

# PSGSA ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY 2011

Family Values: Canadian Problems,  
South Asian Solutions?

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# Overview

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# Background

- ▣ 1. Remembering Canada from 1960's
- ▣ 2. South Korea 1996-2009
- ▣ 3. Yasmeen Abu-Laban's Class

# Importance of Family

- ▣ *“Despite much debate about the declining importance of families and the fragmentation of traditional values, Canadians remain fiercely loyal to the idea of family. In a 1994 Angus Reid opinion survey, two-thirds of Canadian adults strongly agreed with the statement that their families are the greatest joy in their lives. Regardless of age, income, or family structure, most Canadians feel that their families are stable and satisfying, and three-quarters describe their family lives as “happy” and “full of love.” Most young adults plan to get married, have children, and stay married. However, 40% of Canadians strongly agree that families are in crisis”-Ann Milan, “One Hundred Years of Families,” Canadian Social Trends 56 Spring 2000, 5*

# Caveats about Families

- ▣ - Many Types of Families (big change from 1960's)
- ▣ - There have always been problems with traditional nuclear families (patriarchal, etc.)
- ▣ - Still, most Canadians find great satisfaction with families
- ▣ - Reactionary? Neo-Con? (Hope not)

# Families – Circa 1960's

- ▣ 1959 – 3.9 children/women in census families
- ▣ 1961 Census – 91.6% families had marriage
- ▣ Would Change within 10 years
- ▣ (All figures in this and following slides are from Statistics Canada)

# Changes and Developments (1)

- ▣ Early 1960's – Pill becomes available
- ▣ 1968 – Divorce Act (“no fault” divorce after three year separation – necessary time apart would decrease in future)
- ▣ 1971 Census – ZPG (2.1 children/woman, this is last time at replacement level)

# Families in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- ▣ 69% - Married Couple Census families
- ▣ 15-16% - Common Law Census Families
- ▣ 15-16% - Lone Parent Census Families
- ▣ 1% - Gay Couples



# Changes and Developments (2)

- ▣ 1986 – 4.5% of children 14 and under lived in common-law families
- ▣ 2006 – 14.6% of children 14 and under lived in common-law families
- ▣ 2006 – 18.6% of children 14 and under lived in lone parent households

# So What? (1)

- ▣ - Divorce and Separation – families with children 4 times as likely to move into poverty than if they had not broken up
- ▣ - About 80% of lone parent families headed by women (but changing with more headed by men) at this time
- ▣ - Lone mothers often have low levels of education and few job skills

## So What? (2)

- ▣ Low Income Correlated With:
- ▣ - low birth weight
- ▣ - health problems later in life
- ▣ - substandard and crowded housing
- ▣ - poor diets
- ▣ - poor academic performance

## So What? (3)

- ▣ - Tax data shows that low-income in one generation is strongly correlated with low-income in the next
- ▣ Social Problems:
  - ▣ - Boys might not learn proper ways to channel aggression and compete
  - ▣ - Daughter's expectations about men can be shaped by father (respect for mother by husband/boyfriend very important)

# South Asian Immigration and Family (1)

- ▣ Why study South Asians (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka)?
- ▣ - second-largest immigration community after Chinese
- ▣ - fastest growing immigrant community representing 38% of all new immigrants to Canada in 2006
- ▣ - in almost every South Asian culture, family unit is primary central force around which the entire community functions

# South Asian Immigration and Family (2)

- ▣ - Richard Berthoud, Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex: “The key feature of family life in South Asian communities is the very high rate of marriage.” (consistent with UK data showing 75% of women are married by age 25)
- ▣ - Most Canadians under 25 are not married
- ▣ - 80% of second-generation South Asians do get married in Canada

# John Berry's Acculturation Framework

- ▣ Four strategies for immigrant communities:
  - ▣ - integration
  - ▣ - separation (if forced, segregation)
  - ▣ - assimilation
  - ▣ - marginalization
  
- ▣ Many parents in South Asian Canadian families prefer something closer to separation
  
- ▣ Overwhelming majority of children in South Asian Canadian families prefer at least some level of integration

# Evolutionary Model of Social Change (1)

- ▣ Developed by Christian Welzel and Ronald Inglehart (of World Values Surveys)
- ▣ - General trend that is expected to spread to entire world is of greater freedom and self-expression (leading to greater individual human rights)



# Nancy Fraser

- ▣ Universal Breadwinner vs. Universal Care-giver

# Problem

- ▣ Balancing Individual Human Rights with Collective Good of Society