Social Identity and Preferred Ethnic/
Racial Labels for Blacks in Canada

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A number of studies conducted in the United States have found that Black *and* African American *are the preferred labels for ethnic/racial self-designation by Blacks. The purpose of this study was to assess which labels were preferred (and disliked) by a sample of Black Canadian students (*N = 101*), as well as to uncover the personal meanings of their preferred labels. In addition, the relationships between label preferences and measures of ethnic/racial identity developed in America (African Self-Consciousness Scale, Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale) and Canada (York Ethnic Identification Scale) were examined. Although* Black *was the most preferred label, the following four types of preferred labels were identified: Black, Africentric, Caribbean, and Canadian. Different label preferences were associated with different measures of social identity. Issues of social identity and ethnic/racial self-designation for Blacks in Canada are discussed.*

The process of social identification and group labeling for North Americans of African descent is an evolving one that has been studied by a number of researchers. All of this research, however, has been conducted within the United States, and it is not clear whether findings from such studies would generalize to other countries such as Canada. The purpose of this study was to examine social identity and self-labeling in a sample of Black Canadians.

The evolution of racial labels in America has been reviewed by Smith (1992; see also Smitherman, 1991). In his article, Smith traces the evolution of labels from *Colored* to *Negro* to *Black* to the more contemporary *African American*. As Smith shows, this latter label is currently the label of choice for organizations representing Blacks in the United States and is being used with

increasing frequency by the media. His review of surveys taken by polling organizations and newspapers, however, indicates that by 1990-1991, the Black label was still either equally preferred or more preferred to African American by Black Americans. Smith (1992) argues that changes in group labels reflect strategies of redefinition by Blacks to improve their social standing in a society that historically rendered them inferior. This interpretation is in line with what social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) would call social creativity, a strategy that is used by members of a socially disadvantaged group to bolster and foster a more positive social identity. In fact, many discussions of social identity theory use the phrase "Black is beautiful" as an example of a social creativity strategy used by Black Americans in the 1960s (e.g., Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). More recently, Ghee (1990) has argued that a self-definition as African American rather than Black would provide a more positive self-concept. What is clear from discussions of ethnic and racial labels is that labels and social identities are intimately linked, and one purpose of this study was to examine their relationship.

RACIAL/ETHNIC LABELING IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT

A number of studies have examined the racial/ethnic label preferences of Black Americans and many of these have been conducted by Hecht and his colleagues. Hecht and Ribeau (1991 [**1987 IN REFS**]) found that when undergraduate respondents ($N = 69$) were asked what label they would use to describe their ethnic/racial identity, the majority preferred the Black (46%) or Black American (22%) labels, followed by the Afro-American label (15%). In a later study, Larkey, Hecht, and Martin (1993) asked a more representative sample of African Americans ($N = 108$) what term they used to describe themselves in terms of race and ethnicity and what their chosen label personally meant to them. *Black* was the most frequent term (38%), followed by *African American* (29%). Those who chose the Black label were more likely to refer to a racial identity compared with those who selected the African American label; this latter group in turn was more likely to refer to a blended heritage. Finally, the most recent study by Larkey and Hecht (1995) found that the majority of their respondents ($N = 126$) referred to themselves as Black (60%) rather than as African American (9%). Although these two groups of respondents did not differ on a measure of social identity salience, respondents preferring the African American label scored higher on a measure of Black political identity when compared with respondents preferring the Black label.

A more recent study by Speight, Vera, and Derrickson (1996) found that the most preferred racial self-designation for their convenience sample ($N =$ 232) was Black (41%), followed by African American (30%), Afro-American (16%), and American (6%). These results are similar to those of Stokes, Murray, Peacock, and Kaiser (1994), where identification with Black (55%) was slightly greater than with African American (42%).

Using a different approach to the study of racial self-designation in the United States, Smitherman (1991) asked a convenience sample from three cities and a random sample from two cities if the term *African American* should replace *Black* as the term used for Black people in the United States. When looking at the answers of her Black respondents only ($N = 264$), 43% of her convenience sample and 33% of her random sample favored this change. The primary reason given for approving such a shift was that it recognized that part of their dual heritage was from Africa. The primary reason given for not favoring this shift was that this would not produce a significant change in the life of Blacks in America. In 1994, a Time/CNN poll (Yankelovich Partners Inc., 1994) also pitted the labels African American and Black against each other and found that African American respondents ($N =503$) selected the African American label (53%) more often than the Black label (36%).

