

1-1-2013

# The Diverse City: Can you read all about it in ethnic newspapers?

April Lindgren

Ryerson University, [april.lindgren@ryerson.ca](mailto:april.lindgren@ryerson.ca)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.ryerson.ca/journalism>



Part of the [Journalism Studies Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Lindgren, April, "The Diverse City: Can you read all about it in ethnic newspapers?" (2013). *Journalism Publications and Research*. Paper 5.

<http://digitalcommons.ryerson.ca/journalism/5>

This Working Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Journalism at Digital Commons @ Ryerson. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journalism Publications and Research by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Ryerson. For more information, please contact [bcameron@ryerson.ca](mailto:bcameron@ryerson.ca).

# **WORKING PAPER SERIES**

**The Diverse City:**

**Can you read all about it in ethnic newspapers?**

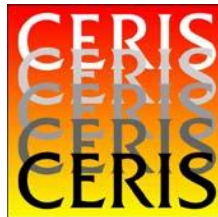
**April Lindgren**

**CERIS Working Paper No. 95**

**January 2013**

Series Editor

Kenise Murphy Kilbride  
Graduate Programs of  
Early Childhood Studies  
and  
Immigration and Settlement Studies  
Ryerson University  
350 Victoria Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5B 2K3  
kilbride@ryerson.ca



**CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Centre**

**The CERIS Working Paper Series**

**Manuscripts on topics related to immigration, settlement, and cultural diversity in urban centres are welcome. Preference may be given to the publication of manuscripts that are the result of research projects funded through CERIS - The Ontario Metropolis Centre.**

**All manuscripts must be submitted in both digital and hard-copy form, and should include an Abstract of 100-200 words and a list of keywords.**

**If you have comments or proposals regarding the CERIS Working Paper Series please contact the Editor at:  
(416) 736-5223 or e-mail at <ceris@yorku.ca>.**

**Copyright of the papers in the CERIS Working Paper Series is retained by the author(s).**

**The views expressed in these Working Papers are those of the author(s), and opinions on the content of the Working Papers should be communicated directly to the author(s) themselves.**

**CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Centre  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor, York Research Tower, 4700 Keele St.  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3  
Telephone (416) 736-5223 Facsimile: (416) 736-5688**

**The Diverse City:  
Can you read about it in ethnic newspapers?**

**April Lindgren  
Ryerson University**

**ABSTRACT**

The ethnic diversity in Canadian cities has been accompanied by rapid growth in the number of ethnocultural newspapers serving immigrant, ethnic and racialized communities. What role do these newspapers play in shaping how different groups see each other? This study examines how three ethnic newspapers published in the Greater Toronto Area portray residents other than their target audiences. Data are presented on the extent to which other groups are covered in the news and the nature of that news coverage. The results suggest that the Korean, Russian and Punjabi-language publications examined in the study paint only a limited picture of diversity in one of the world's most diverse metropolitan areas. In the case of the Korean-language newspaper, there is also some limited evidence of stereotyping of the Black community. Suggestions are offered on how ethnic news outlets with small editorial teams and limited financial resources can introduce greater diversity into their news reporting without compromising coverage of their own communities. Training options and strategies to help address challenges associated with reporting on diversity are also outlined.

**KEY WORDS**

Journalism, diversity, representation, stereotyping, ethnic media

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introduction.....  | 1  |
| News and diversity .....   | 2  |
| Method .....   | 3  |
| <i>Coding procedure</i> .....  | 4  |
| <i>Diversity representation</i> .....                                      | 5  |
| Results .....  | 6  |
| <i>Identification of local news items</i> .....                            | 6  |
| <i>Number of references to race or ethnicity in local news items</i> ..... | 6  |
| <i>Portrayals of the target audience and other groups</i> .....            | 10 |
| Discussion .....   | 14 |
| <i>Is there a case for more diversity coverage?</i> .....                  | 14 |
| <i>Negative and other stereotypes</i> .....                                | 16 |
| Acknowledgements .....   | 20 |
| References .....   | 21 |

## Introduction

The growing diversity in Canada's largest cities has prompted calls for a better understanding of how ethnocultural media shape "the ways that particular racialized groups understand, perceive and 'make sense' of other racialized groups" (Mahtani 2008, 247).

The Local News Research Project ([www.localnewsresearchproject.ca](http://www.localnewsresearchproject.ca)) at the Ryerson University School of Journalism responded to such calls by undertaking a two-part study examining how other groups are portrayed in local news coverage that appears in Greater Toronto Area ethnocultural newspapers. The first phase examined content published in *Ming Pao*, a Toronto-area Chinese-language daily newspaper. It concluded that, with the exception of the White community, groups other than Chinese received only limited coverage in the newspaper. The study also raised concerns about the newspaper's negative portrayals of members of the Vietnamese and Black communities (Lindgren, in press).

*Ming Pao*, a publication owned by a foreign-based multinational company, is one of the GTA's largest ethnic newspapers with an editorial staff of 35, a daily circulation of 51,000, a weekly readership of 227,000, and 500,000 visits per month to the online website [Mingpaoto.ca](http://Mingpaoto.ca) (Chan 2010). Most ethnic news publications in the GTA are more modest, locally owned operations. The question then arises: How do these smaller publications cover diversity?

This paper presents the results of the study's second phase, which examined how newspapers serving three other ethnic communities - the *Canadian Punjabi Post*, *Korea Times Daily* and *Russian Express* – portray groups other than their target audiences. After outlining the methodology and results, suggestions are offered on how ethnic news outlets with small editorial teams and limited financial resources can introduce greater diversity into their news reporting without compromising coverage of their own communities.

## News and diversity

Extensive literature exists on the misrepresentation and underrepresentation of diversity and of racial minorities in news coverage by mainstream media (D'Arcy 2007; Diversity Institute 2010; Fleras and Kunz 2001; Henry and Tator 2002; Mahtani 2001; Special Committee on Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society 1984). The sustained interest in the topic is an acknowledgement of the significant role news media play in shaping perceptions of others. As Jiwani (2006) observes, the representation of race “in the dominant media is indicative of the place accorded to racialized groups in the symbolic landscape of the nation, and further, how they are perceived in terms of belonging to the imagined community reflected by the media” (xx). The invisibility of certain groups in the news – the fact that they seldom appear in stories and photographs – suggests members of these groups are people who do not exist or do not matter. The *type* of coverage is also significant in that a steady stream of stories linking ethnic and/or racialized groups to negative activities such as crime “leads to the erroneous impression that every member that shares any kind of resemblance to this group has a proclivity to crime” (Jiwani 2006, 47).

In an era when diversity training and workshops are the norm in journalism schools and Canadian newsrooms, conscious, deliberate racism on the part of reporters, editors and publishers seems an unlikely explanation for what is proving to be an ongoing problem. Researchers, however, have identified more subtle forms of bias.

