting the dictates of academic rigour, to theorize on the interplay between the positionality of a journalist and the specific bias or slant of the writing or ways that they consciously or unconsciously represent things in their work. I think the only sufficient way would have been to interview journalists, but then what questions would I ask? What does each response mean? How do you tie it all together within an analytical framework? It is unlikely that I would have had the space to engage these sorts of open-ended and subjective questions.

Textual Analysis

> *Anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position: language is not a clear window, but a refracting, structuring medium. If we can acknowledge this as a positive, productive principle, we can go on to show by analysis how it operates in texts.*
>
> Fowler, 1991

I employ a critical textual analysis in order to get to the deeper meanings implied in the newspaper articles which I argue contain propositions or ideologies reflective of new racism. My assumption is that the press adopt certain ideological positions inherent in their work. According to van Dijk (1991), "textual analysis pays special attention to *how* such contents are formulated, that is to style, rhetoric, argumentative or narrative structures or conversational strategies" (p. 6). A semantic analysis enables a researcher to see what lies beneath the surface of the language and rhetoric. The idea is that a text is not a value neutral, static transmission of fact to an abstract audience. A text contains

multiple layers or types of meaning which are encoded and eventually interpreted or decoded through the cognitive and epistemological structures of a particular audience. In general terms, a textual analysis endeavors to get beneath the surface meanings in order to examine more implicit social meanings. The conscious and unconscious elements in the text link themselves to the larger power relations at play in Western society.

My textual approach focuses on uncovering the text semantics and syntactic structure to analyze the implicit knowledge of Quebecois. Stated simply, it is the ideological content I want to uncover. Text semantics are understood to be the implicit knowledge or background knowledge in which the dominant identifies with and relates to the social context. The headline and lead paragraphs of the news texts are looked at to understand how topicalization works to reinforce negative imagery. As well, I draw on various syntactic elements such as the order of the quotes, how they are placed within the text and the overall structure of the article. I engage in a thick description that aims to qualitatively describe how the text communicates meaning. The research method that I use follows a form of discourse analysis elaborated by van Dijk (1991). He states that, "discourse analysis focuses on the relationship between text and context in the press. Social and political structures are manifest in the meanings and organizations of news reports, and how the news reports may change the social cognitions of the readers, and in turn legitimate the power of elites" (p. 45). Van Dijk's work has consistently shown that the mass media play a critical role in the reproduction of racism by perpetuating stereotypes and prejudice about immigrants and minority groups. He develops the analytical approach of discourse analysis that posits that messages are not transparent and so therefore they cannot be read in a superficial, quantitative way. Instead he examines

how the press embodies complex structures and strategies and how these relate to the social context.

Van Dijk's (1991) research helped me immeasurably in my attempt to map, annotate and analyze the development of certain aspects concerning reasonable accommodation and the representation of Muslim women. His main contention is that the West, and hence white people, employ structure and strategies in the news that buttress and perpetuate their position of dominance (p. 22). Van Dijk explains:

> It is only when we become aware how textual power is wielded, how it rhetorically persuades and seduces, how it produces "common-sense", that we can begin to challenge the dominant ethnic consensus—the point that needs to be emphasized is that racism is a structural and ideological property of white group dominance and therefore characterizes the press as a whole (p. 22).

In addition, I have based my textual analysis on the work of Fowler (1991) a critical linguist who opens *Language in the News* by advancing the following argument: "This is a study of how language is used in newspapers to form ideas and beliefs. I take the view that the 'content' of the newspapers is not facts about the world, but in a very general sense 'ideas'" (p. 1). In this way the reporting of the reasonable accommodation debates was not merely reporting the hard facts of the events, rather the news texts conveyed *ideas* that were highly subjective and ideological. Furthermore Fowler adds:

> News is a representation of the world in language; because language is a semiotic code, it imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented; and so inevitably news, like every discourse, constructively patterns that of which it speaks. News is a representation in this sense of construction; it is not a value-free reflection of 'facts' (p. 4).

News texts that may, at first read, appear relatively objective and free from racism may in fact be riddled with instances of subtle racist sentiments. Upon closer critical analysis I found this discrimination is anchored in an understanding of the knowledge and

experience of the dominant Quebecois. For example, one could invoke the narrative of a threatened and marginalized people that must protect themselves against the constant threat of dilution. This is a narrative that exists in Quebec today.

Fowler (1991) illuminates the subjective quality of how words and language become meaningful and shows that it cannot be separated from the wider context of social beliefs, values systems, ideology and power relations, "Meaningfulness, with its subsections 'cultural proximity' and 'relevance', is founded on an ideology of ethnocentrism, or more inclusively, homocentrism: a preoccupation with countries, societies and individuals perceived to be like oneself; […and] with defining groups felt to be unlike oneself" (p. 16). Lastly, I have incorporated elements of Nielsen's (2009) dialogic framing method to show what the news texts reveal about the relationship between the journalist and the readership. Neilsen posits the existence of a dialogue or conversation between the journalist and an "implied" audience.

Drawing on the work of Russian culturologist Bakhtin (1984), Neilsen (2009) treats journalism texts as *dialogical*, rather than as transmissions of information toward a passive reader (p. 40). At the stage of conceptualizing and writing, the journalist actually imagines who the audience is and how they will respond. In essence, he argues that journalism can be treated as participatory in orientation. He writes that newspapers do not *seem* to participate in any direct dialogue with an audience but "the fact that journalists themselves anticipate rejoinders means they also imply what an audience "ought to feel" through the emotional and moral tones of address (p. 25). Furthermore, Nielsen's work guided my critical analysis of the textual representations because I found these representations were framed in a manner that reflects an implied dialogue that is

imagined in the mind of the journalist. In other words, journalistic constructions of the "Other" create an imaginary bridge among readers that decide for the reader how they "ought to feel" about the moral and emotional tones of address in the article's imagery (Neilsen, 2009).

The implied audience is central to the constructed representation of Muslim women because the idea of a dialogue taking place helps to locate the relationship of those who are included in the dominant imaginary and those who are excluded. In my findings this exclusion reinforces an *us* vs. *them* hierarchical relationship between the dominant group and Muslim women. In essence, Nielsen's (2009) research gives clues as to whom the texts are speaking and whom they leave out.

As I discussed above, ideological content is transmitted through newsprint texts and interpreted within a particular community which shares common implicit knowledge and experience. The way they see, interpret and accord value to objects in the world around them, constitutes ideological acts of interpretation and negotiation of meaning. Fowler (1996) again offers valuable insights into the implied audience with his definition of ideology:

> [A] society's implicit theory of what types of object exist in their world (categorisation); of the way that world works (causation); and of the values to be assigned to objects and processes (general propositions or paradigms). These implicit beliefs constitute 'common-sense' which provides a normative base to discourse (pp. 10-11).

Thus categorization occurs when Muslim women are viewed necessarily as immigrants and not legitimate Quebec citizens. There are multiple ways of interpreting causal relationship depending on one's ideological position. The responsibility for difficulties in integrating is a lucid example. On the one hand it may be the Muslim women who do not

try hard enough to adopt Quebec's values and way of life. Conversely, the causal factor could be attributed to the fact that Quebec society may be particularly difficult to integrate into. In a similar way how value is accorded to objects involves ideological positioning. In most representations, the veil is characterized as a religious symbol. In all ways, the ideological content of the news texts is inextricably linked to the "common-sense" of white Quebecois normativity. Far from being a static entity, when a reader interprets the text they bring with them their own social values and assumptions. That is, they engage in a *dialogue* and hence participate in the creation and interpretation of meaning.

The news texts frame and represent Muslim women so as to reference the "common-sense stock of knowledge" (Jiwani, 2006) in the minds of Quebecois. Furthering this point she writes, "Given that common-sense is ideological…it would seem that news accounts are intended for the reasonable person, the ideal typical Canadian [Read: Quebecer] who shares the dominant perspectives…" (p. 38). As such, the dominant readership takes for granted certain assumptions and notions which are expressed ideologically by the press. Explaining this idea further, van Dijk (2000) says that coherence, referring to presupposed information that is relative to the way in which a journalist represents the story according to their "mental models", becomes subjective and ideological. Van Dijk (1991b) posits, "Our shared, social knowledge of such scripts provides the numerous "missing links" between the concepts and propositions of the text, which is, a semantic iceberg of which only the tip is actually expressed is presupposed to be known by the readers…what is coherent for the journalist may not be so for all readers" (p. 112).

Findings

I now turn to my findings which are organized according to the text semantics and syntactic structures I examine in my close critical analysis of the articles. I refer the reader to Appendix C which provides a brief summary of each article that is necessary to situate the analysis I present below. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the journalists employ many strategies to convey meaning in the texts. As I have elaborated earlier, the text semantics I analyze are language, code words, associations, metaphors, generalizations, in-group designators, moral or emotional tone, topicalization and the use of authorities (van Dijk, 1991). Additionally, I look at the syntactic structure of the text, focusing on stylistic choices including how quotes are placed and how important information is placed either at the front or end of the text.

Code Words

Code words are specific terms that carry with them certain associations or connotations (van Dijk, 2000). These devices are laden with value assumptions or presuppositions which find meaning in the experience of Quebecois. Code words are similar to "short-hand descriptors" that characterize a number of ideas that have become *common-sense* ideologically. Very often code words are used to characterize the "problems" of the minority group. Jiwani (2006) observes that inferential racism is utilized through the media as code language:

> Immigrants become synonymous with foreigners, illegal migrants, so-called bogus refugees, and terrorists; diversity becomes a code word to communicate racial differences with racialized groups often being referred to as multicultural "Others"; tolerance is presented as a kind of benevolent forbearance of difference (pp. 46-47).

The term "immigrant" is a good example of a negative code word that is used in the articles to describe the actions of immigrants and minorities (van Dijk, 2000, p. 39). The term immigrant speaks to a perception that is commonly held by members of the dominant group that immigrants are not *white*. Because they are so often thought of as black or brown the term carries with it an inherently pejorative connotation when cast against the white standard. Consequently racism is disguised as ethnic hegemony. There is an amplified sense of belonging, and hence *possession*, of the Quebec geographical space by Quebecois. People who come from elsewhere, are already seen as *suspect* because they come from *somewhere* else. Here the idea of difference underpins and pre-informs the discourse. There is an emphasis on what is *different* as opposed to what is *shared* among the two groups. As well, there is an immediate tendency to view minorities or immigrants as foreign and different. This perspective establishes the obligation on their part to integrate and unconditionally accept the dominant values and way of life.

Moreover, immigrants are often blamed for many social ills. They are frequently blamed for taking jobs away from *legitimate* citizens and requiring the need for policies of special treatment such as affirmative action. In the same manner they are blamed for unfairly increasing the competition in educational institutions. In many of the news articles the word "immigrant" is used with little qualification. I contend that this is due to preexisting connotations and associations people make, most of which are automatically negative (van Dijk, 1991). People barely ever think of *white* immigrants because they are not visible minorities within society.

The term "European" has a number of connotations attached to it as well. In *Town's Norms* the journalist quotes a local electrician who lives in Hérouxville as saying,

"I don't think that we're going to have Muslims moving here en masse the week after next…Anyone from outside moving here is more likely to be *European*." [my emphasis] It is evident that if the measures that the town took will in fact keep Muslims out, among others, then it is naturally *European*, Read: white people of Christian background, who would wish to immigrate. There is an inference here that Europeans are white and would have no problem with the standards of the *code of conduct* as articulated by the town. Orientalist undertones are expressed here, as it is clear that the electrician, and perhaps he represents the town in this regard, identifies as European at least in terms of a civilizational identity as discussed above. Here there is also the race card at play because many people still think of a white identity when thinking of European identity. White normativity (de)racializes the discourse because white identity is not regarded as a "race" in the same way as other races. Many Europeans are in fact black, brown and even Muslim; in some cases these people have lived in Europe for many generations and have been legitimate citizens. It is unfortunate that this differentiation does not enter into the mind of the electrician or the journalist to qualify the use of "European" in this quote.