In summary, these recent American studies from the early 1990s indicate that Black still seems to be the preferred label, but that the African American label has gained considerable ground. The increasing popularity of the African American label can be attributed in part to the support it has received from leaders in the Black community (see Smitherman, 1991). Moreover, the shift toward a label that recognizes an African heritage coincides with a movement toward Afrocentricity that is occurring in many academic disciplines (e.g., Dei, 1994).

BLACKS AND RACIAL/
ETHNIC LABELING IN A CANADIAN CONTEXT

A number of factors make the Canadian context quite distinct from the American context for Blacks, including its history.[1] According to the 1986 census, the majority of single-origin Black and Caribbean ethnics were found in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec and formed about 1% of Canada's population. The relative number of Blacks in Canada, therefore, is much smaller than in the United States. Another difference is that residential segre-

gation is greater for Blacks in America than in Canada (Fong, 1996). Further-more, although there are Blacks in Canada who can trace their roots to the 18th century, the majority of Canada's Black population can be attributed to immigration from the West Indies (e.g., Jamaica) beginning in the late 1960s (Kalbach, 1990). In her analysis of race in the American context, Smitherman (1991, p. 117) noted that "other African peoples lay claim to national identity in countries where the population is 'Black' e.g., Jamaicans," such that a claim to nationality may then imply a claim to race. It is possible, therefore, that some Blacks in Canada may refer to a former national or regional identity when labeling themselves (e.g., Caribbean, Jamaican, Trinidadian, Bajan) because it can imply both race and culture. Such labeling may mitigate against the use of an Africentric label such as African Canadian.

Another difference between Canada and the United States is that Canada has a policy of multiculturalism with regard to newcomers, whereas the American policy has been premised on the notion of a melting pot. Multicul-turalism as an ideology and policy was introduced to Canadians in the early 1970s (see Berry, 1984). As a state policy, multiculturalism maintains that Canada is composed not only of Canadians of French and British descent but also of Native Canadians (First Nations people) and individuals from groups originating from all parts of the world. The multicultural policy encourages new Canadians to retain various aspects of their heritage culture. For Black students who were socialized in Canadian schools where multiculturalism is strongly emphasized, labels that reflect a recent cultural heritage (e.g., West Indian) are likely to be reinforced. This may also mitigate against the usage of a term such as *African Canadian*, which refers to a more distant cultural heri-tage. It should be added that despite the policy's goal of creating intergroup acceptance and tolerance, inequality along racial line persists (see Henry, 1994). In response to societal barriers, Canada's Black citizens may feel forced to turn to their cultural roots and reject more generic forms of self-labeling such as Canadian (Lalonde, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1992).

PRESENT STUDY

It would be naive to assume that the politics of Black identity in Canada are not influenced by events and trends taking place in the United States. With regard to label preferences, therefore, it was expected that our results would mirror the results of the majority of recent studies conducted in the United States and that the Black label would be the most preferred label.

However, given that many Blacks in Canada are first or second generation Canadians and given Canada's policy of multiculturalism, we did expect considerable diversity in label preferences, with many of these labels being defined by a recent cultural heritage. Following the lead of Larkey et al. (1993), we also asked our respondents to tell us what their most preferred label meant to them so we could explore the relationship between label preferences and their underlying meanings.

It was expected that different label preferences would relate to different measures of identity. Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, and Chavous (1998) have highlighted a distinction between mainstream and underground (or Africentric) approaches to racial identity (see also Gaines & Reed, 1995). To tap into these different approaches, three different measures of identity were used. Two of these measures, the African Self-Consciousness Scale (Baldwin & Bell, 1982 {**PLEASE PROVIDE REFERENCE**}) and the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (Parham & Helms, 1981) represent measures from the underground approach because of their strong (Baldwin & Bell, 1982) or partial (Parham & Helms, 1981) emphasis on cultural and historical factors associated with the African American experience. The third measure, the York Ethnic Identification Scale (Cameron, Sato, Lalonde, & Lay, 1997) was developed within a social identity theory framework (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and can be considered a mainstream measure. It is a generic measure that can be applied to a variety of group memberships such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and race.

