I can trace the motivation for this research as far back as grade six. I was eleven years old going to school in a small city in southwestern Ontario, Canada, and it was the first day of my art class. I settled into my seat at a round table that sat four, and a student sat across from me. As I glanced up I was struck by what I thought was the most beautiful boy in the world. I could not take my eyes off him. He had deep brown eyes and skin that looked like chocolate butter. I spent the rest of the class mesmerized by him. Later, going over the day’s events with my mother, I told her about my experience. I said (in Macedonian, my mother tongue), “Ma, I saw the most beautiful boy in art class today. He has skin like chocolate butter.” Not realizing the impact of my words, I went about my routine of doing homework, eating supper and watching TV. Although my mother didn’t say anything other than “oh yes” at the time, she must have told my father. Later that evening my father sat me down and commanded that I never bring “one of those people” home. “We Macedonians do not associate with those people.” I was told that if I were to bring one of “those” people home, then, without hesitation, I would be tossed out of my home and disowned. I remember feeling both frightened and perplexed and asked my father for a rationale. His reply went something like this: “They are not good people. They are criminals, lazy and stupid.” I recall thinking that there was something wrong with my father’s assertions. I wondered how could an entire group of people with skin like “chocolate butter” all be criminals, lazy and stupid? I was left with a very unsettled feeling that I have spent much of my life trying to understand.

Not surprisingly, I found myself attracted to another man of African descent. But this time, at age nineteen, I knew to keep quiet. I was aware that, not only did my family feel that African people were “criminals, lazy and stupid,” but so too did the Macedonian Canadian community and the wider society. Over the years, at family gatherings, vacations and picnics, extended family (and even friends and acquaintances) warned me, “don’t ever bring one of those home.” This warning seemed to be one of those important life
lessons that Macedonians (and other Europeans) felt their children and the children in their community needed to heed. And it always pertained to not bringing a ‘black’ man home. I got the message, but did I heed it?

Eventually I fell in love and had children with an African Canadian man of Jamaican descent. To no surprise, my family and extended family responded with outrage. The social responses outside my personal circle were also hostile. My life completely unravelled. This unravelling constituted a series of unfortunate events that included violence directed towards me, a period of homelessness and living on welfare and in subsidized housing. This unravelling affected me so profoundly it precipitated what I call a “realization of whiteness.” This realization is when a European’s ‘white’ sense of self, which for the most part is unexamined and taken for granted, undergoes a radical transformation. Whiteness becomes visible to the ‘white’ self, which alters one’s mind and life. This shift in consciousness is something I also identify in this research. For me, this shift did not happen overnight or from a single event. It was through a series of events, some good (the birth of my children) but mostly bad, that I began to see life very differently. I, like one of my research participants (Britney), started to think there was something really “twisted” about European people’s behaviour and rhetoric. European people’s behaviour toward my partner (and other African people), my children and myself seemed surreal. European people’s reactions were also contradictory. Many Europeans spoke of racism as a thing of the past or a phenomenon peculiar to the United States; yet, I knew from my personal experiences that racism was indeed alive and flourishing in Canada.

Out of my perceptions that many Europeans displayed both contradictory and virulently hateful attitudes and behaviour toward “people of colour,” I started asking questions. I wanted to know why Europeans spoke with what First Nations people call “a forked tongue.” Why would anyone even care that I loved a man of African descent? Why did men of African descent and women of European descent need to be kept apart? I found some answers over the years through investigations into the history of racism and sexism in North America. Many more answers and just as many questions were yielded, however, through the research I conducted in 1999 with European women in interracial relationships with African men. Through this research I learned that there is a long and complex history surrounding the relationships of European and African people (and all negatively racialized peoples). The bodies of the latter peoples have been signified, represented and defined, and these historically self-renewing practices tend to have hegemonic force. Whiteness, in essence, is a supremacy that, like all other supremacies, is Other-dependent. While I found some answers, I was still left with a feeling that I was not done my quest of examining and understanding European cultures’ fantasies of racial dominance and purity. Thus, my point of entry into this research is my location and experiences as
a Macedonian Canadian woman involved with an African Canadian man and as a mother to two “mixed” children. To be clear, however, this research is not specifically about interracial relationships. While the theme of “black and white” relationships, as demonstrated by the women’s narratives, plays a central analytical role, the study’s purpose is to extrapolate how responses to these unions reveal some of the peculiarities of ‘white’ femininity and whiteness in southwestern Ontario.

