# Identities and Interests

Race, Ethnicity, and Affinity Voting

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## Introduction

As global immigration continues to transform the electorates of democracies, the political activity of racialized voters will have increasingly powerful effects on political life. Racialized Canadians are now approaching 20 percent of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada 2011), and there is little doubt that this upward trajectory will continue. Therefore, electoral districts with large and diverse racialized populations offer a preview of our future political demography. These ridings are also key electoral battlegrounds (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013), which means even relatively small levels of influence can produce dramatic changes in power at the national level, including determining who governs. A growing racialized population will also make racialized leaders far more influential. These demographic changes will mean more racialized candidates, public officials, and party leaders, and increasing weight in electoral coalitions. Already, as will be shown, one in four electoral districts have at least one racialized candidate, and a growing number have multiple racialized candidates.

Racialized citizens will be increasingly important political actors, yet there is surprisingly little research on the electoral behaviour of racialized Canadians in Canada or, indeed, on racialized voters in any democracy other than the United States. While there is a great deal of research on immigration, multiculturalism, integration, and attitudes toward racialized people, the subject of racialized citizens as active participants in electoral politics has been somewhat neglected. In part, this is because the backlash of the majority against the minority, in the form of discrimination and hostility, tends to be the focus of attention. Ethnic minorities are also difficult to study: standard surveys generally do not include a large enough sample of ethnic minorities and certainly not enough data to study subcategories such as specific ethnocultural groups. Nonetheless, ignoring the political behaviour

of racialized citizens is no longer a viable option. As globalized immigration increases ethnic diversity, the electoral choices of racialized minorities are becoming increasingly important: we can't understand politics without understanding the political behaviour of racialized citizens.

This book examines the role of racial and ethnic identities in politics. Specifically, it explores how and when people identify with ethnic and racialized groups and the role they play in the political support that racialized candidates receive from racialized citizens. It is a truism in political commentary that voters support candidates who are like themselves – be it their region, language, or gender – often referred to in the political science literature as affinity voting. Yet the extent of this phenomenon among ethnic groups, and the motivations for it, is still not well understood. People identify in many ways, but which identity groups matter, and when? Affinity effects can have wide-ranging implications, including those that are explicitly electoral but also those that are broadly political and social. In terms of electoral politics, coethnic affinity voting could form an essential base of support for racialized politicians, influence party leadership races, and act as an important counterbalance to discrimination by white voters. The data examined here show that there were 1.6 million racialized Canadians that could cast a vote for a racialized candidate in the 2011 federal election: in other words, coethnic- and racialized-affinity effects are potentially widespread and affect many voters. Similarly, these psychological effects could impact many other forms of political and social action, such as social movements, issue-based advocacy groups, and immigration settlement programs.

Three central themes are explored in this book. The first is voting behaviour: Are voters more likely to support candidates of their own racial or ethnic group or candidates of other racialized ethnic groups? Does affinity voting produce rainbow coalitions or more narrowly focused support from single ethnic groups? The breadth of affinity voting effects is a major determinate of the size, and therefore, political influence, of these coalitions.

The second theme is the motivation for this affinity behaviour: why do racialized voters support racialized candidates? This question cuts to the heart of our understanding of democracy and citizenship: when citizens vote, what are they doing? This question is part of a wide-ranging debate about whether electoral politics are fundamentally expressive or instrumental (Achen and Bartels 2016; Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015), which has important implications for democracy and citizenship. Two types of

motivations are explored in this book – interests and identities – which can express themselves in a series of different mechanisms.