It was predicted that respondents preferring an Africentric label would score higher on a measure of African self-consciousness (Baldwin & Bell, 1982) compared with respondents who preferred other labels. Stokes et al. (1994) had found that American respondents preferring the African American label scored higher on this measure compared with respondents who preferred the Black label. With regard to the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale, we again expected that respondents preferring an Africentric label would score differently on some of its subscales compared with respondents preferring the Black label or other labels. Speight et al. (1996) found, for example, that respondents who self-designated themselves as African American, compared with respondents who self-designated themselves as Black, scored lower on their Pre-Encounter attitudes, a subscale of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale suggesting a devaluation of Black culture.

On the other hand, we also expected that respondents preferring labels tied to a Caribbean/West Indian cultural heritage would score higher than other respondents on the more generic or mainstream measure of ethnic identity.

This prediction was based on the assumption that Caribbean or West Indian heritage is interpreted as a form of ethnic/cultural heritage, and much of the conceptualization and development of mainstream measures of identity have taken place within the literature on ethnic identity (e.g., Phinney, 1990).

Another aspect of this study concerns the relationships between the mainstream and Africentric measures of racial identity that were used in this study. Mainstream approaches to ethnic or social identity have conceptualized identity along a number of psychological dimensions. Tajfel (1978) for example, suggested that social identity includes knowledge of group membership (i.e., cognitive component), as well as emotional and evaluative correlates of group membership (i.e., affective component). Phinney (1990) has argued that there are three facets of identity common to all ethnic groups: self identification or self-labeling, a sense of belonging, and pride in one's group (i.e., affective component). Although these models of identity share the affective component of identity, we believe that it is the cognitive component and, more specifically, the cognitive centrality of identity (i.e., the amount of time spent thinking about group membership) (Gurin & Markus, 1989) that will relate more closely to an Africentric form of identity. Along these lines, Cameron and Lalonde (in press) found, within the context of gender identity, that the perception of women as socially disadvantaged correlated with the cognitive component of gender identity, but not the affective component of identity. It is believed that a strong cognitive component to identity involves accessing a network of knowledge pertaining to a group's cultural, social, and political history. It is this type of knowledge that is being tapped by Baldwin and Bell's (1982) measure of African self-consciousness.

The following are summaries of our hypotheses:

1. The Black label would be the preferred label by the majority of the respondents. However, given that many Blacks in Canada are first or second generation Canadians and given Canada's policy of multiculturalism, considerable diversity in label preferences was expected, with many labels being defined by a recent cultural heritage.
2. Respondents preferring an Africentric label were expected to score higher on a measure of African self-consciousness (Baldwin & Bell, 1982) compared with respondents who preferred other labels; these same respondents were also expected to differ from other respondents on some of the subscales of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale.
3. Respondents preferring labels tied to a Caribbean/West Indian cultural heritage were expected to score higher on the more generic or mainstream measure of ethnic identity compared with other respondents.
4.

The cognitive centrality component of the mainstream measure of identity will relate more closely to an Africentric form of identity than the affective component.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 101 Black students, 54 women and 46 men (one did not report gender) from two large universities in Toronto participated in this study. According to the 1986 Canadian census, about 3% of metropolitan Toronto is of Black origin. Their ages ranged from 18 to 50 years ($M = 21.76$, $SD = 3.95$). The majority of the respondents were born in Canada (63%), and of these respondents the majority (93%) were of Caribbean heritage. Respondents not born in Canada had been living in Canada for an average of 13.46 years.

PROCEDURE

Students were recruited from classes and student clubs and participation was on a voluntary basis. They were informed in the consent page that the purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate preferred racial and ethnic labels of Black students and how these preferences were connected to aspects of social identity. The questionnaire had four parts. The first part asked about self-labeling in a Canadian context and provided 24 example labels. Participants were informed that the list was not exhaustive and that they could use additional labels. Respondents were asked to list their three most and three least preferred group labels and provide their personal meaning of their most and their least preferred label. The second part asked for demographic information such as gender and age. The third part consisted of items taken from the three identity measures described below. The items from these three measures were mixed together in a fixed random order rather than randomly ordering the presentation of the scales.