Journalists' judgments about what is considered newsworthy, combined with reporting practices developed in response to deadlines and other practical aspects of news production, for instance, have been linked to mainstream media's tendency to stereotype or render racialized and ethnic groups invisible. It can take extra time to find sources from diverse backgrounds, something that is frowned upon in a competitive environment where being fast and first with the news is highly valued. The emphasis on novelty and drama, meanwhile, can result in stories that highlight achievements by racialized minorities in part because they *are* racialized minorities. “The underlying expectation,” as Jiwani (2006) has observed, “is that such individuals or groups are generally incapable of rising to such standards...” (39).

The focus on bad news as being particularly worthy of coverage also has the potential to produce distorted representations of racial or ethnic minorities. Bad news stories are reported in the media about all people regardless of race or ethnicity. The potential for negatively stereotyping a group arises, however, when this type of story is the *only* news that is published (Fleras 2011).

While representations of diversity have been the subject of ongoing interest in scholarly research on mainstream media, much less is known about how ethnic news organizations cover groups other than their own target audiences. An examination of the news content published in Vancouver's ethnic media found little in the way of interethnic coverage and researchers identified concerns about this pronounced in-group focus during interviews with media and other stakeholders from the Chinese, Punjabi, Iranian and Korean communities (Murray, Yu and Ahadi 2007).

Phase one of The Local News Research Project study explored the representation of diversity in the Toronto edition of the Chinese-language newspaper *Ming Pao* (Lindgren, in press). Data on references to all racialized and ethnic minorities in local coverage over a four-week-period in 2008 found that the newspaper published more news items featuring the White community than any other group except Chinese, and that coverage of the White and Chinese communities tended to be generally positive. Other groups appeared much less frequently, and members of the Vietnamese and, to a lesser extent, the Black community were often cast in an unflattering light in crime-related stories and photos.

## **Method**

This study examined portrayals of other groups in local news coverage by three ethnocultural newspapers in the Greater Toronto Area. Although dozens of newspapers are produced each week by and for immigrant groups and racialized and ethnic minorities, preliminary sampling revealed that many of these publications contained little or no local news and therefore were unsuitable for use in this study. The Punjabi, Russian and Korean newspapers that were selected (Table 1) do publish local news and all serve substantial communities. The most recent available census data reported that 157,475



GTA residents listed Punjabi as their mother tongue, 78,105 listed Russian and 51,395 listed Korean (Statistics Canada 2012).

The *Korea Times Daily* publishes six days per week in Korean; *Russian Express* is a weekly newspaper that publishes every Friday in Russian; the *Canadian Punjabi Post* publishes six days per week in Punjabi.

**Table 1. Overview of papers examined**

| Newspaper             | Publishing schedule      | Ownership   | Daily circulation* | Staff (editors & reporters) responsible for local coverage* |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------|---|
| Canadian Punjabi Post | Daily Monday to Saturday | Locally owned and operated  | 14,000 to 18,000   | 5 local journalists plus one editor & one reporter in India |
| Russian Express       | Weekly                   | Locally owned and operated  | 14,000             | 4   |
| Korea Times Daily     | Daily Monday to Saturday | Locally owned with contract to access content from the U.S. and Korean editions | 15,000             | 9   |

\*Circulation data, staff numbers and other information supplied by newspaper officials

### ***Coding procedure***

This study examined 21 issues of the *Canadian Punjabi Post* and *Korea Times Daily* collected between January 4 and August 8, 2011. The contents of 21 issues of the weekly *Russian Express* were coded for the weeks between January 14 and September 9 because we were unable to obtain some issues published during the main study period. In all three cases, we excluded the weeks between March 17 and May 4, 2011 because a federal election took place during this period, rendering the local news that appeared in the papers unrepresentative of typical content.

The coding was done by one coder who could read and speak Russian fluently, one coder who could read and speak Korean fluently, and one coder who could read and speak Punjabi fluently. Coders read each newspaper and identified stories and photographs that dealt primarily with local people, events, issues and places in

the Greater Toronto Area. Each local item was then categorized according to one of the general subject categories outlined in Table 2.

**Table 2. Subject categories for local articles and photographs**

| General Subject Code | General Subject Category Description   |
|----------------------|--|
| PO                   | Police/crime/legal/courts/local public safety  |
| ED                   | Education  |
| HE                   | Health/health protection/medical   |
| TR                   | Transit/gridlock/sprawl/traffic  |
| SO                   | Social supports/affordable housing/poverty/social justice  |
| LU                   | Land use/urban design/development/redevelopment  |
| MU                   | Municipal politics/services/budget   |
| EW                   | Environment/weather  |
| FA                   | Fire/accident  |
| RI                   | Religious-cultural diversity/multiculturalism/immigration  |
| AE                   | Arts/entertainment/local attractions   |
| BU                   | Business   |
| SP                   | Sports   |
| NS                   | Local impact of national security/terrorism/foreign policy/foreign disasters/human rights/Canadian soldiers/casualties |
| FP                   | Federal or provincial politics/initiatives – local angle   |
| OT                   | Other/pets/travel/human interest   |

If a news item contained no mentions of race or ethnicity, it was classified as referring to the “general community.” Where a local story referenced a particular ethnic or racial group, or where a photograph featured people of an identifiable racial or ethnic background, this information was added to the database.

Since coders were working in three different languages, *Toronto Star* content was used for basic training and for an inter-recorder reliability test. Coders achieved acceptable levels of agreement for all major variables in the test, suggesting that their coding decisions for the individual ethnocultural newspapers would be consistent and accurate. Details of the test results are available from the author.

### ***Diversity representation***

Three aspects of diversity coverage were investigated.

- The first measure involved analyzing the data to identify the racialized or ethnic groups captured in photographs or referenced in stories. The variety of representation and frequency of appearances were tabulated.
- The second measure involved identifying the subject matter of stories and photos (sports, crime, business, politics etc.) containing references to racial or ethnic groups so we could explore how different groups were portrayed.
- The third measure involved examining all of the local news items that referenced groups other than the target audience for consistency with the standards established by the Canadian Press wire service on when it is appropriate to mention race or ethnicity. The CP standard, which has been adopted by most mainstream news organizations, says that race, colour, national origin or immigration status should only be identified when the information is truly relevant to the story (Tasko 2012). Coders categorized each news item that mentioned other racial or ethnic groups as consistent or inconsistent with CP style. References to the publications' own target audiences (Russian, Korean and Indian) were not tested for consistency with the CP standard because it seemed reasonable for each newspaper to mention and highlight their own community members' activities, tragedies, criminal transgressions and successes.