The third theme of this book is the structure of race and ethnic identity: how people identify and how ethnic and racial groups are defined in Canada. Ethnic and racial groups can exist at multiple levels, such as specific cultural identities, as ethnic identities (such as those used by Statistics Canada), and as superordinate racialized "ethnic minority" identities. Racialized Canadians can and do identify with all of these groups. These higher- and lower-order identities are connected, but the strength of higher-order identities is weaker, as nested-identity theory would suggest. While the state-defined Statistics Canada ethnic categories are, in some sense, artificial, Canadians do identify with these categories, and immigrants start to do so quickly. More subtly, racialization and the normalization of whiteness in Canada seem to result in a racial schema (Roth 2012) in which nonwhite ethnic groups are defined as a unified "minority" or "immigrant" social group. It appears that this categorization is internalized by racialized Canadians themselves.

## Coethnic versus Racialized Affinity Voting

There is a good deal of evidence that voters are more likely to support candidates of their own ethnicity. However, nearly all research is from one country and focused on two specific groups: black and Latino voters in the United States (e.g., Barreto 2010; Philpot and Walton 2007). Although there is some emerging research out of Canada (Bird 2015) and the United Kingdom (Fisher et al. 2015), as of yet, evidence is scarce for affinity voting outside the United States or among other ethnic groups. This is particularly important given the long history of bitter racial conflict in the United States and the fact that racial issues continue to play an explicit role in modern elections. The extent to which findings of coethnic affinity voting in the United States are generalizable to the rest of the world is not clear.

It is also unclear whether affinity voting is limited to the candidate's own ethnicity (coethnic affinity voting) or applies to all racialized voters (racialized affinity voting). The breadth of affinity voting is a key factor in the potential size and influence of rainbow coalitions of different racialized ethnic groups, given the diversity of racialized populations in most Western democracies. Understanding the relationships among racialized ethnic groups is especially important in Canada, since Canada's population of racialized

minorities is not only large but also diverse. According to Statistics Canada, the largest racialized ethnic category is "South Asian," and it makes up only 25 percent of the racialized minority population (Statistics Canada 2011). Moreover, diversity is reflected at the electoral district level. As Chapter 7 will show, the ethnic group of a racialized candidate is almost always a minority of racialized voters – that is, voters of the candidate's ethnic group are usually outnumbered by voters of other racialized ethnic groups. To a great degree, the influence of rainbow coalitions and the success of racialized candidates may be conditional on the degree of affinity (or discrimination) among different racialized ethnocultural groups.

Previous research suggests that racialized citizens may well discriminate against other racialized groups. The limited evidence from studies on black and Latino Americans suggests that there is conflict between ethnic groups (Meier and Stewart 1991; McClain et al. 2006). Of course, political conflict, as defined here, includes discrimination against candidates or opposition to policies favouring particular ethnic groups rather than violence or persecution. Still, these effects may have important consequences. One broad concern relates to the capacity of citizens to build coalitions among racialized communities and, therefore, these citizens' ability to address important shared policy concerns. Postcolonial theorists sometimes advocate for strategic essentialism, an approach that suggests that oppressed peoples should sometimes adopt broad, essentialized group identities for pragmatic political reasons. For example, Asians in Britain might consider themselves "black" for the purposes of building a useful political coalition (Modood 1994). While such group identities inevitably erase distinctions and homogenize differences, they can also help build support for important political projects (Spivak 1987). Similar concepts have been used by activists around the world, including influential leaders such as Jesse Jackson, who famously called for a rainbow coalition of black, Jewish, Arab, and Hispanic Americans, along with other social groups (Jackson 1984). Advocates for rainbow coalitions make the claim that racialized communities of all kinds often share similar experiences and needs, including issues related to immigration, racism and discrimination, and the recognition of foreign credentials. Yet the viability of rainbow coalitions may depend on the attitudes of racialized minority groups toward one another rather than on commonly held issues of concern. If different racialized ethnic groups see one another as out-groups, it follows that issue coalitions will be much harder to build. Therefore, identity may undermine issue coalitions.