MEASURES

All items were answered using a 7-point scale and the responses ranged from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Respondents were told that when the term *ethnic group* was used in items, it referred to the cultural group with

which they most closely identified, and that culture could be based on race, place of birth (for self or parents), or ethnic heritage.

African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASC). This balanced scale was developed by Baldwin and Bell (1982) to assess an Africentric personality. A high score indicates an awareness of an African cultural heritage, a recognition of the need for Black survival, and a proactive approach to Black issues. The reliability and validity of the scale are addressed by Baldwin and Bell (1982). A number of items were reworded to ensure a Canadian rather than an American focus. Most of these item changes involved rewording the phrase "Blacks in America" to "Blacks in Canada." Two of the original items were omitted, thus leaving a 40-item measure ($\alpha = .90$).

Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (RIAS-B). The 30-item version of this measure was developed by Parham and Helms (1981; see Helms, 1990) to assess four types of racial identity attitudes. The psychometric properties of the RIAS-B are addressed in a study by Yanico, Swanson, and Tokar (1994). Pre-Encounter attitudes are associated with an identity that is dependent on a Euro-American worldview ($\alpha = .66$) (8 items; e.g., "I believe that White people look and express themselves better than Blacks"). Immersion-Emersion attitudes reflect a complete absorption into Black culture and denigration of White culture ($\alpha = .55$) (7 items; e.g., "I believe that everything Black is good and consequently, I limit myself to Black activities"). Internalization attitudes reflect a positive Black identity while seeing strengths and weaknesses in both races ($\alpha = 71$) (9 items; e.g., "I believe that because I am black, I have many strengths"). The fourth attitude, Encounter, which is characterized by identity confusion, was dropped from the study because of poor internal consistency ($\alpha = .19$); Yanico et al. (1994) also found the Encounter subscale to be inadequate.

York Ethnic Identification Scale (YETI). This 29-item scale (14 negatively keyed) developed by Cameron et al. (1997) provides a global measure of ethnic/cultural identity ($\alpha = .89$) that can be broken down into the following three components: centrality, affect, and ingroup ties (10, 8, and 11 items, respectively). The psychometric properties of a parallel scale that has examined gender identity are presented by Cameron and Lalonde (in press). Centrality assesses the extent to which respondents think about being a member of their ethnic group and the importance of this identification to their self-definition ($\alpha = .88$) (e.g., "My ethnicity is a very significant part of myself"). Affect taps the feelings associated with group membership ($\alpha = .88$) (e.g., "I feel good when I think about myself as a member of my ethnic group").

TABLE 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Identity Measures

Measure	Mean	SD
African Self-Consciousness Scale	4.63	0.79
Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale		
Pre-Encounter	2.16	0.88
Immersion-Emersion	3.58	1.02
Internalization	4.71	0.76
York Ethnic Identification Scale	5.70	0.90
Centrality	5.46	1.29
Affect	6.48	0.91
Ingroup Ties	5.36	0.97

Ingroup ties assesses the bond one has with ingroup members ($\alpha = .82$) (e.g., "I feel I have a lot in common with other members of my ethnic group").

RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND DEMOGRAPHIC EFFECTS

The means and standard deviations for all of the identity measures are presented in Table 1. Scores on theses measures were related to all of the demographic variables that were assessed in the study: gender, age, year of study, and whether the respondent was born in Canada. There were no significant relationships observed between any of these variables and the identity measures; these demographic variables were also independent of label preferences.

One consistent demographic effect points to the validity of the various identity measures. When respondents who belong to social groups or clubs that deal with the concerns of Blacks were compared with respondents who do not belong to such groups, it was found that the former scored higher on the ASC ($M = 4.86$ vs. $M = 4.38$), $t(95) = 3.00$, $p < .005$; and the Black racial identity attitudes of Immersion-Emersion ($M = 3.79$ vs. $M = 3.37$) $t(96) = 2.01$, $p < .047$, and Internalization ($M = 4.88$ vs. $M = 4.47$), $t(95) = 2.80$, $p < .01$. This group also scored higher on the YETI ($M = 5.93$ vs. $M = 5.46$), $t(95) = 2.60$, $p < .01$, and its subscales of Centrality ($M = 5.74$ vs. $M = 5.21$), $t(95) = 2.03$, $p < .05$; Affect ($M = 6.64$ vs. $M = 6.28$), $t(95) = 1.94$, $p < .06$; and