## Results

### *Identification of local news items*

For the purpose of this study, 480 local news items (stories and photographs) were identified and analyzed in *Canadian Punjabi Post*. The *Korea Times Daily* contained 459 local news items while *Russian Express* published 443 local news items.

### *Number of references to race or ethnicity in local news items*

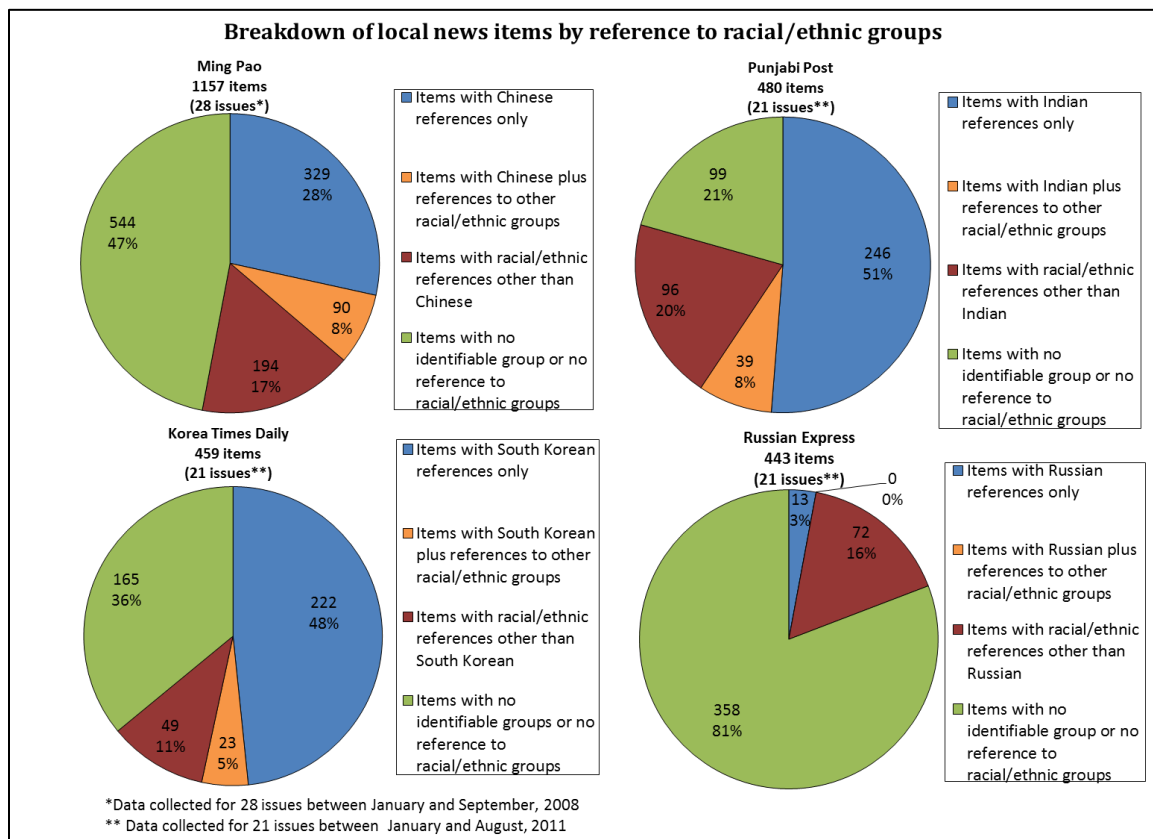
*Russian Express* stood out from the pack in that just three percent of its local news items contained in-group (Russian) references while 81 percent of its local content contained no references to ethnic or racialized groups (Figure 1).

Data for the other two newspapers told a much different story in that more than half of their local coverage contained references to their target audiences. The

Indian community was explicitly mentioned (alone or in articles/photos that also mentioned other groups) in 59 percent of local news items published by *Canadian Punjabi Post*, while 53 percent of local items that appear in *Korea Times Daily* (Figure 1) referenced the Korean community. In both these cases, the emphasis on coverage of the target (in-group) audience was greater than it was in the earlier study of *Ming Pao*. In that case, 36 percent of news items referenced the Chinese community or the Chinese community and one or more other groups (Lindgren, in press).

The data also showed that 28 percent of local news items in *Canadian Punjabi Post* referenced other groups, slightly higher than the 25 percent total for *Ming Pao*. Sixteen percent of news items in *Korea Times Daily* and *Russian Express* respectively referred to groups other than the target audiences.

**Figure 1.**



References to 12 other racial or ethnic groups were identified in the local news content of *Korea Times Daily* (Tables 3) and *Russian Express* (Table 5). This number rose to 14 in the *Canadian Punjabi Post* (Table 4). In all three cases, the numbers were significantly lower than for *Ming Pao*, where 22 groups other than Chinese were referenced in stories and photographs one or more times.

**Table 3**

**References to Race/Ethnicity in Korea Times Daily**

| Race/Ethnicity  | In Photos  | In News/Feature Stories | Total References       |
|---|------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| South Korea   | 95         | 150                     | 245                    |
| Not Identifiable <sup>1</sup>   | 50         | 1                       | 51                     |
| White   | 39         |                         | 39                     |
| East Asian (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan) <sup>2</sup>                                       | 12         | 1                       | 13                     |
| Chinese   |            | 6                       | 6                      |
| Black community   | 3          | 1                       | 4                      |
| North Korea   | 1          | 3                       | 4                      |
| Other   | 1          | 2                       | 3                      |
| Philippines   |            | 2                       | 2                      |
| Afghanistan   |            | 1                       | 1                      |
| Iran  |            | 1                       | 1                      |
| Trinidad  |            | 1                       | 1                      |
| South Asian (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Nepal) <sup>2</sup> | 1          |                         | 1                      |
| Tibet   |            | 1                       | 1                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>204</b> | <b>168</b>              | <b>372<sup>3</sup></b> |

<sup>1</sup> Used where race/ethnicity was not identified in relation to photograph

<sup>2</sup> General references to Asian, East Asian, South Asian or Southeast Asian in news stories or photos where specific information is lacking

<sup>3</sup> Total number of race/ethnicity references in 294 local news items that mention race/ethnicity

Further analysis of the newspapers examined in this second phase of research identified only a limited range of diversity coverage beyond mentions of the White community. The 480 local news items in *Canadian Punjabi Post* (Table 4) contained 56 references to the White community, 54 references to South Asians (because, in some cases, coders couldn't say with certainty that the individuals in the photos were of Indian origin), and just 17 references to all other groups. *Korea Times Daily* (Table 3) published 459 local news items with 39 references to the White community, 13 references to the East Asian community (again, in some cases,

coders couldn't say with certainty that the individuals in the photos were of Korean origin) and 24 references to other groups.