One of the most widely used and loaded terms is "Quebecer". It can be used to mean many different things to different people. When addressing the dominant group, *Quebecer* means someone belonging to the in-group of truly Quebecois. They speak French and identify principally with the French culture and cultural experience. In a similar way there is a prevalent association that "Quebecer" also refers to "white" people. The term "Quebecer" can, of course, be used to refer to the Quebec collectivity (Letourneau, 2004): all citizens of Quebec, whether Anglophone or allophone, including various cultural, ethnic or even racial backgrounds.

In *Media Storm* there is an informative quote of a communications teacher at TELUQ (l'Université à distance de l'UQAM), "The way the media have stirred up this debate, Quebecers have been left with the feeling they're threatened in some way." In the context of the reasonable accommodation debates, the use of the term "Quebecer" is not employed in the most inclusive way. It appears that the teacher is referring to Quebecois and not the entire Quebec collectivity. "Quebecer" draws implicit lines of inclusion and exclusion and places Muslim women on the periphery. Muslim women are depicted as a foreign and invasive group that clashes with the established secularism of the state. Protective policies such as interculturalism further reinforce the inclusion of only those that conform to the Quebecois language and way of life. This phenomenon is developed by van Dijk (1991) who affirms that "dominant culture is never problematized or challenged, *nor it is explicitly discussed at all; typically, it is presupposed*" (p. 103). [my emphasis] As we have seen the term *Quebecer* acquires intended meaning once the implied audience identifies with it.

Associations, Metaphors and Generalizations

Next we come to associations, metaphors and generalizations which are powerful semantic devices that communicate implicit knowledge between a journalist and an audience. Often narratives that speak to the Quebecois experience are interwoven into the metaphors and associations in the news texts. This information is not expressed in the text because it is presupposed by the readers (van Dijk, 1991b).

A subtle form of indirect association is seen in *Veiled Threats*. The journalist makes a number of indirect comparisons between a niqab and a host of other images. The emphasis must be placed on the imagery that is invoked in the mind of a reader. First of

all, there is no explanation of why the niqab is worn by women. Instead, there are various references that associate the niqab with ridicule and distort its true nature. The journalist makes a reference to the potential "masquerade" which the election might become if Quebecers carried through with their threat to show up in Halloween costumes to vote. There is no explanation of whether the election would turn into a "masquerade" because Muslim women would wear the niqab or because dissident Quebecers intend on showing up to voting stations *masquerading* in Halloween costumes and the like. Secondly, the journalist references similar images associated with the veil in a *Journal de Montreal* article that include Halloween costumes, paper bags, Darth Vader and skeletons. These leave distinct mental images or associations that may either be categorized as sinister/threat or trivial/ridiculous. In the mind of a less informed or educated reader, it is easy to see how negative associations of the niqab become symbolic of Islam as a religion. We see how the power to represent Muslim women enables essentialized portrayals that lead to inaccurate and skewed representations. Muslim women are *spoken for* instead of being given their own voice.

I must emphasize that important complementary information about the niqab is omitted. This is worth noting because the veil, as I have discussed above, encompasses a great deal more than merely religious symbolism. The journalist may consciously or unconsciously not include explanatory information about the niqab, because explicitly stating such information would diminish the sensational dynamic of equating niqabs with Darth Vader or Halloween costumes (van Dijk, 1991). Hence the niqab remains enshrouded in mystery or at least false thinking in the minds of the dominant group. It is exactly these spaces of ignorance or misperception that provide fertile ground for skewed

representations to grow, such as the belief that women wear niqabs because they are oppressed.

If the women are seen as oppressed it lends more support for the rescue motif by insulating the perception of superiority of the dominant group grounded in its modernity and secularism. On the basis of these superior claims, the dominant group engages in a civilizing discourse vis-à-vis Muslims. Muslim women are to be rescued from their oppressive state through a process of "civilizing" whereby they cast off their veils and become emancipated. In this way, the model and measure of progress is Quebecois secularism and modernity; the niqab becomes a tool to reaffirm their identity and their position of superiority. The niqab is only one example of the many contemporary stereotypes of race that draw on classic racist imagery (van Dijk, 1991, 2000) to describe ethnic minorities, specifically Muslims, in terms of barbarianism, oppressed women, criminality or irrationality.

In *Passions déchaînées* there is a good example of the use of a metaphor to represent immigration in an email response to reasonable accommodation and Hérouxville's code of conduct written by Jean-Pierre Labbé: "Espérons que votre initiative va réveiller nos élus au provincial et fédéral pour que cesse l'horreur de l'envahissement de nos valeurs traditionnelles. Ce ne sont pas leurs ancêtres qui se sont gelées pour faire de cette terre l'un des derniers pays libres du monde." The emotionalism of this quote demonstrates the entrenched conviction of a member of the dominant group that sees their values as under attack. As well it reveals the palpable hostility towards an abstract "Other" group that does not possess the same level of entitlement. Often metaphors describe immigrants as an army that will conquer or overrun the country (van

Dijk, 2000). In this manner, readers are more prone to fear immigrants because they are violent and constitute an imminent threat. The metaphor of an invading army also brings with it associations of space and belonging—the immigrants come from *abroad* to flood Quebec and dilute its culture. The use of such metaphors deepens the division between Muslim women and the dominant group, as the former are lumped into this broad, abstract category of the menacing hoards who threaten the culture and way of life in Quebec. This sort of portrayal is even more harmful when some Muslim women, who are multi-generational Quebec citizens, are viewed as perpetual immigrants who do not belong by virtue of their visible identity markers. As well, in this quote we see the references to the particular historical experience of sacrifice of the in-group which justifies their superior claim to set the terms of the discourse to the exclusion of all "Others". It was the ancestors of Quebecois who froze in the long winters in order to earn the entitlement to be here.

In the same article there is also a frequent type of generalization that reflects the common sentiments of the implied audience in how they view immigrants. Robert Delorme and Francine Demers wrote, "Si les gens désirent abandonner leur pays, c'est parce qu'il ne leur convient plus. Alors, pourquoi vouloir changer le nôtre afin de le rendre pareil à ce qu'ils ont quitté." Such generalizations typically rest on reductionist arguments which simplify the situation and easily portray Quebec as a superior destination country devoid of the ills of those countries that immigrants leave. Beneath this generalization there are two presuppositions that further reflect the simplistic and self-serving perspectives of Quebecois. Van Dijk (1991) explains that "presuppositions convey information that is supposed to be known and shared by the writer and reader, and

which therefore need not be stated. In this way, the press may indirectly and rather subtly state things that are not 'known' by the readers at all but which are suggested to be common knowledge" (p. 183). The quote suggests that all immigrants only leave their home country because it no longer serves their purpose to stay there. There are many different reasons why immigrants come to Quebec. Secondly, the quote presupposes that all immigrants have intentions to change Quebec into the country they left behind. Many immigrants who flee authoritarian or oppressive regimes have no desire to challenge the democratic principles of Quebec.

In-group Designator

Van Dijk (2000) explains that the use of in-group designators create two distinct, mutually exclusive categories of us and them (p. 44). By delineating these groups along lines of inclusion and exclusion, the identity of the Self is reinforced through negative representations of the "Other" (Said, 1979). In *Circling the Wagons*, there is a reference to Quebecois as the in-group. The article offers an explanation as to why there is so much fuss about reasonable accommodation, "Because French Quebecers are at a point in their history in which they can't abide the flaunting of religious symbols in their midst, and are trying to figure out who they are as a modern people". Muslim women who do not unreservedly adopt Quebec's established secularism will always be regarded as part of the out-group, thereby inhibiting inclusion in terms of belonging and citizenship. The problem is that the dominant group has already determined that the hijab is religious and refuse to see it as culturally normative dress. The dominant group has a particular interest in seeing the hijab as religious so they may claim that it clashes with their secular identity.

Another quote in *Meaning of Quebecer* clearly demarcates the lines of in-group and out-group with the use of numerous first-person plural references. The article quotes Celine Saint-Pierre, a sociologist and conference co-president, who states, "we want to build a common culture while better understanding our roots, our history, and our heritage so that newly arrived immigrants who join Quebec society know which society they are arriving in. But at the same time our culture is in the process of recomposing itself." This quote does not leave the reader with the impression that Muslim women or immigrants belong to the in-group that participates in Quebec's current redefinition. In this construct immigrants' expression and participation is not only circumscribed by the redefinition of the cultural identity of the dominant group, they must also wait in an on-hold status until the redefinition is achieved to be fully aware of their place in society. Muslim women do not have the requisite roots, history and heritage required to belong. Rather they are the objects which must be *considered* and at the same time *dealt with* in the process. As well, this quote is a lucid example of an expression of legitimate cultural self-defense (Barker, 1981) because the reasonable accommodation debates are presented as simply part of a process of *redefinition* and therefore hide the xenophobia and racism.

Tone

The tone of an article has a large impact on what a reader takes away from it, or which representations of Muslim women are effectively conveyed. Tone also normalizes the ideological content of the article. For example, in *Circling the Wagons*, the journalist adds a little quip, "Quebecers get along quite well 'thank you'" which is confusing as to whether the author identifies with the position of the dominant group or if he is presenting himself as a neutral observer and objective reporter of the truth. When

journalists present themselves as objective reporters of reality, an unclear tone may contribute to more confusion for the reader who may have the impression that the journalist actually supports the position of the dominant group vis-à-vis minorities and the issue of reasonable accommodation. There is so much meaning that is lost in print communication; sarcasm and irony are often left to be interpreted at will by the readers. Likewise, a journalist may hide behind sarcasm or jokes, posing as objective but merely poking fun at something. Confusion on the part of the reader complicates the act of interpretation when it is unclear whether the journalist critiques the issues or is complicit in the events taking place. If journalists wish to benefit from the perception of objectivity in their reporting, they must also accept a degree of responsibility as to clarity of intended tone and meaning. As we have seen, any gaps of clarity may contribute to negative interpretations if the preexisting imagery of Muslim women is already established in the minds of many readers because of negative Orientalist imagery.

The emotional and moral tones of *Veiled Threats* address the implied audience of Quebecois by making reference to their implicit knowledge and experience. Firstly, the tone references the implicit awareness around the protection of a "Quebecois" identity which has always been in need of protection from many other threats in the past. The journalist alludes indirectly to the idea that the pure Quebecois culture risks dilution or corruption if Muslim women are permitted to wear the niqab. Secondly, the journalist's tone represents Quebec as a society reflecting on the limits of its tolerance, reacting to the perceived threat of the Muslim minority to its distinct language and culture. Here the implied audience is the one who tolerates and sets the terms of the discourse. Though the

subject of the debate, Muslim women are never directly addressed as the implied audience. This renders Muslim women as passive objects.

Structure of Article

In this category we look at what I call the objective attributes of the article. That is how the article is ordered or how it is structured. I look at quote arrangement, article structure, head-line and lead paragraph, all of which constitute the syntactic structure of sentences. From an analysis of the syntactic structure and stylistic choices I draw conclusions about the ideological position of the journalist (van Dijk, 1991b). For example, in news print the top-down method dictates how to lay out a headline, tagline and subsequent lead paragraph so that they contain the most important information that a journalist wishes to convey. Essentially there are certain established practices and structures that have been developed over time, to which journalists must adhere, due to editorial demands. Van Dijk (1991) explains that it is important to "look at the precise structures of news reports, as they are mediated through the practices and social cognitions of the reporters and the editors of the Press…" (pp. 40-41). In a similar vein, a number of the articles I selected were front-page news stories which contributed to exacerbating the sensationalism that surrounded the stories.