I have found in the course of doing this research, coupled with myriad experiences as a result of my union and having “mixed” children, that there is indeed something peculiar to being a European-Canadian woman in this society. This peculiarity, if you will, functions like a habitus and is something that becomes manifest at specific times, like, for example, when we transgress racial and/or sexual boundaries. At other times, ‘white’ femininity is marked by a normative taken-for-grantedness. This situational marking of ‘white’ femininity speaks to the complexity of European women’s location in a ‘white’ capitalist patriarchy, which needs to be explored in terms of the connections between class, ethnicity, gender, race, sexuality and power/privilege. This complexity has yet to receive the attention it warrants, particularly in Canada. Having said this, I am not arguing that the spotlight be kept on European women. In fact, much has already been written about European women’s location in terms of gender and class. This white-centred focus or the lack thereof, depending on one’s vantage point, has been made clear by feminists of colour, who draw attention to the universalism and ethnocentrism of second-wave feminist discourse (and some would argue continues into the third wave). Although there is a growing body of scholarship, much less has been written about European women’s complex location in terms of the intersections of class, ethnicity, gender, race and sexuality.

I begin, in chapter 2, exploring some of the aspects of this complex location by situating it in the burgeoning literature on whiteness that has developed over the last twenty years. While scholars, particularly in the United States, have been studying whiteness for some time as a distinct subfield, “whiteness studies” has gone through a process of legitimation that has resulted in a concept called “whiteness” and disciplines devoted to its study. Vital questions whiteness studies address include: Who is or can be ‘white’? Who are the primary definers of whiteness? What are the historical and material contingencies and criteria that bear on being ‘white’?

Through a complex interplay of imperialism, colonialism, slavery, capitalism and European cultural practices, including science, religion and law, Europeans came to occupy “positional superiority” (Said 1979) on a world scale (this not only included the British, who had the largest empire in history, but also the Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch and Germans). European people became an invented ‘white’ race made up of ethnic groups (at times Greek, Roman or Germanic) perceived to have a common ancestry in Europe
(see Saxton 1990; Allen 1994; Roediger 1994). This historical interethnic conflation and fabricated racial appellation of ‘white’ was constructed as a unique category belonging to European people. Prior to the seventeenth century, Europeans did not conceptualize themselves as a ‘white’ group, though they did imagine themselves as pan-Christian. It was the “codification of slavery” (Martinot 2003: 66) and all its attendant material and psychological practices, the legislation of intimate relations (anti-miscegenation) and the scientific theorization of human hierarchy that created one of the most enduring and phantasmatical systems of social stratification, differentiation and categorization. This social categorization that marked people as ‘white’ and ‘black’ not only set in motion “subsequent expansions of European colonialism [and] invasions of other lands” (Martinot 2003: 72), it also informed all levels of European social/cultural discourse. Race, racism and processes of racialization were not only determined by capitalistic imperatives, the economic disparities resulting from these economic imperatives were justified by ideologies of race.

