CSIS' INFLUENCE ON THE LIVES OF MUSLIM CANADIANS
THE INFLUENCE OF CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICES ON THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES OF MUSLIM CANADIANS

By

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Abstract

This thesis explores the affect that Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS) has on Muslim Canadians. Drawing on concepts of religious and national identity, I explore the ways these identities are shaped and constructed after individuals are approached by CSIS agents. This study presents a qualitative study of the lives of 8 Muslim Canadians and their experiences in both their religious and national communities after being interviewed by CSIS officials.

This thesis explores how religious identity is expressed through religious community involvement and how boundaries of community are formed. In particular it examines how interviews with CSIS agents influence individuals to become more or less involved in their religious communities. Further, I discuss some of the implications that interviews with CSIS can have on the community as a whole.

National identity presents a more complex and challenging exploration of defining citizenship, nationhood and the role of government. For all of these individuals, their sentiments towards citizenship and their perceived place within Canadian had shifted after being approached by CSIS officials.

These changing identities are placed into a larger framework that examines the problems associated with defining Muslim Canadians, Islamophobia, Canada’s approach to multiculturalism and Canada’s response to terrorism and security. Thus, this thesis examines some of the critical issues that Muslim Canadians face and how these particular topics, in addition to an interview with CSIS agents, have influenced the lives of the individuals in this study.
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Introduction

Point of Entry

On December 10, 2009 I was standing in the kitchen with my mother busily making baklava, an Arab sweet, for my thesis supervisor and a few other professors. Eid Ul-Adha, the second of the two holy Eid celebrations for Muslims, had just occurred and I wanted to share some of our celebration with the people at school. When I heard a knock at the door, I quickly ran to my room as I was not wearing hijab, and waited for my dad to answer the door. When he called my name, I came out in my baklava crusted pyjamas to see who had come to the door. I was shocked to see two women whom I had never seen before. Instinctively, I assumed that they were selling something and I was prepared to tell them that I was not interested. As I approached the women they pulled out their badges and informed me that they were sent by the federal government and they worked with Canadian Security Intelligence Services. At first I did not realize what organization they were referring to, as I had always referred to it simply as CSIS. As I began to realize who they were, the women had already managed to make it through my front door. In these brief moments, questions were buzzing through my head: Was I in trouble? What had I done? Was I too vocal about Muslim human rights? How did they find me? What did they want with me?

The women informed me that they had been sent by the federal government with regards to immigration. Considering the fact that I have been a Canadian citizen my entire life, I could not begin to imagine what they wanted. The women had been told by the
government that I was considering sponsoring a man from Egypt. They wanted to know why I had stopped the procedure. I replied that I had been briefly engaged to him, but was no longer involved with him and therefore had no need to sponsor him. They proceeded to ask me about Muslims students at McMaster University. The women were curious if I have worked with the Muslim Students' Association and if there was anyone they should “be worried about.” In particular, they said they were interested in converts and wanted to know if I knew any converts who were potential threats to Canada.

Next, they asked me about my research at the university. I was, at the time, proposing to study the case of 18 Toronto Muslim men arrested on charges of terrorism. I had recently submitted my project proposal to a government funding agency with the hope of winning a scholarship. The women at my door asked me if I believed these men were innocent and if I doubted the justice system in Canada. I responded by saying that my research would be made public once I completed my project. Finally, about thirty minutes later, the women left my home. For the next few days I felt isolated, fearful and hurt that I could be harassed in my own home. I could not understand the reason for their visit. They had said that they were sent by the immigration department, but their questions focused on my research and on Muslims at McMaster. I was afraid to talk on the phone about my experience, fearful of being listened to and misquoted at a later time. Eventually, these feelings of fear faded and I began to see the larger picture. If I, with no criminal record, a graduate student at a well-respected Canadian university, a lifetime resident of Canada, and an attendee of Canadian public schools, could be made to feel
“less” Canadian than other Canadians, then it was possible that other Muslims have had similar experiences.

This thesis grows out of my research with Muslims in Canada who have had experiences with CSIS similar to my own. In particular, I address the following questions: What sorts of questions do CSIS officers ask when approaching Canadian Muslim youth? How do these questions make them feel? Do these individuals feel that CSIS is fulfilling its promise to protect Canadians? Does the involvement of CSIS in the lives of these Muslim Canadian youth make them feel more or less Canadian, and more or less Muslim? More broadly, this thesis addresses the questions: How do Muslim Canadian youth see themselves as both Muslim and Canadian? What factors do these youth use to measure their sense of belonging to both the Canadian and Muslim communities?

**Methodology**

Following my interview with CSIS, my interest in national and religious identity grew. I began preliminary research and found that CAIR-CAN, Canadian Council on American-Islamic Relations, had conducted a survey in 2004 examining statistics of Canadians visited by government officials (CAIR-CAN, Presumption of Guilt Survey 2004). The survey showed that of the 467 respondents, 8% had been contacted by government officials.

My research draws on the findings of CAIR-CAN. However, while CAIR-CAN was mainly a quantitative study, my focus is more qualitative. I focus on the ways in which Muslim-Canadians shape and re-shape their religious and national identities, stemming from their encounters with CSIS officials. My research explores concepts of
identity formation, national security and minority group integration. Many Muslim Canadians have struggled with the relationship between their religious identity and their Canadian identity. It is this struggle and self-definition that I am most interested in with particular relation to government involvement in the lives of Muslim Canadian citizens.

For the purposes of this work, I interviewed Muslim individuals who have been approached by CSIS in the past. I selected Muslims who identify as Muslim without differentiating between different Muslim sects or generational gaps. The reason for this is that Muslims are living as a minority group in Canada. Therefore, they are already distinguished from other citizens. Although Shi’a Muslims are further marginalized within the Muslim community (Takim 2009) it did not seem relevant to distinguish between the sects for the purposes of this work. I am interested in how the Muslim community as a whole is further marginalized within Canadian society is effected by government involvement rather than sectarianism or ethnic divides.

My interview questions revolved around the central theme of identity, including: How did you feel after being approached by CSIS? Did you feel more or less Muslim? Did this experience make you question your religious affiliations, mosque, school, or other forms of social involvement? Did this experience change how you feel about being Canadian? If so, how? Did CSIS’ approach change your standing in your community?

Although I did not initially set an age limit for participants, all of the individuals who participated were between the ages of 19 and 30. This may be for two reasons: 1) Older Muslims may not have been interested in participating or 2) The majority of individuals who are approached by CSIS are under the age of 30. According to the study
conducted by CAIR-CAN, 63% of individuals who are approached by CSIS are between the ages of 18-35.

Interviewing these individuals proved to be difficult. Many Muslims were afraid to talk about their experiences. One individual felt it was “incriminating.” Further, it took time to build a level of trust that enabled participants to disclose their experiences. Given the sensitivity of the topic, sometimes two interviews with the same individual were required in order to allow him/her time to respond as accurately as possible. Individuals were concerned that I could be working with CSIS and that they could get in trouble for sharing their stories. Participants were also worried about speaking on the phone about their experiences since they feared that their conversations were being recorded or infiltrated by CSIS.

Another challenge I faced while interviewing individuals was the inability to engage female subjects. While I have been approached by females who had been interviewed by CSIS in the past, they were more reluctant than male subjects to be involved in my interview process. Also, two of the females who had initially shown interest in being interviewed by me were discouraged by their male relatives. Another possible reason for my lack of female participants may be due to the fact that males are more often approached by government officials than females. According to CAIR-CAN, males comprised 89% of individuals approached (CAIR-CAN, Presumption of Guilt Survey 2004).

In total, I interviewed 8 individuals. Of these, 6 were male and 2 were female. The purpose of my study was to create a qualitative report of their experiences. Although
there were other individuals who expressed initial interest, there were challenges that I faced in attempting to schedule meetings. Some individuals were fearful that these interviews would jeopardize their reputations. Although I reassured these participants that their interviews would remain anonymous, they were worried that CSIS officers would discover their participation and they would be subject to further scrutiny. The female subjects were even more prone to this fear. Their male relatives discouraged them from participating and their reputations are seen as more fragile within the community.

The second method I utilized in my research was participant observation at current events that had been launched to raise awareness of individual rights when approached by CSIS. These events are referred to as “CSIS-Know Your Rights”. In order to gain access to individuals who had been questioned by CSIS, I approached a group of Muslims in Mississauga, Ontario that had launched a campaign with flyers and demonstrations promoting the legal rights that individuals have when approached by CSIS. I received a personal invitation to attend these events in order to record the lectures and recruit participants for my research. All my research methods were approved by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board.

Due to the sensitivity of the topic, I had to build a certain level of trust within the Muslim community. Since all of the participants that I interviewed were from the Greater Toronto Area, I was not well known to them and therefore not well trusted. My attendance at the “CSIS-Know Your Rights” events was meant to make myself known within this particular group of individuals. The organizers announced that I was there and encouraged individuals to approach me to set up interview times.
These events, two in total, contributed to my understanding of CSIS' involvement in the Muslim community. The events were set up with a number of speakers who addressed the issue of what should be done when CSIS comes to visit. Interestingly, the events were not exclusive to Muslims and there were indeed many non-Muslims present. The composition of individuals at these events is difficult to describe since there was no "typical" common factor. It seemed that all of these individuals had either been approached by CSIS or they knew someone who had. The attendees' ages also varied. I observed an older couple, probably in their sixties, at the front of the room. I also saw many university students grouped throughout the room. On average, these events attracted about fifty individuals.

The first event addressed the topic of Canadian citizens who had been arrested internationally and the government’s role in these arrests. This event broadly discussed the government’s lack of support for these individuals and the injustices they face at the hands of other governments. Further, the speakers, mostly lawyers who had defended these people, discussed CSIS’ role in these arrests by providing the other countries with intelligence.

The second event was more specifically targeted to individuals who had been approached by CSIS. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of individuals’ rights in cases where CSIS was involved. The event had three main speakers: The first speaker works for an organization that helps Arabs settle and integrate into North American society; the second speaker is a peace activist; and the third is a lawyer who serves the Toronto area.
The first speaker, Speaker 1, began his talk by highlighting the increasing Islamophobia in popular culture. He explained that Muslims were often portrayed as "Muslim terrorists." This, he suggested, was the reasons for society's negative treatment of Muslim individuals. He claimed that CSIS actions are a response to this popular notion of “Muslim terrorists.”

He explained that he worked for an organization that offered free legal advice for individuals who had been approached by CSIS. He emphasized that individuals had the right to refuse to talk to CSIS officers and that they should always write down the officer's name and phone number. He also suggested that individuals should ask the officers to see identification and ensure that they were indeed who they claimed to be.

According to Speaker 1, individuals were approached by CSIS for one of two reasons: (1) Individuals were considered a potential threat to the Canadian government or, (2) Individuals were seen as potential informants. Interestingly, CSIS used the same tactics on both groups of individuals. For the first group, intimidation was used to let individuals know that they were being watched and therefore it made them more cautious about their involvement in Islamic activities. Individuals who were seen as potential informants were also approached with an intimidation tactic. The purpose for this was to "scare" individuals into cooperating by suggesting they could become suspects themselves if they did not agree.

This speaker also gave tips on what to do if individuals chose to meet with CSIS. He encouraged them to meet in public spaces. He explained that meeting at home could lead to trouble since physical evidence of a person's religiosity could be seen and
interpreted by CSIS agents. For example, if a person had many books on Islamic topics, CSIS agents could deduce that the individual was a “fundamentalist.” He also explained that individuals should never meet CSIS alone. He suggested that a lawyer be present and named a few local lawyers who would do this sort of work for free. He also commented on the right to electronically record the entire conversation and the right not to answer certain questions. He explained that some questions could be double-edged and individuals could get themselves in trouble by answering the question since there was no "right" answer.

The second speaker, Speaker 2, took a more historical and political approach. He explained that there was a distinct dichotomy between the war objective of bringing democracy to Muslim states and the current situation of Muslims in the West. He explained that ironically, Muslims here are getting in trouble for exercising their democratic freedoms.

This speaker also discussed Islamophobia and linked it back to the time of the Gulf War. He elucidated that since then, "Muslim" and "terrorist" have become synonymous for one another for many people. He views this connection as problematic but places it within a recent historical context. He then suggested that this understanding of Islamophobic history helps us understand the current state of Muslims in the west.

Speaker 2 went on to argue that the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and CSIS have a long history of engaging in criminal activity. He illustrated this point by discussing the new Security Certificate that Canada has recently been put in place. He elaborated that since the implementation of this certificate five men, popularly known
as the "Secret Trial 5" have been detained for numerous years without evidence. He further stated that the RCMP and CSIS have been known to practice the destruction of evidence.

Finally, he discussed the place of surveillance in National Security. He mentioned the book "Whose National Security?" by Kinsman et al. (2000), and placed surveillance in a historical context. He clarified that national security and surveillance, although recent in world history, had a place in society before Islamophobia became apparent. He encouraged attendees to read the book so that they could learn about the harassment and tactics that government officials employ.

The third speaker, Speaker 3, is a lawyer in the Toronto area whose advice is frequently sought after CSIS agents visit individuals in the community. He believes that individuals who participate in community events, particularly political events, are most likely to receive a visit from CSIS. He described a couple who had visited his office, both ex-CSIS officers, who were seeking legal advice on how to proceed with their lives. These two individuals did not agree with the methods that CSIS employed when dealing with Muslims and had decided to leave the agency.

This speaker was careful to note the importance of security agencies like CSIS but he believed that there was a need for policies that ensured the safety of individuals from government harassment. He warned, like the other two speakers, against meeting with CSIS agents alone and recommended that a lawyer be present at all times.

All of the speakers seemed to think that CSIS visits frequently targeted the Arab and Muslim communities. They all believed that individuals were safer if they sought...
legal advice and did not agree to meet with the agents alone. The speakers’ experience with a number of Muslims in the community was evidence that there was a great need for these events.

This thesis examines the influence that CSIS agents’ visits can have on the lives of Muslim Canadians. In particular, I argue that CSIS’ encounter with Muslim individuals can affect their level of involvement within the Muslim community. Further, these individuals feel isolated from both their religious communities and the Canadian population at large. Thus, CSIS’ interviews with Muslim individuals leave these individuals feeling alienated, isolated and untrusting.

Throughout the next chapters, I explore how CSIS’ encounter with Muslim individuals helps to shape their understanding of religious and national identities. In chapter 2 I provide a brief overview of the anthropological study of Islam and the history of Islam in Canada. This chapter highlights some of the difficulties faced by scholars of Islam in defining a lived religion that is influenced by many different cultures. This chapter also examines statistical data on Muslims in Canada and how Canadian Muslims attempt to shape both their religious and national identities. Chapter 3 examines how CSIS can influence a Muslim individual’s choice to become more or less active in the religious community. It also takes a close look at how the Muslim community as a whole reacts to Muslim individuals who have been approached by CSIS. Chapter 4 examines how these encounters make Muslims feel about their Canadian identity. In particular, it focuses on concepts of governance, power and disenfranchised citizens.
Chapter 2 - Studying Islam and Islamic Identity

Studying Islam

Studying Islam and Islamic communities has been a challenge for academics. In large part, this is due to the multitude of Islamic beliefs, cultures, traditions and ethnicities. Ronald A. Lukens-Bull (1999: 1) explains that, “The anthropological study of Islam is one that has been plagued by problems of definition. What exactly are we studying? Local practices, universal texts and standards of practice, or something else entirely? At the heart of the question is how anthropologists define Islam.” Every scholar is faced with the task of defining Islam and Muslims, and, subsequently, their methodological point of entry. Many authors attempt to classify Muslims based on self-made proclamations of faith while others have attempted to use a narrow definition in their research, choosing a particular sect or ethnicity to examine.

Due to the many sects of Islam and the variable local cultural traditions within every Muslim country, scholars must grapple with how to create theoretical frameworks that neither reduce Islam to a monolithic tradition, nor formulate their academic work in such a manner that it is too specific to be used by others. For this reason, some scholars have attempted to separate analytically Islamic religious ideals from Muslim religious practice (Redfield 1956; Lukens-Bull 1999; Gibb and Rothenberg 2000).

Robert Redfield’s study of religion has been used by many scholars of Islam. Redfield divides religious tradition into two main categories: the great tradition and the little tradition. Redfield (1956: 70) defines orthodox religion as follows, “The great tradition, the orthodox form of the cultural/religious center, is that of the urban elite. It is
the religion of the reflective few and is cultivated in schools and temples and is ‘consciously cultivated and handed down’.” In contrast, the little tradition “...is the heterodox form of the cultural/religious periphery. The little tradition incorporates many elements of local tradition and practice. The little tradition is the religion as it practiced in daily life by ordinary people (in Redfield’s assessment, the largely unreflective many)” (Lukens-Bull 1999: 3).

In Redfield’s understanding of religion, individuals are categorized based on their practice of “orthodox” traditions. The great tradition is practiced by few but seems to be the “ideal” or “correct” method of religious practice. On the other hand, the little tradition is laced with cultural beliefs and attitudes that diverge from the “correct” practices. Redfield believes that this little tradition is practiced by the majority of adherents.