A lack of solidarity among racialized communities (when voters are more likely to support candidates from their own ethnocultural background than other racialized candidates) may also put all racialized candidates at a systematic disadvantage. Research suggests a correlation between the number of racialized citizens in an electoral district and the nomination of racialized candidates (Tossutti and Najem 2002; Black and Hicks 2006). Counterintuitively, racial diversity may be a disadvantage for racialized candidates in ridings where their ethnic group is only a plurality. As noted earlier, in Canada this is the situation for racialized candidates in almost all federal electoral districts. If racialized voters prefer white candidates to candidates from racialized communities *other than their own,* then this preference may have a systematically negative impact on candidates from *all* racialized communities. Put another way, racialized candidates may split the racialized vote in a way that white candidates do not.

Nonetheless, the prospects for rainbow coalitions are not so bleak as they first appear. Conflict between Latinos and African Americans is not universal; there are examples of political cooperation (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984; Saito 1998). While specific ethnic identities may be chronically accessible, broader racialized identities may be influential in the right context. This suggests that we should not presume that interminority conflict is inevitable; rather, we should pay careful attention to the context and to the way that ethnic and racial identities are defined.

## Effects on Party Leaders, Nominations, and Social Movements

The psychological principles that apply to voting for a local candidate also imply a wide range of effects on other types of political and social behaviour, such as those related to party leaders, nominations, and social movements. Perhaps the largest affinity effects would occur if a racialized leader of a major party were elected. That party leaders are influential in elections around the world is well established (Bean and Mughan 1989; Bittner 2011; Gidengil et al. 2007; Garzia 2017; Watenburg 1991). Therefore, if affinity voting affects local candidates, it is very likely that those effects would be even stronger and more widespread in the case of party leaders because they are prominent in campaigns, the media, and advertising, and knowledge and salience of their characteristics is very high. Voters would be aware of the leaders' ethnicity, and the general concept of ethnicity would likely be salient in the election (an important factor in the degree of influence that ethnic identification has on vote choice). Media often report on the candidates' race,

gender, or other characteristics that make them exceptional, particularly if they are a "first" in some way (Tolley 2015).

In Canada, a racialized party leader would be considered newsworthy, and even if the leader downplayed his or her ethnicity, there would be much public debate about whether the country was ready to elect a racialized prime minister. Furthermore, a racialized party leader would likely produce at least some prejudiced or discriminatory attacks, which would also receive media coverage. These debates and media coverage itself would increase the salience of ethnicity. In addition, voters (quite correctly) think that party leaders are important and that the attributes of leaders are an important factor in vote choice. Party leaders in Canada are particularly powerful, even compared to other Westminster systems, making them even more important.

Party nominations and leadership races are also likely to be shaped by coethnic- and racialized-affinity effects. While there has been no systematic study of affinity voting in these contexts, there is widespread anecdotal evidence suggesting that minority candidates regularly win nomination meetings with support of coethnic party members. In fact, minority candidates have been so successful that there are periodic complaints from other party members and calls for party leaders to reform the nomination rules to restrict voting to citizens or, at least, to long-time party members (*Kamloops This Week* 2005; CBC News 2008). Party leaders have consistently declined to intervene, to the benefit of minority candidates who often win nominations with the apparent support of coethnic party members.

Affinity voting for both party leaders and in nomination contests is likely to produce long-lasting effects. Early research on ethnic voting (such as among Irish and Italian immigrants) showed clear preferences for in-group candidates, but it also revealed that early support and "first" candidacies produced long-lasting changes in support for parties (Wolfinger 1965). When the first candidate of an ethnic group runs for a prominent political office, they attract a substantial amount of support for their ethnic group to that political party. Wolfinger (1965) suggests that these first candidacies can be a form of critical election. There is debate about how many generations these effects will last for (see Dahl 1961; Parenti 1967; Barreto and Pedraza 2009), but Wolfinger argues that these effects can persist for three or four generations, perhaps more. In part, persistence likely depends on the degree to which party competition reinforces and reproduces the link between the party and the ethnic group. The socialization of partisanship,

however, provides another long-term mechanism. Since the partisanship of parents strongly influences the partisanship of their children (e.g., Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers 2009), initial partisanship based on ethnic ties might extend for multiple generations, well after strong ethnic identification has faded.