Headlines are a very powerful tool which frame and imply particular meaning since they are read first by the reader and hence frame and inform the subsequent interpretation of the rest of the article. Van Dijk (1991) relates that the information the headline conveys references important knowledge that the reader uses to make sense of the news report. So for example, "[A]s soon as the word *riot* is used in the headline, the reader will activate relevant general knowledge about riots, that is, a so-called 'riot script'. This

script monitors the interpretation of the details of the rest of the text (p. 50). Similarly the headline *Veiled Threats* carries with it the same connotations and establishes a 'threat script' that informs the readers interpretation of the rest of the article. The placement or order of quotes and specific complementary information, whether at the beginning of the article or near the end, may have a large impact on the impressions of a reader depending on what the content is.

In *Veiled Threats* the order of the quotes frames Muslim women as threats to the democratic process and Quebec's values and way of life. Voting wearing a niqab is held to be special accommodation that other Quebecers would not have. As I will show, there are two other quotes which could reduce or counter this perceived threat. It follows that these quotes would have a much different effect if they were placed farther up in the article where the chances of being read are significantly greater. The news text begins by framing the act of "voting while veiled" as a threat to the dominant group. Then it elaborates on how much of a problem this need on the part of Muslim women for "accommodation" presents. Next the text affirms the fact that the electoral procedures *require* identification by showing one's face when voting. Yet it is after the middle of the article that a representative of the Muslim community says that only 10 or 15 women *would* have come out to vote had there not been so much negative attention including utterances of potential threats. As well, if asked, they would have shown their faces preferably to other women. These denunciations and threats emanated from members of the public and elicited fear for the safety of election officers from "mobs" of dominant Quebecers. The fact that it would only have been necessary for a relatively small number of women to be "accommodated" thus suffers from a diminished effectiveness in

countering the sensationalized imagery of an imminent *threat* at the beginning of the article.

The chief electoral officer of Quebec reinforced that "what is at stake here is the integrity and serenity of the electoral process". Muslim women are clearly framed as the *threat* to the integrity of the electoral process, which reflects the Orientalist imagery of Muslims being against democratic values. Here Muslim women are singled out in a racist manner because of their ethnicity and race. Furthermore, Muslim women are seen as not respecting the fundamental values of life in Quebec, i.e. the democratic process. It is only near the end the article that the journalist notes the existing alternatives in place for the proper identification of people who cannot show their faces, such as people with bandaged faces. In other provinces Muslim women who wear the niqab can vote with the aid of someone vouching for their identity. These facts show that it is possible to accommodate particular needs and that the demands for accommodation may not be so *unreasonable* or *impractical*. Nonetheless, this information is conspicuously placed well after the "threat" has been established and has had its effect in framing how the reader ascribes levels of alarm to Muslim women and the issue of veiling (Entman, 2005).

In *Passions déchaînées* the lead paragraph contains a disclaimer (van Dijk, 1991) that sets the tone for the rest of the article as though the dominant group has been wronged in some way by giving concessions to minorities and immigrants. This paragraph quotes an email response received by the website of the Municipality of Hérouxville regarding public reactions toward its code of conduct: "C'est bien beau les accommodements raisonnables, mais moi dans tout ça, je ne me sens pas du tout respectée par les immigrants qui veulent faire régresser le Québec." This "concerned"

citizen first affirms positive support for reasonable accommodation but then claims that immigrants want to "regress" Quebec. Through the use of this type of disclaimer the citizen wishes to avoid a bad impression with readers who may not think that immigrants wish to roll-back the social progress Quebec has made on many fronts. By placing this disclaimer in the lead, it functions as a method of identification that in-group readers use to feel the same way about themselves and thus also how they interpret the rest of the article.

In the same sentence there is another subtle rhetorical device at work which also influences how readers identify with the article and are invited to focus on themselves as the subjects who are not respected. Many members of the dominant group may share the feeling of not being respected and hold this in their minds. This emphasis disguises the pernicious white normativity, innocence and ability to set the terms of the discourse contained in the assertion that immigrants want to "regress" Quebec. In this manner, the reader focuses on their experience of not being respected, as opposed to being critical of a generalized claim that all immigrants necessarily wish to erode Quebec's progress. The dominant group, and not Muslim women, decides what is *regression* according to their particular standards of *progress* in their linear historic experience.

In *Femmes voilées* there is another example of poor consultation with the Muslim community and even poorer consultation with Muslim women. The latter are portrayed as the object of debate, spoken *for* and *about*, as opposed to being consulted with and given an active voice as a participant in the debate. Only at the end of the article does the journalist include some remarks from a representative of the Canadian Council on Islamic-American Relations, Sarah Elgazzar. She maintained that the controversy is

misleading and contrived because women who wear either the burqa or the niqab would have accepted to remove their head covering in order to vote. Likewise she notes that the controversy was sensationalized since there are only roughly 50 women who wear the burqa or the niqab in Quebec. In this way Muslim women become a racialized minority subject to racist treatment because they wear the veil for cultural or religious reasons. This type of ethnism contrasts to the traditional biologically-grounded racism of the past. With such representations of Muslim women it is not surprising that the dominant imagery is that of oppressed, passive victims who lack the agency to speak for themselves. Likewise this imagery reaffirms the position of superior *rescuer* of the dominant group (Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 1998).

Agency of Journalist and Selection of Quotes

In addition to external authorities such as academic sources, polls and statistics, members of the public can be sources as well. The journalist often selects certain voices or actors that sensationalize an issue or have charged language that speaks to the emotions of the implied audience (van Dijk, 2000, 1991). Likewise the journalist may may omit certain voices or have others speak for an immigrant or a minority group without direct consultation.

In *Veiled Threats* there are no actual quotes containing the thoughts or opinions of Muslim women. Although there are a number of quotes from a male leader of the Muslim community of Montreal, Muslim women are never consulted directly. The exclusion of a female voice evokes the patriarchy and sexism inherent in Quebec society despite the official policy of gender equality. This can be construed as an example of the passivity of Muslim women since the men must speak, and *do* speak, for them. The reader is left with

the image of the oppressed Muslim woman. This portrayal reinforces the rescue motif because women are perceived as not possessing the same level of freedom as "modern" Quebecois women who had to work very hard to emancipate themselves in order to bring about gender equality. Furthermore, some Quebecois women feel threatened by Muslim women and their veiling practices because the latter are viewed as primarily religious symbols which remind them of the oppression of the Catholic Church.

In *Town's Norms* the journalist includes a succession of quotes from a town councilor of Hérouxville, André Drouin. Drouin initiated the establishment of the code of conduct. As an authority figure representing the town, his words are very powerful because he speaks for the town and its community views. One particular quote contains a questionable statistic that is not qualified in any way. Drouin remarks, "It's what the people want. There are 95 percent of people in Quebec who want this. Now it's up to him to act." Drouin is referring in the latter part of the quote to Jean Charest, premier of Quebec, who had received considerable pressure to act in the face of the reasonable accommodation debates. Drouin "called on the provincial government to declare a state of emergency to protect Quebec culture from distortion by foreign pressures." Referencing this "statistic" without any qualification is highly misleading for uninformed readers who do not exercise a sufficient level of criticism of the news print media. Likewise this quote can be very effective in supporting the position of more extreme members of the dominant group who oppose reasonable accommodation for immigrants. It lends false credibility regarding the broader public support of the Hérouxville code of conduct. Drouin himself provides no reference to any external objective authority or study which would back up his claim. Moreover, the second quote speaks to how Muslim

women and immigrants are perceived to be a threat that should incite moral panic and immediate action. Claiming that a *state of emergency* is necessary erodes the legitimacy of calm and rational dialogue. The imagery of hoards of immigrants overtaking the country necessitates immediate action in order to prevent this from happening.

As well, the journalist makes no effort to counter the potential effect of the quote in the mind of a reader. The journalist could do this by either qualifying the quote or offering a critique. As such, there is a heightened possibility for readers of the dominant group to believe that their position regarding reasonable accommodation is actually more widely shared. In this way, this belief becomes more acceptable and legitimate. From any standpoint of reasonable critique one should question a number such as *95*%. There are surely less than this percentage of the population who would want Charest to declare a state of emergency.

Furthermore, this quote can pass itself off as a statistic. Statistics can have certain effects because readers are conditioned to believe that statistics are reliable. Readers are more inclined to believe this because of the common assumption that statistics are based on an objective, empirical scientific method. Van Dijk (2000) relates that numbers are a rhetorical device that indicate precision and objectivity and hence credibility (p. 46). Here this quote affirms the sense of identity, cohesion and unity of the dominant majority vis-à-vis the imminent threat of Muslims who demand special treatment.

L'Effet contains an example illustrating how the choice of a quote clearly implies an ideological proposition. The article quotes a bar owner, Guy Francoeur, in Rivière-du-Loup who feels that any immigrants that want to settle in the area only have to "behave

themselves" to be acceptable to the community. Following this he remarks, "Ils faut qu'ils soient au courant de nos réalités avant d'arriver. Quand tu entres au pays, il y a un contrat, signe-le." It is evident that this quote speaks to the sentiments of many Quebecois who feel that they enjoy exclusive ownership of the space and the attendant claims of belonging. They are justified in imposing the standards of behavior and the terms of immigration in the political and social space of Quebec. However, this quote has a distinct effect of creating a very rigid, black and white conception of the discourse. Immigrants and minorities are not given an opportunity to have a say in the future orientation of the society of which they are a part.

Secondly, this quote is an example of the enduring need of Quebecers to control the terms of the discourse. It is as if the bar owner is speaking for the interests of the dominant group who possesses the exclusive right to establish how people are supposed to behave and exactly what are the content and terms of the "contract". The claim becomes problematic in its implicit reactionary tone. The claim almost precludes any possibility of change within the society. It is as if the society is a static entity that must be accepted unconditionally with no hope for mutual dialogue.

Another quote found in *L'Effet* contains a persistent type of argumentation that reflects the popular sentiment of many Quebecois. The journalist quotes Philippe Migneault, a 60 year-old forestry worker, "Je suis pas contre les immigrants, mais qu'ils s'adaptent. Si je vais en Iran, moi, Monsieur, qu'est-ce que je vais faire? Je vais m'adapter à eux!" This is another example of a frequent type of disclaimer called "apparent denial". Van Dijk (2000) relates, "[W]e call these disclaimers apparent not because the speakers are obviously or intentionally lying, but because the structure of their discourse is such

that especially the negative part of the sentence is spelled out throughout the discourse. The positive part thus especially has the function of avoiding a bad impression with the recipients" (p. 41). Quebecers do not want to be seen as being against immigrants, intolerant or xenophobic. The positive claim that Migneault is not *against* immigrants shows that he wishes to avoid a bad impression with the readers (van Dijk, 2000).

This disclaimer equates Quebec with Iran as if they are two equivalent countries with the same way of life and the normative standards are set by a dominant group. But Quebec is not exactly the same as Iran on numerous accounts. This type of reductionist argument is problematic, especially when it is not critiqued or balanced by the journalist. Quebec is a modern, liberal democracy in which citizens have a number of guaranteed rights. Iran is a fundamentalist Islamic republic in which pluralism and fundamental principles of liberalism, democracy and equality do not obtain in the same way as Quebec. Quebec is constantly evolving as it reformulates its identity and demographic composition. It is conceivable that at some point in the future minorities will become the majority in Quebec.

Positive Self-presentation

As I have previously discussed quotes of positive self-presentation enable Quebecois to "save face" so that they seem to be merely engaging in legitimate cultural self-defense. As van Dijk (1991) relates, "quotations allow for the insertion of subjective interpretations, explanations or opinions about current news events" (p. 152). Many of the quotes of Quebec citizens, whether residents of Hérouxville or not, have a tendency to subjectively portray themselves and Quebec society in a very positive light; this phenomenon speaks to the aspect of "tolerating" minorities. That is to say they downplay

or omit any potentially negative sentiments or practices when referring to themselves. At the same time they emphasize negative aspects about the "Other", such as the contention that immigrants do not try hard enough to integrate into Quebec society. In this light Quebec is consistently portrayed as friendly, open and welcoming.