While these descriptions are useful as a framework outlining the divergence between ideals and practice, Redfield’s model still classifies Muslims into categories: those who are “orthodox” and practice what is deemed correct according to scripture, and those who engage in local practices. This categorization of individuals and the assumption that some practices are correct while others are incorrect has received much criticism from other scholars. Lukens-Bull (1999:6) summarizes some of the criticisms of the “great and little traditions” model according to anthropologists who specialize in the study of Islam:

Bowen states that anthropologists and other scholars concerned with local forms of culture looked for the rites, myths, or ideas that made the group they were studying distinctive rather than those they shared with other Muslims (1993:4). Dale Eickelman suggests that when scholars mention great and little traditions they tend merely to juxtapose them and not explore their complex
interrelationships (1982:2) ... A further problem with the model, according to Talal Asad, is that it leads anthropologists to assert that "neither form of Islam has a claim to being regarded as 'more real' than the other" (Asad 1986:6). Asad seems to take a theological position about the "corrupted" nature of local Islam, and seems to suggest that the great tradition is indeed more real than the little tradition. Abdul Hamid el-Zein criticizes academicians who, like Asad, make theological assertions. He argues "both theology and anthropology claim a higher degree of reflection than folk expressions of Islam" (1977:243). Therefore, both regard local Islam as "less ordered, less objective, and somehow less complete versions of the religious experience" (1977:243). Anthropologists often regard local variants of Islam as a diluted form corrupted by magic and superstition... El-Zein argues that the dichotomy of folk Islam (little tradition) versus elite Islam (great tradition) is infertile and fruitless. This dichotomy is part of an Islamic elite's attempt to dominate the discourse about what constitutes real religion (el-Zein 1977:252) ... Antoun argues that the dichotomization of tradition is not inherently infertile. However, what is infertile and even dangerous is the assignment, by the anthropologist, of the superiority of the great tradition over the little tradition (Antoun 1989:43).

In response to the dichotomous "great versus little tradition" model, scholars have attempted to find other approaches to the study of Islam. Since Islam is so diverse in constituents, beliefs and practices, some scholars have decided to divide the study of Islam into the study of "islams" in order to avoid over-generalizing (see El-Zein 1979). The islams approach is understood as an effort to acknowledge and value equally the many forms of Islamic religious practice and the diversity of adherents.

However, this approach is also problematic. It presents Islam as a fragmented religion and does not account for any continuity between local traditions and their place within a global tradition. Some scholars have refuted this approach and have indicated that the islams model is limiting in nature (see Eikelman and Piscator 1990: 19).
Thus, while both the Great/Little Tradition and islam's model present challenges for the anthropological study of Islam, both approaches acknowledge the various cultural, ethnic and local practices that play an important role in the lives of Muslims.

**Muslims in Canada**

According to Statistics Canada in 2001, there were fewer than 580,000 Muslims in Canada. Although a new census has not been conducted, with increasing immigration, Statistics Canada Projections estimated that by 2006, there would have been 783,000 Muslims in Canada.¹ Muslims in Canada are a minority populace, although they do comprise the largest of Canada’s religious minorities. In fact, “Muslims now represent 2% of the total Canadian population” (Janhevich and Ibrahim 2004: 50).

The Muslim population in Canada is concentrated within certain geographical areas: “Of the total number of persons identifying as Muslim, eight in ten lived in Ontario (60.8%) and Quebec (18.7%), while most of the remaining proportion lived in British Columbia (9.7%) and Alberta (8.5)” (Janhevich and Ibrahim 2004: 50). These percentages are not surprising since these provinces are most likely to have economic opportunities for immigrants and minority groups. Further, these areas are heavily populated by Canadians in general with “over two thirds of the Canadian population [living] in a census metropolis area...” (2004: 50).

¹ Jedwab, Jack. *Canada’s Demo-Religious Revolution*. Association for Canadian Studies. March 30, 2005. [www.acs-aec.ca/oldsite/Polls/30-03-05.pdf](http://www.acs-aec.ca/oldsite/Polls/30-03-05.pdf). Note here: A census of religious populations in Canada is only conducted every 10 years. Therefore, this is merely a projection. There are no current studies that show exact numbers at this time.
Canada’s Muslim population is complex and varies greatly by culture and ethnicity. The first generation immigrants often had expectations of returning to their homeland after benefiting from the booming job market in Europe and the United States (Roy 2004). “The earliest Muslim immigrants began to trickle to North America in the late 1800s. Most of these early pioneers were from the area of greater Syria (today including Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Jordan) which was under the rule of the Ottoman empire” (Abu-Laban 1991: 13). This population was small and it was difficult to establish families since, “The earliest Muslim immigrants were mostly male, young and unskilled. These early immigrants were often unilingual, with little formal education and no specialized job training and most were single or if they were married they travelled without wives or children” (Abu Laban 1991: 14). Eventually, these men married or brought their wives from their homelands.

With increasing numbers of Muslims in North America, the public mark of Islam became more evident and the differences between this new community and their adopted homeland became more noticeable: “Early communities were found in several cities in the United States and in Canada. The first Canadian mosque, built in 1938 by twenty Edmonton families, attests to the role of women often played in those early mosques. The incorporation papers list both men’s and women’s names as founders” (Abu-Laban 1991: 15). It is interesting to note here that the first immigrants immigrated in the late 1800s, yet it took approximately 40 years to build the first mosque. This time lag may indicate the small population of Muslims as well as initial sentiments that favoured assimilation.
Over the years, the face of Islam has changed from this original description. Abu-Laban (1991: 23) describes current Muslims in North America,

The most recent immigrants more often came to North America as couples with children. They represent the largest proportion of Muslims in Canada and the United States. Their motivations for immigration include economic gain, educational advancement, civic freedom, sanctuary from war and political repression, family reunification, and a spirit of adventure. Thus they represent a diversity of educational backgrounds and occupations but they immigrated at a distinctive point in history. They have access to greater numbers of co-religionists and they can find support in the extensive network of religious institutions that now exists. Many of these institutions have developed and flourished in the past twenty years through the financial aid of Muslim oil-producing countries. The ability and willingness of wealthier Muslim nations to assist North American Muslims has had not only a practical outcome in terms of institution-building but also a psychological outcome in terms of enhanced pride and identification.

As the changing trend of Muslim immigration emerges, from single men to couples, Muslim Canadian families are formed and become a part of Canada’s religious landscape. These Muslims come to Canada for numerous reasons and thus they represent a diverse community.

With the increasing number of Muslim families, the role of religion has changed as well. McDonough and Hoodfar (2005: 136) explain that “one of the changes taking place in Canadian Muslim life has been a gradual transition from religious practice at home to a greater involvement with other Muslims in mosque communities.” Thus, Islam is no longer a hidden set of beliefs and practices. Islam, for Muslims in Canada, is a shared ideology that “unites them to the global umma, the fellowship open to all those who accept the Quran and agree to live as Muslims (Qu’an 2:143)” (2005: 140).
The mosque plays a critical role in the lives of Canadian Muslims that differs from the role of mosques elsewhere (McDonough and Hoodfar 2005). Although the architectural structure of mosques remains relatively the same, “what is new in the Canadian context is that some mosques now serve also as cultural centres where lectures are given, study groups take place, and people come to meet other Muslims” (2005: 140). The mosque has become a community centre where various religious and social events take place.

Further, the role of Muslim women in Canada has evolved. In 1982, the Canadian Council of Muslim Women or CCMW was formed after it was discovered that many Muslim women “…wanted a way of expressing their own voices” (McDonough and Hoodfar 2005: 141). This organization works with government agencies that are concerned with women’s issues. Further, the CCMW organizes conferences and invite, as speakers, Canadian Muslim women “…who have distinguished themselves in their business or professional lives” (2005: 145). The CCMW indicates a strong sense of national leadership amongst Muslim women.

In the Canadian context, and in other parts of the world, the role of women and their religious obligations are debated. In particular, women’s dress became a highly contested topic. Although the hijab, or Islamic head covering, is described as an oppressive form of dress by some Canadians, the reasons that Muslim women choose to don the veil vary greatly, “Some women wear the veil because their fathers or husbands insist that they do, but many others freely choose to cover their heads. Some see this act as a symbol of their Muslim identity...On the other hand, many serious Muslim women
dress in the way of their non-Muslim peers” (McDonough and Hoodfar 2005: 141). Thus, the hijab, in many parts of the world, is a highly controversial topic. In Canada, some women feel that the hijab helps them better integrate into the Muslim community because they become recognizable as Muslim to others (2005:143). Thus, the hijab can negotiate a sense of shared identity amongst Muslim women living in Canada.

Although Muslims in Canada are united through religion, the majority of Muslims identify as being part of a racial minority as well: “From a national perspective, well over two-thirds (37%) of Muslims also reported being South Asian; two in ten were Arab (21%); West Asian was identified by 21% of Muslim respondents; and just under one in ten (9%) identified themselves as Black” (Janhevich and Ibrahim 2004: 52). Although Muslims are often thought of as mainly Arab, these figures attest to the fact that the Muslims in Canada are truly diverse in their origins. Further, “The heterogeneity of Canadian Muslims is reflected in the breadth of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and racial diversity” (2004:53). Canadian Muslims are not monolithic in origin. Rather, they have different countries of origins, speak many languages, and practice varying ethnic and cultural traditions.

The Muslim population in Canada is growing at a faster rate than other populations. In part, this is due to the fact that Canadian Muslims are younger than the rest of the Canadian population. “Whereas the median age for the total Canadian population was 37 years old, Muslims are significantly younger, with a median age of 28 years old” (Janhevich and Ibrahim 2004: 51). Although a direct reason for this age trend is not known, “one contributing factor to this younger age dynamic is the associated
young population of recent immigrants to Canada. In 2001- almost half of recent immigrants – those that arrived in the last ten years – were between the ages of 25-44” (2004: 52). These figures indicate that immigrants are younger in age and they are likely still establishing families.

Canadian Muslims also have higher levels of education than the general Canadian population. Statistics show that “...among those fifteen years and older, almost six in ten Muslims (56%) had some level of post-secondary education. This proportion drops to 44% for the total population” (Janhevich and Ibrahim 2004: 55). Despite these higher levels of education, Muslims in Canada hold lower incomes than other Canadians. On average, Muslim Canadians made $8000 less than the rest of the Canadian population (2004: 55). Considering the higher education levels of Canadian Muslims, the reasons for this discrepancy in wages are not evident. Some speculation has been made that these low wages are a result of unrecognized international credentials or possibly the result of discrimination (2004: 56).

The Muslims in Canada are an evolving community that are shaping and defining their role within Canadian society. The roles of mosques and imams are changing and the community is to growing. Although Muslims in Canada are still experiencing instances of discrimination and finding difficulties entering the workforce, they have come together to form a sense of community.

**Muslim Identity**
As discussed earlier, it is difficult to define Islam and choose a proper academic approach to the study of Islam. Thus, defining Muslims and examining the ways in which they form their religious identity becomes a challenge. In this section, I will explore Tariq Ramadan’s (2007) method of defining Muslim identity.

Ramadan (2007:454) creates a framework for Muslim identity that he claims is “unchangeable, wherever one lives.” Ramadan states that there are four essential components of Muslim identity, “1. To be a Muslim is to bear faith... 2. To be a Muslim is to take into account both the scriptural texts and the context – the social, political and cultural environment... 3. To be a Muslim is to educate and transmit... 4. To be a Muslim is to act and participate.” For Ramadan, Muslim identity is comprised of these different elements to form a cohesive understanding of religious practice.

The first element, to bear faith, is that individuals should be aware of their religious identity. Muslims should “carry a faith, live a practice and nourish a spirituality” (2007: 454). Thus, Islam becomes a religion that one lives. For a true Muslim identity, Islam cannot be taken out of the individual since the person bears witness to his faith.

This element of identity is important since many Muslims believe that Islam is a complete way of life. In essence, Muslim individuals see their religious identity as being an important part of their daily lives. Ramadan (2007: 454) supports his identification of this element by claiming that it is outlined in the hadith or prophetic tradition: “these correspond in Islam to three well-known principles, spelled out in the prophetic tradition,
hadith: al-īman (faith), al-Islam (five pillars of practice) and al-ihsan (excellence, spiritual dimension.” These principles are testament to the fact that Muslims are expected to uphold certain beliefs and traditions².

The second element that Ramadan emphasizes is that Muslims are to believe in the scriptural texts but also to understand the context in which they emerged. Ramadan believes a proper understanding of context is the only way to truly understand the texts. He states, “it is a question of intelligence, and thus of understanding the text in context. In other words, it is impossible to understand the text if one sees oneself outside of the actual context” (Ramadan 2007: 454).

This emphasis on understanding text within context is an ideal notion in Ramadan’s understanding of Islam but it could also lead to controversy. Whenever there is an element of interpretation, individuals will choose different methods to explore their unique interpretation. Although I do not believe that Ramadan is calling for an individualistic approach to understanding context, I would point out that the context from which the scripture emerges is a contested point amongst religious scholars. I would doubt that Sunni Muslim scholars and Shi’a Muslim scholars would agree on their understandings of context. These different opinions are further emphasized by different cultural and linguistic interpretations. It is possible that Muslims in Pakistan do not interpret the texts, or the contexts, in the same manner as Egyptian Muslims. For this

²² The second principle al-Islam (five pillars of practice) refers to the testament of faith, the five daily prayers, almsgiving, fasting the month of Ramadan and performing hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca).
reason, I would argue that this particular element that Ramadan identifies as being essential to Muslim identity is not as simple as he suggests.

Ramadan’s third element of Muslim identity is that one should educate and transmit the religious tradition. He explains (2007: 454) that “the term ‘educate’ contains the idea of spiritual reform, in the sense of purifying oneself. This is fundamentally the aim of the revelation. To be a Muslim is, in essence, to be an educator for oneself and others. As for transmission, one should be a witness before people... and to witness is to live what one says and what one believes.” A Muslim, in Ramadan’s opinion, is one who continuously seeks and transmits knowledge. This individual should also live according to his or her beliefs.

This third element is perhaps ideal in an orthodox manner of thinking. Although many Muslims might not argue with Ramadan about the importance of religious education, his definition of identity is quite narrow in this regard. If in order for one to have a Muslim identity, one must seek religious knowledge and transmit it, the many illiterate Muslims would be excluded. Since many Muslims live in Third World countries, this uneducated population is necessarily quite large.

Ramadan’s belief that education is an important part of a Muslim’s identity is supported by the many madrasas, religious schools, which have emerged in recent years throughout the Muslim world. However, I still am doubtful that all Muslims have access
to these schools and resources. Therefore, I would be wary of including this element as an essential factor for identity formation.

Finally, Ramadan’s fourth element of identity is that it is essential to a Muslim’s identity that they “act and participate.” He explains (2007: 454) this concept, “faith relates to action, and in participation we find the relation of action to community – the community of people, of citizens. It is a matter of acting and participating in a social way.” A Muslim’s identity, for Ramadan, is embedded in the participation of individuals within the community. Identity is not an isolated concept. Rather, it emerges out of a participatory nature within the religious community.

Ramadan sees the Muslim community as a spiritual community that is not isolated from the rest of society. He explains (2007: 458), “It is a true community of the heart. Islam, to a Muslim, means in the nature of things developing community dimension. It does not at all mean that we must go in the other direction, which is communitarianism. It is a community that reaches out, not a communitarianism that closes in on itself.” The Muslim community, in Ramadan’s opinion, is open and inviting to all individuals. It is a community that works within the larger community without isolating itself.

In this sense, Ramadan is describing the *ummah* as one that is not exclusive in all regards. Rather, it is exclusive in the sense that it is a spiritual affiliation but it remains inviting through its participation in the larger community. He warns (2007: 458) that Muslims who isolate themselves “put themselves into a ghetto, to confine themselves, to
prevent themselves from communication with the surroundings, to demand laws specific to the place where they are.”

Ramadan (2007: 455) summarizes his discussion of Muslim identity in the following paragraph:

First, everything I have put forward concerning Muslim identity shows us that it is a conception of life in the widest sense. This can be expressed, for those who reject transcendence, as a philosophy of life. One will accept this term the moment one accepts the idea of a philosophy of life that, for Muslims, starts with faith and ends with participation. Second, Muslim identity is a conception, and this conception includes social behavior; it involves at one and the same time education, participation and understanding the context. Identity extends to the social dimension of the individual, to society. This is why the question of religious allegiance and citizenship is interesting and crucial. The third point, also very important, is that many sociologists—and in this they are right, to some extent—put the issue thus: Those who talk about identity often give us the impressions that they are speaking of an identity confined within itself, a protective identity (‘I am this in order not to become that’) an identity that closes one off from the world.

While Ramadan’s framework provides room for an attempt to clarify the place of Muslims within Canadian society, his point of entry is slightly flawed. He writes as though all Muslims will agree with his logic and follow his prescriptions to become effective members of Canadian society. However, the diverse voices of the Muslim community have proven otherwise.

In truth, there is no uniform “Muslim” identity since Muslims come from diverse backgrounds and thus have diverse opinions and approaches to religion. The Muslim community does not have a monolithic voice and debates surrounding Islamic legislation are common. In Canada these diverse voices are raised when conflicts occur within the Muslim community. Take for example the Sharia Law debate. In 2003 the Islamic
Institute of Civil Justice proposed to create a judicial system that would serve as a legal court for Muslim family law matters. This proposal caused an outcry from Muslims who did not want to adhere to Islamic law in family issues. In contrast, many Muslims wanted to resolve their familial conflicts according to Islamic law.

Marion Boyd (2007: 466) states that “these pronouncements precipitated immediate and vocal opposition within the Muslim community and Canadian society as a whole. Under the mistaken impression that the Ontario government had taken, or planned to take, specific action to allow Canadian laws to be superseded by Sharia law, opponents worked with the media to perpetuate this myth.” The Muslims who opposed the implementation of Sharia law in familial matters believed that this new court would be able to overrule Canadian laws. Those opposed to the arbitration of Islamic law were worried that their Muslim identities would supersede their Canadian rights in a court of law. In truth, this could not happen.

However, this conflict within the Muslim community illustrates that it does not speak with one monolithic voice. Rather, Muslim identity is as diverse as its people. For this reason, Ramadan’s descriptions of a uniform Muslim community, and his prescriptions for how it should engage with the broader community, are not entirely accurate. While he gives suggestions for how Muslims can effectively integrate into Canadian society, he does not take into account the many individuals who would oppose his theories of “correct” forms of civic inclusion. For Muslims who were proponents of the Sharia law, their understanding of being Muslim and Canadian places Islamic law at a
higher stature than Canadian law. Ramadan’s elements of Muslim identity would reject this notion. He would view Canadian law as being superior to religious law in cases where Muslims are the minority.