Initial affinity voting is also likely to lead to a long-term increase in participation. When people join a party or express support for a party (via voter ID calling, door knocking, social-media monitoring, etc.), these actions can result in a long period of party contact. The voter enters the party's support and GOTV lists, and they are called, mailed, or have their doors knocked on to remind them to vote. The sophistication of political data analytics is sometimes overstated (Hersh 2015), and Canadian parties have fewer resources than US parties; nonetheless, these standard techniques do have important positive effects on voter participation (Green and Gerber 2015) and are regularly employed in Canada. Contact is likely to continue indefinitely (or at least until the party is informed that the voter no longer supports it). As anyone who has been on a party mailing list knows, parties keep data forever, and given the near-zero cost of communication technologies such as email and auto dialing, they will continue to use it even with no subsequent confirmation of interest. As a result, recruitment through affinity effects may result in a lifetime of increased participation.

Affinity effects, particularly the role of coethnic identity and higher-order racialized identities, also have important implications for social movements and issue coalitions. Group identities are a crucial way for social movements to overcome collective-action problems (Brewer and Silver 2000; Klandermans 2002), particularly among marginalized or "low-power" groups (Simpson and Macy 2004). Because generating identification is difficult, movements that link to existing identities are more likely to mobilize people. For more narrowly defined cultural national groups, however, linking to a narrowly defined identity inherently limits the size of the potential coalition. Given the diversity of Canada's racialized population, this is a serious problem. A natural response is to build a broader coalition that incorporates more groups, but to do this effectively at the mass level, I argue, requires a superordinate identity.

There is essentially no research on multiethnic social movements in Canada, but research elsewhere reveals that multiethnic and multiracial movements can be especially effective. Many of these movements are in large cities where immigrant populations and African Americans have formed

political coalitions (Pulido 2006), but there are also nationwide examples, such as Martin Luther King's multiracial campaigns (Mantler 2013). In fact, even movements based on standard racial or ethnic groups are usually coalitions of national groups, such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other Asian Americans (Espiritu 1992). The Black Lives Matter movement in the United States was borne out of a relatively homogeneous African American population, but a similar movement in Canada draws on a "black" population composed of people who have many different national origins, yet the majority still view "black" as their primary racial identity (Black Experience Project 2017). Clearly, there are reasons why certain identities are more appropriate for certain movements and issues; in general, however, higher-order racialized identities apply to more groups, providing a broader basis for social movement mobilization. Although the research presented here focuses on affinity voting and local candidates, there is good reason to believe that affinity effects can also be found in many other forms of political and social behaviour.

## Interests and Identities in Racialized Politics

If racialized voters are more likely to support racialized candidates, why do they do so? That is, what is the motivation behind affinity voting? Here, the role of race and ethnicity is part of a larger debate about the meaning and content of politics, about whether political actions are fundamentally instrumental or expressive (Fiorina 1976; Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015). Within an instrumental understanding of politics, citizens cast ballots and take action as a means to some end – to change public policy for the better, to further their own interests, or to be consistent with what they believe is right. An alternative interpretation is that politics are expressive – citizens act to express their identities or to support their group's status, regardless of changes to government policy. As Achen and Bartels (2016, 4) put it, "even the most informed voters typically make choices not on the basis of policy preferences or ideology, but on the basis of who they are – their social identities."

Despite evidence demonstrating that people tend to vote for a candidate of the same ethnicity, little research explores why they do so. What does exist suggests notionally heuristic explanations, but it does so without testing the mechanism (e.g., Philpot and Walton 2007; Stokes-Brown 2006; L. Sigelman and C. Sigelman 1982). More than thirty years after initial experimental studies on affinity voting, there is a clear need for a more sophisticated

theoretical account of coethnic affinity voting and empirical examinations of the psychological mechanisms that the account proposes.