TABLE 2
Frequencies of Preferred Labels

	Choice			
Label	First	Second	Third	Total
Black	35	18	10	63
Canadian	10	4	13	27
West Indian	4	10	13	27
Black Canadian	4	10	5	19
African Canadian	9	4	5	18
Jamaican	6	8	3	17
African	5	6	3	14
Jamaican Canadian	3	5	6	14
Afro-Canadian	4	4	2	10
West Indian Canadian	3	2	4	9
Missing data	1	11	23	

NOTE: Frequencies are equal to percentages.

Ingroup Ties ($M = 5.57$ vs. $M = 5.09$), $t(95) = 2.49$, $p < .01$. Club membership was independent of label preferences.

PREFERRED LABELS

In terms of label preferences, 20 different labels were selected as the first choice, 25 different labels were used for the second choice, and 18 different labels were given as a third choice.[2] A total of 35 different labels were used across all three preferences. To simplify the presentation of the results, only labels associated with a minimum frequency of at least four for either one of the choices are reported in Table 2.

The first hypothesis that the Black label would be the preferred label by the majority of the respondents was supported. *Black* was selected as the most preferred label by 35% of the respondents and as one of the three most preferred labels by 63% of the respondents. In terms of label types, an examination of only the most preferred labels reveals the following four primary reference roots: African ($n = 23$; e.g., African Jamaican), Black ($n = 39$; e.g., Black Canadian), Canadian ($n = 37$; e.g., Caribbean Canadian), or the Caribbean and West Indian nations ($n = 30$; e.g., Bajan). The reported frequencies total more than 101 because of multiple roots used in some labels (e.g., African Canadian).

Personal Meanings of Most Preferred Label

Answers to the question "What does your most preferred term mean to you?" were coded into one of six categories using a scheme similar to that used by Larkey et al. (1993). Ethnic identity ($n = 14$) involved references to a source of ethnicity, culture, or ancestral heritage. Racial identity ($n = 10$) involved references to race and/or skin color. Blended heritage ($n = 27$) included references to dual ethnicity/culture or to some form of cultural/racial heritage plus one's nationality or place of birth. Pride ($n = 10$) was used when priority of meaning was given to notions of pride or a positive sense of kinship. Terminology ($n = 12$) included simple meanings such as "who I am" and "what I am." Birth/origin/nationality ($n = 17$) was used when respondents indicated that the label indicated where they were born, where they were from, or their nationality. These six categories were able to capture the essence of meanings given by 90 respondents (7 were uncodable and 4 provided no responses). Coding was done by two independent raters who were given the definitions for each category and who were blind to the preferred label indicated by respondents. The Kappa coefficient for the coding was .84 and all disagreements were resolved between the two raters.

To relate the various label preferences to the coded meanings, respondents were grouped into one of four categories based on their first preference. The Black and Canadian groups consisted of all respondents who respectively selected these labels. The Africentric group included participants who preferred a label that included a reference to African heritage (e.g., African, African Canadian, Afro-Canadian, Afro-Caribbean, African Jamaican, and African American). The Caribbean group consisted of respondents who chose a nonhyphenated label referring to a West Indian or Caribbean country (e.g., Bajan, Guyanese, Jamaican, Tobagonian, Trinidadian). These four groups permitted the classification of 85% of the respondents.[3]

When a cross-tabulation of the type of preferred label (i.e., African, Black, Caribbean, Canadian) by its personal meaning (i.e., ethnic identity, racial identity, blended heritage, pride, terminology, and birth/origin/nationality) was conducted, nonindependence of categories was found, $\chi^2 (15, n = 77) = 68.75, p < .001$, thus indicating that different categories of labels were differentially associated with different meanings. Although this relationship should be interpreted with caution because the majority of cells had very low expected cell frequencies, a clear pattern of results emerged. The majority of respondents preferring Africentric labels (76%) provided either a blended heritage (9/21) or an ethnic identity interpretation (7/21). The majority of respondents selecting *Black* (90%) were more likely to interpret its meaning in terms of either simple descriptive terms (i.e., terminology; 11/31), racial