Ramadan’s theory on Muslim identity assumes that there is a “true Islam” and therefore there is a “true Muslim Identity”. This approach can best be understood through an examination of globalization and the effect that it can have on a global Muslim identity.

Recent scholarship has used the concepts of globalization, deculturation, and deterritorialization to identify the new experience of being Muslim in a globalized world. These concepts emphasize local practices but acknowledge the nature of a lived tradition in a global world.

Globalization can be understood in many ways. The most pertinent to this study is to understand globalization as a process which helps to make global events relevant to the local setting. Further, “with globalization people become more able – physically, legally, linguistically, culturally and psychologically – to engage with each other wherever on planet Earth they might be” (Scholte 2005: 59). In this way, Muslims living in a global world are able to interact with one another although they may be living in different parts of the world.

Through the process of globalization, many Muslims try to create an Islam that is global and removed from any specific cultural context. Because of the increasing ability for individuals to share thoughts, ideologies and convictions with greater speed than ever
before, the question “what is Islam?” has a broader and more significant reach than ever before. Further, globalization facilitates calls within the Muslim community for a “true Islam.”

This attempt, by some Muslims, to find a “true Islam,” one that is void of ethnic and cultural factors, relies on the “great tradition” to unify the “little traditions.” This process relies on “deculturation.” Roy (2004: 22) defines deculturation as “...a crisis of pristine cultures giving way to westernisation and reconstructed identities.” This process attempts to remove the pre-existing cultures and replace it with western worldviews. Deculturation furthers the agenda for a “true” Islam because it becomes a “means of experiencing a religious identity that is not linked to a given culture and can therefore fit with every culture, or, more precisely, could be defined beyond the very notion of culture” (2004: 22). Roy (2004: 25) states that globalization, ...

leads to the endeavour to define a ‘universal’ Islam, valid in any cultural context. Of course, by definition Islam is universal, but after the time of the Prophet and his companions (the Salaf) it has always been embedded in given cultures... Globalization is a good opportunity to dissociate Islam from any given culture and to provide a model that could work beyond any culture.

With the ability to communicate with individuals in a global context, Islam can become separate from local cultures and traditions.

Deculturation is also pushed forward because of “deterritorialization.” Islam is no longer specified as belonging to certain countries, or even continents. Rather, the spread of Islam, through migration, has caused “more and more Muslims [to live]... in societies that are not Muslim: a third of the world’s Muslims now live as members of a minority”
With Muslims dispersed among many countries, there is no longer an "Islamic hub" solely in the Middle East. Rather, the religion has become a global tradition. Not only have these Muslims flourished as a community but they have adopted Western norms and integrated these values into their religious value system (Roy 2004). With increasing globalization, "a Muslim might experience this deterritorialisation without leaving his own country" (Roy 2004: 19). This is thought to be caused by the Westernization of majority Muslim countries. Therefore, with globalization, we see an exchange of values, cultures and norms between the West and Muslim countries.

Muslims living as minority groups are forced to separate their religious lives from their social life, "to live as a minority means experiencing Islam as only a religion. Even if Islam is an all-encompassing religion for the believer, such an integrative view is not supported by social authority" (Roy 2004: 148). Since the societies that Muslims choose to live in do not foster an entirely Islamic lifestyle, Muslims are forced to separate Islam from every aspect of their lives.

Ramadan’s theory of Muslim identity fits into this globalization framework. For Ramadan, a Muslim identity is uniform and can effectively undergo the process of "deculturation". Thus, for Ramadan, Islamic identity can be consistent in a global context.

However, migration and changing global patterns make it difficult to understand Islam as a single, unified, religion. We are exposed to a plethora of different practices. Not only do Muslim immigrants come with their cultural beliefs from their homeland, but these customs and rituals are changed by succeeding generations. As different Muslims
interact with their new homeland, and encounter other Muslims, the lines become blurry between Islam, culture, new traditions and secular life.

Thus, there remains no uniform description of Canadian Muslims. Muslims in Canada reflect the multicultural countries from which they come. Canadian Muslims differ in race, ethnicity, cultural practices, religious interpretation, linguistics, and political views. These differentiations make it difficult to speak of “the Muslim community” as a monolithic and static community.

**Muslims- “Canadian” or “Other”?**

Although Muslims do comprise the largest religious minority in Canada, tensions between some Muslims and “non-Muslims” continue to exist. These tensions often arise from a societal understanding of Muslims as “other” than Canadian. This understanding of Muslims as “other” has increased after the events of September 11, 2001 in New York. These events caused a shift in societal understanding of who is considered an ally and who is an enemy. This shift was encouraged by American political discourse: “...[the] President of the United States George W. Bush engaged in the labelling of Muslims. His ‘us’ versus ‘them,’ ‘good’ versus ‘evil’ rhetoric pits the good Christian West against an evil Islam all over the world” (McCloud 2006: 2). This differentiation, causes citizens, both Muslim and non-Muslim, to experience a distinction between national and religious identity. In its dominant theme, Bush’s rhetoric did not allow for Muslims to be both American and Muslim. Rather, the religious identity of Muslims was understood to be their most important defining characteristic.
This “us” versus “them” mentality is not entirely new to the West. Rather, this phenomenon began in the sixteenth century when Christian leaders began to view Muslims as a threat to their existence. With Islamic rule in Spain, Muslims were seen as a threat to Christian nations, “Not for nothing did Islam come to symbolize terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma. Until the end of the seventeenth century the ‘Ottoman peril’ lurked alongside Europe to represent for the whole of Christian civilization a constant danger” (Said 1978: 59). The Ottoman Empire threatened to unravel Christian control of Europe. Islam was the dominating force which challenged the very existence of Christianity and quickly became the “other” to Christians in Europe. This “otherness” of Muslims has continued to present day.

This differentiation leads to what scholars have called “Islamophobia.” Islamophobia “accurately reflects a social anxiety toward Muslim cultures that is largely unexamined by, yet deeply ingrained in, Americans [and by extension, Canadians]… this anxiety relies on a sense of otherness, despite many common sources of thought” (Gottschalk and Greenberg 2008: 5). As seen in Said’s (1978) work, Islamophobia existed long before this term was coined. Islamophobia is propelled forward by media outlets in particular which “consistently overlook the voices of moderation that come from the majority of Muslims” (Gottschalk and Greenberg 2008: 8). Not only is Islamophobia fuelled and pushed forward through mainstream media, these anxieties create tensions between government and Muslim citizens, “Like a vicious cyclone feeding off of its own energy, these sentiments cumulatively feed policies that in turn produce reactions that
reinforce the original sentiments" (2008: 6). This dynamic may be seen by the American government’s decision to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq following September 11. Some Muslims chose to protest this decision and thus, from the point of view of many Americans, proved the “danger of Muslims.”

The concept of Islam as the “other” has perpetuated the notion that Islam is a monolithic tradition. Orientalism played a critical role in the formation of this notion, “it is the story of how a host of travelers, novelists, artists, diplomats, scholars, and now the media depict the Muslim Middle East as a monolithic, fundamentally static, and therefore ‘peculiar’ entity” (Bayat 2007: 1). The objectification of Islam, as something that is uniform with clearly defined boundaries, does not take into account the diverse nature of a lived tradition. Since Muslims are seen as a comprehensive entity, the diverse practices, beliefs and cultures of these individuals are largely ignored.

Islamophobia, like racism and sexism, creates a binary relationship in this case between Muslims and the West. Hamdon (2010: 33) explains,

Islamophobic, racialist, and culturalist essentialisms all make use of the Orientalist framework, which situates Muslims as culturally and racially alien to the West. The political, social, and cultural means of producing and disseminating information about Muslims continue to reinforce rather than counter (mis)understanding and have resulted in the circulation of powerful visual stereotypes that in turn reinforce ‘western’ ideas about Muslims and Islam.

Muslims, seen as alien and different from their co-citizens, are unable to dispel these stereotypes because of the lasting impact of politics and media.

One study in the UK showed that after 9/11 “levels of implicit or indirect discrimination [towards Muslims] rose by 82.6% and experiences of overt discrimination
by 76.3%" (Sheridan 2006: 317). This study shows that British Muslims experienced a staggering surge of Islamophobic attitudes from their fellow British citizens after September 11. Further, “the current work demonstrates that major world events may affect not only stereotypes of minority groups but also prejudice towards minorities” (2006: 317). While orientalism created stereotypes about Muslims in relatively faraway places, modern day Islamophobia, as a result of world events, creates prejudice amongst citizens within the same country.

As a result of recent Islamophobia, many negative images of Muslims have developed, “One image of Arabs and Islam that emerges says: all Arabs are threatening and the evil other; all Arabs are Muslim; thus, all Muslims are evil, threatening, and other... The other or mirror image, always present as a veiled shadow, is that of the Arab Muslim woman – equally mysterious, oppressed, and other” (McCloud 2006: 72). These images are continually presented in the media making it difficult to move away from stereotypes. The majority of Americans believe that most, if not all, Muslims are Arab, “If one asks Americans which countries have the most Muslims, all but the most knowledgeable will reply with the names of Middle Eastern nations such as Egypt, Iraq, and Iran... Yet only 20 percent of all Muslims in the world identify themselves as Arab” (Gottschalk and Greenberg 2008: 69). This synonymous understanding of Arab and Muslim indicates an overarching lack of knowledge about Muslim demographics.

In a post 9-11 world, many Muslims in North America feel more and more isolated, and perhaps, perceive themselves as less and less Canadian or American. Islamophobic tendencies become dangerous on three levels:
First, foreign Muslim populations increasingly consider expanding American interests as antithetical to their own and American foreign policy as threatening to Muslim-majority states. Second, as a tiny but dedicated fraction of these populations employ very lethal means of retaliating against what they perceive as the anti-Islamic or anti-Muslim policies of the United States government, these sentiments will appear to be confirmed among Americans. Third, as increasing numbers of Muslims live in the United States— and will soon represent the largest non-Christian religious population—they increasingly become the targets of hate crimes and discrimination... (Gottschalk and Greenberg 2008:6)

As a result of Islamophobia, many Muslims become wary of American foreign policies and begun to doubt the relationships between Muslim-majority countries and America. Thus, Islamophobia not only leads to feelings of marginalization for Muslims in North America, but also threatens to ruin the relationship of North American Muslims with non-Muslims and the relationships between North America and Muslim-majority states.

Identity

Identity is a critical concept presented in this thesis. I argue that CSIS can have an influence on Muslim individuals and how they choose to identify with the Muslim community. However, the formation of social identity is highly complex and involves many factors such as: race, culture, gender, religion, age and citizenship. Further, it becomes even more difficult to discuss identity when individuals have conflicting identities that are complicated to merge. Identity can come from the individual as “self-declared” or by others according to “national traditions and legal systems” (Roy 2004: 102-103).
Marilynn Brewer (2001: 115) explains that, “The concept of social identity has been invoked throughout the human sciences whenever there is a need for a conceptual bridge between individual and group levels of analysis.” Social identity differs from personal identity because it attempts to understand identity in a pluralistic sense. Identity is not confined to how one views his or her self but rather, refers to how members of a collective form a group identity. Further, “Social identity provides a link between the psychology of the individual—the representation of self—and the structure and process of social groups within which the self is embedded” (2001: 115). Social identity becomes an expression of the individual’s self. The individual identity is a part of the social identity and susceptible to changing as the social identity redefines itself.

Brewer (2001: 116) attempts to link individual and social identities and explains, “I start from the assumption that all conceptualizations of social identity refer in some way to the idea that an individual's self-concept is derived, to some extent and in some sense, from the social relationships and social groups he or she participates in.” An individual’s identity is not separate from their group identity. Rather, individual identities are formed from their experiences within their social groups.

Social identity, for Brewer (2001) can be derived from four sources: person-based social identities, relational social identities, group-based social identities and collective identities. Person-based social identities refer to “definitions of social identity that are located within the individual self-concept. In this usage, social identities are aspects of the self that have been particularly influenced by the fact of membership in specific social groups or categories and the shared socialization experiences that such membership
implies” (Brewer 2001: 117). An individual’s sense of self is derived from their membership in social groups. A person may ask themselves, “Who am I as an X?” (where "X" refers to a social category membership)” (2001: 117). Therefore, the person’s understanding of themselves is in relation to their membership within a social structure.

Relational social identities refer to the way a person views themselves in relation to other individuals (Brewer 2001: 118). These identities are formed through interdependent relationships with individuals in a larger group. Brewer (2001: 118) explains that,

Relational social identities are interdependent in the sense that the traits and behaviors expressed by one individual are dependent on and responsive to the behavior and expectancies of the other parties in the relationship. Even highly prescribed social roles must be adapted to some extent to the characteristics, needs, and skills of the specific other(s) occupying complementary roles. Hence, relational identities reflect the influence on the self-concept of societal norms and expectations associated with occupying particular roles or social positions, and the nature of the specific interpersonal relationships within which that role is carried out.

Relational social identities are influenced by interconnected relationships with other individuals that help to shape the concept of self. The person is influenced by, and influences, other individuals.

Group-based social identities can be understood as the opposite of person-based social identities. Further, “whereas person-based social identities reflect the extent to which a group or category membership is represented as an integral part of an individual’s self-concept, group-based identities refer to the perception of self as an integral or interchangeable part of a larger group or social unit” (Brewer 2001: 118).
Group-based social identity takes the focus away from the person as an individual self and instead sees the individual as part of a cohesive whole.

The last social identity that Brewer discusses is collective identity. Collective identity is similar to group-based identity because it focuses on relationships that are based on the shared interests of group members. However, collective identity “...also refers to an active process of shaping and forging an image to what the group stands for and how it wishes to be viewed by others. Thus, collective identities represent an achievement of collective efforts, above and beyond what category members have in common to begin with” (Brewer 2001: 119). Collective identities extend beyond the framework of group-identities because they call for action by the group members. The group members forge new relationships based on their collective action and their contributions to the group’s achievements.

Using Brewer’s framework for identity, I will give an example of how these four types of social identities can be used to form the different aspects of a Muslim individual’s identity. In terms of person-based social identity, an individual may derive their sense of self from their membership in the Muslim community. A person in this case would ask themselves, “Who am I as a Muslim?” Thus, this person’s concept of self is reliant on how they understand themselves within the larger Islamic structure.

Relational identity describes the behaviours and traits of a Muslim individual based on the expectations of other Muslims. For example, one of the reasons that some Muslim women choose to don the hijab is in direct relation to how they believe other Muslim women will perceive them. These women believe that the hijab will help them
gain access to the services that are offered by other Muslims (McDonough and Hoodfar 2005: 143).

In contrast to person-based identity, group-based identity takes the focus away from the self and places greater emphasis on the group as a whole. For example, Muslim students who participate in the Muslim Students’ Association (MSA) may form group-based identity. This shared identity is expressed through a sense of belonging to a larger group. Thus, the individuals that comprise the MSA are not as important as the organization itself. Further, this distinguishes MSA members from the larger student body.

However, the individuals that form the MSA may evolve their group-based identity into a collective identity. One such example is when a group of MSA members decides to raise money for a local charity. Although they were originally brought together by their shared identity as MSA members, they may now experience a sense of accomplishment in their fundraising. Consequently, their shared identity with other members becomes based on their desire to help others. These individuals feel a sense of achievement that extends beyond their shared religion.

Although I use Islam as a defining characteristic of the individual self, it is important to take into consideration that this is just one of many social identities. There are many other factors that can help to shape an individual’s concept of self. According to Takim (2009: 78), identities are shaped and structured by different factors. In the case of Muslims in America, these may include prejudice against Muslims, the need to preserve one’s culture and language, the perceived threat from fellow Muslims or non-Muslims,
resistance to assimilation to mainstream American culture, and so forth. Besides religion, other indices compete as an identity marker in America. In fact, one can talk of various diasporic identities that are constructed by an immigrant community. These identities are multiple and often contested, sometimes within the same immigrant community. A person can be defined politically, linguistically, culturally, and ethnically. We can have multiple identities at one particular time. Overlapping identities allow us to identify with overlapping communities... Drawing on differing identities, a person can identify him or herself as a Muslim, South Asian, or as an American at the same time. Other identities include ethnicity, sectarian affiliation, race and/or class. America has become an arena where different cultural, ethnic, and religious identities are contested. It is therefore necessary to move away from the notion of a rigid, ethnic/religious identity.

As Takim points out, identities can overlap and coexist at the same time. Thus, a member of MSA may identify as being a Muslim, a student, Canadian and Pakistani at the same time.

Further, these identities are salient and may change or evolve throughout an individual’s life. All of these factors make the definition of identity highly complex. It would be naive to claim that a true “Muslim identity” exists. Although all Muslims are united in their belief in the sacredness of the Quran, their acknowledgement of the five pillars and the belief in Allah, there are vast differences between Muslims in different geographical areas due to a number of factors. Further, “It is ...impossible to know the significance of Islamic identity for every individual Muslim, and assumptions about it are frequently spurious” (Schwedler 2001: 3).

**Canadian Multiculturalism**
To understand the changing identity of the Muslim community, it is critical to examine the role that Canada has played in that process. As discussed previously, Muslims who initially immigrated to Canada tried to assimilate into Canadian society. Thus, they attempted to remove their cultural and religious heritage in order to adopt a “Canadian identity”. However, as time passed and more Muslims immigrated to Canada, the Muslim community grew and retained their Islamic and cultural identities.

This shift from assimilation to cultural retention was not unique to the Muslim community. Rather, the assimilation of immigrant groups was an expectation of the Canadian government. The change from assimilation to retaining cultural identity can best be understood by examining Canada’s approaches to multiculturalism.