Potential explanations for affinity effects can be divided into two general categories: identity-based explanations and interest-based explanations. These categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive – both interests and identity can influence coethnic affinity voting, and one might serve as a mediator for the other. Nonetheless, they form distinct motivational accounts. As defined here, interest-based explanations involve rational, relatively intentional motivations, such as policy or ideological preferences or a general sense of self-interest. Identity-based explanations, on the other hand, involve expressions of group identity or bias produced by in-group favouritism.

The classic explanation for the effects of candidate race is interest-based heuristics: a candidate's race is a piece of information that tells voters about the candidate's likely positions and future actions (e.g., Popkin 1991, Lau and Redlawsk 2001). This is the core of instrumental politics: electing a candidate of one's own group is not a goal in itself but a means to some end, such as supporting a policy that favours the voter or is consistent with the voter's beliefs. Interests could produce affinity voting in multiple ways. For example, a voter might have a general sense that voting for the candidate of her ethnic group is in her own best interest, however she defines it. Influential theories of group consciousness provide accounts of this kind: group identity alone does not affect behaviour; rather, there must be a perception of inequality that political action can address (e.g., Miller 1981). Similarly, proponents of the closely related theory of linked fate argue that discrimination and oppression tie the interests of the individual and the group together (e.g., Dawson 1994). Since the candidate's ethnicity implies that he or she will pursue policies that benefits the group, group consciousness and linked fate lead to affinity voting (McConnaughy et al. 2010).

A second type of interest-based explanation posits that voters can stereotype candidates ideologically – that is, they might believe that the candidate's ethnicity tells them something about his or her general ideological position (e.g., McDermott 1998). Or voters might adhere to stereotypes about specific policy positions such as immigration or racial inequality based on the candidate's ethnicity. All of these explanations can be thought of as the link between descriptive and substantive representation, where the descriptive characteristics of legislators are an important indicator of the substantive

policy that they will pursue, and affinity voting is a product of the voter's desire for that policy.

Identity-based explanations imply a quite different account of politics. That is, voter self-identity has an independent effect on their choices, separate from their interests or the policies a candidate would implement. Perhaps the most prominent identity in political behaviour research is party identification, and it is now recognized that the traditional direction of causality is often reversed: party identification affects issue positions (Goren, Federico, and Kittilson 2009), perceptions of the economy (Gerber and Huber 2009), and leader evaluations (Bittner 2011) rather than the other way around. Psychological theories of identity provide an important account of why self-identity itself can affect choices. In particular, the arguments set out here draw on social-identity theory, which focuses on the relationship between the self and the status of the group (Tajfel 1981). The central insight of this theory is that identification links the self and the group. The successes and failures of fellow group members become our own successes and failures, and we are motivated to perceive in-group members as superior in all kinds of ways. This link between self-esteem and group success can produce a number of important effects, including a straightforward desire for a candidate of the same ethnic group to win, persuasion effects stemming from increased source credibility, and voting as a way to express membership and loyalty to the group. While interest-based effects have received the most attention by scholars of affinity voting, I argue that identity effects are far more influential than is commonly held.

## Racial and Ethnic Identities

If identities are important for affinity voting, which racial and ethnic groups do people identify with? At a more fundamental level, if people support candidates who belong to their own group, how is that group defined? These questions are complicated by the social construction of identities and the potentially infinite number of groups. As a result, identification is the product of two processes: the long-term definition of identity groups and the short-term selection of which groups a person identifies with at a given moment. Since the research that follows manipulates the short-term context and explores its effects on how people behave, it can shed light on how racial and ethnic groups identify and how ethnic and racial categories are defined and understood.