TABLE 3
Identity Differences in Relation to Type of Most Preferred Label

Type of Label

Measure	Africentric (n = 23)	Black (n = 34)	Caribbean (n = 18)	Canadian (n = 10)	F	p
African Self-Consciousness Scale	5.16[a]	4.52[b]	4.45[b]	4.35[b]	4.40	.01
Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale						
Internalization	5.04[a]	4.63[ab]	4.73[ab]	4.10[b]	3.69	.02
York Ethnic Identification Scale	5.78[ab]	5.85[a]	5.89[a]	4.97[b]	2.68	.05
Centrality	5.46[ab]	5.76[a]	5.60[ab]	4.39[b]	2.79	.05
Ingroup Ties	5.67[a]	5.32[ab]	5.53[ab]	4.67[b]	2.59	.06

NOTE: Means within a row that do not share a common superscript are significantly different from each other ($p < .05$).

identity (9/31), or pride (8/31). The majority of respondents selecting Caribbean labels (81%) were primarily interpreted in terms of ethnic identity (6/16) or place of birth/origin/nationality (7/16). Finally, the majority of respondents selecting *Canadian* (89%) interpreted its meaning in terms of birth/origin/nationality (5/9) or blended heritage (3/9).

It should be noted that this four-group classification (Africentric, Black, Caribbean, Canadian) was not independent from whether the respondent was born in Canada, $\chi^2(3, N = 85) = 18.58$, $p < .001$. Compared with the non-Canadian born, respondents born in Canada were more likely to prefer the Canadian ($n = 10$ vs. $n = 0$) and Black labels ($n = 25$ vs. $n = 10$) and less likely to select a Caribbean label ($n = 13$ vs. $n = 4$). An equal number of Canadian born ($n = 12$) and non-Canadian born ($n = 11$) respondents selected an Africentric label.

LABEL PREFERENCES AND SOCIAL IDENTITY MEASURES

The means on all of the different identity scales and subscales were compared using a series of analyses of variance with the label preference group (i.e., Africentric, Black, Caribbean, Canadian) as the independent variable. Significant group effects were found for the ASC, the Internalization subscale of the RIAS, and the York Ethnic Identification Scale and subscales. Only these significant effects and their associated tests of means ($p < .05$) using a Tukey procedure are presented in Table 3.

Certain hypotheses were tested regarding the measures of identity and label preferences. The first hypothesis was that respondents preferring an Africentric label were expected to score higher than respondents who preferred other labels on the measure of African self-consciousness. This hypothesis was clearly supported. Mean scores on the ASC were significantly higher for the Africentric group when compared with the Canadian, Caribbean, and Black groups. It was also expected that respondents preferring an Africentric label would differ from the other respondents on some of the subscales of the RIAS-B. This prediction received less support. The mean of the Internalization subscale for individuals preferring an Africentric label was significantly higher than the mean score for individuals preferring the Canadian label. No mean differences were found between the label preference groups on the Pre-Encounter and Immersion/Emersion subscales.

Another hypothesis was that respondents preferring labels tied to a Caribbean/West Indian cultural heritage would score higher on the YETI Scale. This hypothesis only received partial support. Respondents preferring a Caribbean label scored higher on the total YETI score than respondents preferring the Canadian label. It can be seen in Table 3 that all of the effects related to the YETI are primarily due to lower scores associated with respondents preferring the Canadian label. The mean total score on the YETI was higher for the Black group compared with the Canadian group. In terms of the YETI subscales, the Black group scored higher than the Canadian group on the measure of Centrality, and the Africentric group scored significantly higher than the Canadian group on the measure of Ingroup Ties.