While this scholarship has been invaluable in understanding how whiteness is a process of racialization embedded within social, cultural and economic relations of power and domination, oftentimes it has focused exclusively on European men. This focus is particularly true for those works that explore the social economic history of the European working classes. The resulting image is of a “world without women” or a “world where women don’t count.” This androcentric history points to a central issue for feminism — that history in mainstream knowledge production is his-story. In light of this, a central concern for feminists is how to rescue and restore women to history (see Kelly-Gadol 1987). For many (‘white’) feminists of the 1970s and 1980s, adding “herstory” meant discarding the conceptual and methodological tools of male-centred social sciences. In their attempts to reject the masculinist imperialism of the social sciences, feminists developed methodological and theoretical tools grounded in the concrete realm of women’s lives. This attempt, indeed, resulted in “herstory,” but serious limitations became obvious. By the 1980s, the critical insights of feminists of colour revealed that feminist epistemology and research that attempted to restore women to history (to make it herstory) were in fact rescuing ‘white,’ largely middle-class women’s story.

Feminist of colour argue that ‘white’ feminism needs to be re-theorized to reflect how different groups of women experience marginalization as well as privilege through the simultaneity of race, class, gender and sexuality. Taking these variables seriously means exploring not only the lives of negatively racialized women but those of positively racialized women as well. Thus, ‘white’ feminists need to move beyond the theorization that has produced what Ruth Frankenberg (1993: 10) identifies as “the single axis of gender domination or the twin poles of capitalism and patriarchy.” While
incredibly complex and rich accounts of the multiplicity of women’s experiences have been produced, those that focus on race have come primarily from women of colour. As Enashki Dua and Angela Robertson (1999) argue, ‘white’ feminism has only scratched the surface. As such, my attempt is to dig deeper, perhaps elsewhere from here, to remap some of the territories of ‘white’ femininity. Key to this remapping is that whiteness be seen as a process of positive racialization that is embedded in relations and structures of power, privilege and domination. Of vital consequence is that this process shapes inclusion into an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983), whose ‘white’ membership privileges are taken for granted. I argue that European women’s group membership occurs in three related ways, which I call disciplinary regimes (Rowe and Lindsay 2003). I use disciplinary with a Foucauldian approach to capture the complex network of practices, discourses and institutions of power that “incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize and organize” European women’s activity (Foucault 1990: 136). I explore these disciplinary regimes in the subsequent chapters:

- compulsory ‘white’ heterosexuality (chapter 3);
- reinscribing whiteness (chapter 4); and
- normative ‘white’ femininity (chapter 5).

My journey toward remapping these territories was difficult and fraught with frustration, at times intermingled with a deepening cynicism about ‘white’ people’s hidden commitments to racist ideologies and at other times marked with moments of exhilaration. I was most struck by the display of what Marimba Ani (1994) calls the “rhetorical ethic” of Western culture. This rhetorical ethic, characteristic of European culture, Ani (1994: 313–14) argues, is the “confounding of meaning and commitment with mere verbal expressions.” This ethic was displayed by three of the research participants (that I know of) and exhibited itself when they verbalized progressive antiracist feminist rhetoric, yet participated in racist and sexist behaviour (which I witnessed accidentally).

The other aspect of the women’s narratives that struck me was the evocation of what Frankenberg (1993) calls “racial discourse,” one aspect of which is the hypervisibility that African Americans are accorded relative to the invisibility of Asian Americans, Native Americans and Latinos. Frankenberg (1993: 12) states:

Two white women explicitly singled out African Americans as “racial others,” in contrast to Latinos and Asians, viewed as “culturally” but not “racially” different from white people. Elsewhere the women described Asian Americans and Latinos as somehow less different from whites in racial terms. They also, at times, had more to say
about Black-white relationships, and more elaborate constructions of African Americans than about other communities of colour.

I found a similar result in my work. There was a hypervisibility to African Canadians that was not accorded to any other community of colour. When speaking to issues of race, racial oppression or racial violence, African Canadians were the group most referred to and ‘black’ was the descriptor most often applied. This racial descriptor was not one I evoked. In fact, I was very careful to avoid specific racial designators for fear of biasing the participants’ responses and possibly evoking what has been described as a “black and white binary.” I found it interesting that when the research participants referred to a person’s “racial” or ethnic origin, they would often use the terms black or white to refer to European and African people. The times they referred to people who were, for example, First Nations, Indian or Chinese, they never used colour descriptives such as red, brown or yellow. It became clear that the common everyday parlance of racial categorization was as follows: people of European descent were designated ‘white’ and people of African descent were considered ‘black.’ Everyone else was designated by their established ethnic/geographic location. As racial/ethnic descriptors, there was a conflation between colour and ethnic/racial origins only when it applied to Africans and Europeans.