**Table 4**

**References to Race/Ethnicity in Punjabi Post**

| Race/Ethnicity  | In Photos | In News/Feature Stories | Total References |
|---|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|
| India   | 174       | 116                     | 290              |
| Not Identifiable <sup>1</sup>   | 67        |                         | 67               |
| White   | 56        |                         | 56               |
| South Asian (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Nepal) <sup>2</sup> | 53        | 1                       | 54               |
| Pakistan  | 1         | 2                       | 3                |
| Other   |           | 2                       | 2                |
| Black community   | 2         |                         | 2                |
| Middle Eastern  | 1         | 1                       | 2                |
| Aboriginal  |           | 1                       | 1                |
| China   |           | 1                       | 1                |
| East Asian (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan) <sup>2</sup>                                       | 1         |                         | 1                |
| France  |           | 1                       | 1                |
| Japanese  |           | 1                       | 1                |
| Mexican community   |           | 1                       | 1                |
| Sri Lanka   |           | 1                       | 1                |
| Nepal   |           | 1                       | 1                |
| Total   | 355       | 129                     | 484 <sup>3</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Used where race/ethnicity was not identified in relation to photograph

<sup>2</sup> General references to Asian, East Asian, South Asian or Southeast Asian in news stories or photos where specific information is lacking

<sup>3</sup> Total number of race/ethnicity references in 379 local news items that mention race/ethnicity

The 443 local items published in *Russian Express* (Table 5) referenced the White community 59 times and mentioned other groups on just 22 occasions. The White community was actually the most frequently identified group, well ahead of the newspaper's Russian target audience, which received only 13 specific references (12 stories and one photo). At first glance, this suggests that the paper paid much less attention to its own community than the other publications. The number of Russian references, however, may be artificially low because many Russians are White. As such, Russians appearing in photographs would have been coded as White unless information accompanying the photograph explicitly identified them as Russian.

**Table 5****References to Race/Ethnicity in Russian Express**

| Race/Ethnicity                | In Photos | In News/Feature Stories | Total References       |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Russia                        | 1         | 12                      | 13                     |
| White                         | 59        |                         | 59                     |
| Not Identifiable <sup>1</sup> | 25        |                         | 25                     |
| Black community               | 7         |                         | 7                      |
| Other                         |           | 3                       | 3                      |
| Afghanistan                   |           | 2                       | 2                      |
| Asian <sup>2</sup>            | 1         | 1                       | 2                      |
| Israeli                       |           | 2                       | 2                      |
| Caribbean community           |           | 1                       | 1                      |
| Egyptian                      |           | 1                       | 1                      |
| India                         |           | 1                       | 1                      |
| Iran                          |           | 1                       | 1                      |
| Portugal                      |           | 1                       | 1                      |
| Korea (South)                 |           | 1                       | 1                      |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>93</b> | <b>23</b>               | <b>119<sup>3</sup></b> |

<sup>1</sup> Used where race/ethnicity was not identified in relation to photograph

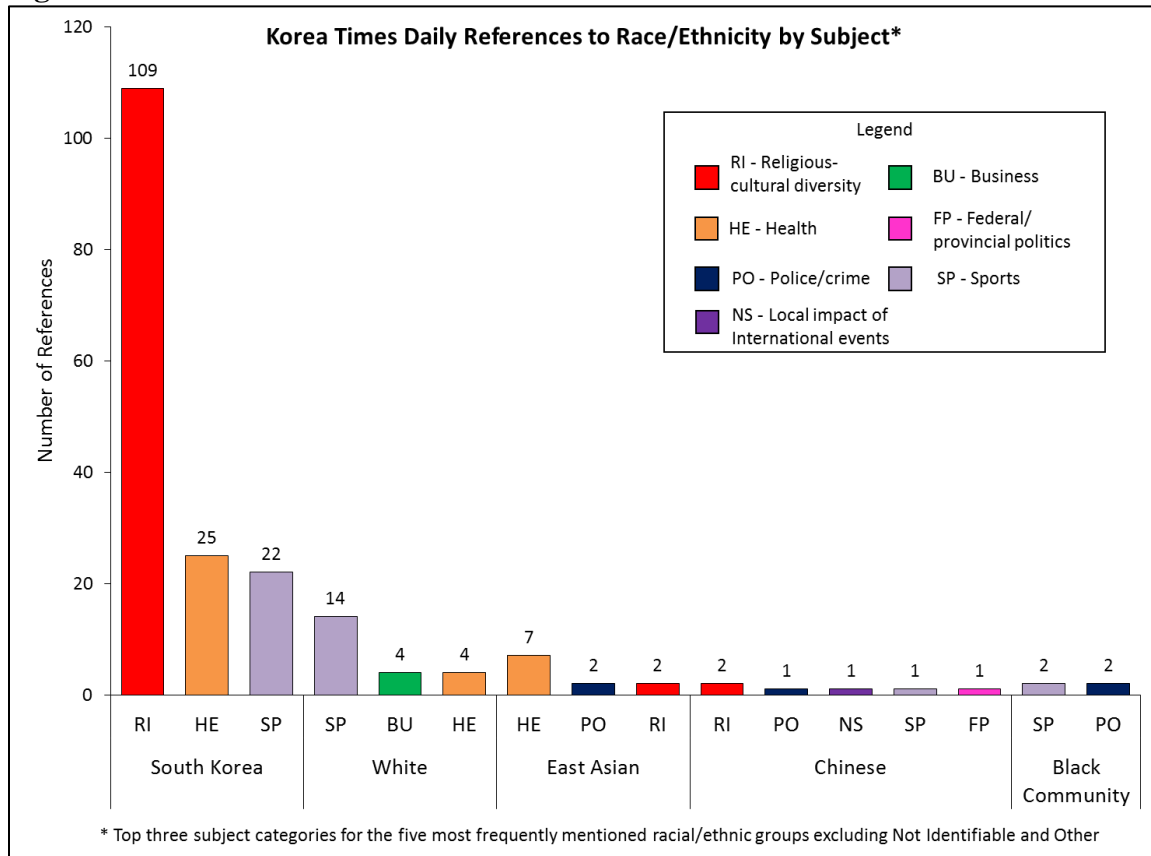
<sup>2</sup> General references to Asian, East Asian, South Asian or Southeast Asian in news stories or photos where specific information is lacking

<sup>3</sup> Total number of race/ethnicity references in 85 local news items that mention race/ethnicity

***Portrayals of the target audience and other groups***

Consistent with what was found in *Ming Pao*, the three newspapers tended to cast their own communities in a positive light. Stories and photographs in the RI category (religious/cultural diversity, multiculturalism and immigration issues) dominated the *Korea Times Daily's* reporting on the Korean community (Figure 2). Of the 109 items in the RI category, 66 focused on community celebrations and festivals and another 20 dealt with the individual achievements of Korean community members.

