



Multiculturalism and
Citizenship Canada

Multiculturalisme et
Citoyenneté Canada

Produced by Breakthrough Films and
Television Inc. for Multiculturalism and
Citizenship Canada, the video **CANADIAN
PORTRAITS** is of interest to teenagers,
approximately grades 7 and up, and adult
audiences

CANADIAN PORTRAITS



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USER'S GUIDE

This guide is to be used in
conjunction with the video
CANADIAN PORTRAITS

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE VIDEO

Canadian Portraits is a tribute to the cultural diversity that characterizes present-day Canada. A teenage girl, answering an exam question about people who have played an important role in building this country, decides to focus on the contributions made by so-called "ordinary folk." Through her musings, we are introduced to six Canadians: **Elisapi Davidee**, an Inuk broadcaster in Iqaluit; **Bhagwan Mayer**, a Sikh businessman in Chemainus, B.C.; **Tomas Van**, a Vietnamese high school student in Toronto; **Elise Davis**, a Black museum technician and guide in Amherst, Ont.; **Dr. Samuel Llbach**, a Jewish obstetrician who works in a Toronto hospital known for the multicultural mix of its patients and staff; and **George Widz**, a Polish French-Canadian police officer in Montréal.

The people profiled in the video speak candidly about the successes they have achieved, the problems they have faced as members of minority groups, and the contributions they have made to our society. These "Canadian portraits" are interwoven with historical material from the past to suggest the nature and extent of this country's multicultural make-up.

The video has been produced for teenagers, approximately grade 7 and up, and adult audiences.

ABOUT THE USER'S GUIDE

This guide has been put together with the following user groups in mind:

- secondary and post-secondary educators, particularly those working in the area of social studies
- librarians, community centre animators, cross-cultural trainers, social service professionals
- individual borrowers who might appreciate having some background information

Suggestions for Using this Guide

In its attempt to give viewers some sense of the multicultural reality of the country today, *Canadian Portraits* touches on the following themes:

- Canadian diversity
- cultural heritage
- race relations
- immigration

In the guide, the section on **Background Information** sets forth some current and historical facts about these and related issues.

Though the video stresses mainly the positive aspects of multicultural diversity, it is also important to look at some of the less positive responses such diversity may engender. The most effective way to approach this topic has been the subject of much discussion. As many of us well know, merely supplying information rarely leads to a reduction in racist or prejudiced attitudes. To change behaviour, it is necessary to involve both the head and the heart. Hence, the **Ideas for Discussion** and **Activities** included here have been chosen to encourage learning on both cognitive and affective levels.

Since some of these discussions and activities may lead people to examine their own attitudes and behaviour on issues such as stereotyping and racism, we recommend that group leaders try to create a warm and supportive environment where their reactions can be dealt with openly and honestly.

Quotations from the Video to stimulate discussion, **Resources** for those wishing to do further research and a **Glossary of Related Terms** have also been included to extend the usefulness of *Canadian Portraits*.

THE USER IS ENCOURAGED TO MAKE COPIES OF THIS GUIDE.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Did you know that . . . ?

- When the first Europeans arrived in Canada, there were more than 200 Inuit and Native Indian groups already living here.
 - French explorers and settlers arrived in the 16th and 17th centuries.
 - Immigration from the British Isles, Germany and Holland began in the 17th century.
 - Between 1945 and 1954, 92% of all immigrants came from Europe; only 2.5% from Asia. As late as 1966, fewer than 3% of immigrants to Canada were Black or Asian.
 - In 1962 and 1967, substantial changes were made to the *Immigration Act*. Race was dropped as a criterion for admission and replaced by a point system which considered factors such as occupation, linguistic ability, education, prearranged employment and preferred settlement area. Applicants with close relatives living in Canada were given priority as family class immigrants. For the first time, immigration offices were opened in many non-white countries, placing applicants from these countries on a more equal basis with white migrants.
 - Among immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1981 and 1986:
 - 43% were born in Asia
 - 29% were born in Europe
 - 10% were born in South and Central America
 - 7% were born in the United States
 - 6% were born in the Caribbean
 - 5% were born in Africa and Oceania.
 - In 1986, immigrants represented almost one-quarter of the populations of Ontario and British Columbia.
 - 37.5% of Canadians reported, in 1986, an ethnic origin other than British or French.
- 25% reported ethnic origins involving no English or French ancestry.
 - In 1985, about one in five newcomers to Canada was a refugee.
 - From 1975-1983, only the USA received a higher number of refugees.
 - Without immigration, and with present birth rates, Canada's population would fall from 24 million to 11.5 million by 2051.

QUOTATIONS FROM THE VIDEO

The following statements have been chosen from the transcript of the video because of their value in provoking discussion.

1. *Most everyone thinks of Canadians as being English or French. But that isn't really true.* (Narrator)
2. *They were just ordinary folk, the ones who really built the country. And if you think about it, there are plenty of people around like that today. . . They're not famous either. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't have a country.* (Narrator)
3. *Black history has not been represented in Canada. In all my experience in school, there was very little information, if any, on Canadian Blacks in our history books.* (Elise Knox)
4. *What was it like being Jewish in Toronto in the 1930's? There was a lot of racial tension. There were a lot of tough bullies around. . . Things are, hopefully, much different now though there are still bullies around.* (Samuel Librach)
5. *In our school we have various ethnic groups. We interact with students from different cultures. . . and through that interaction we gain understanding. That's where the friendships are built.* (Tomas Van)
6. *There are new immigrants arriving every day with new ways and new cultures. . . . Like they have to adapt themselves to their new land, we have to adapt ourselves to our new neighbours.* (George Widz)
7. *I did not know how to speak English when I first went to school. We were punished for that.* (Elisapi Davidee)
8. *I have patients coming to my office who don't speak a lot of English. They frequently come in with interpreters. We don't have any problem getting back and forth and I don't have any resentment that they don't speak the language.* (Samuel Librach)
9. *Our own children cannot go forward into the future without knowing about their past and having pride in themselves.* (Elise Davis)
10. *Dad taught us that as Canada was our home, we were duty-bound to make a positive contribution to Canada, not to sit back and take it all for granted.* (Bhagwan Mayer)
11. *I think the arrival of new immigrants to Canada will benefit Canada both economically and socially. New immigrants tend to work harder With new immigrants, we can harness their energy as well as their creativity to lead Canada's economy into the future.* (Tomas Van)