Statistics Canada even reflects this usage. When collecting information about “visible minorities,” the following racial categories are used: White, Chinese (includes Taiwan and Hong Kong), South Asian (includes India, Bangladesh, Kashmir, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka), Black, Filipino, Latin American (South and Central American, including native peoples), East and Southeast Asian (includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam), Arab, West Asian (includes Afghanistan, Iran), Japanese, Korean and Other (Toronto Star March 23, 2005: B1-5).

While an in-depth investigation into the politics of racial/ethnic categorization is beyond the scope of this study, I believe it points to the black and white Manichaeism that shapes aesthetic and moral valuations and is operative in the determination of power and privilege in North American society. This binary has resulted in a hypervisibility that has had and still has enormous consequences for the material, economic and psychological lives of African people. This is not to suggest that other groups have not suffered as a result of this Manichaeism. History is replete with examples that suggest otherwise: the genocide of Aboriginal peoples worldwide, Armenian genocide, Nazi Germany and the Jewish Holocaust, Japanese Canadian internment. My intent, rather, is to illuminate the specificity (aesthetic and moral valuations) of this black and white binary and its implications for the control and regulation of ‘white’ femininity. The experiences relayed by the research participants suggest that this black and white binary plays a deter-
mining role in how they view and experience the world and how the world views and experiences them.

In light of this problematic, I use the terms African and European throughout this study to denote cultural groups that would otherwise be called ‘black’ and ‘white.’ My belief is that such terms do not accurately reflect cultural genealogy and geographic ancestry. In addition, these terms are laden with such ideological heaviness they cannot be used without reinscribing their concomitant ideology; therefore, to avoid reification I place them in single quotation marks to signal their problematic and socially constructed nature. The other instances in which ‘black’ and ‘white’ occur are quotations from academic references or from my research participants.

ANALYZING ‘WHITE’ FEMININITY

It is one thing to argue that whiteness is a structural feature of power and privilege that is actively accessed and maintained in the everyday lives of European women. It is quite another thing to actually study how whiteness is accessed and maintained at the micro-sociological level. Deciding how I was going to approach this research, however, was not difficult because I knew the approach had to be true, at the very least, to two commitments: one, the feminist principle of “liberating women’s minds and bodies” and two, what C. Wright Mills (1959: 5) calls the “sociological imagination.” Mills states that the sociological imagination is “the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self — and to see the relations between the two.” In this context, my task is to elucidate the connections between the women’s personal experiences and their connections to larger social mechanisms that organize the everyday/everynight (see also Dorothy Smith 1987). In the spirit of the feminist principle to “liberate women’s minds and bodies,” I am referring to a “consciousness raising” agenda. Susan Bordo (2003: 30) argues:

The goal of consciousness-raising may seem, perhaps, to belong to another era. I believe, however, that in our present culture of mystification — a culture which continually pulls us away from systemic understanding and inclines us toward constructions that emphasize individual freedom, choice, power, ability — simply to become more conscious is a tremendous achievement. (As Marx insisted, changes in consciousness are changes in life, and in a culture that counts on our remaining unconscious, they are political as well). (emphasis in original)

As does Bordo, I would like my research to enhance women’s consciousness of various aspects of the complex functioning of Western culture. It, however, also needs to reflect another important commitment — to contribute
to a wider and more radical feminist politic. This politic must take seriously
the role of race in feminism, history and social relations. This approach
encourages a methodology that scrutinizes the centre in a way that allows
for a critical understanding of how European women construct identity,
access and exercise power and make sense of their everyday lives. For me
this is a multi-dimensional standpoint, as posited by Nancy Naples (2003).
Multi-dimensional standpoint methodology, Naples (2003: 85) argues, neces-
sitates that “women’s spoken experience must remain open to exploration
from a number of angles” These angles or analytic dimensions necessitate
an understanding that