Town's Norms contains a prime example of positive self-presentation (van Dijk, 1992). Louise Trudel, another resident of Hérouxville, exclaims, "I have nothing against immigrants. I know a lot of immigrants. But at one point there has to be a limit to accommodating them. If they came here, it must be because they like the way we live." The first part of the quote contains a clear positive self-presentation—of course she is not racist because she has nothing against immigrants. Adding to this, she claims to know a lot of immigrants, so again she must be open to them or at least not shun them. Worthy of this remark is the latter part of her pronouncement where she affirms something that appears somewhat logically contradictory to what she has just said. In the same breath as asserting her openness to immigrants she explicitly advances the importance of placing limits on their accommodation. Her more negative warning of "necessary limits" ultimately leaves the impression in the readers mind that there is indeed a determinate line beyond what is reasonable. This line should not be crossed. It is, rather, the immigrants who must be, or are lucky to be, "tolerated" by nice, reasonable and benevolent Quebecers who really are not racist or discriminatory.

Another example is of Claude Veillet, also a resident of Hérouxville and retired police officer, who says, "You either do catch-up or you do prevention. We're doing prevention…We don't want this to turn into a tower of Babel." Here Claude Veillet is presenting the code of conduct in a positive light by engaging in the juxtaposition of the

comparison with the alternative of playing *catch-up*. Again it normalizes such ignorant and biased measures implicit in the code of conduct and also legitimizes the actions of *reasonable* Quebecers who are only doing what is *right*. Furthermore, this quote is confusing because of the overt biblical reference to a tower of Babel. The reader construes this as if Veillet is saying something negative about immigrants by his words and his tone. There is still lingering confusion as to why the tower of Babel is a negative thing. By invoking a religious reference the reader is unclear on whether it could perhaps be a religious conflict.

In *Meaning of Quebecer* there are two quotes which present Quebec in a positive light in order to not appear xenophobic. As I have mentioned earlier, the article quotes Céline Saint-Pierre who exclaims that "Hérouxville shows a certain fragility in the Quebecois identity…But it's not reflective of xenophobia." The reader is left with the impression that the code of conduct does not even qualify as xenophobic, which is typically seen to be more innocuous than racism. These types of claims, which escape qualification, affirm the innocence of Quebecois whiteness and normativity. Many other critics have, in fact, qualified the code of conduct as *xenophobic* and *racist* (Mahrouse, 2010; Nieguth & Lacassagne, 2010; Sharify-Funk, 2010).

In the same article there is another quote which lends even more weight to the self-presentation of Quebec as not being xenophobic. The ex-labour trial judge, Marc Brière affirms that, "Reasonable accommodation is a normal and inevitable consequence of the recognition of fundamental rights in the (Quebec) Charter…We have to be careful because this could easily degenerate into xenophobia." By claiming that the debates *could* degenerate into xenophobia, the reader is left with the implicit affirmation that the

debates have not *yet* turned into expressions of xenophobia. The journalist quotes an authority figure, an ex-judge, which has the effect of repelling the claims by critics that xenophobia, and even racism, are already present in the debates.

One particular consideration when analyzing the inclusion of positive self-presentation quotes and references is that the journalist tends to neglect to add quotes or complement them with additional information and commentary. There is no qualification, explanation or clarification which could balance the treatment. For instance in *Meaning of Quebecer* the journalist includes a quote from a Moroccan woman, Asmaa Ibnouzahir, who does not feel that she belongs to or is part of the Quebec majority: "In public, certainly the image that people have of me is of someone who is not necessarily a Quebecoise." This is after the journalist writes that Ibnouzahir grew up in Quebec and is articulate, speaking fluent French and has earned a Masters degree in nutrition. Immigrants can move to Quebec, try to integrate into the culture, but still they are seen as coming from *their* country of origin. Speaking French and identifying with the dominant culture are not enough to meet the particular standards of the Quebecois majority. The journalist does not offer any commentary on the difficulties many immigrants face when they attempt to integrate into Quebec society. There are, however, a number of potential explanations which shed light on these difficulties. One of the most obvious is that Quebec has a more protective, and hence exclusive, conception of citizenship that determines who can belong to the dominant group (Ghosh, 2004; Juteau, 2002). Immigrants that are visibly different face greater challenges because they have to break down the traditional stereotypes and prejudice before engaging Quebecers on an equal footing.

There are also instances of positive self-presentation which are not accompanied by a simultaneous negative other-presentation. The positive self-presentation nonetheless plays a similar effect, especially when held in the mind of the reader who will likely read many different articles that use the same device over the duration of the coverage. In *Media Storm*, a quote from an immigrant affirms that Quebecers are *not* racist—or at least that the majority of Quebecers are not: "they don't feel superior at all, they're just irritated by some things." This quote is deceiving because it downplays Quebecois' white dominance and ethnic hegemony and emphasizes their innocence and benevolence. As well, it is effective because the quote is positioned as though an immigrant speaks from a subject position representing all immigrants. It seems that the journalist could have selected this quote to buttress and insulate the position of the dominant group, especially because "they" and "at all" are absolute claims encompassing the whole group of Quebecois.

In the same vein another quote from *Circling the Wagons*, a prominent philosopher Charles Taylor claims that "Attacking honest expression of discomfort, such as Heroux-ville [*sic*] expressed, isn't helping matters…" Asserting the "honest" nature of the reaction of Hérouxville normalizes the sense of Quebecois' feelings of discomfort on the one hand, while also inoculating feelings of xenophobia, ignorance and close mindedness on the other. Ignorance and xenophobia contributed to establishing the code of conduct in the first place, and has the effect of reinforcing racist ideologies that previously were thought but not expressed in open, public dialogue. It is problematic when such a revered academic describes these as simply "honest expressions of discomfort" and fails to make any value-judgment of the form or the xenophobic content

within the code. Such an affirmation normalizes the sentiments that prevail in the more rural areas of Quebec. Here we see a subtle working of the normativity of whiteness and the experience of discomfort of the dominant group. The victim is blamed because the *discomfort* is seen as legitimate. Hence the responsibility for action and integration lies with the Muslim women who must take the first step to integrate so that the majority feels more comfortable with their presence. This quote affirms the innocence of whiteness (Dei, 2000) and absolves them of any responsibility of self-critique. Self-criticism could challenge the proposition that the expressions of discomfort are simply *honest* and hence acceptable according to Quebecois standards.

To complement the numerous instances of positive self-presentation that were found in the *Gazette* articles, there are a number of comparable quotes in the *La Presse* articles that have the same effect and serve the same end goal. In the article *Débat* the journalist quotes Karl Blackburn, a liberal MLA for the region of Roberval, who says, after admitting that the debate has elicited responses from his constituency, "Oui, ça les préoccupe, oui, ils entendent ce qui se véhicule d'un bord et de l'autre, mais il y a ici des succès d'immigration et d'intégration qui font en sorte qu'on est capable d'en parler de façon positive". He is referring to Peruvian immigrants who have been able to use community-based media to share their culture with their fellow citizens. Pointing to success stories is a valid response in the face of the negative backlash and critiques following an incident like Hérouxville. However, the unqualified inclusion of this quote begs critique; the quote clearly stands as another indication of the positive, open nature of Quebec and Quebecers without acknowledging that they have had difficulties with negotiating *difference*. Second, we must again ask ourselves why the journalist did not

seek out any voices of immigrants who have settled in Quebec, instead preferring to let Quebecers speak for them, almost always in positive terms of immigrants' ability to integrate into the acceptant and tolerant Quebec society. If Quebecois habitually speak for immigrants it is easy for the former to blame the latter for not attempting hard enough to integrate into Quebec society. This again elicits the patriarchal dominance of Quebecois who control the discourse to paint themselves in the most favourable light.

In *Meaning of Quebecer* the journalist quotes André Boisclair, "I do not understand the decision of the chief electoral officer. You know my openness. You know how I am a fervent defender of the possibility of everyone to participate in the development of Quebec society, but there is a line that cannot be crossed and it has been crossed." This is a very obvious example of a disclaimer through which an authority figure is able to reassert the dominant group's power to set the terms of the discourse. It is the dominant group who determines *where the line is* and *if it has been crossed*. However, Muslim women are not able to *participate in the development* of Quebec society because they are rarely given a voice or even consulted in the conversation. The imperative need to protect Quebecois culture from the onslaught of "reasonable accommodations" trumps Muslim women's need to be accommodated in ways that account for their difference. Muslim women are clearly portrayed as second class citizens.

Furthermore, the journalist goes on to write that "Boisclair said the issue is one of voter identification and his legal advisers believe the decision could even be against the law." Still benefiting from the position of authority of a political leader relying on the opinion of his legal advisors, Boisclair's statement may be interpreted in various ways. Is

the chief electoral officer breaking the law by making the decision? Or is it the Muslim women who are forcing him to do this with their demands for special treatment? In this way, the actions of Muslim women seem to contribute to something *illegal*. A reader can easily conclude, consciously or unconsciously, that voting while veiled constitutes some threat to democracy. The statement is misleading because authoritative legal advisors are saying that it *could* be against the law, when in fact it never was. Consequently, Muslim women are portrayed in harmful ways which depict them as unwilling to integrate into the society and adopt Quebec's values and way of life.

Reference to Authorities

References to authorities, especially academics, politicians and other community leaders, can be a very effective device for a journalist to present an issue or group in a certain light. For example, the articles reference various academics and politicians in order to add credibility to their reportage. Van Dijk (1991) explains that references to authorities frequently take the form of quoting police officers and politicians who speak most often for and about ethnic minorities (pp. 174-175). In this way, white social and political elites are quoted the most because they have more access to the media. The public regards these elites as reliable sources of information and they thus have the most influence on public opinion. As a result they are able to exert a considerable ideological influence over the broader readership (van Dijk, 2000). Moreover immigrants and minorities are rarely quoted directly because they have less power and access to the media. As Van Dijk (2000) posits, "depending who has access to and control over journalists also will be able to influence whether or not they are actually quoted. What one would expect…is that in general…minorities are quoted less, and less prominently

than (white) elites" (p. 39). The media abuse this power by speaking for the minorities as opposed to consulting them directly. And when they do speak for them, what they say is naturally favourable, and not critical, of the dominant group. The dominant media discourse around issues such as these is virtually consensual (p. 37). There is not a lot of dialogue or discussion around the considerations and needs of minorities.

In *Media Storm* the journalist quotes Marc-François Bernier, a communications professor at the University of Ottawa, arguing that "[T]he only people who have put this issue on the table are the media…[Accommodating minorities] is not something that is in the realm of most people's experience. They've never been affected by it." The fact that an academic is making the claim bolsters the credibility of the content. The quote makes it seem like reasonable accommodation is not part of Quebecers experience. In reality it is relevant to more people than Bernier allows, especially for those who live in Montreal where most minorities settle. This quote deflects the focus of reasonable accommodation away from its origins that touch sensitive nerves in the Quebecois collective psyche. Rather it is all blamed on the media. The journalist is complicit in representing reasonable accommodation that suits how the dominant group wants to see it. They do not want to acknowledge their part in driving the debate around reasonable accommodation. It is much easier to deny that their soul-searching about citizenship in a changing Quebec society has had an impact on the debates. In this way, the power to set the terms of the discourse, to say that it is merely soul-searching or redefinition of the dominant group, repels claims of new racism and the *difference* of *culture*. Instead of blaming immigrants in this instance, an authoritative Quebecois instead blames the

media. Blaming the media functions to repel critiques maintaining that Quebec's redefinition has contributed considerably to the debates.