Long-term definitions of ethnic and racial categories do not exist separate from society, nor are people free from constraints in how they identify. It is hardly surprising that a person's individual experiences – including socialization, family history, and country of birth – are naturally important to how they identify. Less obvious, but equally important, is the way that society defines what ethnic and racial categories and identities mean and how they are (apparently) logically structured. For example, a woman might know that her family originated in Guatemala and, therefore, that Canadian society and the state bureaucracy defines her as Latin American. She has two plausible ways to identify – as Guatemalan or as Latin American – alongside definitions of who fits into those categories, what Roth (2012) calls a racial schema. Simultaneously, this racial schema rules out other identities, such as being black. These categories may appear logical but are in fact produced and enforced by social processes involving social power (Waters 2006), the state (Thompson 2016), the media (Tolley 2015), and the expectations of other individuals (Ujimoto 1999). The difference between the Canadian and US censuses illustrates this: in the United States, people are categorized as black Hispanics or white Hispanics, whereas in Canada black and Latin American are exclusive categories.

Nonetheless, the existence of bureaucratically defined categories, such as "Latin American," does not mean that these labels are psychologically meaningful. Just because people recognize that they objectively fit into that category does not mean that their internal sense of self-identity is defined in those same terms. Self-reports of group membership are what Verkuyten (2005, 61) calls "identity as a social fact," which is both conceptually and empirically different from a subjective sense of self-identity. While there are connections between the two, there can also be a great deal of variation.

In the analysis that follows, one important consideration is the ethnocultural categories used by Statistics Canada. These categories are used by the state, not to mention in academic research. In addition, they are also useful mid-range identities – narrower than the general "ethnic minority" category but still large enough to be politically important. However, despite their use by the government, it is unclear if they have any real weight in the self-identification of ordinary Canadians. Do these ways of defining ethnic groups have real psychological impacts? In the terms of identity theory, are these identities easily accessible to many Canadians, and do Canadians readily categorize themselves as belonging to these groups? I argue

that Canadians do in fact identify with Statistics Canada ethnic categories, but this identification is something that needs to be empirically investigated rather than assumed.

The short-term process that determines how Canadians identify in a given moment is also crucial, because many different identity groups can be psychologically meaningful to the same person. The woman in the above example could identify as Guatemalan or as Latin American, but her identify might also be influenced by her gender, religion, class, language, province of residence, her status as a parent or child, political party, or place of employment. In fact, each of us could identify with a potentially infinite number of groups, a great many of which could be important and politically influential. Yet all these possible identities cannot be active at the same time. While priming theory and framing theory show how some considerations are made "top of mind," and thus much more influential (Iyengar and Kinder 1987), self-categorization theory explains which group we identify with in a given moment (Turner et al. 1987).

One important set of factors that determine how a person identifies in a given moment are short-term contextual factors. For our purposes, the most important are those related to electoral context: the candidates with which the voter is presented. The candidates might all be white; one candidate might be of the same ethnicity as the voter; there might be a racialized candidate of a different ethnic group. These different choice contexts might make different identities salient – that is, the candidate context helps determine which identity in-groups are relevant and how a person identifies while making the choice between candidates. I argue that a candidate of the same ethnic group as the voter will make the voter more likely to identify with that ethnic group than with some other identity.

A less obvious situation is when a candidate is of a different racialized ethnic group. Do racialized Canadians see one another as members of some broader group of "racialized people" or "ethnic minority"? Racialized identity is more difficult to study than specific ethnic group identities because it is less concrete or real, in the sense that it lacks the institutional and social markers of more specific ethnic groups (e.g., associations and traditions; see Goette, Huffman, and Meier 2006) or even a generally accepted name. In the analysis that follows, this way of identifying is not measured directly and is inferred from behaviour. Nonetheless, I argue that a choice between a white candidate and a racialized candidate of a different ethnic group will lead

voters to identify with a more general racialized or ethnic-minority identity and to support the (racialized) in-group candidate.