- experience is itself organized through relations of ruling that are not
  necessarily visible to individual “knowers” (Smith, 1987) and as such
  experience is constructed knowledge that is therefore politically constituted;
- women’s oral testimony is relational to other knowers and various insti-
  tutional sites of power; and
- women’s spoken experience is a site of inquiry (Naples 2003: 85).

Naples further contends that attention must be given to how gendered
processes of racialization inform the construction of experience within
these three analytic dimensions. Paying attention to gendered processes of
racialization means understanding that while each woman is unique, they
all share certain common practices and experiences and ways of knowing
and seeing the world informed by whiteness. Multi-dimensional standpoint
allows for the women’s oral testimony to call attention to how being ‘white’
women structures their way of understanding history, culture and self, and
in turn, how history and culture structures ‘white’ femininity.

THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
From September 2002 to August 2003, I interviewed twenty-four European
women from southwestern Ontario. The women’s ages ranged from seven-
teen to seventy. I primarily used referrals from friends, acquaintances and
colleagues to locate research participants. The participants included women
from two groups: twelve women were of northern and western European
ancestry and twelve were of eastern and southern European ancestry. The
women who were eastern or southern European consisted of four Italians,
three Macedonians, one Italian /Serbian, one Czechoslovakian, one Polish,
one Serbian and one Ukrainian. The women who were northern and western
European consisted of five English, one French, one Irish, one Irish/English,
one German, one German/Dutch, one Scottish and one Scottish/English. I
grouped the women into these ancestral geographic/ethnic locations because
they approximate the internal hierarchy of whiteness between Europeans.
As discussed in chapter 2, cultural and moral valuations have been assigned to different groups of Europeans. Immigrants from northern and western Europe were considered more culturally and morally superior to those groups from southern and eastern Europe and therefore “not quite white.” In the context of an internal hierarchy of whiteness, I sought to evaluate to what extent ethnicity played a role in European women’s lives.

Recognizing that definitions of ethnicity can vary, I chose to use it to reflect what Herbert J. Gans (1985: 435) calls “symbolic ethnicity,” which is “characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country; a love for and a pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour.” In this way ethnicity is an expressive sentiment rather than an instrumental function that reflects a collective “we feeling” within a group, whose symbolic components can vary from time and place (see Fleras and Elliot 1996). Rather than a fixed ascribed status, ethnicity is viewed as a transactional process that is situational, variable and flexible (see also Satzewich 2001). This conceptualization is important because it allows for the understanding of immigrant experiences in places such as Canada (which has an official multiculturalism policy), where, despite a lack of factors such as internal cohesion, common institutions or an inability to transmit language to the next generation, immigrants (first, second and third generation) may still identify as a particular ethnic group.

Within these two groups of participants were women of various socio-economic categories, such as unemployed working class, immigrant working class, working class, middle class, professional middle class, etc. Recognizing that definitions attached to class, like ethnicity, can vary considerably, I adopted the term in a general sense to indicate the socio-economic status of the individual. Harvey Krahn’s definition of class is useful here. He states that class indicates “the position of an individual or a family within an economic hierarchy, along with others who have roughly the same amount of control over or access to economic or material resources” (Krahn 2001: 150). To round out this definition, I included occupation and education.

I selected these categories of analysis because central to a more comprehensive analysis of whiteness is investigating how other axes of social relations inform and mediate race privilege. Diane Reay (1998: 265) states that sociologists need to add a qualitative approach that explores the dynamic aspects of identity that permeates daily interactions. For Reay this means understanding that class, as well as gender, race, age and sexuality, are “lived in and through people’s bodies and permeates their thinking.” Following Reay’s lead, exploring these dynamic aspects of identity means not only exploring how European women experience and live out their whiteness but also how it is impacted by their class, ethnicity, sexuality and intimate relationships.