CORRELATIONS AMONG IDENTITY MEASURES

Correlations among the identity scales and subscales are presented in Table 4. As expected, all correlations involving Pre-Encounter racial attitudes were negative. Also, as expected, the majority of the correlations in Table 4 are significant ($p < .001$), except for some correlations between the Immersion/Emersion subscale of the RIAS and the YETI scales, which were either weak or not significant. Although the ASC correlated highly and fairly consistently with all of the other scales, the strength of the correlations between the RIAS subscales and the YETI subscales varied.[4]

It was hypothesized that the cognitive centrality component of the YETI, a mainstream measure of identity, would relate more closely to an Africentric form of identity than its affective component. This hypothesis received clear support in the case of the ASC. The Centrality subscale of the YETI correlated more highly with the ASC scale than did the Affect subscale (.63 vs. .42; $z = 2.71$, $p < .007$). Also in support of this hypothesis, Centrality correlated

TABLE 4
Correlations Among the Identity Scales and Subscales

	ASC	PRE	IE	INT	YETI	CEN	AFF
African Self-Consciousness Scale(ASC)	—						
Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale							
Pre-Encounter (PRE)	-.44***	—					
Immersion/Emersion (IE)	.51**	-.03	—				
Internalization (INT)	.61**	-.16	.49**	—			
York Ethnic Identification Scale (YETI)	.65**	-.50**	.26*	.62**	—		
Centrality (CEN)	.63**	-.37**	.28*	.52**	.89**	—	
Affect (AFF)	.42**	-.57**	-.02	.44**	.78***	.57**	—
Ingroup Ties (TIE)	.53**	-.36**	.31**	.57**	.83**	.56**	.50**

*$p < .01.$ **$p < .001.$

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more highly with the Immersion/Emersion subscale of the RIAS than did the Affect subscale (.28 vs. −.02; $z = 3.22$, $p < .002$).

DISCUSSION

PREFERRED ETHNIC/RACIAL LABELS

A number of issues can be discussed on the basis of our results. Perhaps the most important finding at this time is that *Black*, as hypothesized, was the most preferred label among our respondents. Almost two thirds of the participants listed *Black* as one of their three most preferred labels. This preference for *Black* concurs with the majority of studies conducted in the United States in the early 1990s (e.g., Hecht & Ribeau, 1991; Larkey et al., 1993; Larkey & Hecht, 1995; Speight et al., 1996; Stokes et al., 1994). Furthermore, the meaning given to this label by our respondents mirrors results that were obtained by Larkey et al. (1993). Respondents preferring *Black* in this study either viewed it as being the most appropriate term (i.e., terminology), as connoting racial identity, or as reflecting pride. Similarly, respondents in the Larkey et al. (1993) study were more likely to mention issues of terminology and racial identity when reporting the meaning of the Black label. However, with just more than a third of our respondents indicating the Black label as their first preference, support for this label may not appear as strong as in many of the American studies. This was due in part to the relatively large number of labels that were used by our Canadian respondents.

A total of 35 different labels were listed among the preferred labels, with 20 different labels as a first preference. Part of the variability in responses may be methodological; we offered our respondents a variety of labels to choose from and did not constrain their responses to our list. It appears, however, that the variability in preferred labels was greater in this study than in American studies where an open-ended procedure was used (e.g., Larkey et al., 1993; Larkey & Hecht, 1995). The greater variability in responses in this study is more likely due to the fact that the majority of Blacks in the Toronto area are typically first or second generation Canadians who have ties to recent heritage cultures. For example, 30% of the respondents referred to a Caribbean country or to the West Indies in their primary label preference. Furthermore, respondents who were not Canadian born were more likely to select a Caribbean label than were the Canadian-born respondents. These results suggest that ethnic/racial identity label preferences for Blacks in Canada are

associated with a cohort effect reflecting the number of generations since migration.

In terms of Smitherman's (1991) analysis, the use of Caribbean or West Indian labels may imply a claim to race. Although this racial claim may have been implicit for some of the respondents, none of the respondents preferring uniquely Caribbean labels explicitly interpreted their meaning as racial; the personal meanings of these labels typically referred to an ethnic identity or place of birth, origin, or nationality. Also, it had been predicted that respondents preferring Caribbean labels would have higher ethnic identity scores than other respondents, but this effect was only obtained when they were compared with those who preferred the Canadian label. Given that the YETI (Cameron et al., 1997) is a measure of ethnic and cultural identity, our results suggest that respondents preferring *Canadian*, who scored lower than respondents selecting *Black*, may be moving toward a Canadian culture and away from a Black culture.