**Figure 2**

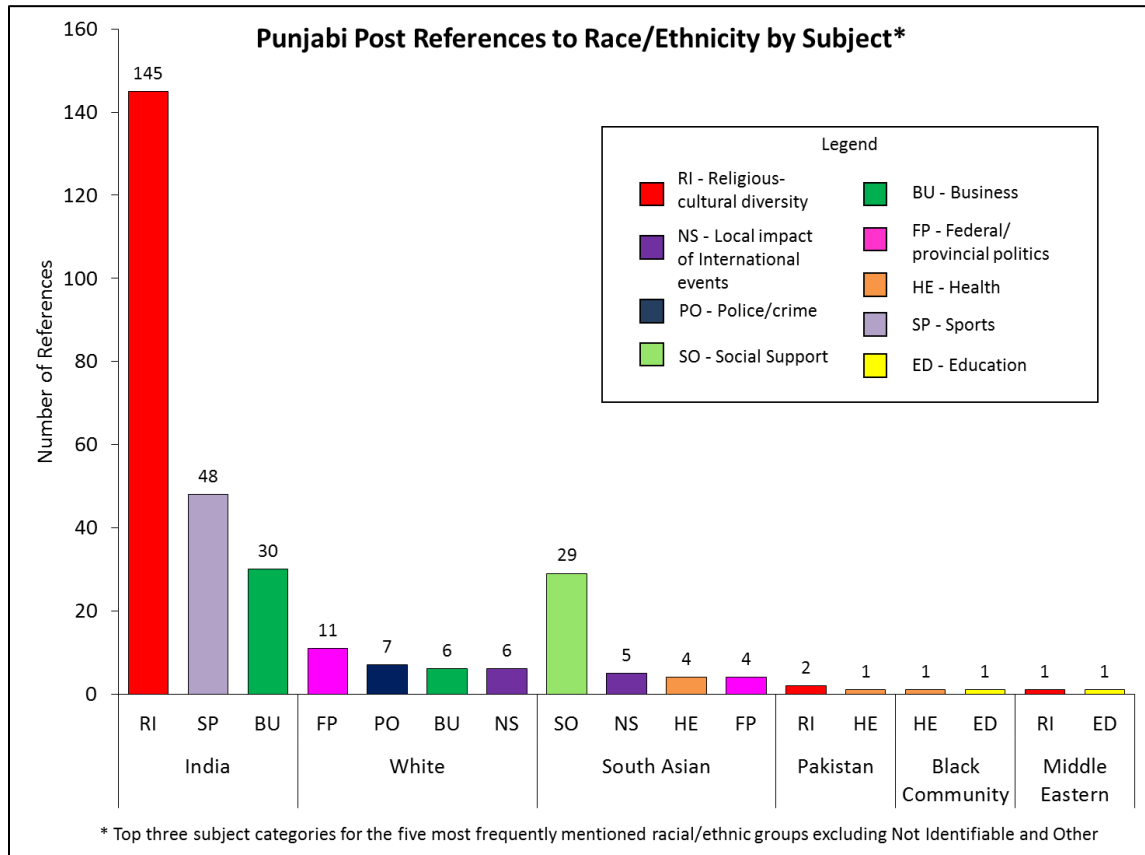


In *Canadian Punjabi Post*, the RI category also dominated (Figure 3), with an emphasis (78 of 145 RI items) on cultural festivals and celebrations, and religious practices of the Indian community. In *Russian Express* (Figure 4), the few stories and photographs that explicitly mentioned the Russian community dealt primarily with arts and entertainment topics, followed by RI coverage of cultural festivals and celebrations.

Apart from the focus on community festivals and celebrations, the three newspapers' coverage of their respective target audiences tended to focus on health, business and sports.

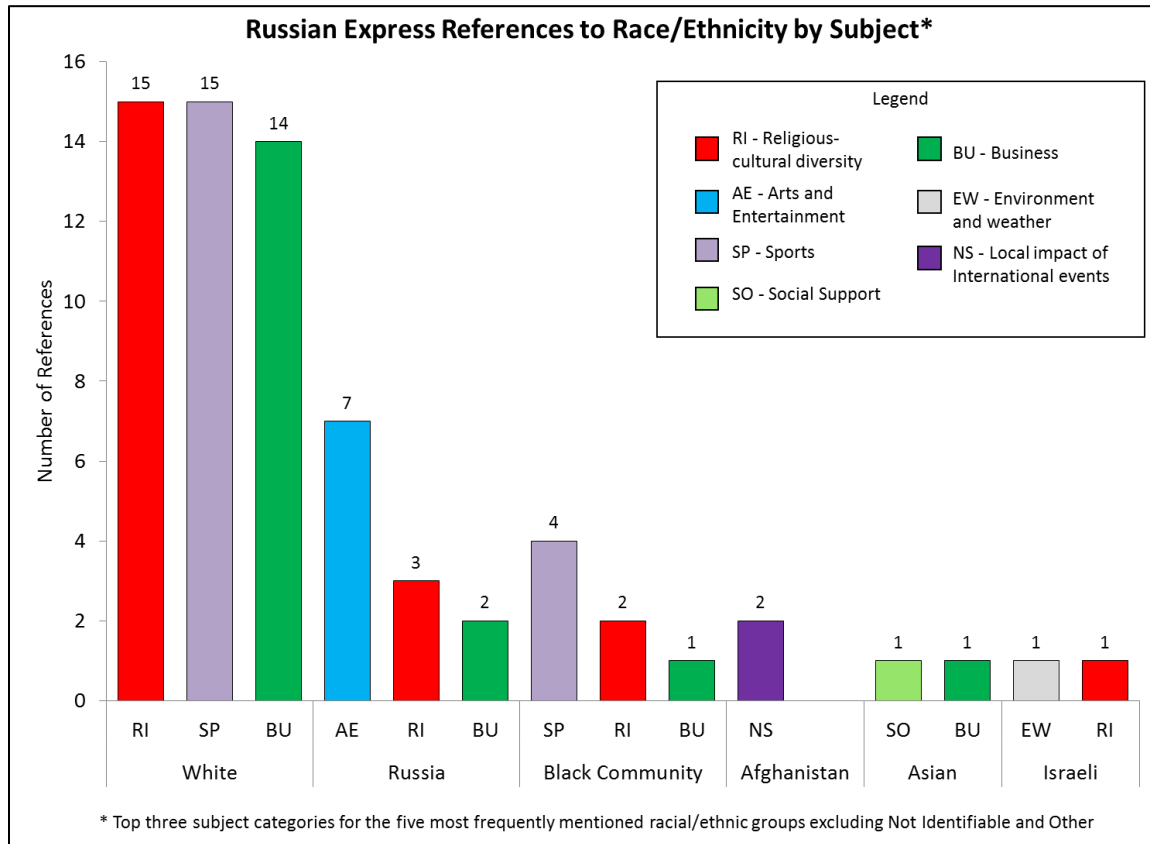


**Figure 3**



Analysis of how the newspapers covered communities other than their own varied. In both the *Canadian Punjabi Post* and *Russian Express*, the reporting on different groups included a range of topics (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Coverage of the Black community by the *Korea Times Daily*, stood out, however, in that the four news items that referenced this group were limited to the categories of sports (two photos of Black professional baseball players) and police/crime (one story about the shooting of a Korean community member that ran with a photo of a Black man arrested in connection with the murder).