Nine of my participants were or had been involved with men of African
descent and two identified as lesbians. I did not necessarily seek out women in interracial relationships. I had been acquainted with four of these women as research participants for my master’s thesis. The other five women in interracial relationships were referrals from friends and colleagues. These women’s narratives played a key role in my discussions on the racial and sexual politics of ‘white’ femininity. Three of the women in particular, one Macedonian-Canadian, one Czech-Canadian and one French-Canadian, took on particular significance. One reason is that talking to these women felt more like we were “comrades in the struggle,” who were sharing friendships rather than conducting interviews. The level of comfort with which we interacted allowed for rich and dynamic interviews. The ease may have resulted from the fact that we have so much in common: we are interested in issues of social justice, are/were in interracial relationships, some of us have children and two of three women have graduate degrees and are of Slavic ancestry. Another reason for our ease with one another lies in the fact that women who transgress conventional racial, ethnic and/or sexual boundaries are the recipients of responses that reveal some of the normative expectations of ‘white’ culture. These normative expectations oftentimes remain hidden or obscured from everyday viewing until an incident occurs to propel them to the surface. These normative expectations were clearly evident in these women’s narratives and made for grounded and liberatory sociology because they made visible the many impediments to social equality. While, the ‘white’ normative expectations were clearly evident in the narratives, I also wanted to get at how these women participated in and negotiated these expectations. Furthermore, were they critically aware of and did they actively reject the seductiveness of ‘white’ inclusion?

These questions call attention to the dialectical relationship between structure and the individual. Simply stated, relations and structures of domination/privilege are articulated through human praxis and intentionality. My perception of structure, then, is not within a framework that poses a superstructure imposing its will on a mass of vulnerable beings — as if structure is separate from people, out there somewhere and unchangeable. Nor do I perceive structure in a framework that ignores social institutions by focusing on individual agency/discourse. My definition of structure, rather, refers to the ways in which human life is concretely organized through the socio-economic order, the state, social institutions (family, media, etc.), organizations and governments. This definition always assumes interplay between structure and human agency/action (as groups and as individuals).

The mechanics of how structure and individual agency work to produce life experiences are complex, and I do not want to reduce or ignore this complexity. It is important, however, to reiterate that if we have structures of domination, this results from individuals who reproduce and perpetuate them. I make this case to emphasize that those social agents who benefit from
an inherited system and relations of oppression are either participants (active or passive) or dissenters. It is real men and real women who oppress although there is a systematization of dominance within social institutions that perpetuate ‘white’ privilege and other forms of oppression inter-generationally. As a set of expectations, performances and rules, the system may be experienced as oppressive, but it is people who do its work. The values and ideas expressed through language or ‘white’ discourse have no oppressive force outside the historical relations and structures that support it. Structures and relations of domination are not only dictated by history, culture and material relations but are also shaped at the local level by the actions and discursive practices of real historical actors. Steve Martinot (2003: 180–81) states:

The permissibility of individual white racists’ attitudes — condescension, ostracism, contempt, hostility, or violence — is given socially, as institutional; the variety of prejudices, violations and hatreds by which whites endlessly inferiorize their victims would have no claim to ethical sanction without the institutionalization of white social consensus and solidarity. Similarly, institutional racism — the variety of modes of segregation in housing, jobs, careers, education, financing, and lending, the social disenfranchisement incurred through gerrymandered districts and police profiling and the ethical sanction of violence, hatred and condescension — would not exist if not enacted continually, obsessively, and publicly by individuals.