Although the immigrant population comprises a major component of Canada’s population, approaches to multiculturalism have differed throughout the years. Kymlicka (2007: 43) explains that,

In the past, Canada, like the other major British settler societies (The United States, Australia, New Zealand), had an assimilationist approach to immigration. Immigrants were encouraged and expected to assimilate to the preexisting British mainstream culture, in the hope that over time they would become indistinguishable from native-born British Canadians in their speech, dress, recreation and general way of life. Indeed, any group that was seen as incapable of this sort of cultural assimilation (for example, Asians and Africans) was prohibited from immigrating to Canada.

It is clear that multiculturalism has not always been a priority of the Canadian government. Immigrants who chose to come to Canada in the past did so with the government’s presumption that they would eventually assimilate with British Canadians.
who had settled in earlier years. Of course this would prove problematic for immigrants who varied from the status quo by skin colour, language, cultural practices, religious belief and/or ideologies.

This expectation for assimilation began to change in the postwar period and change came into full effect in “in the late 1960s and early 1970s” (Kymlicka 2007: 44). This historical phase, prior to the Multiculturalism Act of 1971, is described as the “incipient stage.” Dewing and Leman (2006: 4) explain that “the era preceding 1971 can best be interpreted as a time of gradual movement towards acceptance of ethnic diversity as legitimate and integral to Canadian society.” Canadian society was preparing itself for a shift in population composition. Kymlicka (2007: 44) accredits this change to two factors: (1) individuals immigrating to Canada were not solely from Christian European countries and (2) the expectation that these immigrants would be proud of their multicultural identities and less willing to assimilate. The Canadian government had to prepare itself for change or risk losing the satisfaction of its new arrivals. In particular, “pressures for change stemmed from the growing assertiveness of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples, the force of Quebecois nationalism, and the increasing resentment of ethnic minorities towards their place in society” (Dewing and Leman 2006: 4). Canada was receiving pressure from all three of their minority groups, Aboriginals, Quebecois and ethnic minorities, to change and adapt its understanding of diverse populations.

The subsequent time period between 1971 and 1981 can be described as “the Formative Period.” In 1969 the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism
made recommendations which highlighted the urgent need for a more inclusive ethnocultural policy (Dewing and Leman 2006: 4). This led to the creation of a federal policy which emphasized the following: “To assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity; to assist cultural groups to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society;...To promote creative exchanges among all Canadian cultural groups; To assist immigrants in acquiring at least one of the official languages” (2006: 4). The Canadian government recognized that simply allowing people to immigrate to Canada was not enough to ensure their satisfaction as citizens. Rather, the government had to put in place a policy that would establish the importance of cultural heritage while assisting immigrants to adapt to Canadian life through supporting language learning in particular.

One of the changes that came into effect was the “adoption of race-neutral admissions criteria (the points system)” (Kymlicka 2007: 44). This system was meant to ensure that immigrants could not be denied entry to Canada based on race. Rather, this new system allowed immigrants from different backgrounds to be admitted to Canada based on their level of education, knowledge of the official languages, work experience and financial capability.

In order to implement this policy and increase support for new immigrants, funding was needed. The Canadian government allocated nearly $200 million...in the first decade of the policy for special initiatives in language and cultural maintenance. A Multicultural Directorate...was approved in 1972 to assist in the implementation of multicultural policies and programs...[Also] a Ministry of Multiculturalism was created in 1973 to monitor
the implementation of multicultural initiatives within government departments. In addition, formal linkages between the government and ethnic organizations were established to provide ongoing input into the decision-making process (Dewing and Leman, 2006: 5).

After the 1971 Multicultural Act, Canada saw a new wave of immigration. Minority immigrants increased in number and with them came a new set of challenges that policy makers were forced to take into account. In particular, new challenges such as employment, education and discrimination were being presented. For this reason, “Equality through the removal of racially discriminatory barriers became the main focus of multicultural programs, and race relations policies and programs were put in place to uncover, isolate and combat racial discrimination at personal and institutional levels” (Dewing and Leman 2006: 5).

Although multiculturalism appears to be an important item on the Canadian government’s agenda, “many Canadians are unsure of what multiculturalism is, what it is trying to do and why, and what it can realistically accomplish in a liberal-democratic society such as ours” (Dewing and Leman 2006: 10). Though Canadians generally support the concept of multiculturalism, they are unaware of the many facets of multiculturalism. In part, this is to “the indiscriminate application of the term to a wide range of situations, practices, expectations and goals” (2006: 10). Kymlicka (2007: 46) explains,

Most Canadians have no clear idea how this complex of multiculturalism policies operates. They are vaguely aware that the federal government has an official multiculturalism policy, but they have little idea how, or even whether, this federal policy is connected to the adoption of a new multiculturalism curriculum in their local public schools, or to the appearance of a new multilingual ethnic channel on cable TV. In this sense, multiculturalism policies have permeated Canadian public life, with ripple effects
extending far beyond their original source in one branch of the federal government. The 1971 federal statement on multiculturalism has initiated a ‘long march through the institutions’ at all levels of Canadian society.

Even with multiculturalism’s ripple effects, not all Canadians are in favour of the changes and certain groups feel that “multiculturalism” is detrimental to some communities. In Quebec, the sentiments towards multiculturalism are less positive than those in other parts of Canada (Dewing and Leman 2006: 10). Although the Francophone community stands to benefit from multiculturalism, since they are a minority, they feel that it undermines their position as a majority within the province of Quebec. For Québécois, multiculturalism is not seen in favorable light and is believed to be detrimental to their position in Canada. In particular, “for many Quebeckers, the idea of reducing the rights of French-speaking Canadians to the same level as those of other ethno-racial minorities in the name of multicultural equality is inconsistent with the special compact between the two founding peoples of Canada” (Dewing and Leman 2006: 10). Therefore, Québécois worry that their history in establishing Canada as a country would be forgotten and they would be treated like all other minority groups.

Québécois are not the only ones that oppose multiculturalism. A 1991 forum “uncovered a wide gap between a largely positive reaction to the growing ethnic diversity of Canada on the one hand and opposition to what was considered to be official multiculturalism on the other” (Dewing and Leman 2006: 10). Canadians are torn between those who support multiculturalism and those who feel that multiculturalism goes too far. Some “critics say the policy is divisive because it emphasizes what is
different, rather than the values that are Canada” (2006: 10). Individuals believe that multiculturalism can be a negative factor in attempting to build a united country. It is believed that citizens who embrace their own cultures do not know what it means to be Canadian. Further, “multiculturalism is blamed for isolating ethno-racial groups in distinct enclaves by fostering an inward-focused mentality that drives a wedge between Canadians of different ethnic backgrounds” (Dewing and Leman 2006: 11).

Multicultural policies, according to Kymlicka (2007: 64), can be assessed by examining three parts,

First, liberalism: Have these policies succeeded in ensuring that the accommodation of ethnocultural diversity occurs within the boundaries of liberal values, consistent with human rights and civil liberties? Second, equality: Have these policies succeeded in reducing inherited ethnic and racial hierarchies (and preventing new hierarchies from emerging)? Third, sustainability: Are these policies sustainable over time, or are they eroding the sort of trust and solidarity needed to maintain them?

For Kymlicka, multicultural policies are only successful if they manage to maintain liberalism, achieve equality and are sustainable over the years. Kymlicka believes that these three measures of success are indicative of a successful diverse country.

Liberalism is understood to work within the framework of human and civil rights: “Liberal democracy gives the vote to communists who want to abolish parliamentary democracy, just as it gives free speech to those who would refuse free speech to others” (Kymlicka 2007: 65). Liberalism is seen, in this sense, as problematic since it manages to give voice, and perhaps power, to those who would not grant those same rights to others.
In theory, illiberal voices have the ability, under the liberal democracy banner, to legitimize illiberal acts. However, Kymlicka argues that this outcome has not taken place. Rather, liberal voices have managed to remain in control of the democratic state. Kymlicka (2007: 65) argues that this is done in three ways, “(1) civic education and political socialization to help develop and sustain a broader political culture for human rights and civil rights liberalism; (2) mechanisms for identifying and publicizing actual or potential abuses… (3) legal and constitutional safeguards…” Kymlicka asserts that individuals and communities have attempted to misuse the multiculturalism act to legitimize practices that are not congruent with Canada’s constitution. However, these attempts have not been successful. In particular, Kymlicka (2007: 65) points to the practices of certain ethnic groups and their attempts since the 1980s to lobby for specific cultural practices to be exercised in Canada: “These have included demands to ban or censor various artistic productions, the use of intimidation to suppress dissent within a community, the customary use of violence against women or children, honour killings, gender discrimination in employment, female genital mutilation and coerced arranged marriages.” None of these attempts have been successful in gaining support in Canada.

The second measure of success that Kymlicka examines is whether the Multiculturalism Act achieves equality. He argues (2007: 68) that this is more difficult to analyze because “we have no clear or agreed-upon metric for measuring equality. Equality is a multi-dimensional concept: it has economic, political and cultural dimensions.” Kymlicka examines the equality issue by assessing the overall affect that
the Multiculturalism Act has had on the Francophone community, Aboriginals and ethno-racial minorities.

In the case of the Francophone community, Kymlicka (2007: 68) argues that since the 1960s Québécois have “achieved a dramatic equalization with English Canadians in all dimensions, whether measured in terms of economic opportunities and standard of living, or in terms of effective political representation and voice, or in terms of public status of language and culture.” Interestingly, in contrast to Kymlicka’s assertion that the multicultural policies have benefitted the Francophone community, Québécois are the least in favour of multicultural policies (Dewing and Leman 2006).

Kymlicka also examines the Aboriginal experience. Although he admits that this particular community is difficult to assess, Kymlicka (2007: 69) believes that “the package of land claims and self-government agreements has certainly enhanced the political voice and representation of some Aboriginal communities – particularly status Indians with treaties and the Inuit.” However, Kymlicka also recognizes that some Aboriginal communities have been underrepresented and as such have not benefitted from these agreements. In particular, nonstatus Indians, Metis and urban Aboriginal people do not have a place within the current self-governing bodies. Although Kymlicka gives some suggestions for how the Canadian government might address this lack of representation, he admits that these approaches have not been tested (2007: 70).
The last group that Kymlicka examines, the immigrant/ethnic group, is also difficult to examine. He (2007: 70) states that “It [multiculturalism] has clearly helped many disadvantaged groups achieve greater equality... However, one could also argue that the policy framework is insufficiently sensitive to the widely varying conditions of different immigrant groups.” Kymlicka argues that some individuals who fit in the “immigrant/ethnic group” are not in need of the preferential treatment that Canada offers individuals in this group. He states (2007: 17), “...for instance, Hong Kong Chinese immigrants who have above-average levels of education, income and wealth. Not only are they not in need of this benefit, but because they already have high levels of human capital they are also better able to take advantage of the benefit.” Kymlicka’s concern is that the benefits reserved for individuals with immigrant backgrounds are being misused by individuals who are not in need. However, Kymlicka’s assumption that Hong Kong Chinese immigrants are not in need of social services offered by the government does not take into account that this community may still experience racial discrimination. Thus, they may be using these funds for initiatives that help their community in these instances.

Kymlicka’s final measure for the success of the multicultural policies is whether they are sustainable throughout time. For Kymlicka (2007: 71), Canada’s diversity policies should “reflect in part a progressive commitment to reducing inherited ethnic and racial hierarchies. As such, they depend on a sense of pan-ethnic solidarity and responsibility.” He argues that there is much work to be done in terms of creating policies that would help sustain the Multicultural Act. He acknowledges that multi-nation states are complex and therefore, they require a thorough examination of the barriers that
impede long-term sustainability. In particular, he (2007: 77) highlights key issues that remain to be examined: “weak feelings of shared fate among Canada’s nations within; the danger of racial and religious polarization; and a generalized decline in feelings of solidarity, trust, and civility.”

While multiculturalism is a central part of Canada’s demographic landscape, there are many critical aspects that must be examined. Canada is amongst the nations that prides itself on inclusivity and multiculturalism. However, there are barriers that exist that make it difficult for all citizens to exercise their rights. In particular, Aboriginals and immigrant minorities still face challenges integrating fully into Canadian society.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter addressed the different approaches that scholars take when they study Islam and the limitations that these models can present. These approaches are at times too narrow, making it difficult for other scholars to adopt the same approach, or they are too broad, not taking into account the many local practices. Thus, many scholars have allowed Muslims to “self-identify,” taking into account that Muslims and Islamic practice can vary.

This chapter also explored the Muslim community in Canada and how it has changed, adapted and evolved over time. Further, this chapter examined the types of social identities that exist and how these identities can, at times, overlap. Although there is no monolithic Muslim identity, this chapter sheds light on the many societal factors that can help shape concepts of the “self.”
Although Muslims have established communities in North America, the events of 9/11 have heightened sentiments of Islamophobia. While the fear of Muslims in the West as “other” has been in existence since 16th century Ottoman rule, an “us versus them” rhetoric in a post 9/11 world has increased the divide between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Multiculturalism in Canada, as an attempt to decrease racial discrimination, was discussed at length to examine the practices and policies that have helped to shape Canada’s ethnic landscape. The Canadian government plays a role in the development and retention of cultural heritage and immigrant integration. However, although the Canadian government has taken steps towards the inclusion of various minority groups, there still remain challenges for integration and participation.
Chapter 3- Muslim Involvement and CSIS

Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine the ways in which Muslim Canadians’ religious involvement is changed when they are approached by CSIS. Although it is difficult to pinpoint the feelings of spirituality for any particular individual, we can trace his or her level of involvement in social religious activities. In particular, for the present study, we can trace the participants’ attendance at mosques, their involvement in university groups such as the Muslim Students Association, and their association with community members. All of the participants felt that it was their status as observant Muslims that persuaded CSIS to approach them. For example, one of my interviewees, Mohammed, felt that CSIS was targeting Muslims specifically based on their religious practices. He claimed that CSIS agents had asked him how many times he prayed a day and whether he read the Quran on a regular basis. Another interviewee, Khalid, said that although CSIS may have targeted him because of his activism, he felt the “real” reason that CSIS chose him was because he was a practising Muslim. In fact, he felt that if he has been less observant, then CSIS would not have approached him at all. Ali, another participant, claimed that CSIS was attempting to control Muslims’ religious affiliations. He felt that CSIS’ approach of certain individuals was aimed at “policing thought.” Ali felt that by intimidating individuals with these interviews, CSIS was able to effectively scare people away from becoming “extreme” in their ideology.

Perhaps one of the most prominent reasons why Muslim Canadians feel that they are targeted by CSIS because of their religious identity is that CSIS publicly discusses its
concerns with Islamic terrorist groups. On the CSIS website, CSIS ranks “terrorism” as its top priority. However, in the explanation, it seems that “terrorism” is almost solely “Muslim terrorism.” This is most evident in CSIS’ discussion on identifying terrorists. On CSIS’ website, http://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/prrts/trrsm/index-eng.asp (accessed December 5, 2010), it states:

Identifying and apprehending terrorists is more challenging than ever. Sunni Islamic extremists such as the members of the Al Qaeda network, for example, are often well-educated in specialized fields such as computer science, biochemistry and engineering. They are security-conscious, well-funded and resourceful. They use sophisticated technology, enhanced by encryption and steganography (the concealment of the existence of messages), to communicate worldwide and to transfer funds electronically. Furthermore, they are masterful at exploiting the media to influence public opinion, and at using democratic institutions to further their cause or to avoid just penalty.

According to this description, in many respects, these terrorists are not so different from typical Canadians. With the exception of the ability to conceal worldwide communication, the individuals described are working within the Canadian legal system. Given this description of terrorist activities, and the fact that only one example of a terrorist group, Al-Qaeda – a Sunni Muslim fundamentalist group is mentioned, it becomes easier to understand why Muslims feel that they are a targeted group. Since CSIS’ website focuses primarily on Muslim terrorists, and the website description of these terrorists is so general, many Muslims feel that they are targeted based on nothing more than their religious affiliation. Further, if individuals feel that they have become suspects simply because they are able to effectively use democratic institutions, they may also feel alienated from their own religious and Canadian political spheres.
Although all of the individuals interviewed for this study felt targeted because of their religious identity, they did not all react in the same manner. Rather, three patterns of reaction emerge among study participants after they were interviewed by CSIS: (1) Individuals become more involved, (2) less involved, or (3) their involvement in religious activities generally stayed the same. It is critical to note that some individuals were initially less involved out of fear, and then later turned that fear into activism that included a higher level of involvement in religious activities.

**Increased Involvement**

Khalid was approached by CSIS in 2002. He was taking in class driving lessons and the class had paused for a lunch break. On that particular day, Khalid chose to take the stairs to exit the building for the break. He began to descend when he saw two men ascending the stairs and they asked him if he was “Khalid.” They identified themselves as working for Canadian Security Intelligence Services and asked him if they could take him out for lunch. Khalid initially agreed but on his walk to the local restaurant he remembered past events when speakers had warned individuals not to speak to CSIS unless they had a lawyer present. When they sat down, Khalid asked to have his father or his lawyer present. CSIS officials denied him at first but eventually relented and let him call home. After Khalid tried three times and was unsuccessful in reaching his parents, he declined to continue the meeting with CSIS. After much reluctance on the part of the CSIS agents, they eventually let him leave.

Khalid always saw himself as a practising Muslim. However, after the approach of the CSIS agents, he began to think about his Muslim identity more distinctively. He felt
that CSIS had targeted him because he was a Muslim, and as such, he felt that they saw him as a potential enemy of the government. Khalid instantly recognized his own presumptions as extreme, but felt that the CSIS agents were to blame for putting these initial thoughts in his head. Khalid decided that in order to be seen by CSIS agents as a mainstream Muslim, he would need to become more involved in mainstream groups such as the Muslim Students’ Association. He felt that if he became more involved in such groups, and therefore more visible, CSIS would cease to think of him as a threat and would leave him alone. Although he felt that CSIS would leave him alone entirely if he became less religiously observant, Khalid did not view this as an option. Rather, he became more attached to his religious identity specifically because, in his view, CSIS sought to decrease his religious involvement.