Furthermore, the overall effect of Media Storm is to actually pull the attention away from issues of Quebec identity and just explain it all away as purely a result of opportunistic media interests. This is deceiving because the media are not *solely* responsible for drumming up the hysteria in media frenzy as is claimed by the *Gazette* articles and other sources. The media play off sensitive nerves of the Quebecois cultural experience and identity. Besides, the large media conglomerates would not be able to incite such a vibrant and heightened response if the issue of reasonable accommodation were not in peoples' minds. But the root issues around reasonable accommodation have existed for a long time within Quebec. Immigrants are not a new phenomenon.

Another very telling choice of reference to an authority figure can be found in *Débat*. Noella Champagne, a Parti Quebecois MLA, can be seen as a more legitimate and credible source because she is both an authority figure as well as a representative of the people. The journalist quotes Champagne regarding what the response of the people [in her riding] has been in general [to reasonable accommodation]. Champagne claims that "c'est plus positif que négatif." Van Dijk (2000) specifies that issues like reasonable accommodation "provide positive but polarized identification for most white readers in terms of Us and Them" (p. 37). It is evident that such a quote downplays the issues surrounding reasonable accommodation and the code of conduct. It affirms that even if there are some negative aspects of these issues, they are outweighed by the positive. Affirming the position that there is no *real* cause for alarm and no one is doing anything *wrong*, insulates Quebecois innocence. However, it is unclear whether people are

responding to Hérouxville's *code of conduct* in a positive way or to the *reasonable accommodation* debates. There is confusion here because of the vagueness of the quote. If a reader does not engage in critique, he or she will most likely be left with a positive impression of the attitudes or sentiments of these Quebecois constituents because of their "more positive than negative" response.

Secondly, in the same paragraph another quote by Champagne serves to play down the issue, "Samedi, j'étais à une soirée du club Optimiste, et les gens en [of reasonable accommodation] jasaient, mais souvent avec humour. D'ailleurs, la petite toune sur un air de Joe Dassin (composée par un policier de Montréal et invitant les immigrants mécontents de leur sort à filer vers l'aéroport), prenons ça avec un grain de sel, ça n'a pas été fait avec une grosse méchanceté, ça fait plus rire les gens qu'autre chose." She gives an impression of being more positive by saying that at the Optimist club the people just talked about [code of conduct], often with humour. This does not say much other than leave a lingering positive impression or the sense that there is nothing to get worked up about. Furthermore, her reference to a song that tells immigrants to go to the airport (Read: home) if they do not like it in Quebec supports the point of view that she is merely downplaying any potential negative views of Quebecer reactions to reasonable accommodation. By exclaiming that it is only a joke masks the other explanations or indications of perhaps widespread Quebec sentiments against immigrants.

Thirdly, she glosses over the whole affair by engaging in positive self-presentation, "Dans mon bureau de comté, je rencontre des immigrants, et tous me disent qu'ils ont été bien accueillis." Here she gives the impression that the standard is that all immigrants are welcome and that the behaviour of Hérouxville, by extension as it is in

the same region, is not quite as problematic or negative. One must ask why there are no direct quotes from the immigrants in question, and why Quebecois are speaking for them. Why cannot the immigrants define their own reality or be present as legitimate subjects in the debate (van Dijk, 1991, p. 154)? These sorts of generalist arguments are very effective in countering any critical claims of negative presentations of the dominant group. Again this MLA affirms the conception of friendly, open and benevolent Quebecers who embrace immigrants that are quite happy with their reception. This type of self-portrayal aids Quebecers in assigning the responsibility, and hence blame, onto Muslim women and immigrants who do not try hard enough to integrate into the society.

In *Voter sans se dévoiler* the journalist's coverage of the reactions of the three main political leaders illustrates how credibility is used to support subtle ideological rhetoric. These politicians' pronouncements speak most directly to the identity and experience of the dominant group and further entrench the existing negative portrayals of Muslim women. As elected representatives of the people, these leaders have a considerable amount of authority because they are seen as representing, as well as speaking in the name of the values, attitudes and sentiments of the dominant group.

Leading up to the provincial election, debating whether Muslim women should be allowed to vote while veiled gave rise to much political posturing on the part of the leaders regarding this sensitive issue. Before a group of supporters Boisclair exclaimed, "[A]u-delà des différences qui nous enrichissent, il y a des valeurs communes qui nous rassemblent. Parmi ces valeurs-là, il y a le respect de nos règles démocratiques." In this construction Muslim women who do not wish to show their faces fail to respect the most elementary principles of democracy. Such a portrayal reflects the Orientalist imagery of

Muslims as being anti-democratic or incompatible with democracy, and therefore a threat to the cultural and political fabric of society. This quote also exemplifies the usage of in-group designators such as "*our* common values" and "respect for *our* democratic rules" which reinforce the idea that the inclusive group respects democracy and establishes a clear contrast between *us* and *them*. Here Muslim women are characterized culturally as different because they require special "accommodation". The need for special treatment is ultimately perceived as a "complication", and they are then characterized negatively as deviant in the minds of many Quebecois.

Another quote from Boisclair echoes the common sentiment of many Quebecers that there is a clear line to accommodation that cannot be crossed. Such a construct is very similar to the previously discussed figurative contract that must be signed by all immigrants if they wish to be accepted into society. These are not negotiable. Boisclair states, "Il faut être capable d'identifier les électeurs. C'est un principe non négociable pour moi." He is clearly speaking to the implicit experience and sentiments of the dominant group of Quebecers who feel that no compromises should be accorded to this principle. However, this is ironic since there are in fact other ways of properly *identifying* Muslim women if they do not wish to show their face, such as the case of a person who has a bandage.

In *Défense des valeurs* the article opens with a quote from Mario Dumont who accuses his opponents of being willing to compromise on fundamental principles of gender equality. He maintains that his fellow Quebecers are in no way willing to accept any compromises to this principle. Dumont points to a recent instance of compromise accorded to Muslim women in an effort toward reasonable accommodation. A CLSC had

provided female-only prenatal classes to these women whose religion forbids the presence of males in such an environment. According to Dumont this concession is portrayed as an absolute compromise to the fundamental principle of gender equality. Dumont does not explain exactly why refusing males access to an all-female class constitutes clear gender inequality. Nor does he emphasize the purpose of reasonable accommodations that seek to provide special treatment for ethnic or culturally-based needs. The rhetorical effect of Dumont's claim is that Muslim women are positioned in direct opposition to gender equality with no qualification of why their religious identity may require all-female classes. These highly skewed and self-serving political responses show how the dominant group set the terms of the discourse on reasonable accommodation by topicalizing Muslim women as a threat in the minds of readers.

In the same article Dumont's pronouncements clearly demarcate in-group inclusion and majority dominance and exhibits an instance of positive self-presentation, "On est une majorité qui n'a pas besoin de vivre dans la peur d'être traitée d'intolérante…Le Québec est un exemple en matière de générosité, de tolérance et d'égalité de ses citoyens." The structure of the text conveys a generally negative opinion about an undefined "Other" who may treat Quebecers as intolerant. Dumont does not specify who the "Other" actually is, whether immigrant, minority or Anglophone. The Quebecois majority is free to set the terms of the discourse by effortlessly refuting assertions that Quebec *may be* intolerant. The majority circumscribes the legitimate content of the discourse by excluding any subject matter that is unfavourable to dominant Quebecers. This position is further bolstered by the title of the article "Dumont appelle à la défense des valeurs de la majorité" in conjunction with the lead paragraph in which

Dumont positions himself as the spokesperson for the majority. Quebec politicians define Quebecois as a coherent subject and construct the Other as opposing the fundamental values of Quebecois identity. The negative headline and lead paragraph are therefore easily memorized by the readers and the negative impressions frame how they interpret the rest of the content. In this instance the headline and lead paragraph entrench the *us* vs. *them* division; *Their* bad actions and *Our* good ones (van Dijk, 2000, p. 38). In addition, the news text presents positive but polarized identification for most white readers who must be either for or against immigrants and minorities without clarifying the grey area and complexity of these issues. Lastly Dumont presents Quebec as an unquestioned generous, tolerant society in which equality between citizens constitutes a fundamental value. This representation contrasts greatly with the opposing critiques of Quebec society that include xenophobia, discrimination and racism.

Journalistic Omissions

Equally as important as analyzing the substantive content of the text, is identifying what is left out. Does the journalist seem to favour one particular side of the debate? Does the journalist engage in any type of critique of the content of the story? By omitting certain information the journalist is able to transmit biased or skewed content under the guise of news objectivity. Journalists frequently employ the same rhetorical devices to portray certain events or issues in a particular light. This is problematic in cases where the events or issues are complex, controversial or polarized, and the journalist fails to balance out the debate. Here I would invoke the representation of Muslim women of not trying hard enough to integrate into Quebec society. In most dominant discourses about immigrants and minorities, any potential negative actions of

the dominant group, such as being intolerant, will be glossed over or not included at all. Failing to integrate into a tolerant an open society shows the negative words that are used to describe the actions of immigrants and minorities. Here we see that the journalist is avoiding explicitly racist labels in order to convey the new racism.

In *Town's Norms* the journalist does not include many voices that are critical of Hérouxville passing the c*ode of conduct*. In the article most of the coverage focuses on the town of Hérouxville and what its citizens did, as if almost promoting it implicitly by giving it more coverage. The news text does not account for the broader context in which these events took place. It is important to contextualize the story by including integral aspects of the debate, such as the identity-related anxieties on the part of Quebecois. As I have elaborated earlier, a key element to include is *why* immigration is important to Quebec's economic growth and what some of the other root causes of the reasonable accommodation debate are. These balancing-out factors are necessary to offset the effects of the hysteria and sensationalized frenzy about the debate. If journalists balance debates they are not able to strike the emotional chords in the implied audience.

Secondly, there is no critical voice that addresses how absurd the code of conduct is. There has never been a stoning of a Muslim female in Canada or any genital mutilation of any women. The only attempt at a more balanced treatment is the inclusion, again near the end of the article, of a quote by a resident who asks the same question "I'd like to know how many women have been stoned in Canada since it was founded?" However, the journalist does not qualify this statement by affirming that there have not been any stonings of this kind in Canada so that the readership could see the issue in a more balanced manner.

This affirmation is problematic because its effect normalizes both the ideological grounding and the purpose of the code of conduct. The journalist's silence indicates a degree of complicity in promoting or reaffirming the existence of two distinct classes of morality. The first category includes that of the proper Hérouxville who are so *morally enlightened* that they do not have to be reminded not to stone their women, Read: rest of reasonable Quebecers. The second category of morality, to which the code is intended to speak more directly, includes Muslims who need to be warned that such practices will not be tolerated.

Journalistic Framing

As I began discussing above, how a journalist frames an article gives powerful weight to particular representations of Muslim women and Muslims in general that reflect the bias of the journalist or the dominant group. Often this begins with the title, topicalization and lead paragraph which can all set a biased tone for the rest of the content of the article (Entman, 2007). Entman (2007) refers to this as "content bias" because one side of the debate is favoured more or given more treatment than the other in a political controversy (p. 163). How an article is titled, such as the case of *Veiled Threats*, can have a large influence on how a reader interprets the information in the news text. As van Dijk (2000) writes, "Since topics express the most important information of a text, and in news are further signalled [*sic*] by prominent headlines and leads, they are also best understood and memorized by the readers. In other words, negative topics have negative consequences on the 'minds' of the recipients" (p. 38).

In *Veiled Threats* there is little room but to interpret Muslims as posing anything but an imminent threat or some kind of danger through the use of the double meaning of

"Veiled Threats" when referring to the niqab. This is problematic since the article is taking an almost adversarial tone to what masquerades as a balanced and objective treatment of events and issues. This is important because tone lends more weight to the existing framing of the article, thereby amplifying preexisting negative imagery. What is under threat exactly? As I have identified, a perennial focus of attack is upon the sacred nature of Quebec's values and institutions, or most fundamentally its *distinct way of life*. In this particular instance, it was undoubtedly the free and democratic electoral process that was in the minds of the populace as they were about to vote in the upcoming election.