**Figure 4**



The crime story was also inconsistent with CP standards in that it said “...Kang was shot and killed by 2 young Black men at a plaza near Victoria Park and Finch in northeast Toronto” (“Young Korean man shooting” 2011). According to CP style, mentions of the racial background of the accused would only be justifiable as part of a more extensive description of suspects still being sought by police.

The shooting story in *Korea Times Daily* was one of seven CP-inconsistent news items identified across the three newspapers. The other items were:

- A story in *Korea Times Daily* that identified a child killed in a Korean neighbourhood as Iranian (“A car accident in North York” 2011).
- Three stories in the *Canadian Punjabi Post* that formed a series about a GTA family’s trip to Alaska. Each story was published with a headline that used the word “Eskimo” (“Eskimo people’s pretty land” 2011a, b, c). The issue here is not the decision to reference northern inhabitants in the headline but with the choice

of term. Although the term Eskimo is widely used in Alaska (Kaplan 2011), it is considered derogatory in many other places, including Canada, because it was thought to mean “eater of raw meat.” The CP style guide says Inuit is the proper term and that Eskimo should “never” be used (Tasko 2012).

- A story in the *Canadian Punjabi Post* that identified two doctors accused of rape as being of South Asian background (“Toronto police have charged” 2011).
- A story in *Russian Express* about the kidnapping and death of a local realtor noted that the accused “if judged by their names seem to be immigrants from South Asia” (“Kidnapped realtor’s body found” 2011).

## Discussion

### *Is there a case for more diversity coverage?*

The diversity of the Great Toronto Area is portrayed only to a limited extent in the three newspapers examined for this study. In the *Canadian Punjabi Post*, 28 percent of news items referenced other groups, about the same percentage as in the earlier study of *Ming Pao* (25 percent). In *Korea Times Daily* and *Russian Express*, the number shrank to 16 percent. Closer examination of the data indicate that the diversity representation is actually much more limited than these numbers suggest. In all three cases, the newspapers referenced only about a dozen other groups. Most of these other groups, however, were referenced infrequently except for the White community.

*Russian Express* stood out for the lack of specific references to its target audience (Russians were explicitly referenced in just three percent of articles), as well as the invisibility of other groups (81 percent of news items contained no references to race or ethnicity).

The in-group focus of the other two newspapers, however, was even more pronounced than it was in *Ming Pao*, where 36 percent of news items referenced the Chinese community. In *Korea Times Daily*, 53 percent of local news items referenced Koreans while in *Canadian Punjabi Post* Indians were referenced in 59 percent of stories and photographs.

This in-group focus and the positive nature of coverage accorded the target audience suggest *Canadian Punjabi Post* and *Korea Times Daily* perform an important function in terms of countering stereotypes and fostering community cohesion and identity. Most obviously, they simply just published more information about their communities than the mainstream media. *Korea Times Daily*, for instance, published 245 news items that referenced the Korean community. By comparison, the Local News Research Project's analysis of diversity representation in the *Toronto Star* on the same 21 sample days identified just eight items that explicitly referenced the Korean community. Similarly, the *Canadian Punjabi Post* published 285 stories and photographs containing explicit references to the GTA's Indian community compared to 13 explicit references in the *Star*. While *Russian Express* contained just 13 explicit references to the Russian community (again, this could be artificially low since some Russian community members who appeared in the photographs may have been coded as members of the White community), this still outnumbered appearances in the *Star*, where the community was mentioned just three times in the comparable period.

Given the important role they play in their communities and the challenges that generating local coverage presents for small news operations, to what extent should these three ethnic newspapers be including information about other groups? The results of a Canada-wide survey of editors and publishers at ethnocultural news organizations suggest that many see a role for their publications in promoting intercultural relations: 45% of respondents said they serve readers by building bridges between cultures (Miller 2006). Offering insights and introductions to "unlike" people by including them in stories and photographs contributes to building these bridges and helps with the integration process by introducing readers to members of other racial and ethnic communities. This is of particular use for newcomers who may be unaccustomed to the extreme diversity that characterizes the Greater Toronto Area.

In the spring of 2012, the author met with a group of publishers, editors and reporters from ethnocultural news organizations to make the case for more diversity reporting in local news. Reaction to the presentation was mixed (Fatima 2012). "That's an area that I will mention to (my editor) that we need to get into," noted one receptive journalist from a newspaper serving the Caribbean community. "As Caribbean people,

we do intermarry with other ethnicities and do business.” Representatives of other news organizations, however, pointed to the challenges of reporting on groups beyond their immediate community. The obstacles they identified included language barriers and lack of time and resources to find out about events or issues in other communities, given that covering their own target group is already a strain.

Many of the 35 journalists attending the presentation nonetheless expressed an interest in professional development, including sessions on the Canadian Press standard for the representation of others. The possibility of training opportunities in general was warmly embraced (Fatima 2012).

### ***Negative and other stereotypes***

The data analysis found little evidence of negative representations of others in *Canadian Punjabi Post* and *Russian Express* in terms of the types of stories and photographs they published.

*Russian Express* did inappropriately identify the accused in a crime story as immigrants from South Asia “judging by their names.” This is problematic in terms of the CP standard for mentions of race and ethnicity and also potentially inaccurate since the reporter obviously had no information on the immigration status of the individuals or their country of origin.

Stories published in *Punjabi Post* that the coders identified as failing to comply with the CP standard for mentions of race and ethnicity, tended to be somewhat ambiguous cases. The three *Punjabi Post* headlines that use the word Eskimo (“Eskimo people’s pretty land” 2011a, b, c), for instance, do violate the CP standard that says Inuit should be used instead. At the same time, however, the author of the travel series was a community member on a family holiday in Alaska where the term Eskimo is widely accepted and used. This suggests that editors were unaware of the CP standard for use of the term Eskimo, a situation that could be addressed through an education and awareness campaign.