This is an important empirical finding in its own right, but it also has far-reaching implications for Canadian society. A racial schema where people understand ethnic groups as, among other things, bifurcating society into white and nonwhite or racialized or nonracialized is not inevitable or natural. Nor should we assume this is the case; rather it needs to be empirically established. Returning to our example of the Guatemalan Canadian voter – why should she see a Chinese candidate as an in-group member and the white candidate as part of an out-group? The implication is that the dominant racial schema in Canadian society defines racial and ethnic categories this way, dividing society into racialized "ethnic" people and nonracialized white people. It would be less surprising if white people held this view, but the evidence presented here suggests that this structure of ethnic and racial identities is also inculcated and internalized by racialized people.

A simple thought experiment will help highlight the importance of these processes. Imagine the different ways that racial- and ethnic-identity categories – that is, different racial schemas – could be structured and defined (Roth 2012). One possibility is viewing racial and ethnic groups as equally distinct, what we might term a cultural equality structure. Such a society would be a collaboration of many cultures, all of which would be equally deserving of respect and participation. In this way of thinking, ethno-cultural groups have meaning and importance but are all equally "distant" – that is, all other ethnic groups are equally different from one's own group. In this scenario, it would not be surprising if citizens showed a preference for candidates of their own group and considered all other ethnic groups out-groups. However, in a society where ethnic identities are structured as simply a series of separate groups, there would be no natural alliance or sense of commonality among nonwhite ethnic groups.

A second possibility would be a racialized society in which some citizens are racialized and others are not. In this kind of a society, white Canadians would be normalized ("not ethnic") while others would be considered "ethnic" Canadians. Society would not be composed of distinct but equal cultural groups; it would be bifurcated into those who are ethnic and those who are not. Even if there were many specific ethnic subgroups, racialized groups would be viewed as part of some superordinate grouping. In contrast, white, European-origin Canadians would be part of another separate group. While

the Canadian national myth of multiculturalism implies a society of equal ethnocultural groups, the evidence presented in this book tells a more complex story: Canadians are loyal to specific ethnic groups, but they also think in terms of white and nonwhite.

## Structure of the Book

Chapter 2 begins with an evaluation of the existing empirical research on affinity voting and then sets out a number of potential theoretical explanations. These explanations fall into two broad categories based on their core motivation: interest-based explanations and identity-based explanations. Each category contains a number of different mechanisms or subtypes, including general group interest, ideological stereotyping, and policy attitudes (as types of interest-based explanations) and self-esteem, persuasion effects, and expressive voting (as types of identity-based explanations). In addition, I apply these explanations to two major scenarios: one in which the candidate and voter are of the same racialized ethnic group (which I refer to as coethnic affinity voting) and one in which candidates and voters are racialized but of different ethnic groups (which I refer to as racialized affinity voting).

The basic pattern of affinity voting is explored in Chapter 3 using a national survey sample of Canadians, including a large oversample of racialized respondents. The centrepiece of the survey is a voting experiment involving a set of fictional candidates. The results show evidence of greater support for candidates of the same ethnic group, relative to a white candidate (i.e., coethnic affinity voting). There is also some evidence of affinity voting for candidates of different racialized ethnic groups (i.e., racialized affinity voting).

In the chapters that follow I examine several explanations for affinity voting. Chapter 4 presents the argument that self-identification is a key concept for understanding identity effects. In-group bias and expressive voting turn on identifying with a group, not merely on cognitive recognition of an "objective" group membership. Thus, we require a measure of ethnic self-identification. I set out an adaptation of the Identification with a Psychological Group Scale (IDPG) and explore its demographic predictors.