Again Orientalist framing is present as though the article implicitly pits Islam against democracy as two incompatible notions. This also ties in to the perception of Muslims as foreigners that do not belong because they demand special treatment in the form of "reasonable accommodation" that many Quebecers do not feel they deserve. This essentialist stereotype draws a hard line of inclusion and exclusion in terms of symbolic citizenship determining who belongs in the nation. "Muslim" erases a whole range of identities and practices with diverse ethnic and cultural roots.

An example of framing that applies to a component part of the article is how Muslim women are portrayed as having a victimized status. The reader may infer from the news text that these women must be protected by more than two body guards each from some potential enraged mob of Quebec voters. The selection of the quotes leaves this image in the reader's mind. This type of framing speaks to the theme of the rescue motif that portrays Muslim women as being weak and oppressed and therefore in need of rescuing by Quebec (Read: modern, democratic, Western liberal values of Quebec

society). The article does not make any mention of the fact that there are many highly educated and emancipated Muslim women who choose to wear the veil. These women are in no way in need of rescuing as it is a choice they make to wear the veil. However the dominant majority does not want to see it this way, for then they could not act as the saviours of women burdened by an oppressed, backwards religious practice (Bullock, 1999; Hoodfar, 1992, 2003; Jiwani, 2006; Razack 1998). Here the victims are the ones who are blamed. Our sympathies do not fall with Muslim women but rather with the Quebecois who were provoked into having to physically defend their culture and values. Either way Muslim women appear to be victimized to the reader. It is unclear what the true source of victimization is: either their patriarchal religion forces them to wear the veil or because Quebecois react this way to defend their values and hence feel justified in threatening Muslim women.

Accusations of Complicity

Journalists frequently paint their own paper in a more favourable light, i.e. more objective or disinterested, than they do their competitors. During the reasonable accommodation debates the *Gazette* and *La Presse* portrayed each other or tabloids as more complicit in the media frenzy over reasonable accommodation. In this way they were able to benefit from a greater degree of perceived objectivity because they deflected any claims that they were simply feeding the frenzy to sell papers. Clarke and Garner (2010) state that "…various newspapers try to compete with each other, some providing rational answers to the irrational fears that are evoked by one reading of a newspaper contra that of the other (p. 134). In 2006-2007 there was so much sensational coverage of reasonable accommodation in the news that even many media outlets referred to it as

"media frenzy". It was widely argued that this frenzy greatly amplified the sense of importance of the reasonable accommodation debates in the lives of all Quebecers. The result would have been different if the media had not been so quick to capitalize on such sensational issues that they knew touched many sensitive emotional chords with the dominant group. Perhaps there would not have been so much excitement and hysterical fear among Quebecers.

In *Media Storm* the *Gazette* places itself outside of the scope of chain ownership in the paragraph that lists all the media chains of Quebec and explicitly names Quebecor. The *Gazette* did in fact engage in the media frenzy over reasonable accommodation because it is owned by a large media conglomerate driven to sell papers just as Quebecor. Before being sold to Postmedia Network Inc., a publically traded company, the *Gazette* was part of the Asper Empire of CanWest Global. The self-ascribed position of being outside the scope of complicity is misleading because the *Gazette* then benefits from a false perception of being more objective. This is problematic because there is a higher chance that readers will believe this self-ascribed objective superiority. When "objectivity" is falsely presented, harmful representations of Muslim women are even more damaging. It is problematic when a reader believes that the portrayals of the veil are accurate simply because they believe that their newspaper is an objective source of information.

Veiled Threats contains an example of how the journalist uses certain quotes that support the claims of objectivity on the part of the media. The journalist tries to portray the dialogue in an objective way. He cites Salam Elenyawi's (President of the Muslim Council of Montreal) assertion that Quebecor's various media outlets fuel hatred toward

Muslims. However, further down in the article the journalist includes two quotes from senior managers of the *Journal de Montreal* and TVA that contradict Elenyawi's words. The managers argue that they are not guilty of any of these claims of stirring hatred for any motives. They simply say that they are following a story: "We have nothing to change. Somebody has an agenda somewhere." In this manner the dominant group is able to absolve themselves of the blame, while assigning it to some abstract "somebody" "somewhere" that has "some agenda".

Likewise, in *Meaning of Quebecer* the journalist seems to position the *Gazette* as a neutral reporter of the facts in contrast to the *Journal de Montreal* and *La Presse*. The journalist writes that these two papers portray reasonable accommodation as involving concessions to minority groups to the detriment of Quebecois. The *Journal de Montreal* and *La Presse* do this by "insinuating that some health-care institutions have *been bending over backward* to accommodate Muslims and Orthodox Jews at the *expense of other Quebecers*." [my emphasis] In actuality the *Gazette* is also guilty of much bias such as in the article *Veiled Threats* that contains framing techniques and omissions that compromise objectivity. How a newspaper or journalist positions itself in the media landscape is highly informative in uncovering hidden bias when papers such as the *Gazette* try to present themselves as a reliable touchstone of reasonable reporting.

As I have shown the *Gazette* and *La Presse*, respected news sources, are not unbiased and objective as might appear at first read. Driven by corporate interests and highly influenced by established journalistic practices, news texts must be read as subjective messages loaded with ideological content. This content is indeed intended for the implied audience of Quebecois who share the same ethnic background and implicit

knowledge that is necessary to interpret the representations in the intended way. The layers of complex and subtle meaning may be uncovered and decoded through a critical textual analysis which treats the text as a symbolic mode of communication. Applying this examination to the 12 articles that focus on aspects of the reasonable accommodation debates, I have shown the many instances of discrimination, prejudice and racism, which clearly define the boundaries of inclusion and acceptability between *us* and *them.* In the following chapter I present my conclusions as well as new areas for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE:
CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

We have seen that a cross-section of the news print coverage of the reasonable accommodation debates shows the presence of racism, discrimination and xenophobia towards Muslim women. Racism is a process that constructs others as though they have irreducible differences; the justifications for such constructions are shown to be emotional, and ultimately based on a threatened identity. In turn the persuasive argument of a "threatened identity" serves to defend the rights of personal entitlement. The normative discourse and the reality of inter-group relations presents a gap which may partly be explained by a shift in the new forms of racism now present in society. Minorities and immigrants are ultimately "unassimilable" and incapable of being understood as something more than a stereotype.

Most importantly this research has challenged the perception among Quebecois that they are an open, democratic and tolerant society. The news articles speak of "race" in terms of "culture". Intrinsically, the ideological terms have changed and a *cultural difference* now becomes the code words for racial differences. This process of differentiation and inferiorization of the Other constructs *difference* as a marker of social inferiority. This is troubling because it raises the question, what is this notion of *difference* different from? Or what is the standard by which social groups are deemed acceptable? What is this undefined core or essence from which "Others" are demarcated by their differences?

The news print media constitute a powerful social institution which has considerable influence in shaping the perceptions and beliefs of its readership. As

we have seen, the news print media is not as objective as they may claim to be. My critical textual analysis uncovered a substantial amount of deeper discriminatory meaning which would normally escape a surface read or a quantitative inquiry. In the findings I found many examples where the newspapers absolved themselves of any contribution to the media frenzy around reasonable accommodation and the Hérouxville code of conduct. As well, the media actors claimed that they were merely reporting what was going on in an objective manner. The newspapers argued that they faithfully reported on the debates of reasonable accommodation without participating actively in shaping these debates. Furthermore, the media presented the reasonable accommodations from the angle that minorities enjoy privileges and they threaten common values.

The imagery of veiled Muslim women demonstrates that these women are racialized by virtue of wearing the veil and having brown skin despite the constant affirmation that the *true* discourse was about the 'reasonable' accommodation of immigrant 'cultural' practices in Quebec society. Neither the *Gazette* nor *La Presse* exercised a sufficient level of journalistic responsibility to counter the negative effects that media frenzy had on Quebec society at large. Furthermore, the introduction and subsequent support for Bill 94 in 2010 indicate the discourse of the 'reasonable' Québécois remains prevalent within political debates.

Muslim women along with other "immigrants" have been harmed on multiple fronts by these debates but their story is never told in the news media. Wing (2006) characterizes the abuse that racialized minorities face as "spirit injury" because the psychological effects of these harmful representations constitute an assault on a Muslim

woman's emotional well being: "Racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination can lead to the slow death of a person's soul or psyche" (p. 779). In effect, by banning the niqab in Quebec Muslim women may feel, "defilement, silence, denial, shame, guilt, fear, blaming the victim, violence, self-destructive behaviors, acute despair/emotional death (p. 779).

The news print media is only one of the many social institutions which produce, transmit and validate knowledge about "Others". The representations contain subtle ideological meanings and propositions that reinforce social hierarchies within society. My findings have shown that the dominant group possesses a powerful ability to essentialize Muslim women. The common representations of Islam as a monolithic religious entity lacking inner differentiation demonstrate that the Orientalist framework holds true. Far from advancing objective, fair and accurate images of Muslim women or Islam, the representations say more about the inner soul-searching that is necessary to redefine contemporary Quebec identity.

Moreover, Quebecois place themselves in the position of a benevolent rescuer of backward and oppressed women. If they can be rescued, then they can become civilized and ultimately be accepted as full members of Quebec society. Olwin (2010) asks a poignant question regarding the perceived "protection" that state officials, media and the military offer as they "object to tyranny, battle against oppression and protect the weak…What narratives do we write out when we construct ourselves as protectors and saviours and render Muslim women objects of our benevolence and good will" (p. 1)?

In the context of Quebec's current process of redefinition, my findings show that more effort must be made to increase the awareness of citizens to the pervasiveness of new forms of racism and problematic one-dimensional portrayals. As I have discussed, Quebec's national identity finds itself at a cross-roads. It will not be easy to reconcile all of the conflicting forces within society: coming to grips with a past characterized by insular homogeneity while at the same time preparing for a future of increased immigration and *difference*. Quebec will have to become better at dealing with "Other" difference, as opposed to continually highlighting its own *difference* as a distinct Quebecois cultural, language and historical peoples.

In practical terms I hope that deconstructing media messages will aid students in becoming responsible, Quebec citizens— more open, aware and comfortable with difference. The first step is educating students to be critical of the media and to become aware that the news they read may contain racialized discourses which reinforce their position of white dominance and privilege. Anti-racist praxis can provide an effective pedagogical vehicle through which social change may occur. Coupled with this, a critical media literacy methodology tailored to the classroom environment can play a large role in increasing the awareness of students to subtle racism, their inherent white privilege and the need for transformative learning. By rupturing the white consciousness students will better understand how the processes of white normativity shape and influence the power relations between diverse groups in society.

To what extent can Quebec's national identity be gendered in order to speak to alternative representations outside the charter groups of historically European French/English ethnicity? My research has shown that gender is not accounted for as

much as it should be in understanding the experience of Muslim women in the news print media. It is my contention that Muslim women's identities will continue to be excluded from the construction of "women" in the Quebec national imaginary unless there is a better understanding of Muslim cultures and Islamic beliefs. In the same way, it will be necessary to address the gendered dynamic when tackling notions such as citizenship and belonging when the idea of the “nation” rests on a predominantly white, male national consciousness. White, masculine identification must be challenged within policy debates when political leaders purport to be looking out for the interests and needs of Muslim women. We have to examine how we can increase women’s capacity to influence and shape the future orientation of a more inclusive conception of citizenship. The new “citizenship” must account for multiple locations of a political subject that considers race, gender, ethnicity, religion, class and sexuality. Is it possible to conceive of a Muslim feminist as a political subject whose perspective and experience is as legitimate as her white male counterparts?