Ali was approached in 2006. According to Ali, the CSIS agents claimed that they were there to ask him about another individual. They had “noticed” that Ali had held a barbeque at his house; they also “noticed” the licence plate of one of the attendees and wanted to know more about him. Ali did not know that particular individual but he knew the individual’s brother who had been invited to the barbeque. The agents then asked Ali about his internet activities and they quoted several statements he had posted online in the past.

Like Khalid, Ali also saw himself as a practicing Muslim before CSIS chose to approach him. However, he felt a strong desire to become a Muslim rights’ activist after this event. Ali explained that in his view, CSIS often plays on individuals’ vulnerabilities. For example, if an individual was applying for citizenship, Ali believed that CSIS agents
would coax the individual to participate in an interview by suggesting that their unwillingness to participate could jeopardize his/her right to citizenship. However, Ali did not feel that he had vulnerabilities that CSIS could target. For that reason, he increased his activism in the hope of defending the rights of those who felt unable to do so.

Prior to CSIS approaching Ali, he was involved in an organization that helps Muslims overseas. Although this particular group is not identified as a terrorist group, Ali felt that CSIS was concerned about his involvement and was trying to scare him from continuing his affiliation with the group. Nevertheless, Ali saw this occasion as an opportunity to become more involved to ensure that CSIS was unable to control his value system. Ali saw his participation in this group as a fulfilment of his duties to other Muslims and refused, in his view, to allow CSIS "the satisfaction" of seeing his religious involvement decreased.

Mohammed was approached for the first time in the fall of 2003. He described how when he was leaving work at night, he noticed a car parked outside of the building. Two men exited the vehicle and approached him with badges. They referred to him using his online messaging name and asked him to speak with them. They asked him if they could go to a local coffee shop to discuss some issues. Mohammed declined going to another location but agreed to be interviewed on the street. They spent about 15 to 20 minutes asking him questions about 9/11, jihad and his opinions on certain verses in the Quran.
Mohamed was approached numerous times after this; each time with a different reason. In one particular instance, CSIS agents came to Mohamed’s home. He asked them to leave, but they refused and asked to speak to his parents. His parents invited the agents in for tea and answered the agents’ questions. They claimed that Mohamed was a “good son” and went to the mosque regularly. Mohamed felt that this information was used by CSIS to fit into preconceived notions about Islamic fundamentalists.

Mohammed also saw himself as a practicing Muslim before CSIS chose to approach him for the first time. He claimed that he would always pray and recite the Quran. He also frequently visited mosques and, although one of the mosques he visited was linked to CSIS infiltration, he continued to visit this particular mosque. In a few of his visits, Mohammed would encounter youth that had “black and white views of the world.” Whenever Mohammed would hear these individuals express extreme political views he claimed he would attempt to guide them and refine their thinking. In Mohammed’s opinion these individuals were young and easily influenced in becoming extreme in their thinking. For this reason, Mohammed saw his role in the mosque as a sort of guide for these individuals which he was not willing to forgo.

Mohammed’s experience is unique in that CSIS tried to hire him on multiple occasions as an informant. Mohamed felt that CSIS would attempt to make him feel that he was extreme in his views. They offered him protection if he would work for them. Mohammed explained that CSIS would ask him about particular ayat, verses in the Quran. Mohammed would avoid answering these questions since he felt they were entrapment style questions designed to prove his guilt.
Amir was interviewed by CSIS agents for the first, and only, time in March 2009. The phone call coincided with an event held at a Toronto university by students protesting the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Amir received a phone call from a “Restricted” number and was asked to have a meeting with an official from “Public Safety.” Amir was surprised by this phone call since his phone had been deactivated for a month. He had just regained access to phone service the previous day. The caller insisted on a meeting with Amir and had Amir’s former address on file. Amir agreed to meet on the condition that they meet in a public place. An official approached him and identified himself as a CSIS agent. The agent told him that the government was interested in Canadians who had lived abroad. They wanted to know about the experiences of these individuals to see if their perspectives were different from those of Canadians who had lived only in Canada.

Amir’s religious beliefs did not change drastically as a result of his interview with CSIS. Amir was already quite religious and had begun giving Friday sermons at universities. He did not stop giving sermons after the interview, but he became more aware of Islamophobia. Amir feels that as a Muslim he is targeted and that the Canadian government is creating a divide between Muslims and non-Muslims. He claimed that “certain communities are privileged over others”. Further, Amir felt that if the Canadian government continued with its practices, it would create a divided society and Muslims would become more and more isolated. Amir also believed that it was dangerous to have so many Canadian Muslims living in a state of suspicion.

Amir’s experience is unique in that he began to tell certain individuals about his experience, hoping for a change in the system. It is because of Amir’s experience that the
“CSIS- Know Your Rights” events, which I attended, began. He helped to promote these events and subsequently more Muslims have become aware of their legal rights when dealing with CSIS. Although these events are open to individuals who are not Muslim, the majority of the attendees are Muslim.

The reactions of these four men are perhaps the exact opposite of what one many presume CSIS intended to achieve. Individuals in this category tend to become more involved and more active in Islamic activities and organizations; their sense of Islamic identity is heightened. They become more aware of the fact that they are Muslim and as such they are different from the people around them.

Becoming religious and leaving behind the culture of the “homeland,” when part of a Muslim minority is a common trend in Western countries. Roy (2004: 36) explains that, “Re-Islamisation means that Muslim identity, self-evident so long as it belonged to an inherited cultural legacy, has to express itself explicitly in a non-Muslim or Western context.” In this sense, Muslims who immigrate to the West reorient themselves and establish a religious identity that is distinct from their cultural heritage.

Further, “to many young Muslims born or raised in the United States, Islam...provides a means of engaging in American societal processes. Although some are highly critical of, if not fully antagonistic toward, the norms of this country, they are aware of their identity as people who must relate to an American reality. Life in the United States, for them, is about reforming Islam” (Schmidt 2004: 5). Therefore, these young Muslims see their Islamic identity in relation to their Western identity. They do not
separate the two entirely but they are careful to ensure that their religious obligations are practiced in conjunction with the realization that they are living in the West.

What we see happening with the individuals in this category is slightly different. These individuals had a strong sense of Muslim identity before the interviews with CSIS but we now see a heightened level of Islamic affiliation. They, like other American or Canadian Muslim youth, readily identified with their religious identities since they were part of a religious minority. However, individuals in this category feel that they are threatened as individuals because of their Muslim identity. They feel that CSIS is attempting to control their religious activities through rigid monitoring and screening. As a result, these individuals choose to become more religious, to speak up against these presumed actions of CSIS and to become more involved in their religious communities.

Perhaps this process is best understood through reference to Foucault’s thoughts on governance. Foucault (1984: 242) claims, “It seems to me that at that very moment it becomes apparent that if one governed too much, one did not govern at all – that one provoked results contrary to those one desired.” Following this line of reasoning, the heavy infiltration of CSIS into the lives of these citizens, through constant surveillance and monitoring, created an outcome that was presumably unexpected and unwanted. CSIS approached these men in driving classes, at work, at home and by telephone. It seemed to the interviewees that agents knew where these individuals were at any given moment and even knew the status of their phone service. This intrusion into private space does not take into account “the idea of society. That is to say, that government not only has to deal with a territory, with a domain, and with its subjects, but that it also has to deal
with a complex and independent reality that has its own laws and mechanisms of reaction, its regulations as well as its possibilities of disturbance” (Foucault 1984: 242). Therefore, while CSIS may consider its relationship with its subjects, it does not seem to take into account the many possible outcomes of its work, including, in particular, the possibility of creating a sense of divide between Muslims and the government.

**Unchanged Involvement**

Tasneem was approached in 2008. Tasneem described how her parents received a phone call during which a CSIS officer pretended to be one of Tasneem’s friends. She asked when Tasneem would be home and did not leave a contact number. The CSIS officer then came to the house and left a blank card with only a name and phone number and asked Tasneem’s mother to have Tasneem set up an appropriate meeting time. After setting up an appointment the officer came to her house and asked Tasneem a number of questions about the individuals involved in the Toronto 18 case. Tasneem did not know any of the individuals but had been acquainted with some of their female relatives. She was then asked about a specific individual whom she did not know. When Tasneem asked the CSIS agent why CSIS had chosen to visit her, the officer claimed that they were interviewing everyone involved in the Muslim Students’ Association.

In this case, the CSIS officials did not pressure Tasneem to answer questions and she felt that it was a very pleasant encounter. She did not feel that they approached awkward topics. In part, she thought this was due to the fact that she had not been overly involved with the Muslim Students’ Association. She felt that if she had been more involved perhaps they would have asked her more pressing questions.
When asked about her religious involvement after the CSIS interview, Tasneem replied that her involvement was unchanged. However, she did admit that her work with the Muslim Students’ Association had decreased. Tasneem was insistent that this change was due to her increasing workload at school and not due to her interview with CSIS. Tasneem did admit, however, that she became more cautious about associating with some of the Muslims involved in her university’s Muslim Student’s Association.

Tasneem, who did not feel that her CSIS visit was overly negative, nevertheless felt uncomfortable telling others about the interview. She only told family and felt unsure about how others would react if they heard about this encounter. She felt that if individuals did not know her on a personal level they would react negatively and consider her a liability through association.

Rashid was approached in 2007. He described receiving a phone call from a CSIS officer who wanted to talk to him about individuals with whom he was acquainted. He asked Rashid to meet at a local Tim Hortons’s to discuss his friends. Although the CSIS officer did not mention any specific names, Rashid believes that the CSIS agent was referring to some of the Toronto 18 men. Rashid refused to set up a meeting with the agent but he did refer them to his mother. His mother hired a lawyer and told CSIS agents that conversations could be facilitated with a lawyer present. CSIS did not contact Rashid again.

Although Rashid felt that it was his Muslim identity that made him the subject of CSIS’ interest, he did not change his regular day-to-day activities and remained active in the Muslim Students’ Association. He claimed that he believed that mosques and student
groups are safe places. He did, however, become cautious of the people around him and increasingly suspected individuals of working for CSIS.

These two individuals, although few in number, represent the possibility that an individual’s religious involvement in Muslim organizations will be unchanged due to his/her encounter with CSIS. This outcome may be due to the fact that these individuals had received phone calls beforehand asking for a meeting. In Tasneem’s case, she agreed to the visit and felt that the experience was not overly negative. For Rashid, although he did not meet with CSIS, he was still able to function as he had previously in the community.

CSIS’ way of approaching individuals seems to have a correlation with how individuals react after being interviewed. The individuals who were sought out in private places, or contacted at school or at work, were amongst those who chose to become more active in the Muslim community. Contrastingly, individuals who were telephoned before the meeting felt that the experience was uncomfortable at most. These individuals experienced no, or very little, change in their religious involvement.

It is possible that if CSIS approached individuals in a more direct, open and inviting manner, Muslims would not feel the need to intensify their religious identities and degree of religious involvement. By adopting more open and direct methods, it might possible for CSIS to collect information and talk to individuals without making them feel alienated or victimized. Of course, more data is necessary to demonstrate this claim.

However, we should also be critical here of the claim that these individuals remain unchanged in their religious involvement after the CSIS visit. When initially contacted for
my research, all of the participants claimed that their religious involvement had not been affected by the CSIS visit. However, upon further reflection and more direct questions about involvement in mosques and Muslim Students’ Association I found that they had in fact been affected by the experience.

Tasneem did admit to decreasing her level of involvement in the Muslim Students’ Association after CSIS agents interviewed her but she blamed it on her studies and workload. While her workload may actually have increased, we cannot rule out the possibility that she may have subconsciously decreased her activity due to this visit. In fact, Tasneem stated that she became more aware of and cautious about the individuals who were involved in the Muslim Students’ Association. This suspicion and worry may have influenced her decision to decrease activities.

**Decreased Involvement**

Aisha, one of my few female participants, described being approached by CSIS agents in 2007. CSIS officials knocked on her door at home and asked to speak to her. They showed their identification card and said they were there for community outreach. When Aisha asked them what their purpose was they told her they were interested in her since she was “social” and involved in community events. They felt that she could be a good contact for them. After this introduction, they began to ask her about one of the wives of the suspected terrorists in the Toronto 18 case. Aisha became suspicious of the reason for their visit and told them that it was not a good time and asked them to leave.

Aisha’s parents became very worried after this encounter and they told her to cease her activity in the Muslim Students’ Association. Although Aisha did not feel that it
was necessary to leave the Muslim Students' Association altogether, she did decrease her involvement. She also became suspicious of some of her friends and became more careful in her associations. Aisha also felt that she had been targeted because she wore hijab, but she continued to wear it.

Like Tasneem, Aisha also did not feel comfortable telling the Muslim community about her CSIS visit. She felt that knowledge of the interview could make her isolated from the Muslims around her. Although she knew that many Muslims had been approached, she felt that people would judge her if they found out. For that reason, Aisha only told close friends and family in whom she felt she could confide. She also told a few individuals in the Muslim Students' Association so that she could get advice. Aisha felt that the experience was very intimidating and as such she was afraid to talk about it for sometime afterwards.

Farid described being approached in 2003 when CSIS agents knocked at his door. They asked him about a phone call that he had received from an individual of whom they were suspicious in Ottawa. Farid could not remember the phone call but he had played in a recent hockey tournament in Ottawa. He later recalled that he had received a phone call from one of the relatives of the "person of suspect." During their visit the CSIS agents showed Farid a number of photographs and asked him if he could identify any of the men. Farid described the men as looking "typically Muslim" but he did not recognize any of them.

After 9/11, Farid describes himself as paranoid because of his involvement in the Muslim community. He was certain that CSIS had chosen him because of his
involvement with the Muslim Students Association. Farid also felt that he was targeted because of the many observant Muslims that he knew. He became more suspicious of the people around him and was cautious during phone calls. He also believed that his emails were being monitored because of the lag time when he attempted to log into his account.

Farid felt that he was “guilty by association” with the Muslim Students Association and began to question the wisdom behind being involved in these groups. As a result, his involvement in these activities decreased and he questioned his associations with certain individuals.

Farid also felt that he was put on guard at events. He became constantly aware of the people and conversations around him. Farid believed that associating with certain individuals could be incriminating. Further, since he believe that he was targeted by CSIS based on a phone call that he could not recollect, he became more cautious of whom he was speaking with. He felt that if his name was connected to individuals who CSIS suspected then he could be made a suspect as well.

Farid did not tell many people about the interview. He confided in close friends and family. Although Farid did not mind if people found out about his experience he was still careful not to tell many individuals. He did not know how they would react to the news but he was not willing to find out either.

It is important to note that Khalid, discussed earlier in this chapter as increasing his religious activity after being approached by CSIS, also became cautious about certain mosques and individuals. He believed that being associated with particular mosques was a liability and he was careful not to have strong affiliations to certain places. When
Khalid was in a mosque he would not talk to individuals who he did not know. In particular, he would avoid discussing controversial issues. Khalid frequently gave Friday sermons at mosques and although he rarely discussed political subjects before CSIS approached him, he ensured that he avoided political subjects altogether after the encounter. He was worried that his words would be misconstrued or misinterpreted and that he would be painted as an extremist. So while Khalid’s involvement in religious activities increased after the CSIS interview, it increased carefully and with heightened suspicion.

Khalid chose not to tell the Muslim community about CSIS’ visit. He chose only to tell his family and legal counsel. However, from the few individuals whom he did tell, rumours began and the community quickly learned about the interview. When people found out, he felt they would avoid him and cease contact.

Similarly, after his interview, Amir, who also increased his religious activity, became suspicious of the people around him. In particular, he was worried about individuals who tried to engage him in political or social justice conversations. He would try to avoid such conversations and became aware of who he kept as friends. In part, this reaction was due to his fear of entrapment. Amir explained that, to his knowledge, in the developing cases of some of the Toronto 18 individuals there have been claims made that CSIS paid individuals to infiltrate groups and set up entrapment situations. Although Amir asserts that he would not engage in illegal activity, he does believe that individuals around him might lie if given the right price.
Amir also deactivated his Facebook page for fear of being linked as “friends with” certain individuals. He did not feel that Facebook was a secure website and felt that information was too readily available to anyone who wanted to access it. Amir also chose to speak in Arabic at times over the phone for fear of being misquoted at a later time. He felt that his phone conversations were being listened to and was unsure if his emails had been read.

Amir avoided telling individuals about his experience. However, Amir did tell some of his Muslim friends whom he felt he could trust or individuals whom he knew had been approached by CSIS in the past. He was blamed by some for agreeing to meet with CSIS and was criticised for talking to them. Although Amir did not feel that he was given a choice in his participation with CSIS agents, he tried to explain that he was trying to alleviate any suspicions that CSIS might have about him. Despite this fact, others still blamed him for accepting the invitation to meet. Amir did not tell many people because he was worried about how they would treat him afterwards. It is possible that after being criticized by his friends, Amir felt that he would be further criticized by individuals who did not know him personally.

Finally, it is also important to note in this context that Mohammed, who helps youth in the mosque as discussed earlier, was careful not to discuss political issues in the mosque. Whenever he would visit the mosque, he would limit his interaction with individuals whom he did not know. In particular, he would dissociate himself from individuals who tried to engage him in controversial or political issues. When he would see a gathering of people at the mosque he would be careful not to disclose his religious
views. At one mosque, Mohammed believed that one of the adherents was a CSIS informant. This particular individual would try to get Mohammed to admit to extremist views. In one case, the informant even tried to convince Mohammed to create a plot against CSIS. Mohammed did not agree and limited any contact with this individual in subsequent visits.

Mohammed explained that many people chose to avoid him and his family after CSIS' visit. Although he did not tell many people himself, rumours were spread and even some of his friends in the United States had heard about the visit. Mohammed had heard that the FBI had even investigated some of his friends in the United States and asked questions about Mohammed. Mohammed also felt that these visits impeded his ability to get married. Girls that Mohammed had been interested in getting to know for marriage refused to associate with him after they learned about CSIS' visit. Mohammed was also suspected by some members of the Muslim community to be working for CSIS. They believed that he had agreed to work for CSIS and was infiltrating the community.