Another issue to be addressed from the results is the standing of Africentric labels. African American is clearly one of the labels of choice in American studies, the one used in American newspapers, and one of the labels (along with Black) recommended by the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (American Psychological Association, 1994). However, its Canadian equivalent, African Canadian, did not have considerable support in this study (9% of first preferences). Although the African Canadian label was selected by relatively few respondents, variability played a role as six different Africentric labels were nominated. Furthermore, respondents selecting an Africentric label (almost a quarter of the sample) were quite unique in some respects. As hypothesized, this group scored higher on the measure of African self-consciousness, thus replicating some of the research conducted in the United States (e.g., Stokes et al., 1994).

MEASURES OF ETHNIC/RACIAL IDENTITY

Finally, a brief discussion of the different identity measures is warranted. Both the ASC (Baldwin & Bell, 1982) and the RIAS-B (Parham & Helms, 1981), which were developed in the United States, can be applied in a Canadian setting. It appears, however, that in this study the ASC was the better of the two measures, both in terms of its reliability and its predictive ability. ASC scores were more clearly related to label preferences. The YETI (Cameron et al., 1997), which is a more mainstream measure designed for general use with ethnic/cultural groups, also was able to differentiate between respondents selecting different group labels. Furthermore, its

subscales differentially predicted different label preferences, thus bolstering the view that social identity is not a unidimensional construct. This was further reflected in the hypothesized finding that the Centrality subscale of the YETI correlated more highly with the ASC and the Immersion subscale of the RIAS than the Affect subscale. Future research focusing on ethnic and cultural identities would probably provide more comprehensive results when using multidimensional measures of identity (see Sellers et al., 1998) rather than unidimensional measures.

CONCLUSION

This study offers some interesting, albeit preliminary, information on the process of racial self-labeling and social identification in a sample of Black Canadians. Although *Black* was the most preferred label in this study, this may change with time. Future studies should be conducted in Canada and the United States to plot the changes that take place in racial self-designation and examine how these changes may relate to social identification processes. Such studies should attempt to obtain more representative samples and should employ more current and multidimensional measures of social identification. Measures reflecting both the underground or Africentric approach (i.e., Baldwin & Bell, 1990) and the mainstream approach (i.e., Cameron et al., 1997) to social identity are promising in understanding this important aspect of the lives of Black individuals.

NOTES

1. The early history of Blacks in Canada is well documented by Hill (1981). There were a number of Africans brought to Canada as slaves under French rule beginning in 1689 and British rule beginning in 1713. Although support for the abolition of slavery grew (a bill prohibiting the importing of slaves was passed in Upper Canada in 1793) and the practice of slavery declined by the turn of the 18th century, it was not until the British Imperial Act of 1833 that slavery was officially abolished. The first large-scale Black migration to Canada began in 1783 with Black Loyalists from the American War of Independence going to Nova Scotia; the largest community was in Birchtown. From 1800 to 1860, the Underground Railroad movement had routes from the United States into Canada and many of the Black communities in southeastern Ontario began with these fugitive slaves. The relative number of Blacks in Canada prior to the Second World War, however, was still extremely small.

2. Frequencies of the least preferred labels were also tabulated. Of the 24 labels that were provided in the questionnaire, it was clear that labels involving color or a minority component

were among the least preferred labels. The top 5 first choices of most disliked labels we as follows in descending order: colored ($n = 24$), minority ($n = 12$), nigger ($n = 11$), person of color ($n = 9$), and visible minority tied with Jamaican ($n = 7$ for each). Although *nigger* was only chosen by 11 respondents, it should be noted that this term was not part of the example set provided to respondents.

3. The majority of the remaining responses consisted of various hyphenated Canadian labels, but such a grouping would have been confounded with the Africentric group, which included a number of labels associated with Canadian. Priority was given to Africentric labels to more fully capture the current trend toward Africanism that has been developing in the United States and that is now being felt in Canada.

4. A further examination of these correlations revealed that although the Centrality, Affect, and Ingroup Ties subscales of the YETI correlated highly with the Internalization attitude of the RIAS-B, their respective correlations with the Immersion/Emersion subscale were significantly lower (.52 vs. .28, $z = 2.63$, $p < .009$; .44 vs. $-.02$, $z = 4.65$, $p < .001$; .57 vs. .31, $z = 2.95$, $p < .004$).

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