Much of my focus, then, is examining the rituals and discursive practices enacted “continually, obsessively and publicly by individuals.” This focus is important to me as a sociologist because it centralizes the dynamic lived aspects of social life that permeate daily interactions while still connecting to the social processes and structures that extend beyond the scope of the everyday (Smith 1987). It is in this way that my family’s anti-interracial animus and racism toward people of African descent makes sense. Their mantra “not to bring one of those home” is connected to the larger social, cultural and historical processes that have imputed a “tribal stigma” (Goffman 1963) onto the bodies of African people, who therefore are to be avoided.

**EXPLAINING ‘WHITE’ FEMININITY**

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 set out to explore some of the defining aspects of ‘white’ femininity. Chapter 3 focuses primarily on compulsory ‘white’ female heterosexuality to illustrate how the racializing of gender and heteronormativity demands a loyalty to whiteness and patriarchy. My argument is that Western notions of heterosexuality are culturally/politically organized to compel women’s attraction to the opposite sex. But, of equal importance is that this compulsion is toward the same “race.” Animus toward interracial unions, in
this particular case, between European women and African men, reveal the hidden heteronormative expectations of compulsory ‘white’ heterosexuality. Consistent with gender, race and ethnic expectations, and at times across class divisions, European women are expected to demonstrate their loyalty to whiteness and patriarchy. If European women fail to demonstrate such loyalty, coercive elements of regulation are employed to elicit compliance. The enforcement frequently begins with the family; however, it is reinforced in external social relations and manifests in a variety of ways, which range from a loss of material and psychological privilege and status to discursive acts of exclusion. The discursive aspect is the primary focus of chapter 4. The attempts by family and society to regulate women’s behaviour is often met with contestation and resistance. Many women find ways to enact personal agency and to self-actualize into independent and autonomous beings. In turn, their acts of agency are met with resistance by family and society. This unequal two-way process involves both parties trying to establish the terms of their existence.

Chapter 3 also draws on the experiences of women who are in same-‘race’ relationships as well as women who are in same-sex relationships. The European women in interracial relationships with men of African descent, however, spoke “loudest” to the demand for racial loyalty. This result does not imply that compulsory ‘white’ heterosexuality is peculiar to only those interracial unions. History holds examples of anti-interracial animus toward European women with First Nations men and with Asian and Southeast Asian men (among others). My data, rather, is limited because the women either spoke of or were predominantly involved with men of African descent. When asked about their choice of dating partners, the women in same “race” relationships appeared to have only dated European men and the women who were in interracial relationships had dated men of African and men of European descent.

Chapter 4 explores the discursive and material ways ‘white’ women experience, perform and participate in relations and structures of domination through the enactment of what Marilyn Frye (1983) calls “rituals of unity and exclusion.” These rituals are behavioural paradigms or ways of performing whiteness enacted at the everyday individual level. They include physical acts whose effects articulate ‘white’ unity and exclusion of the racial Other and ways of speaking and engaging with the world that reinscribe whiteness as a propertied source of exclusive privilege and power. Embedded in the legal structure and the social expectation of ‘white’ superiority, whiteness represents a “property right” in itself with a multitude of material and non-material rights exclusive to those with ‘white’ skin (see Cheryl Harris 1993). In the everyday and everynight articulation and practice of whiteness, rituals embedded in codes of speech, inflection, modes of thought and in some cases action, whose meanings constitute a form of ‘white’ public consciousness,
are several of the mediums through which unity and exclusion are achieved. A number of the women I interviewed who were in interracial relationships spoke of being called “white slut” and “nigger lover.” I explore these appellations to illustrate how these discursive practices solidify a collective ‘white’ membership that signifies and calls attention to the transgressive ‘white’ femininity of European women. Significantly, as part of a ‘white’ cultural paradigm, these rituals are set within an \textit{a priori}, taken-for-granted ideological framework. The focus of this chapter, then, are the “rituals of unity and exclusion” enacted by individuals that are reinforced and supported by the structural dynamics of whiteness as a way of being and a structural location of advantage. When I refer to the structural dynamics of whiteness, I am not referring to the socio-economic or institutional aspects of structure, although these are important dimensions of whiteness. I am pointing out the “positional superiority” (Said 1979) that being ‘white’ accords Europeans at the expense of Others.