Individuals who decreased their religious involvement after the CSIS visit felt that it was their association with certain mosques, the Muslim Students' Association, or individuals in their community that had led to CSIS' visit. For these reasons, they decreased their involvement with these organizations or they avoided individuals whom they did not know.

More importantly, these individuals felt disconnected from their religious communities because they did not feel that they "belonged" in the same way that they had prior to CSIS' involvement. In this sense, these individuals have lost a part of their
religious identity. As discussed in the previous chapter, religious groups contribute to the concept of self through group-based identity. Thus, these individuals who feel that they are no longer part of their local Muslim communities lose a critical aspect of their identity. Individuals who are part of a larger group identify in terms of “we” instead of “I.” More specifically, “when a group identity is engaged, the construal of self extends beyond the individual person to a more inclusive social unit. The boundaries between self and other group members are eclipsed by the greater salience of the boundaries between ingroup and outgroups” (Brewer 2001: 119).

By suspecting the Muslims around them the individuals who decreased their involvement in the Muslim community became isolated from the ingroup and were forced to adopt a more person-based identity. None of the interviewees were willing to dispel their religious identity -- they still identified as Muslim -- but they did feel a sense of exclusion when they began to suspect the people around them. They could not view the group as united and they did not believe that all of the group members were necessarily loyal to the collective group.

**After CSIS: Muslim Community**

It is important to note that interviews with CSIS may cause individuals from the Muslim community to feel isolated from that very community. All of the interviewees were worried about the reactions of the community and felt that they could not confide in members of the community. When community members did find out, they reacted negatively, just as the interviewees suspected. Muslims who are interviewed by CSIS feel isolation on three levels: First, they are suspicious of the Muslims around them and feel
that they cannot trust all members of the Muslim community. Second, they feel that they are judged by Muslim community members and are suspected of being extremists or working for CSIS. Third, they feel alienated from the larger Canadian community since a federal government agency seems to see them as suspect.

All of the research participants were either first or second generation Canadians. Being part of a minority group can, at times, be a difficult experience. These individuals then felt further isolated because of their unique experience with CSIS. They felt isolated from their shared Canadian identity because they believed that they were targeted based on their Muslim identity. This experience, however, heightened their sense of the importance of their religious identity. Ironically, they were also shunned from the Muslim community because of their experiences with CSIS.

Many Muslim Americans or Canadians have multiple sources of identity. For example, “in the Muslim student’s associations, students define themselves predominantly as Muslim; with their families, they are predominantly, say, Pakistani; and with their basketball friends, they are predominantly American. These dynamics again and again show that Muslim identity is not entirely to be understood as ‘either-or’ but, in most cases, as ‘both-and’” (Schmidt 2004: 6). In normal circumstances, these identities do not necessarily contradict each other. In certain instances each identity becomes more distinct and highlights the importance of religious, ethnic and national identities. When CSIS approaches individuals, many feel that these identities become isolated, distinct, and contradictory.
The specific reason for a CSIS visit does not seem to affect the negative reaction of the community or the fear of telling others. Although most of the individuals were interviewed seemingly because of their connections with other people, community members still avoided contact with them or reacted negatively.

In Amir’s case, for example, he was blamed by many in the Muslim community for speaking to CSIS. Others felt that he had incriminated himself by not seeking legal counsel or ignoring CSIS’ request to talk. However, Amir felt that by meeting CSIS he was clearing his name. He explained that he had nothing to hide and therefore he felt that he should not be worried about meeting with CSIS. After meeting with the CSIS agents, Amir did regret his choice but he was surprised that people reacted as negatively as they did.

Other individuals, like Mohammed and Khalid, who chose not to tell people of their encounter with CSIS, still suffered from the backlash when others found out. They were ostracized from their communities and had their names smeared, affecting their chances of getting married and their ability to maintain social relationships. They suspected by community members as either being extremists or as being collaborators with CSIS.

Perhaps the most important aspect of these individuals’ experiences is their need to remain part of their religious community. This indicates their strong reliance on the group and a need to maintain their group identity. Individuals feel that this group identity is an important part of their lives and one that they are not readily willing to lose. Rather than risk this loss, individuals may try to hide their interaction with CSIS.
Interestingly, we see a dual desire to remain part of the group. When discussing individuals who felt a loss of religious identity after they were interviewed by CSIS, we saw a shift away from the group that indicated a lack of trust in other group members. They did not believe that others were as loyal as they were. However, they also feared being removed from the group based on their own actions. While they do not feel that they have done anything wrong, they are worried that others will think they have.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter examined the three main reactions that occur after individuals are approached by CSIS: Individuals may become more religiously involved, less religiously involved or their level of religious involvement may remain unchanged. The change in level of involvement in Muslim associations by these individuals indicates that CSIS’ visits have lasting impacts.

Interviewees who became more religious sought to preserve their Islamic identities and become more involved in their communities. These individuals felt that this was a necessary reaction to tackle CSIS’ efforts to change their religious views and/or involvement. Further, they felt that CSIS was attempting to control their activity and as a result they sought to challenge CSIS’ expectations by becoming more involved.

Those who claimed to be unchanged after CSIS’ approach nonetheless displayed signs of change. They were unable to tell their friends or acquaintances of CSIS’ approach for fear of being ostracized, judged, or ridiculed. Further, they either decreased their activity in Muslims associations, although they did not attribute this to CSIS’ visit, or at minimum they became suspicious of other community members.
Individuals who became less involved in the Muslim community did so out of fear and suspicion. They worried about CSIS’ continued surveillance and so they chose to dissociate from the activities that they felt had jeopardized their reputations. This reaction was seen in particular with decreased levels of involvement in mosques and Muslim Students’ Associations. This pattern was also evident in interviewees’ reluctance to talk to individuals in their communities whom they did not know. They disengaged from controversial and political topics in mosques and suspected the individuals around them. By becoming disconnected from their communities, these individuals experienced a shift in identity. They no longer felt the same sense of safely belonging to the religious community. Their “group-based identity” was weakened and it was replaced with a stronger sense of a “person-based identity.”

This chapter also explored the social implications of being interviewed by CSIS. All of the interviewees felt that they could not tell others about their experience for fear of being shunned from the group. This reaction is critical because it points to the desire of individuals to remain part of the “group” and their fear of being excluded from their religious communities.
Chapter 4- CSIS and National Identity

Introduction

In this chapter I will explore the ways in which Canadians feel that CSIS has affected their sentiments of national citizenship. Although all of the individuals interviewed were Canadian citizens, with the exception of one, clear patterns of feelings of isolation from Canadian society emerge. These individuals are affected, like most Muslim Canadians, by Islamophobic acts from the greater Canadian community. However, for these particular individuals, they feel further alienated by the government through the actions of CSIS. All of the Muslims who were interviewed felt less Canadian because they had been specifically targeted by the government to be approached by CSIS.

More specifically, in this section, I will examine the reasons that individuals give for this lost sense of national identity. By exploring their perceptions of key issues such as post-9/11 government policies, government surveillance practices and civic participation, I will shed light on the sentiments of isolation that the interviewees have expressed.

Canadian Versus Other

In this section, I will discuss my interviewees’ sentiments towards the government after being interviewed by CSIS agents. In particular I will focus on the theme of “mistrust” that emerges. All of the interviewees believed that they had been given false reasons for their interviews and felt an overarching atmosphere of suspicion, mistrust, and dishonesty. In this section I examine the reasons that CSIS officers gave for approaching individuals, as described by my interviewees; the reasons that individuals believe are the
“true” reasons; and how this discrepancy makes these individuals feel about their place in Canadian society.

Although Mohammed was approached many times by CSIS officers he did not have a clear sense of their reasoning. At times, CSIS agents would tell him that they were there because they were interested in some of Mohammed’s acquaintances. However, their questions did not seem to reflect this interest. Rather, Mohammed believes that CSIS approached him because they were suspicious of him specifically. He said that their line of questioning was particularly aimed at his beliefs, actions, and associations. Further, since other individuals had been approached and asked about Mohammed specifically, he felt that the CSIS agents had been dishonest in the reasons that they gave him.

Mohammed feels that he was being pulled in two directions. On the one hand, he feels a strong sense of national identity because he was born and raised in Canada. However, he feels that he also became the “other” and his regular day-to-day religious activities were viewed as suspicious. He feels that Canada is indeed his country but that somehow he has become alienated from it.

Mohammed also feels that it is unfair that he pays tax dollars that are presumably used to pay CSIS employees and officers. He believes that they are unprofessional and target individuals without having any evidence of suspicious behaviour.

Rashid claimed that when CSIS agents called him he felt isolated and singled out because of his religious beliefs. He feels that non-Muslim Canadians do not experience the same sentiments of isolation because they are not as likely to be targeted by government agencies.
Aisha explained that after CSIS agents came to her home she began to doubt the government system. She could not help but wonder if they were simply trying to make Muslims “scared” of the Canadian government. She began to lose faith in the Canadian justice system and felt that CSIS was systematically singling out Muslims for interrogation. This practice, she believes, isolates Muslims from other citizens.

When the CSIS agents came to Aisha’s home they explained that they were conducting research on how to better serve the community. After Aisha allowed them to enter her home because of this seemingly innocent reason for a visit, she began to suspect that they had ulterior motives. She believed that they were there in fact to collect information on members of the community. Aisha felt that the false explanation the officers gave for their visit was responsible for her dubious attitude towards the government. She believed that if government officials could seemingly lie to citizens so easily then they could not be trusted.

Amir felt that CSIS’ practices were creating a division in society. He explained that he feels that the government was isolating Muslims from society by targeting them based on religious belief. He claims that as the Muslim community grows, the government will have to adjust its policies to accommodate for the increasing number of Muslim Canadians. He feels that there are particular religious communities in Canada that are privileged over others and he believes that Muslims are starting to resent this privilege.

Amir was told by the CSIS agents on the phone that they were interviewing individuals who had lived abroad and wanted to know about their experiences. However,
once the agents met with Amir, they asked questions about his involvement in students’ groups and knew many personal details about his past. Like Aisha, Amir believes that the CSIS agents had lied to him, and that they were actually interested in knowing about his activism.

Ali was told by the CSIS officers that their organization was interested in him because of an acquaintance of his. Although Ali did not know this individual well, he was told that they had seen the individual’s car parked outside of Ali’s house. Ali explained that he is friends with the individual’s brother and had invited him over for a barbeque.

Ali felt that the CSIS officers were dishonest in their reasoning. He believed that the questions were too general and unrelated to the person of interest. Instead, they seemed to know a lot about Ali and his personal life. Ali was not sure of the exact reason that CSIS had chosen him, but he was certain that the reasons they gave him were false.

After the CSIS agents approached Ali, he felt a strong sense of alienation. He believes that the government has double standards in its interactions with Muslims. He feels that Muslims are profiled and that the treatment they receive from government organizations makes them feel that they are not welcome as equal citizens. In particular, he thinks that certain Canadian values such as “freedom of speech” and “freedom of association” are jeopardized. In his opinion, it becomes a crime to know certain individuals or to become involved in foreign organizations.

Tasneem believes that the CSIS agents that approached her gave her accurate reasons for their visit. They told her that they had approached her because of her involvement in the Muslim Students’ Association and her connection with individuals
whom the agents thought she knew. Tasneem believes that there was no other reason for CSIS to visit her. The agents did not ask her personal questions and the questions remained very general. Although Tasneem did not know the individuals who were in question, she did feel that the CSIS agents were genuinely there because of these individuals.

Tasneem felt that the approach that CSIS used was common in the United States. However, she was surprised to find that these interrogations took place in Canada as well. She did not feel overly offended but she did feel that it was Muslims who were specifically targeted by the government.

Khalid could not address whether the CSIS’ agents had given him an accurate explanation for approaching him since they did not give a direct reason. When he was approached, and he asked them why they had chosen him, they told him that “he knew why.” They did not give him a direct reason and refused to do so in subsequent encounters. To this day, Khalid is unsure as to why they approached him. Khalid feels particularly offended by CSIS’ approach because he was not given a reason for the interview. He feels that he was targeted simply because he was Muslim and not for any particular illegal activity. Although Khalid was born and raised in Canada, he feels clear isolation from Canadian society because of this visit. He feels that CSIS is “head hunting” Muslim individuals and has already labelled these Muslims as “guilty” without evidence.

CSIS and the Canadian Government

Terrorist activity plagued the global world prior to September 11: “for instance, between 1981 and 2000, the total number of terrorist attacks globally was 9,179 (an
average of 459 attacks a year...Regionally, during 1995-2000, the average number of terrorist attacks per year was 122 in Latin America, 101 in Western Europe, about 45 in Asia, and only 15 in North America” (Centre of Data Analysis 2001, found in Haque 2002:171). Antiterrorist laws, acts and policies were created in response to this terrorist activity in hopes of extinguishing future terrorist acts (Haque 2002). However, when September 11 occurred, these legal provisions were not considered to be sufficient and a “war on terrorism” was launched by President Bush and supported by a range of nations in the hope of finding the group accountable for the attack (Haque 2002). Antiterrorist acts were re-evaluated,

at the international level, [by] the United Nations [who] passed Security Council Resolution 1373 (September 28,2001) immediately, calling on all states to prevent and suppress the financing of all terrorist acts, criminalize the provision or collection of funds for terrorists, freeze funds and assets of individuals involved in terrorism, and so on (UNSC 2001, quoted in Haque 2002:172).

Canada was not excluded from this international call to prevent terrorism and a new “Anti-Terrorism Act” was passed in 2001, “which prescribes measures to define and designate terrorist groups and activities, prosecute and punish terrorists, facilitate the use of electronic surveillance and allow the arrest and detention of suspected terrorists” (Canada, Department of Justice 2001 quoted in Haque 2002: 172).

According to the CSIS website, “CSIS is at the forefront of Canada’s national security establishment and as such, its programs are proactive and pre-emptive. The Service’s role is to investigate threats, analyze information and produce intelligence; it then reports to and advises, the Government of Canada, so as to protect the country and its citizens” (www.csis-srcs.gc.ca). Therefore, CSIS is self-described as a protector of
Canada and its citizens through the gathering of intelligence and the reporting of suspicious activity.

It is the term “intelligence” that is most complicated in the described role of CSIS. “Our starting point [in defining intelligence] should be to recognize that intelligence is a means to an end. This end is the security, and even prosperity, of the entity that provides for the collection and subsequent analysis of intelligence... security is relative and therefore the purpose of intelligence is to bestow a relative security advantage” (Gill and Phythian 2006: 1). The link between intelligence and security is crucial yet ambiguous. Intelligence is thus defined in relation to security as,

...the umbrella term referring to the range of activities- from planning information collection to analysis and dissemination- conducted in secret, and aimed at maintaining or enhancing relative security by providing forewarning of threats or potential threats in a manner that allows for the timely implementation or a preventive policy or strategy, including, where deemed desirable, covert activities (Gill and Phythain 2006:7).

This intelligence is collected by CSIS “from many sources, including: members of the public, foreign governments, human sources, technical interception of telecommunications, open sources including newspapers, periodicals, academic journals, foreign and domestic broadcast, official documents, and other published material” (www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/bts/ntlgnc-eng.asp). The CSIS website does not describe how individuals are chosen to become part of the “members of the public” that are investigated.

Interestingly, combating terrorism is the top priority of CSIS although Canada is not generally known for terrorist activities. CSIS claims that, “with the exception of the
United States, there are more terrorist groups active in Canada today than in any other country in the world" (www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/prrts/trrrsm/index-eng.asp). Further, “...CSIS dedicates most of its counter-terrorism resources to religious extremists, which the Government of Canada considers to be the most serious threat to the safety of Canadians” (www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/prrts/trrrsm/index-eng.asp). Therefore it is evident that CSIS and the Canadian government are truly concerned about the invasion and facilitation of terrorist activity by individuals who currently reside in Canada. This shows that the “war on terrorism,” which is often thought of on an international level occurring in countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq which are believed to be conducting terrorist activity, is in fact equally relevant in the United States and Canada.

This brings us to further questions for understanding national security: What defines a terrorist? How do we define religious extremism? How is the government ensuring that terrorists are identified?

Part of the problem with identifying terrorists, according to CSIS, is their ability to conceal their activity and integrate into society. Further, these individuals often use legitimate democratic tools in order to push forth their agenda. It would be interesting to know, on what basis the claim is made that Canada harbours more terrorist groups than any other country except the US. From the perspective of the lay person, it would seem that we are simply left to question every computer scientist, biochemist and engineer who is religious and opposes government policy, even if that individual is using the tools and means permitted to citizens as legitimate forms of protest. Ultimately, the definition of
“terrorist” is ambiguous enough to allow the majority of Muslims to feel that they live in a state of suspicion.

A Post 9/11 Government

9/11 was a turning point for North American security agencies. Although at the time of writing it has been nine years since the 9/11 attacks, the effects are ever-present in the security policies that have been created. National security came to the forefront of government agendas. Murphy (2007: 450) explains, “The unprecedented terrorist threat to domestic or ‘homeland’ security gave national governments and police a powerful new argument to restate the centrality and importance of the role in the provision of security.” Therefore, 9/11 was the mobilizing agent which pushed forward the importance of governance and policing. In this section, I will explore how the Canadian government has changed and adapted its local and foreign policies in order to increase national security. In particular, it is pertinent to explore the work of Christopher Murphy which examines the role of policing and governance in Canada post 9/11.

I will begin by discussing the term “securitization.” Scholars define this term as, “...a politically and socially constructed process of governments and the media presenting threats to national or state security in a highly dramatized and persuasive form of public discourse” (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, quoted in Murphy 2007: 451). This process helps to legitimize the actions of government organizations and police forces. By utilizing the media to sensationalize security threats, it becomes more likely for governments to gain support from citizens. In particular, “security threats to nation or state are always portrayed as serious, pervasive and existential, which require special,
extraordinary, or exceptional societal and governmental responses” (Murphy 2007: 451).