Ethnic self-identity – the IDPG scale – is linked to affinity voting in Chapter 5. If identity is an important cause of coethnic affinity voting, then strength of ethnic self-identification, as measured by the IDPG scale, ought to interact with the effects of candidate and voter ethnicity. This means that

people who strongly identify as part of an ethnocultural group will be more likely to support a candidate of that group. Conversely, those who are members of an ethnic group but do not identify with it are likely to be indifferent, or even opposed to, candidates of their ethnic group. The analysis suggests that this is the case: the IDPG measure of ethnic self-identification has a strong, positive relationship with coethnic affinity voting. Although weaker in the latter case, this positive relationship obtains for both coethnic and racialized affinity voting. Chapter 5 concludes with an analysis of an open-ended question: "Why did you support that candidate"? The responses were coded into a series of categories related to different explanations for affinity effects and examined qualitatively. The results confirm the importance of identity; many respondents explicitly said they had voted for a candidate because of his or her ethnicity, while others described making more generalized racialized references, such as to minority or immigrant status.

The second set of explanations for coethnic affinity voting – interest-based explanations – are explored in Chapter 6, where I test the role of ideological stereotyping, policy attitudes, and perceived self-interest. The concept of ideological stereotyping explains coethnic affinity voting by suggesting that racialized candidates are stereotyped as being ideologically left-wing. Racialized voters are purportedly also left of centre, suggesting that what appears to be the effect of ethnicity may actually be a product of ideological preferences and stereotyping (McDermott 1998). I tested this account by asking respondents questions about perceived candidate ideology but found no evidence of ideological stereotyping. A different explanation might be about specific policies rather than general ideology: if people who want more immigration support a racialized candidate as a way to pursue that policy preference, then the apparent effects of identity might instead be a result of policy preferences. I test this for various policy attitudes, including immigration, racial inequality, government job creation, and crime, but there is little evidence that policy preferences are related to affinity voting.

Finally, I examined what I refer to as general group interest. In this account, voters believe that a candidate of their ethnic group will act, in some diffuse, nonspecific sense, in their interest. Voters may not have a sophisticated or coherent account of what general group interest is at stake, but they may, nonetheless, have a vague sense that the candidate who shares their ethnic group membership will better serve their interests. I tested this explanation using question wording that primed self-interest considerations but that had little or no effect. Lastly, I reviewed the results of the open-ended

question, revealing that many respondents explicitly cited candidates' ethnicity and minority or immigrant status as a reason for supporting them. Conversely, respondents hardly ever mentioned ideology, policy, or interests. Although they often mentioned the influence of the party when the candidate had a party affiliation, there seemed to be no connection to candidate ethnicity. In sum, while there is strong support for the effect of identity, a series of tests found little or no support for interest-based explanations.

Finally, Chapter 7 examines whether affinity voting is likely in Canadian federal elections and how widespread it might be. I evaluate three factors: party labels, the distribution of candidates, and the geography of racialized voters. Some research suggests that the effects of candidate ethnicity are significantly diminished when party cues are present (Kam 2007). If this is the case, the findings for affinity effects in Chapters 4 and 6 would be significantly less important – perhaps applicable to municipal politics or other nonpartisan settings but not to provincial or federal elections involving clear party affiliations. To test this, I examine how respondents reacted to the presence or absence of candidate party affiliations. Contrary to Kam's findings, I found no evidence that the presence of party labels attenuated the impact of candidate ethnicity, a finding that suggests that, at least at a psychological level, there is no reason affinity effects should not apply widely to both partisan and nonpartisan elections.

The second half of Chapter 7 examines two new sources of data: a data set of the ethnicity of candidates in the 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2011 Canadian federal elections and census data on ethnicity at the federal riding level. This data shows that racialized candidates are widely distributed rather than concentrated in a small number of ridings. In fact, approximately one-quarter of ridings have at least one racialized candidate. Finally, I used census data to compile the number of racialized Canadians in these ridings, and the findings indicate that affinity voting, as explored in this research, may apply, in principle, to some 1.6 million racialized Canadians. Moreover, an examination of the level of ethnic diversity at the riding level makes it clear that most racialized candidates face electorates in which their ethnic group is, at best, a plurality. In other words, few racialized candidates compete in ridings dominated by a single ethnic group. This highlights the importance of racialized affinity voting, and its role in rainbow coalitions.