In chapter 5, I argue that European women are subjected to a further disciplining and normalizing of their bodies based on the patriarchal ideology of feminine beauty, which constructs a normative ‘white’ femininity. This serves as a locus of control over the most fundamental aspects of their identities. In addition, beauty norms invoke a cultural discourse regarding age, class and ethnicity and race that are used as a sophisticated means of social regulation. To understand the significance of normative ‘white’ femininity, the dynamics of ‘white’ patriarchal social control must be discerned. This chapter discusses beauty as a socially constructed normative standard, which sustains a ‘white’-centred discourse of feminine oppression/privilege and male dominance. The ‘white’ patriarchal beauty discourse has been developed, refined and reformulated in the dominant philosophical, religious, social, political and economic practices, and as such, an array of images are employed to portray ‘white’ femininity as a natural, necessary and inevitable order. As Bordo (2003) points out, beauty norms are most powerful when they appear historically and culturally ubiquitous and their socially constructed nature is masked with the authenticity that the “natural” label denotes. As such, normative ‘white’ femininity is not self evident. It requires an examination of the feminine images to which the research participants refer. Turning to the women’s narratives I found that the beauty norms that patriarchy develops not only create a standardized normative femininity but a normative femininity that is racialized.

My intention for the chapters that follow is that some of the intersectionalities of race, ethnicity, sexuality and class will emerge to highlight aspects of European Canadian women’s complex location and “peculiarity” in Canadian society. My hope is that these themes will resonate with the reader as well and help to reveal some of the impediments and obstacles faced by women who struggle against social inequality and for self-fulfillment.
outside of confining and restricting social arrangements. In addition, my analysis hopes to make visible how the stability of whiteness as a structural and psychological location of privilege is secured and legitimated through the compliance and/or participation and discursive practices of European women (and men). In doing so, I aim to contribute to antiracist feminist struggle in Canada against systems of domination.

NOTES
1. I was never warned about bringing home a Chinese, Indian or Aboriginal man. While there were derogatory comments made about other groups, there was never a sense of impending genetic threat constructed with regard to those groups.
2. This concept was originally developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1993) in *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*.
3. I define patriarchy as a hierarchical set of social relations between men and women that have a material base and feeds power *unequally* to men (see Hartmann 1981). It is vital to stress that patriarchy is asymmetrical and men of different classes, ethnic and “racial” groups occupy different ideological and material locations in the hierarchy (see Carby 2000). This hierarchical and asymmetrical patriarchy, thus, creates different gendered, class and raced subjectivities.
4. There are notable exceptions, for example, Frankenberg 1993; Davy 1995; Moon 1999; Backhouse 1999; Hodes 1997; Ware 1992; and Valverde 1991. There is also a growing body of third-wave Canadian antiracist feminist writing. See, for example, Stasiulis 1990; Bannerji 1995; Jhappan 1996; Arat-Koç 1999; and Dua 1999.
5. Whiteness, as a category of analysis, has only just begun in Canada. See George Dei et al. 2004 and Cynthia Levine-Rasky 2002.
6. Manichaeism can be understood as belief or philosophy that supposes a primordial conflict between light and darkness, goodness and evil and any other radical dualism. This Manichaeism is not just framed in a black/white positive and negative dualism, but also in terms of a white/non-white, light/dark, man/woman, civilized/uncivilized etc. binary.
7. Discursive practices refer to the ways that language and representation produce meaning and how that meaning is connected to power, the regulation of behaviour and the construction of identities and subjectivities (see Stuart Hall 1997).
8. One woman was dating an Iraqi Canadian man; however, it was a young relationship (just a few months old) and she had little to say about their experiences as a couple. She did mention that as a man of colour, he has to fight for his place. She, actually, had more to say about the experiences of her sister, who is married to an African man.