Threats become immediate, localized and require a sort of “super government” to obliterate the pending doom.

The term “securitization” is relevant to this work since it helps to describe the significance of government organizations like CSIS and it works to contextualize my interviewees’ feelings and impressions. By making security threats visible on homeland soil, CSIS and other government organizations are able to effectively persuade the general public of the necessity of their existence. After 9/11,

...a highly politicized ‘insecurity discourse’ emerged in Canada designed to educate and persuade Canadians to support a more aggressive national security agenda. Much of the initial public discourse was aimed at communicating the fragility and vulnerability of the Canadian state to both external and internal security threats. A media amplified discourse questioned various traditional governance myths, such as Canada, the peaceable kingdom; the country of peace, order and good government; land of multicultural harmony and cultural diversity; and international peacekeeper. A new group of instant security experts filled the airwaves, TV screens, and newspapers, warning Canadians about their smug complacency, naive liberalism and false sense of security (Murphy 2007: 451-452).

The use of media is critical here in explaining the ability for government agendas to be pushed forth to a large layperson audience. Values that were once seen as honourable and unique to Canada, such as Canada being a peaceable nation, were scrutinized.

Interestingly, one of my interviewees, Ali, pointed to this very fact. He stated that he believes that Canadian values have been compromised for the sake of organizations like CSIS. He explained that the government had the power to undermine the values that Canadians had once held in high regard.
Although Canada is not well known for harbouring terrorist activity, this threat became a central message for Canadians, “They [security officials] warned that Canada had become a hiding place for sleeper terrorist cells,... a conduit for terrorist money-laundering and fundraising, the creator of a dangerously liberal immigration system, and the keeper of an under-policed border which posed a security threat to its powerful neighbour, the United States” (Murphy 2007: 452). Canada, it seems, is the country of choice in which terrorists can hide and provide support foreign terrorist organizations. CSIS’ claim that Canada harbours the highest number of terrorists, with the exception of the US, helps to reinforce fears of Canada’s threatened state. Thus, Canadians are seen as potentially posing a threat for the recurrence of another event like 9/11.

The Canadian government has taken new measures to combat the threat of terrorism for many reasons. As Murphy indicates, Canada was seen as posing a threat to the United States. In response, after 9/11 “Canada quickly passed its antiterrorist legislation not only to arrest and prosecute terrorists at home, but also to allay American fears about their northern border being an unguarded, porous barrier to terrorists” (Keeble 2005: 360). It is evident that Canada is not only interested in securing its borders for homeland security but also in strengthening ties with the United States. Many scholars credit this need to strengthen border security to Ahmed Ressam (Pither 2008; Keeble 2005). Ressam was “an asylee from Algeria living in Montreal who was captured by US officials with a truck-load of explosive material as he crossed from British Columbia to Washington in December 1999, allegedly to blow up the Los Angeles airport” (Keeble 2005: 360). This event helped create an overall atmosphere of distrust between the two.
countries and Canada became a possible suspect in aiding the 9/11 attacks. In fact, “on September 12, unnamed US officials told ABC News that at least some of the hijackers had come from Canada” (Pither 2008: 35). Like Ressam, the hijackers from the 9/11 attack were seen as being linked to Canada’s lax immigration policies and border control. More importantly, “...the possibility of a Canadian connection became a convenient diversion from the stunning security and intelligence failure that 9/11 represented for the United States” (Pither 2008: 34). By placing the blame on Canadian border control, the United States was able to divert some of the attention away from its own failure by pointing to the failures of Canada. Fortunately for Canada, “Within a week of the attacks, this information turned out to be false – none of the hijackers entered the United States from Canada – but the myth persisted” (Pither 2008: 35).

Canada, afraid of hurting its relationship with the United States, was quick to show support for “a U.S. decision to launch attacks in retaliation for 9/11” (Pither 2008: 35). Canada sent troops to Afghanistan and “this was a big step: Canadians weren’t there as peacekeepers, a role we’ve grown used to” (2008: 35). This changed the face of Canada’s involvement in foreign lands. Canada, once known as a peacekeeping country, was actively involved in sending out combating forces (2008: 36). This shift was criticized by some who “argued that placing Canadian troops under de facto American control harmed not only Canada’s sovereignty but also its reputation for peace-keeping and respect for international law” (Roach 2003: 7).

Consequences of 9/11 were also evident in Canadian laws and policies. Following 9/11, “...it [Canada] introduced a massive and hastily drafted Anti-Terrorism
Act (Bill C-36). The bill included new legal concepts such as investigative hearings, preventative arrests, broad motive-based crimes for participation in or support of terrorist groups at home or abroad” (Roach 2003: 8). The act was especially controversial because it “contained a definition of terrorism, one that included an unprecedented reference to political, ideological, and religious motives” (Pither 2008: 38). Interestingly, this inclusion of motive is new to the legal system (Roach 2003: 27). It provides members of the legal and judicial system the grounds to pass judgment based on religious and political motivation rather than the execution of illegal activity. Roach (2003: 27) explains that, “The police now have a legal duty to collect evidence about the political and religious beliefs of those they suspect will commit crimes related to terrorism...The police are not experts in politics and religion...The police may target those whose politics and religion they find to be extreme, or those who are associated with terrorism by means of widely held stereotypes.” This is problematic since police are not trained to understand religious beliefs or the variations of belief among minority religious groups. Further, this examination of religious beliefs can become highly subjective to the interpretations of police and government officials.

Canada has also increased sharing security information with the United States. However, this shared border information and increased border security has in many instances proved detrimental to Canadians. For example, the case of Maher Arar, an innocent Canadian Syrian man who was deported to Syria by US officials where he was jailed and tortured based on faulty information provided by Canadian officials, indicates the dangerous nature of shared border information. Keeble (2005: 361) argues,
“...increased border cooperation generates greater pressure to harmonize policies between the two countries, thus undermining Canada’s ability to decide issues on its own.”

This argument is illustrated by the examples of the individuals who were interviewed for this thesis. Although it is impossible to know with certainty, it is possible that the Canadian government is using CSIS’ investigations to establish Canada’s credibility to the US as a partner in the war on terrorism. If terrorists are indeed hiding in Canada, as US discourse suggests, it would be logical for CSIS to try to infiltrate these organizations and individuals.

Unfortunately for many mainstream Muslims, the terrorist threat that is seen as most imminent comes from Islamic fundamentalism. Roach (2003: 27) explains, “Although no manifesto explaining the rationale for the events of September 11 has been issued and there is evidence that the terrorists did not live their lives in America as devout Muslims, it is widely believed that their suicide mission was motivated by what is commonly called Islamic fanaticism.” Consequently, the broad connection between Islam and terrorism is made by the general population. As already discussed, all of the interviewees felt that it was their religious identity that had brought about CSIS’ suspicion.

Interviewees were specifically asked by CSIS agents about their religious convictions. They were asked whether they prayed regularly, fasted for Ramadan and followed the other basic tenets of the Islamic faith. Although these practices are common to most self-identifying Muslims, it is logical, from the point of view of my interviewees’,
to understand CSIS agents as having particular interest in the practices of these individuals because of their beliefs.

Civic Participation:

All of the interviewees, with the exception of one male, were Canadian citizens. However, all of the individuals felt that they had been isolated from the greater Canadian community by the government. They felt “less Canadian” because of their experience with CSIS. In order to understand the impact that this experience can have, an understanding of the definition of being “Canadian” must be expressed.

It is critical to first analyze what it means to be a “citizen.” It is accepted that “citizenship defines bounded populations, with a specific set of rights and duties, excluding ‘others’ on the grounds of nationality” (Soysal 1994: 2). In essence, citizenship is meant to ensure the rights and duties of individuals within a given territory. However, citizenship also alienates those who are not part of the citizenry by excluding them from the same rights and duties. Abowitz and Harnish (2006: 653) attempt to define citizenship more comprehensively:

Citizenship in a democracy (a) gives membership status to individuals within a political unit; (b) confers an identity on individuals; (c) constitutes a set of values, usually interpreted as a commitment to the common good of a particular political unit; (d) involves practicing a degree of participation in the process of political life; and (e) implies gaining and using knowledge and understanding of laws, documents, structures, and processes of governance (Enslin 2000). Citizenship, at least theoretically, confers membership, identity, values, and rights of participation and assumes a body of common political knowledge.
Therefore, it is clear that citizenship cannot only be understood as the presence of certain rights and freedoms but it must include a component of active citizenry. Citizenship is defined largely in relation to active participation in the political sphere of government.

Citizenship has, throughout history, always been related to equality. T.H. Marshall (1998: 104) explains, "...it is true that citizenship, even in its earliest forms, was a principal of equality, and that during this period it was a developing institution. Starting at the point where all men were free and, in theory, capable of enjoying rights, it grew by enriching the body of rights which they were capable of enjoying." In essence, citizenship was meant to enhance and strengthen the already established right of freedom.

In order to understand what active citizenship means, Waldron (2009: 115) explains that we must also understand civic responsibility "It means (1) participating in a way that does not improperly diminish the prospects for peace or the prospect that inhabitants will in fact come to terms and set up the necessary frameworks. And it means (2) participating in a way that pays proper attention to the interests, wishes, and opinions of all the inhabitants..." Therefore, to be an active citizen means that one becomes a responsible citizen. Further, citizenship is an act which takes into account the wellbeing and welfare of the community at large.

Citizenship can also indicate identity. Heater (2004: 1) explains, "Citizenship is a form of socio-political identity. But it is only one of several...sometimes it has lived in harmony with other forms, sometimes in competition; sometimes it has been the dominant form of identity, sometimes it has been submerged by others; sometimes it has been distinct from other kinds, sometimes subsumed into one another." Although
citizenship is only one form of identity, it seems to have many dynamics. Perhaps most pertinent to this study, citizenship is seen vis-a-vis other forms of identities. In particular, national identity and citizenship can be understood in relation to one another. Although we can identify these two types of identities as distinct, there is a certain commonality between the two.

Heater (2004: 2) explains that “when individuals identify with the nation they are recognizing their status as members of a cultural group (however defined). The feeling associated with this form of identity is love of the nation and a consciousness of its traditions. Therefore, knowledge of what has made and still makes the nation ‘great’ is a required kind of competence.” In short, national identity describes a sense of belonging and a shared understanding of the state’s values. Individuals in Canada would identify as Canadian and would share the same values that Canada holds in high esteem.

On the other hand, citizenship is “the relationship of the individual not to another individual... or a group (as with nationhood), but essentially to the idea of the state. The civic identity is enshrined in the rights conveyed by the state and the duties performed by the individual citizens, who are all autonomous persons, equal in status” (Heater 2004: 2). Citizenship is not understood in the context of personal relationships between citizens, but rather, it is focused on the state as an entity which allows a citizen to have a relationship with the state. This relationship is founded on the concept that individuals are free to engage with the state and that they see themselves as equal to other citizens.

Muslims who have been approached by CSIS agents express a distinct sense of isolation and a destabilized sense of national belonging from the Canadian community
and the state. Those interviewed for this study felt that their rights of freedom of speech and freedom of association were compromised. For example, Ali had explained that although he commonly identified himself as Canadian, he felt that the incident involving CSIS had become an impediment in his ability to identify with the Canadians around him.

Individuals interviewed for this study also feel isolated from the notion of citizenship. If citizenship is understood to mean political inclusion and the ability to engage in political activity with a particular emphasis on equality, then individuals who do not feel that they are equal citizens become excluded from the true sense of Canadian citizenship. We often think of citizenship in terms of nationality, but it goes beyond an identification of being “Canadian.” Rather, it is being an “active Canadian”. This concept implies that individuals should have the ability, and the means to become involved in state politics.

How individuals choose to identify themselves and to what degree they feel included plays a critical role in the development of society at large. “It is deadly serious politics – identity politics – and it is played out for high stakes and with serious ramifications not only for who ends up with what, but also for the terms on which the basic social settlement is framed” (Waldron 2009: 158). Individuals become classified within society based on their identities. If individuals feel a weakened sense of citizenship or national belonging because of their perceived exclusion from basic rights and freedoms, then the groundwork is created for an unstable political atmosphere.

In particular, “A criminal code that denounces certain religious or political motives as extreme and criminal...runs the risk of alienating our diverse and multicultural
citizenry” (Roach 2003: 28). As discussed earlier, the post 9/11 Canadian government has put in place certain legal actions which allow for religious motives to be used as evidence against individuals in criminal court (Roach 2003). This can discourage individuals from active citizen participation because of fear about expressing their religious and political views.

Fear or distrust of government officials makes Muslims who have been interviewed by CSIS feel part of a distinct, marginalized group. Williams (2009: 124) explains,

> When policies are formulated without the active participation of members of such groups [minority or disadvantaged], they are likely to biased or incomplete in various way. Where relations of social and political inequality have long been structured along the lines of group identity, there is an inadequate foundation of trust between citizens who belong to marginalized groups and representatives who belong to privileged groups. Without this trust, the flow of communication which is a precondition of effective representation is unlikely to exist.

Misrepresentation is often a problem in diverse democracies. Although Muslims, and other minority constituents, can become Canadian citizens, their needs are not always met. Scholars who write on this subject claim that “while difference-blind institutions purport to be neutral amongst different ethnocultural groups, they are in fact implicitly tilted towards the needs, interests, and identities of the majority group” (Kymlicka and Norman 2000: 4). Unfortunately, this bias indicates that members of these minority groups are represented by blanket, seemingly neutral policies.

However, in recent history, we have seen a shift that allows for diverse policies to exist in order to represent minority groups. Kymlicka and Norman (2004: 4) explain,
...we are claiming that defenders of minority rights have successfully redefined the terms of public debate in two ways: (a) few thoughtful people continue to think that justice can simply be defined in terms of difference-blind rules or institutions. Instead, it is now widely recognized that difference-blind rules and institutions can cause disadvantages to certain groups. Whether justice requires common rules for all, or differential rules for diverse groups, is something to be assessed case-by-case in particular contexts, not assumed in advance; (b) as a result, the burden of proof has shifted. The burden of proof no longer falls solely of defenders of multiculturalism to show that their proposed reforms would not create injustices; it is now shared with defenders of difference-blind institutions, who must try to show that the status quo does not create injustices for minority groups and their members.

Since democratic governments allow minority groups to have specific policies that relate to their needs, proper representation has, in some instances, been granted. Further, policy makers that advocate for blanket policies are now forced to defend their choice of a difference-blind approach.

However, to simply change policies and to allow for diversity in the policy-making process is not enough. Studies have shown that “the health and stability of a modern democracy depends, not only on the justice of its institutions, but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens: e.g. their sense of identity, and how they view potentially competing forms of national, regional, ethnic or religious identities” (Kymlicka and Norman 2000: 6). While diverse policies are a step in the right direction towards civic inclusion, there is a need for a sense of civic belonging as well.

The low representation of minority groups in government is not a unique feature to Canadian Muslims. Rather, this represents a larger problem for all racial minorities. Studies show that “visible minorities are little better than one-third of the way to being proportionally represented within the local governments of these three cities [Vancouver,
Toronto and Montreal]" (Bird 2004: 183). Thus, although the Canadian government has taken some measurements to attempt civic inclusion of minority groups, there remains a large gap in proper representation at the governmental level.

Although the importance of civic inclusion may not be immediately evident, the importance of a healthy and viable state is the objective of every government. Also, “multi-ethnic countries are as much in need of the virtues, practices and institutions of democratic citizenship of mono-ethnic countries. If anything, multi-ethnic countries are more in need of such things ...” (Waldron 2000: 11).

Tariq Ramadan’s discussion on citizenship is relevant to our discussion and examines both the religious and national identities of Muslims in Canada. For Ramadan (2007: 456), citizenship is defined to relation to three key elements:

First, it assumes recognition of a constitution or of legislation that refers to the place where one lives. Obviously one cannot be a citizen if one does not agree with the constitution and structures of one’s society. The second element is that one should have a relationship of loyalty in conscience and in ethics to this constitution. Having loyalty in conscience means that having accepted the constitution as a context, one acts within this context in loyalty and in good conscience, aware of the framework; one’s acceptance must not be untrue...This does not imply a blind loyalty: the only true and ethical loyalty is a critical loyalty, through which one is able to express critical thoughts when one disagrees with a government decision for instance. We have seen this recently in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as in domestic issues related to security and immigration policies. The third element consists of participation: considering oneself an active member of a community linked by constitution.

These three elements are crucial to our discourse on citizenship. In order for one to feel to be a Canadian citizen, he or she must acknowledge the constitution, have loyalty to the country and become an active citizen. However, these fundamentals of citizenship
are problematic in cases where individuals do not feel that they have the right to become active citizens.

Ramadan explains that one must have critical loyalty to his or her country and express their disagreements with government decisions. Nonetheless, some of the individuals that I interviewed felt that it was this disagreement with government decisions that had instigated CSIS' visit. If this is true, then some individuals are discouraged from becoming true, loyal, and active citizens. Many of the individuals who I interviewed described their experience as a breach of the Charter of Rights. This indicates that these individuals are familiar with the Canadian constitution and agree with the fundamental freedoms outlined. One of my interviewees, Ali, claimed that one of the advantages to being Canadian was having the freedom to express opposition to government decisions, a right that is not available in all countries. However, he felt that this right had been threatened when he was visited by CSIS officials. Like some of the others interviewed for this study, Ali felt that he was being intimidated by government officials from active participation which includes political opposition.

Ramadan (2007: 458) goes on to discuss what it means to be both Muslim and Canadian:

Each of the points I have raised addresses the need for responsible citizenship, and this is the great challenge for all Muslim associations in the West. There are two options. The first is that Muslims understand that, in accordance with their very identity as Muslims, they must stress citizen action; they must understand that in the West being a Muslim means seeing to it that civic education forms part of Islamic education and training, that our faith adds to our social responsibility – in
which case we have understood what a true Islamic training is. The second is that we carry out a schizophrenic type of training; that is, a training completely disconnected from its context, and then we cut off our identity. The word, then, will be ‘act’ and not ‘participate,’ because it will be ‘educate’ but not ‘transmit,’ because it will ‘understand the text’ but understand nothing in context.