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APPENDIX A

Historical Background of Quebec National Identity

A brief overview of the principal characteristics of the Quebecois identity in Quebec is important in understanding how a distinct language, culture and historical experience can shape the relationship the dominant group has with immigrants and minorities. Faced with increasing immigration to ensure the province's economic prosperity, Quebec has to "deal with" and rectify the immigrant question they are now faced with. That is, how to negotiate *difference* into a group identity that has always been predicated on ethnic and cultural homogeneity.

The idea of difference has long and deep roots in the Quebecois experience. They have always regarded themselves, and been labeled by Anglophone Canadians, as different or distinct. Since the Quiet Revolution, Quebecois have articulated their distinct "Quebecer" identity, promoting their *difference* or *distinctness* as an integral part of their identity. This has played an influential role in the construction and affirmation of their identity and as such Quebecois are more disposed to perceive and emphasize this element of difference. The emphasis on their difference reinforces the need for unity and protection of their identity.

The most fundamental aspect of Quebec identity is its distinct Quebecois or Quebecois language, culture and historical experience. One's language is important in articulating and preserving a cultural identity. Within Canada, Quebecois have asserted the French language to reflect their distinct identity. The Quebecois language has

manifested itself in many initiatives including interculturalism[13] as well as the language laws which were instituted in the 1970s. Thus language and culture are intertwined within the dominant institutions of the public sphere of political and economic power.

Additionally, sovereignty has played a central role in the modern articulation of Quebec identity and the attendant narratives of development of Quebecois as a real and distinct "nation". Sovereignty is portrayed as Quebec's natural and logical progression of asserting its independence. This has arisen from a history of persistent Anglophone oppression. The narrative holds that by casting off the chains of Anglophone dominance, Quebec can come of age and become "masters of its own house". An integral part of this narrative, both referenced implicitly and explicitly, is the idea that Quebec, *i.e.* the land, belongs to the Quebecois. And *only* Quebecois have the innate or earned exclusive right to determine their fate and the fate of the geographic space (Maclure, 2004; Letourneau, 2004). The sovereignty movement asserts the agenda that there is a defined geographical space that corresponds with a political space that *should* be separated from the rest of Canada (Juteau, 2002).

Traditionally there are two opposing camps in Quebec regarding sovereignty and Quebec's relation to Anglophones and "Others": melancholic nationalism and anti-nationalist cosmopolitanism (Maclure, 2004). Melancholic nationalism describes the sovereigntist movement which must attain independence as the sole means of reconciling a past of Anglophone domination. Anti-nationalist cosmopolitanism, on the other hand,

[13] Interculturalism differs from Canada's multiculturalism in that all policies protect the primacy of French language and culture within Quebec, subordinating other languages and cultures to a position of less importance, see Ghosh (2004).

refers to the more liberal group of Quebecois which favours federalism, openness and tolerance toward immigrants and minorities based on the respect of universal rights.

The new generation of Quebec leaders steeped in the spirit of the Quiet Revolution established a modern bureaucratic state founded on liberal democratic values of human rights, freedom, equality and the separation of church and state. The long domination of the Catholic Church that impeded secularism and gender equality caused these advancements to be particularly special and meaningful in the hearts and minds of Quebecois (Beauchemin, 2004; Juteau, 2002; Letourneau, 2004; Maclure, 2004). Briefly, the Quiet Revolution accelerated the process of secularization in Quebec which relinquished power from the church in areas such as education, healthcare and social services; this power was assumed by the modern democratic welfare state.

Quebec's history is exceptionally important because it shapes the last 40-50 years of discourse of Quebecois national identity (Quebecois identity). The conquest, sunsequent colonization, attempts at assimilation and integration, status as second-class citizens, and failed referendums—have all impressed upon the national consciousness and influenced contemporary Quebec's articulation of its identity. As Letourneau (2004) notes, "This domination has effectively become part of the cultural experience and manifests itself in many theories about Quebec as a defeated nation, la survivance, and a history full of accumulated pain of conquest and subordination" (p. 128).

Moreover, the sovereignty movement attempted to construct a new Quebecois national identity. This new definition of the political subject propelled and justified the sovereignty movement as it established a meaningful place for Quebecois within a sea of

Canadian culture (Charland, 1987). Yet this Quebecois identity was constructed in a way to make sense of an identity that represented a dominant white conception of Quebecois lineage: speaking French, tracing roots to the *colons français* (original settlers), and identifying with Quebecois culture. As Juteau (2002) elaborates regarding the first decades of the Sovereignty movement in the 1960s-1980s:

> However, not all residents of Quebec were to be included in the emerging national community, which was in fact limited to Quebecois who shared a common history and destiny that was increasingly linked to a political project of sovereignty. At this stage, boundaries were clearly defined in ethno-national terms and the nation was a historical and cultural one. Les Anglais constituted the dominant 'Other', while concern over immigrants and 'ethnics' commenced (p. 443).

Clearly from the start Quebecois were predisposed to be in opposition with any groups that posed a threat of political/economic domination or cultural/linguistic dilution. The national project included only those with the proper claims of inclusion. Immigrants and minorities were only now being considered in this emerging national identity.

Quebecois have often claimed that the rest of Canada and the United States are incapable of understanding their unique experience. Quebecois claim that they embody a minority under constant threat of disappearance. Because of the perpetual feeling of marginalization they feel that may be assimilated over time. To counter this perceived threat, the Quebec government and other elites have encouraged the production of Quebec culture. Likewise they have promoted the Quebec agenda of emancipation and the promotion of its distinct French language and culture. This project has been labelled "Quebecization" and was echoed in the passage of the language laws in the 1970s. Letourneau (2004) advances the process of Quebecization among the Quebec collectivity (p. 139). He relates this is especially important because as the French language is the

"decisive catalyst and main vehicle of expression" (p. 139), Quebecization represents conceptions and standards of the normative citizen of this political and social entity.

The narrative of survival is a constant feature in Quebec's history that speaks to a perpetual threat of linguistic and cultural assimilation. Historically, Quebecois were regarded more or less as second-class citizens in their own space and the dominant Anglophone class appropriated the position of superior culture, religion and language. The relationship between Francophones and Anglophones has manifest as a constant sense of fear which has been described as an insecurity-complex or neurotic temperament (Maclure, 2004). This cognitive state has caused many Quebecois to justify their exceptionalism and differential treatment based on this historical legacy.

Furthermore, the narrative of the national culture in Quebec is told in part through an idea of a pure, original people of Quebec. Quebecois consider themselves racially/ethnically white which excludes any others of non-Western European origin. Hence, the perception in the mind of the dominant group of possessing racial and ethnic characteristics of a white race plays a large role in how they relate to other races. Most trace their "distinct" lineage from the descendents of the same settlers and many therefore refer to themselves as "pure laine" or "de souche", which roughly translates as "old stock".

This sense of belonging, ownership, and concomitant need of protection, which used to be principally focused on Anglophones until the exodus in the 1970s and 1980s, has been transposed onto other minority communities. Still this narrative informs the Quebecois belief that they are the rightful inhabitants of the province/land, and that they

tolerate the presence of "Others" only in limited degrees. In this way, Quebecois possess the exclusive right to set the terms of the discourse and establish the standards of identity and citizenship (Juteau, 2002).

As I have noted, Quebecois are a largely homogenous ethnic group fighting for their self-preservation and way of life. Many agendas and policies, such as the Language laws and interculturalism, were designed purposively to promote French language and culture to the exclusion of any other. As a result it is more difficult to negotiate and integrate the *difference* of immigrants and minorities within Quebec society. It is difficult to accord to immigrants and minorities the special treatment they demand when the Quebecois feel that *they* need the special treatment. It is hard to reconcile the conflicting needs of a minority group who feels threatened as it attempts to reconcile the presence of "Other" minorities within their midst. This inner-dialogue gives way to lengthy debates about the future orientation and policies of integration as more immigrants are needed to sustain the viability of the province.

The particular nature of Quebec's immigration policy is predicated on the exclusiveness and primacy of the French language and acquiring its cultural mores. Quebec places a central role on *interculturalism* which distinguishes itself from Canada's multiculturalism policy. According to a Quebec government publication published in the 1990s, "the unique policy implications of interculturalism include three main tenets: French as the language of public life; a democratic society, in which everyone is expected and encouraged to participate and contribute; and an open, pluralist society that respects democratic values and intercommunatarian exchange" (Government of Québec, 1990, p.16). Quebec thereby justifies a much higher level of autonomy in the selection of its

immigrants according to the primacy of speaking French in the home country. Quebec rejected the equal status of all cultures according to the tenants of federal multiculturalism, because it undermined their project of French cultural revitalization (Ghosh, 2004). Thus, by controlling immigration and which countries to select immigrants from, Quebec could in effect decide who was accepted according to its protectionist cultural and linguistic agenda.

The modern generations of Quebecois, which have pursued a nationalist agenda, have done so largely based on notions of pure Quebecois ethnicity and cultural experience. In opposition to ethnic-based nationalists, cosmopolitan liberals in Quebec have traditionally been more open to Canada, promoting citizenship based on universal rights and principles and values according to a civic-based citizenship (Letourneau, 2004). In this conception, a person's identity markers, such as ethnic background, mother-tongue, race or religion, should not form impediments to full citizenship. A large part of the current soul-searching draws its origins from the opposition between these two general camps because Quebecers are positioned at a crossroads. A redefinition of Quebec identity is being debated as they seek common ground with immigrants and minority populations.

The idea of *difference* speaks to the tendency to highlight differences as a source of distinction and division between the dominant group and subordinate groups, along lines of race, language, culture and ethnicity. Anything labeled "different" is much more likely to be seen as a threat. In the context of reasonable accommodation, the emphasis is placed on the veil as something directly opposed to the identity and values of the secular Quebecois Quebecer Self. For example, Muslim women who wear the veil are

automatically placed in an opposing “Other” social group. It encourages and strengthens the polarization of the two groups into opposing sides.

APPENDIX B

Studies on Minorities in the News Print Media: The Canadian Context

Within the Canadian context I draw on theorists whose recent work focuses on minorities in the media. I found the insights of these studies to be very applicable to my study of Quebec. In particular, Jafri (1998) analyzes Muslim women's experience through qualitative, in-depth interviews in which these women respond to the way they are portrayed in mainstream media messages. She concludes that Orientalist images are dominant in mainstream media, that Muslim women's experience is frequently essentialized. They are represented as passive victims of male patriarchy and actions by activist fringe groups cause all Muslims to be regarded as violent. She notes, "…the vilification of Muslims exceeds any other form of representation, just as the religious identity itself often supersedes any other aspects of the identity of a person who happens to be Muslim" (p. 17).

Likewise, Mahtani (2001) insists that the way Muslims are represented in the media greatly affects the way they are conceived of by the wider public in Canadian society. She asks, "How do media representations of minorities affect the construction of identities in Canada?" (p. 2). She provides an overview of the literature on media representations of minorities and concludes that these studies are merely descriptive accounts and fail to explore the causes of the problematic representations as well as the impact they have on understanding the nation-state and potential strategies for challenging these negative and stereotypical images (p. 21). Within my research immigrants and ethnic minorities were two very large and important targets in the debates around reasonable accommodation that figured greatly in the news print coverage.

In their work, *Media and minorities: Representing diversity in a multicultural Canada*, Fleras and Kuntz (2001) engage in an in-depth analysis of the intricate relationship between minorities and the media against the backdrop of a multicultural Canada. They have found that despite the culturally diverse makeup of Canadian society this diversity is regularly absent from media representations. They conducted an extensive study of race and Canadian media in which they categorize representations of racialized groups into five themes that stereotype minorities as "problem people." They point out that the mass media select race-related incidents that are atypical but also newsworthy. In turn the media frame minority groups in a stereotypical fashion and contrast them with the behaviours and standards of whites. Ultimately this practice reinforces a discourse of white normativity and the status of minority groups as inferior or deviant. Although their study examines the case of Canada, and not Quebec specifically, their work was nonetheless useful in building analytical frameworks for my own methodology and findings. On numerous occasions in my findings I applied the same notion of immigrants and minorities perceived of as "problem people" in the news articles, because the dominant sentiment was these outsiders must be "tolerated".