The *Punjabi Post*’s references to the doctors accused of rape as being South Asian (“Toronto police have charged” 2011) is, strictly speaking, also inconsistent with the CP standard, but could be justified in that the men are part of the newspaper’s broader target audience.

Coverage of other groups in *Korea Times Daily* was somewhat more problematic for two reasons. While reporting on all communities in the *Canadian Punjabi Post* and *Russian Express* was varied in terms of the topics (Figures 3 and 4), *Korea Times Daily* coverage of the Black community focused on sports and crime exclusively (Figure 2). This crime-and-sports emphasis is consistent with a recurring problem in mainstream media where “representations of racialized minorities tend to cluster around the themes of crime and deviance, ethnic exotica, athletic prowess, and societal achievements, thereby constructing them as Others – different from “us” (Jiwani 2006, 42). Research on Canada’s English-language media suggests visible minorities and Blacks in particular tend to be overly represented in sports photographs (Miller and Prince 1994) – a practice that critics suggest reinforces stereotypes about their “natural” athletic abilities (Saul and James 2006).

In mainstream news coverage, the association of the Black community with crime and deviance is also a well-documented problem (D’Arcy 2007; Henry 1999, 2002). While the number of news items in this case is small, it may be that the same scenario is being played out in *Korea Times Daily*. Just five of the 30 police and crime-related news items in the newspaper reference groups other than Koreans or East Asians (who are arguably part of the target audience). Two of those five references (one story accompanied by a photo) involved the Black community and the story was inconsistent with CP standards in that the suspects in a shooting case were identified as Black (“Young Korean man shooting” 2011).

Evidence of the stereotyping of the Black community is worth noting in the context of significant tensions between the Black and Korean communities in the United States (Cheng and Espiritu 1989), where ongoing difficulties between Korean shopkeepers and residents in Black neighbourhoods where the stores operate have recently been described as an “open sore” (Escobar 2012). The data gathered from *Korea Times Daily* offer no concrete evidence that these tensions spill over into Canada, but this should not be ruled out as a possibility. Lack of familiarity with the CP standard and lack of training around the sensitivity surrounding the portrayal of other groups in a multicultural setting are other possible explanations for the paper’s coverage of the Black community.

Finally, it is important to note that data for all three newspapers may not reveal the full story about how other groups are portrayed. This is a distinct possibility because these newspapers, unlike *Ming Pao*, contained relatively little crime coverage and it is in crime coverage where problems associated with negative stereotyping are most pronounced (Special Committee on Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society 1984). While crime was the top subject for coverage in *Ming Pao*, accounting for 18 percent of all local news items, it appeared much less frequently as a topic in the three other papers (7 percent in *Canadian Punjabi Post* and *Korea Times Daily*, and 8 percent in *Russian Express*) examined in this expanded study. A more extensive, detailed look at the representation of others in crime coverage by ethnocultural media over a longer period of time would be a valuable next step in this research.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The results of this study suggest that ethnocultural newspapers in the Greater Toronto Area paint only a limited picture of diversity in a metropolitan area that attracted nearly half a million immigrants between 2001 and 2006 (Statistics Canada 2008) and where visible minorities are forecast to be the majority by 2031 (Statistics Canada 2010).

Small news operations do not have massive resources for reporting on other racial or ethnic groups – it is often a struggle just to get their own community news out on deadline. There are, however, some relatively low-cost options for increasing diversity coverage in a way that still allows newspapers to focus on their target audiences. One obvious option is adoption of the standard journalism practice of “localizing” a story.

This involves identifying an issue or event happening elsewhere and examining it through the prism of the local community. The marked preference for baby boys rather than girls in the South Asian community, for instance, has received significant attention in the mainstream media. Recent news reports on the availability of early-pregnancy ultrasounds among women who subsequently choose to abort baby girls (Yang 2012) could be “localized” by the ethnocultural media serving the Chinese and other communities where the preference for girls has also been an issue. A newspaper serving the Chinese community, for instance, could provide a bare-bones outline of the controversy in the South Asian community, and then look to Chinese-Canadian doctors,

parents and women's groups to see how the issue is playing out closer to home. This sort of coverage would explore an issue of interest to readers of the Chinese newspaper while simultaneously explaining to them how the South Asian community is dealing with it.

A more ambitious plan would involve setting up a cooperative news exchange among ethnic media organizations. This could start out as an exchange of stories among news organizations that publish in English and then gradually expand to include contributions from other publications that commit to translating their best story of the week into English for the purposes of sharing. Newspapers that publish in different languages could then offer one page of news in English to their readers each week.

Recognizing the challenges this would pose for organizations that already have small, overworked news teams, universities in the United States are exploring different news-sharing models. The San Francisco State University runs Bay Voices (<http://xpress.sfsu.edu/bayvoices/>), an English-language ethnic news service produced by journalism students that makes content available for free to all news outlets. The University of Massachusetts-Boston's Centre for Media and Society has experimented with offering a Web-based news service featuring, among other things, the best stories from ethnic media in New England (<http://necir-bu.org/media-partners/media-partners-neen/>).

Journalism schools as well as mainstream and ethnic journalism organizations also have a role to play in fostering best practices in the coverage of diversity issues by ethnic media. This could include the development and provision of training options including:

- *Workshops on best practices for reporting on diversity:* In addition to outlining the role of the media in shaping perceptions of others, this workshop could provide practical training related to Canadian Press style, particularly the standards for mentions of race and ethnicity, and application of the standard in an ethnic media context.
- *Workshops that focus on affordable strategies and partnerships for expanding coverage of other racial or ethnic groups:* Training in this case could focus on low-cost ways to "localize" stories that arise in other communities as well as other



strategies for increasing diversity coverage in a way that complements reporting on the target audience.

- *Workshops aimed at developing strategies and partnerships to increase access to news about other ethnocultural communities.* The goal here would be to bring together potential partners interested in establishing news exchanges which would allow them to publish occasional pages of news in English (to minimize translation requirements) about different ethnocultural communities.