Ramadan explains two approaches that can, and have in the past, been adopted by Muslims in Western states. Muslims either choose to integrate their Canadian identity and civic action into their Islamic identity or they choose to disengage the two identities from one another. In the second instance, Muslims are never really “Muslim” and “Canadian” in the same instance. Rather, they view the two identities as distinct and unrelated from one another.

Civic participation has in this section been described as a critical element of citizenship. Scholars agree that active citizenship is important within democratic nations. The interviewees in this study felt that CSIS’ approach created a division between Muslim Canadians and other Canadians. Consequently, the Muslims in this study felt that they could not actively participate in a government that they felt had targeted Muslims.

**Government Surveillance**

When CSIS agents approach individuals, it can be seen as a form of government surveillance. Defining surveillance is difficult since it incorporates a broad spectrum of actions. However, “surveillance, at its broadest, means ‘to watch over’. Sociologically, it makes sense to think in terms of paying very close attention to personal details – often in the form of digital data – for the purpose of influencing, managing, or controlling those under scrutiny” (Lyon 2003: 15). Therefore, surveillance holds a two-fold purpose. While
the first purpose, watching over people, seems evident, it is the second purpose that incorporates the true essence of surveillance; that is, to “influence”, “manage” or “control” individuals. Surveillance is not a static action which simply observes, but rather it has a purpose which is meant to evoke some sort of reaction from those scrutinized.

Gary Kinsman et al. (2000: 2) explain that surveillance is a tactic used by the Canadian government to examine anyone whose views seem to differ from the current government. He explains:

Would anyone believe that Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) security operatives, the Canadian version of a secret police, spied upon tea and Tupperware parties? During the 1950s and 1960s they did. They also monitored high-school students, gays and lesbians, trade unionists, and left-wing political groups, including Communists, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), and the New Democratic Party (NDP), as well as feminists and consumer housewives’ associations. They watched public servants, members of the military, university students and professors, peace activists, immigrants, Canada Council grant recipients, Learned Societies meetings, recipients of youth funding initiatives, black community activists, First Nations people and Native Studies programs, plus, of course Quebec sovereignists.

It would seem from this list that everyone was under surveillance. Anyone who was viewed as having a remotely different opinion from the government, or even an association with people from these categories was seemingly under surveillance. Even though we now know that most of these groups are harmless (in fact the NDP even became a major political party in Canada), there was a time where these groups were viewed as potential threats to the government.

9/11 played a critical role in the direction of surveillance and the negative consequences that have emerged. Further, “what 9/11 did was to produce socially
negative consequences that hitherto were the stuff of repressive regimes and dystopian novels or movies. The suspension of normal conditions is justified with the ‘war on terrorism’” (Lyon 2003: 15). Democratic states, such as America and Canada have in some respects, become similar to the ever-watchful governments that are sinisterly portrayed in fictional tales.

Although surveillance can be a positive security measure, it also holds certain dangers of prejudice and unfair treatment. Further,

In some contexts, surveillance may ensure that certain groups or individuals are not discriminated against. Think, for example of the use of video cameras in police interrogation rooms, which may foster, not impede, fair treatment of suspects. But in other contexts, intensified surveillance may have socially negative effects which mean that proscription takes precedence over protection, social control over mutual care” (Lyon 2003: 17).

In the case of CSIS agents targeting Muslim individuals, surveillance does not protect these individuals. Rather, it seems to have the socially negative effects that Lyon discusses. Most of the participants that I interviewed admitted that the experience had a negative impact on their feelings towards inclusion and citizenship. CSIS’ efforts to ensure homeland security made a group of Muslim individuals feel marginalized to a realm of exclusion and disenfranchisement.

Many of the individuals that were approached by CSIS felt that they were compelled to speak to the agents to relieve suspicion. They believed that if they did not agree to speak to the agents, they would become suspects. In fact, when Khalid asked the agents to have his father or a lawyer present, he was asked, “If you have nothing to hide,
then why would you need someone else present?” He felt that he was being intimated into speaking with the agents or he would be seen as “hiding” information. Similarly, Amir agreed to meet with CSIS agents because he knew that he had nothing to hide. He felt that meeting with the agents would not put him in jeopardy since he was not involved in any illegal activity.

This fear tactic to gain cooperation is not unique to CSIS agents. A recent news article in the UK reports that,

Five Muslim community workers have accused MI5 [UK’s secret service agency] of waging a campaign of blackmail and harassment in an attempt to recruit them as informants. The men claim they were given a choice of working for the Security Service or face detention and harassment in the UK and overseas (Verkaik 2009).

These men had come together to protest the unfair treatment that they had received from MI5. Their motivation to participate with MI5 agents came from the fear of further harassment. One of the 5 men stated that an MI5 agent had told him, “If you don’t want anything to happen to your family, you will co-operate” (Verkaik 2009).

Although the individuals in this study did not have their families threatened, they did feel pressure to cooperate or risk becoming suspected terrorists. However, even after meeting with CSIS agents, these individuals did not feel relieved. They did not believe that they had alleviated CSIS’ suspicion. In fact, they were criticized by peers for even agreeing to have the meeting. Lyon (2003: 35) explains,

This is why the common promotional refrain, ‘if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear’ is vacuous. Categorical suspicion has consequences for
anyone, ‘innocent’ or ‘guilty,’ caught in its gaze, a fact that has poignant implications for the new anti-terror measures enacted after September 11. It is already clear in several countries that Arab and Muslim minorities are disproportionately and unfairly targeted by these measures.

The phrase “if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear” was a common phrase that CSIS used in approaching the individuals in this study. Some individuals, like Amir, felt that if he did not agree to meet with CSIS, he would be further scrutinized.

When individuals were approached by CSIS agents at home they felt that their personal space had become invaded. One often thinks of home as a safe space that is free of danger and discomfort. However, when CSIS came to individuals’ homes, sentiments of fear and invasion followed. For example, initially Aisha felt that CSIS had come to her home as part of a broad program to interview Muslims to see how the agency could better serve the community. However, after the agents asked her many questions, her suspicions began to rise and she felt that there were other reasons for the visit. The fact that CSIS had seemingly singled her out, collected her personal information and approached her at home, made her feel that there was no real place where she could enjoy personal freedom.

At the “CSIS- Know Your Rights” events, one of the speakers spoke at length of the danger of letting CSIS into one’s home. He had explained that CSIS agents could collect information based on the appearance of your home. This information could include books on the shelves or pictures hanging on the walls. In this type of home visit, it seems that individuals are not the only ones who are being “interviewed” by CSIS. Rather, the entire home is inspected, scrutinized and can be used as evidence of a person’s religiosity.
In contrast, individuals who were contacted beforehand on the phone felt less invaded. Although they recognized that CSIS had potentially tapped their phone lines, they were more willing to allow for a meeting and their sentiments afterwards tended to be more positive. Tasneem felt that her encounter was pleasant and appreciated that she had been able to set the meeting time herself. Although CSIS agents came to her home for the interview, she was not suspicious of their motives and felt that it mirrored a social call. The CSIS agents did not seem to know overly much about her personal history and their questions were quite general.

However, not all individuals who were contacted before their encounter felt that it was a positive encounter. Although Amir received a phone call requesting a time to meet, his experience left negative feelings towards CSIS and its practices. Amir agreed to meet with CSIS agents because they had told him they wanted to know about individuals’ experiences living abroad. However, when the questions quickly turned to his personal status and his immigration, Amir felt that he had been tricked. He realized that CSIS agents were not there for the reasons that they initially claimed. Amir’s experience was also negative because CSIS seemed to know too much information. For example, they knew that his cell phone had recently been reactivated and they knew of his involvement in student Muslim groups.

When CSIS gives individuals the opportunity to schedule a meeting, it seems to have a less negative impact than when agents knock on the front door of a person’s home. One of the reasons for this is that individuals who are called beforehand feel a certain level of autonomy in their situation. They have the chance to refuse to meet with CSIS or
to schedule a time that suits their personal schedules. In Amir's encounter, he admitted that he met with CSIS agents since he had nothing to hide. However, he was still given the opportunity to refuse a meeting, or to contact a lawyer to be present at the meeting.

Perhaps the most invasive method that CSIS agents use in these meetings is when they decide to meet individuals unannounced outside of the home. Both Khalid and Mohammed were subject to this method and their experiences had the most negative impacts. When Khalid was approached outside of his driving school, he knew instantly that CSIS had been following his every move. He knew that agents must have been listening to his phone calls and following him personally. Khalid felt that he was not safe anywhere. If CSIS knew his constant whereabouts, then his freedom to live in a suspicion-free state was jeopardized.

Khalid's suspicion of CSIS surveillance is present in one incident he recalled. According to Khalid, he went to leave his house in the early morning only to find that his car had been thoroughly 'searched', with papers, CDs and audio tapes in disarray. Although there was money in the car, which had been rummaged through, nothing was missing from his vehicle. Khalid believes that CSIS agents were responsible for this incident. When questioned as to why the agents did not attempt to re-arrange the items in the vehicle, Khalid retorted "It was them sending me a message – that they could easily have access to my home or car." Later on, Khalid would find that his experience was shared with other individuals who had run-ins with CSIS. Although Khalid's concerns may be valid, there was no evidence to prove that CSIS was in fact responsible for this
occurrence. However, Khalid’s reaction to this incident speaks to the overwhelming feeling of suspicion and paranoia that he experienced after being approached by CSIS.

Mohammed also felt that he was under constant surveillance. Mohammed was approached outside of his workplace. This indicated that CSIS not only knew where he was working, but that they also knew his work schedule. This meant that Mohammed could not even go to work without being watched. These encounters had Mohammed in a constant state of suspicion. He wondered to what degree CSIS had affected his personal life.

This constant worry that one is being watched leaves individuals feeling isolated, alienated and fearful that their actions might be misconstrued. In reality, “after 9/11, not only is everyone a potential suspect, everyone is also a potential spy” (Lyon 2003: 56). David Lyon (2003: 56) describes an incident in Florida where three men were arrested by police after a woman believed she had heard the men discussing a terrorist plot in a diner. The men turned out to be medical students on their way to an internship at a hospital (Lyon 2003: 56). Lyon (2003: 56) explains that,

The ironies of this story multiply, however. For one thing, it seemed that the conversation details were fabricated...Within a fear culture, no doubt merely seeing ‘Middle Eastern’ men in a Florida diner could insinuate ideas about potential plots. But things got worse. The hospital to which they were heading, Larkin Community Hospital, Miami, then refused to let them start the internships for which they made the journey down Alligator Alley in the first place. As if it were not bad enough to be detained for almost a day, the three were then denied a vital part of their career training, despite the fact that their records were entirely clean.
These men’s careers were negatively impacted simply because someone felt that they might be terrorists. Although the woman had no evidence or any substance to her claim, the men were arrested, interrogated and subsequently had their training jeopardized. This story suggests that it is not CSIS agents alone who are suspicious of Muslims or “Middle Eastern” citizens. The anti-terrorist atmosphere has created a need for everyone to become a spy and false claims are being made as a result.

This story is not so different from Mohammed’s. Although Mohammed was not arrested, CSIS agents called many of his acquaintances and coworkers to verify that he was not involved in terrorist activity. This may have led to Mohammed’s inability to find a suitable spouse and his father’s subsequent job loss. Although Mohammed has never been formally charged with any crimes, his long-standing investigation by CSIS has negatively impacted many facets of his life.

Surveillance has had a lasting impact on the lives of the individuals discussed in this chapter. Although none of the individuals in this study have been charged with criminal or terrorist offenses, their attitudes towards inclusivity have changed. Lyon (2003: 6) argues “...that unless the current intensification of surveillance is slowed or stopped, in the USA and elsewhere, the emerging climate of suspicion will envelop us all in conditions that are not merely disagreeable but unjust and unfree.”

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter examined how CSIS’ visits to Muslim Canadians can make them feel “less Canadian.” Individuals who were interviewed by CSIS believed that it was their religious belief and practice that had instigated CSIS’ interest. They believed that CSIS
agents were targeting Muslims and thus these individuals felt that the government viewed them as “Muslim” rather than “Canadian.”

Muslims who were approached by CSIS believed they were not given the rights and freedoms that are guaranteed to them by the Charter of Rights. These individuals felt that they were not able to exercise their freedom of speech or expression. They felt that CSIS agents were limiting their ability to become active civic participants. Thus, these individuals felt that they were not equal citizens in the sight of the Canadian government.

This chapter also examined the concept of citizenship. Citizenship is defined as having two main aspects. The first is that citizens are protected persons under the constitution of that country. The second aspect of citizenship is that individuals are active members of their country. This means that citizens are expected to participate in the political sphere.

Finally, methods of surveillance used by government agencies were explored. The individuals in this study were more willing to participate with CSIS when they felt that they had a choice in the matter. However, when individuals felt that CSIS had invaded their private spaces, they were more reluctant to cooperate and experience higher sentiments of alienation.
Chapter 5: Conclusions

This thesis has examined CSIS' influence in the lives of Canadian Muslims. Individuals who have been approached by CSIS felt alienated from both their religious communities and their fellow Canadian citizens. Individuals who have been approached by CSIS felt alienated from both their religious communities and their fellow Canadian citizens. Although some of these individuals choose to become more involved in their religious communities, in reaction to the CSIS visit, they are often met with opposition from other Muslims. All of my interviewees were hesitant to tell other Muslims of CSIS' interview because they felt they would be removed from the group since community members may fear becoming "guilty by association." This leads to these individuals feeling alienated from their religious communities.

However, all of my interviewees also felt that they were alienated from the larger Canadian community. They felt that it was their Islamic identity that had led to CSIS' visit and thus they became more aware of their religious identity as "other" than Canadian. They felt that the Canadian government, through CSIS, was targeting Muslims and was trying to infringe on their basic human rights. These individuals felt that they were not treated as equal citizens simply because of their religious beliefs.

Thus, these individuals feel that they are put in a very difficult position. Their position within both the religious and secular communities is threatened. They feel alienated from society at large and although they become more aware of their religious identity, they do not find the proper support within the religious community.
Muslims in this study felt that their status as Canadian citizens was unequal to that of their fellow citizens. While these individuals were aware of their rights as Canadians, they felt that those rights were difficult to exercise in light of the government’s surveillance. These individuals believed that in order to be safe from scrutiny they could not express their opposition to government policies and legislations.

While this study has examined the effect of government involvement in the lives of Muslim Canadians, there is much left to be examined. This study has highlighted that some Muslim Canadians feel targeted by the government. It would be useful to examine Muslims in all regions of Canada, in particular those in smaller Muslim communities, to see if this trend is in fact a national problem. It is possible that individuals in Ontario are subject to heightened surveillance because of the Toronto 18 case and the ensuing Islamophobia that emerged in the media. Further, it would be necessary to conduct a similar study on a larger scale to draw more conclusive results.

However, regardless of whether this is a local or national issue there remains perceived discrimination and religious targeting of Muslims by Canadian government officials. Even if CSIS officials do not intend to target Muslim individuals, this perception exists amongst Canadian Muslims who see CSIS’ practices as discriminatory and contradictory to their right for protection as citizens.

This study raises the issue of the “true nature” of Canada’s multicultural landscape today. Although we have seen the government of Canada take positive steps in the direction of civic inclusion, there remain gaps between minority groups and their representation at governmental levels. In particular, Muslim individuals who do not feel
that they are equal citizens are more reluctant to become politically involved. This fear threatens the very fabric that holds democratic states together.

In addition, Canada’s approach to multiculturalism does not seem to take into account the many instances of discrimination that minority groups may face. In the case of these individuals, they are subject to Islamophobic actions that they feel come directly from CSIS agents. Thus, these individuals feel that retaining their religious identity is a barrier that impedes their ability to fully participate in Canadian society. Although none of the individuals seemed willing to reject their religious identity, they did feel that they could not be “fully Canadian” so long as they maintained their Muslim identity.

This study also indicates that individuals are directly influenced by the method that CSIS adopts in their approach. Those who were approached by telephone and were able to agree on a mutual meeting time were less negatively affected by the interview. These individuals felt that they had a choice in their meeting time and location, and thus had a sense of autonomy throughout the process. Contrastingly, those that were approached in class, at work or at home, had a higher sense of invasion by surveillance. They became more cautious of individuals around them and feared another approach by CSIS at anytime.

The scope of this project was necessarily small. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, many individuals were fearful of participating in my study. This indicates increasing sentiments of mistrust amongst these individuals. Although I am a Muslim, and was interviewed by CSIS myself, there was clear hesitation from participants in sharing their
experiences. It would be pertinent to create a similar study which examines a larger participant base in order to create more conclusive results.

Mistrust is a recurring theme throughout this thesis. Individuals experience mistrust on a number of levels. They begin to question whether Muslims in their communities are working for CSIS. This wariness of other Muslims makes them feel that they are unable to fully integrate into the Muslim community. The interviewees also worry about the reaction of the Muslim community if their CSIS visit becomes known. They worry that the Muslim community will cut off their relationship with these individuals out of fear of the government. Further still, the Muslims in this study had lost trust in the Canadian government. They felt that they were targeted based on religious belief and they felt that this indicated a bias in government officials.

This thesis raises further questions such as: what results may stem from these sentiments of alienation? How do these Muslim individuals cope with these feelings in the long term? Are there negative consequences to these visits, such as mistrust of all government officials? Will these emotions eventually extend to the rest of the Muslim community? What is the proper place of Muslims in Canada? Will Muslim Canadians continue to feel isolated from society because of international events?

The answer to these questions, amongst others, would help to formulate a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the Canadian government and Muslim citizens.
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