APPENDIX C

Brief Summary of Newspaper Articles

***Gazette* articles**

1. ***Veiled Threats*:** Riga, A *et al*. (2007, March 24). Veiled Threats. *The Gazette*, p. A1.

The article looks at the problematic situation of Muslim women voting in the general election, scheduled for 24 March, 2007, wearing a niqab, a full face veil covering that leaves only the eyes visible. It is controversial because the chief electoral officer was forced to reverse a decision to allow Muslim women to vote while wearing the niqab because of denunciations made towards him from the wider populace in the form of threatening phone calls. Many Quebecers voiced their opposition to Muslim women being allowed to vote while wearing the niqab, going as far as to encourage fellow Quebecers to show up in Halloween costumes as a sign of their opposition. A leader of the Muslim community expressed his disappointment that the Muslim community was never consulted at any point. He argued that only 10-15 women would have shown up to vote in a niqab and that they would have been willing to show their faces, preferably to other women. The article concludes mentioning other jurisdictions in Canada in which identifying one's face is not absolutely necessary for voting.

2. ***Circling the Wagons*:** Heinrich, J. (2007, March 2007). Circling the Wagons. *The Gazette*, p. B1.

This article uses a Sikh woman as an example of a minority with difficulties of integrating into Quebec society and the article references the dominant group of Quebecois. It sets up a type of dialogue or discourse between these two groups within the context of reasonable accommodation. This article is noteworthy in that the journalist incorporates a number of leading academic theorists who study Quebec culture and

society. As a result, there is a decidedly more academic bent or influence to this article. The article offers a host of background information to Quebec's history, political development and theorizes about the conceptions of citizenship and inclusion. It comes across to the reader almost as if the journalist is attempting to theorize about Quebec and the future of Quebec nationalism taking into account the realities of reasonable accommodation. The article poses the question about what the characteristics or criteria of inclusion are going to be for the Quebec citizen of the future.

3. ***Media Storm*:** Heinrich, J. (2007, February 3). Media stir up storm over 'accommodation': Herouxville. *The Gazette*, p. A8.

This lengthy article starts by introducing an example of a man who is from an immigrant family, but has lived in Quebec for a number of years, who does not feel comfortable with the "simplistic" way that the reasonable accommodation debate is handled by the media. This immigrant and then a subsequent quote from an academic, act as a springboard for the article to jump into a subtle critique about how the media have been handling the reasonable accommodation debates. Then the article looks at the sensationalized and celebrated example of Hérouxville, again as an opportunity to point out the fact that reasonable accommodation is simply a media-constructed phenomenon. The article elaborates in detail how the media has drummed up the frenzy. Paradoxically from the tone, the article seems to reinforce the negative aspects as it seeks, at the same time, to address them. There are more quotes near the end from representatives of news media outlets such as Quebecor and TVA that deny any complicity or contributory role in the whole sensationalized debate surrounding reasonable accommodation.

4. ***Town's Norms*:** Bauch, H. (2007, February 6). Town stands by its norms. *The Gazette*, pp. A.1.

Hérouxville is the main subject matter of this article, discussed in more detail than any other analyzed. The article opens by introducing the town of Hérouxville through a succession of quotes from certain residents at a local bar. Interspersed between these quotes are short explanations of where Hérouxville is and how it describes the *code of conduct*. The article includes quotes of a town councillor as he defends the measure taken by the town, including the level of support the mayor and the town have received from people all over Quebec. The article does include some voices that critique the measures of the *code of conduct*. There is a lot of space in this article dedicated to Hérouxville's justification in this measure, as well as placing it within the residents' perception of how it relates to global phenomena or similar issues.

5. ***Meaning of Quebecer*:** Derfel, A. (2007, February 4). What does it mean to be a Quebecer? *The Gazette*, p. A3.

The article begins with a profile of a Moroccan immigrant Asmaa Ibnouzahir who identifies with Quebec culture but continually feels treated as an *immigrant* or "Other" because of her visible identity markers and heritage. She believes that Muslim and Hasidic Quebecers should be able to wear religious clothing in public without feeling they are imposing on Quebec society. The context of the article is a weekend conference on the future of Quebec's culture in Montreal that took place in 2007. The article places the object and purpose of the weekend conference in the broader debate around reasonable accommodation and theorizing about ideas of what it is to be a Quebecer. The article also quotes Celine Saint-Pierre, a sociologist and conference co-president, who asserts that Hérouxville's code of conduct was not reflective of xenophobia. She believes rather that it demonstrates a "certain fragility in the Quebecois identity." In addition Marc

Briere, a retired labour tribunal judge, defends reasonable accommodation and in the same breath cautions that the debates could "easily degenerate into xenophobia."

6. ***Covered Heads Queried*:** Authier, P. et al. (2007, March 23). Covered Heads at poll booths queried. *The Gazette*, p. A11.

This controversial article talks about the lead-up to the chief electoral officer's decision whether or not to allow Muslim women to vote while veiled. Despite his personal openness to the respect of minorities, Andre Boisclair asserts that there is a line that cannot be crossed and that this line has been crossed. Allowing women to vote while veiled is described as simply unacceptable. Mario Dumont expressed his belief that this decision is reserved for the chief electoral officer. A representative from the Fédération des femmes du Québec is quoted as being against allowing Muslim women to vote while veiled pointing out that they must take off their veil for healthcare cards and passport pictures. The article also quotes a spokesperson for the chief electoral officer affirming the viability of existing measures that can be taken to confirm a person's identity when it is not possible to see their face, as in the case with someone whose face is bandaged.

La Presse Articles

7. ***Débat***: Roy, P. (2007, January 31). Débat sur les accommodements. *La Presse*, p. A6.

This article discusses Hérouxville and the journalist interviews Noella Champagne who is a MLA for the Parti Quebecois. She expresses the view that reasonable accommodation is a really policy debate that concerns Montreal more than rural Quebec, even if the issue has entered into dialogues in her riding. She believes that one of the primary effects of Hérouxville's code of conduct is that it has "put the town on the map." She offers some commentary about Hérouxville and reasonable

accommodation and affirms that the reaction has been more positive than negative. Furthermore she proceeds to admonish her fellow Quebecers to not give into their most "base" instincts by demanding that immigrants should go home if they do not like it here. Secondly, the article relates some comments made by Karl Blackburn who is a Liberal MLA for Roberval. He remarks that there have been instances of positive immigration and integration into his region, citing this as an indication of success in this area.

8. ***L'Effet***: Meunier, H. *et al*. (2007, February 3). L'effet. *La Presse*, p. A6.

The article begins with an example of 30 South American immigrants who recently settled in rural regions of Saint-Marc-du-Lac-Long highlighting the fact that it was only a matter of days until they began to develop ties with the community. Also the article describes the establishment of a Mosque in Chicoutimi by Muslims who have not decided to demand any types of "special accommodation." The article covers some of the reactions of various municipalities and their inhabitants regarding immigrants and reasonable accommodation, specifically Hérouxville's code of conduct. The Lower Saint-Lawrence, Saguenay and Gulf regions are included. The dominant sentiment is the same in many of these areas which all share the same experience of having very few immigrants in their regions when compared to larger, urban centers like Montreal. The resounding sentiment that prevails is that immigrants must respect the standards and way of life of Quebecers. If they do not wish to do this, then they should go home.

9. ***Voter sans se dévoiler***: Beauchemin, M. (2007, March 23). Voter sans se dévoiler. *La Presse*, p. A5.

This article covers one of the most charged political aspects of the reasonable accommodation debates leading up to the election. The issue pertained to the decision of

the chief electoral officer to reverse his decision to allow Muslim women to vote while wearing the veil. It chronicles the reaction of the party leaders Dumont, Boisclair and Charest as they articulate the position of their political party with respect to the key of the decision of the chief electoral officer to renege on his original decision. Essentially although the chief electoral officer has the discretion to decide these matters independent of political pressure, the chief electoral officer does not make the decision in haste devoid of the political realities or sentiments of the day. Initially the chief electoral officer had decided to allow women to vote until an onslaught of negative attention caused him to do an about face. The quotes range from voicing critiques of their opponents' weaknesses on this controversial decision or the legal implications of the decision. The last section of the article mentions in brief the role of the chief electoral officer in the whole affair. The chief electoral officer states that he is merely applying the law and that there are in fact two alternatives to voting showing ones face. Firstly, by a third person giving the oath that openly confirms the identity of the person voting and secondly by providing two pieces of identification.

10. ***Défense des valeurs***: Roy, P. (2006, November 18). Accommodements raisonnables: Dumont appelle à la défense des valeurs de la majorité. *La Presse*, p. A6.

In this article Mario Dumont's sentiments and political posturing are showcased as he calls for a protection of the value of the majority within the reasonable accommodation debates. In a speech Dumont calls on the other political leaders to do more than mere "lip service" to defending the fundamental principles of equality between men and women. The article covers Dumont's reaction to the demands for tolerance and accommodation at the ADQ's general congress in Trois-Rivières. The article concentrates for the most part on quotes of Dumont, but does include a paragraph

describing the reaction of Parti Quebecois leader Andres Boisclair to Dumont and Premier Jean Charest's reaction to debates on reasonable accommodation. The article treats who is making concessions to ethnic and religious minorities and more importantly the extent to which this shall be done. The article then includes a small amount of coverage, seemingly unrelated, on the demands of specialist doctors in Quebec seeking a wage increase. The article finishes off with a comparison of Dumont's movement with that of Jean Lesage in the Quiet Revolution.

11. ***Passions déchaînées*****:** Girard, M. (2007, January 29). L'affaire Hérouxville déchaîne les passions. *La Presse*, p. A1.

This article chronicles various reactions of members of the general public to the passing of the code of conduct by Hérouxville as well as situating various Hérouxville citizens' views. The article provides information regarding what level and what type of response Hérouxville has been getting on its website. Most of the reactions are in the form of emails received on the website and are very short. In terms of content it is the opinions and sentiments of the inhabitants of the town and supporters of this measure that are given a voice. It also talks about the reality of the regions and their demographic make-up, situating Hérouxville as part of a larger rural-urban divide. Montreal and other urban centers do not have the same experience as the rural areas with respect to more extreme or intolerant reactions to immigrants and minorities. In the latter part of the article, there is a section offering a commentary from Marie McAndrew, Chair of Ethnic Relations at the University of Montreal on the relationship between the immigrant/minorities and the Quebecois. McAndrew also comments on the difficulties of the experience of Quebec's multiethnic society while emphasizing that the town councilors of Hérouxville should have been more prudent in their actions.

12. ***Femmes voilées*****:** Rodrigue, S. *et al*. (2007, March 24). Vote des femmes voilées. *La Presse*, p. A8.

The beginning of this article covers a speech given to supporters in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean by the Parti Quebecois leader Andre Boisclair who openly criticized the handling of the accommodation of Muslim women in the upcoming election. Chief electoral officer revised his previous announcement that women wearing the niqab would not have to remove their veil in order to vote in the upcoming election. The article describes a number of central considerations of the delicate and controversial issue and explains the grounding of the chief electoral officer's initial decision to allow face coverings. The article also places this debate into the wider political context by referencing the remarks and posturing of the political leaders leading up the election. The latter part of the article remarks on the political considerations of the reasonable accommodation debate and the political wrangling between leaders Boisclair, Dumont and Charest. Dumont is the most vociferous critique of the chief electoral officer, while Dumont and Charest took a more cautious tact of affirming that the decision really is up to the chief electoral officer. The article finishes by touching lightly on few of the legal considerations of the decision of the chief electoral officer.