## **Acknowledgements**

*This research was generously supported by CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Centre, the Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and Ryerson University. I would like to thank my research assistant Christina Wong for her work on data analysis and mapping as well as coders Emily Jin, Harbir Natt, Sue Chun and Maria Siassina for their care, diligence, and enthusiasm as members of the Local News Research Project team.*

## References

- A car accident in North York, a densely Korean community, causes the death of a five-year-old girl. (2011, June 21). *Korea Times Daily*, p. A3.
- Chan, Shirley. (2010). *The Rise of the Ethnic Media*. Canadian Journalism Foundation panel presentation, Toronto, Ontario, January 19.
- Cheng, Lucie and Yen Espiritu. (1989). Korean Businesses in Black and Hispanic neighbourhoods: A study of intergroup relations. *Sociological Perspectives* 32.4: 521-534.
- D'Arcy, Stephen. (2007). The "Jamaican criminal" in Toronto, 1994: A critical Ontology. *Canadian Journal of Communication* 32: 241-259.
- Diversity Institute. (2010). *DiverseCity Counts 2: A snapshot of diverse leadership in the GTA*. Toronto: Ryerson University.
- Escobar, Gabriel. (2012, June 19). Survey illuminates Korean-Black tension. *The Dallas Morning News*. Accessed October 11, 2012, from <http://dallasmorningviewsblog.dallasnews.com/2012/06/survey-illuminates-korean-black-tension.html>
- Eskimo people's pretty land: An Alaskan trip. (2011a, January 5). *Canadian Punjabi Post*, p. 1-11.
- Eskimo people's pretty land: An Alaskan trip. (2011b, January 12). *Canadian Punjabi Post*, p. 1-12.
- Eskimo people's pretty land: An Alaskan trip. (2011c, January 20). *Canadian Punjabi Post*, p. 2-7.
- Fatima, Sahar. (2012, May 16). Ryerson journalism professor argues for more local news in ethnic media. *Ryerson Journalism Research Centre*. Accessed September 1, 2012, from <http://ryersonjournalism.ca/2012/05/16/ryerson-journalism-professor-argues-for-more-local-news-in-ethnic-media/>
- Fleras, Augie. (2011). *The Media Gaze: Representations of Diversities in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Fleras, Augie and Jean Lock Kunz. (2001). *Media and Minorities: Representing Diversity in a Multicultural Canada*. Toronto: Thompson Educational Press.
- Henry, Frances. (1999). *The Racialization of Crime in Toronto's Print Media: A Research Project*. Toronto: School of Journalism, Ryerson Polytechnic University.
- Henry, Frances and Carol Tator. (2002). *Discourses of Domination, Racial Bias in the Canadian English-Language Press*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Jiwani, Yasmin. (2006). *Discourses of Denial: Mediations of Race, Gender and Violence*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Kaplan, Lawrence. (2011, July 1). Inuit or Eskimo? Which name to use? *University of Alaska Fairbanks Native Language Center*. Accessed August 1, 2012, from <http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/resources/inuit-eskimo/>
- Kidnapped realtor's body found. (2011, July 15). *Russian Express*, p. 13.
- Lindgren, April. (In press). Missing and misrepresented: Portrayals of other ethnic and racialized groups in a Greater Toronto Area ethnocultural newspaper. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*.
- Mahtani, Minelle. (2001). Representing minorities: Canadian media and minority identities. *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 33(3): 99-131.

- Mahtani, Minelle. (2008). How are immigrants seen – and what do they want to see? Contemporary research on the presentation of immigrants in the Canadian English-language media, edited by J. Biles, M. Burstein & J. Frideres. *Immigration and Integration in Canada in the Twenty-first Century*. Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University.
- Miller, John. (2006). *Canada's Ethnocultural Press: Survey of publishers, 2006*. Ottawa: Heritage Canada.
- Miller, John and Kimberly Prince. (1994). *The imperfect Mirror: Analysis of Minority Pictures and news in six Canadian newspapers*. Toronto: Canadian Daily Newspaper Association.
- Murray, Catherine, Sherry Yu and Daniel Ahadi. (2007). *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Media in British Columbia. A Report to Department of Canadian Heritage, Western Region (Study No. 451933670)*. Simon Fraser University: Center for Policy Studies on Culture and Communities.
- Saul, Roger and Carl James. (2006). Framing possibilities: Representation of Black student athletes in Toronto media. *Canadian and International Education* 35(1): 63-80.
- Special Committee on Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society. (1984). *Equality Now: Report of the Special Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society*, Report 91-109. Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada.
- Statistics Canada. (2012). *Detailed mother tongue, 2011 Census, Catalogue # 98-XWE*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Accessed Nov 10, 2012, from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=535&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=toronto&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>
- Statistics Canada. (2008). *Community Profiles: Toronto Census Metropolitan Area*. Statistics Canada. Accessed July 13, 2010, from <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=535&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=toronto&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>
- Statistics Canada. (2010). *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population, 2006 to 2031*. Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 91-551-X. Accessed July 12, 2010, from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/100309/dq100309a-eng.htm>
- Tasko, Patti (Ed.). (2012). *The Canadian Press Online Guide for Writing and Editing*. Accessed August 17, 2012, from <https://stylebooks.thecanadianpress.com/index.php>
- Toronto police have charged two South Asian doctors. (2011, February 22). *Canadian Punjabi Post*, p. 1-4.
- Yang, Jennifer. (2012, April 17). GTA hospitals conceal sex of fetus amid fear for girls: Policy at one hospital tied to concerns over sex selection, while others deny link. *Toronto Star*, p. A1.
- Young Korean man shooting case, one suspect arrested. (2011, August 3). *Korea Times Daily*, p. A3

## CERIS – THE ONTARIO METROPOLIS CENTRE

*Creating and sharing knowledge on the lives of immigrants and the policies that affect them*

### **Who we are**

Established in 1996, CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Centre is a research network focusing on the resettlement and integration of immigrants and refugees in Ontario. We engage in comparative research, knowledge transfer, and policy development, and we work in a collaborative partnership that includes universities, community organisations and different levels of government. For our first sixteen years, we were funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and a consortium of 14 federal departments and agencies.

### **What we do**

#### **RESEARCH**

CERIS has funded over 120 research projects selected by panels of academic and community researchers and policy makers who evaluate each project's academic and policy merit. Collaborative and interdisciplinary, our research projects are designed to create new knowledge to inform current immigration policy and practice, train graduate students, support community research, and promote knowledge exchange between researchers and all of our partners.

#### **CAPACITY-BUILDING**

CERIS trains a new generation of immigration scholars and researchers. Each year, graduate students receive funding to undertake their own research. We also provide support for students to present their work at annual conferences, local seminars, and graduate student workshops and conferences. We collaborate with our partners in the community and in government providing opportunities for them to participate in research projects and to learn more about research design and methods.

#### **KNOWLEDGE MOBILISATION**

CERIS supports making relevant research more widely available to policy-makers, service providers, researchers, and diverse communities. We hold frequent conferences and seminars to share our research. We also publish materials for a wide range of users and reach out to those who can use our research to effect evidence-based change.

### **Why we do it**

Research has shown that immigrants and refugees coming to Ontario face increasing challenges. CERIS affiliates believe that good policy decisions flow from evidence-based research. We also believe that research must translate into action and we work to mobilise knowledge by getting it in the right hands at the right time.

### **Where we work**

Our office is located at York University in Toronto, but our network extends across Ontario. Our research examines immigration issues in large and small cities as well as in rural areas across the province.