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Okolie (2005) reminds us that there are advantages of racial Others interviewing racial Others, including a shared understanding of body language, emotions, anger and pain of racism that would not necessarily be shared or interpreted in the same way by a “stranger-researcher” (p. 263). In many cases, I found this to be true. However, as a former political staffer and racial “insider Other” in the City of Toronto, I was also acutely aware of how shared experiences might be unintentionally drawn out and emphasized. Kevin alluded to this in our interview. When asked why he automatically equated diversity with race in our conversation, he suggested that he “would consider the interviewer” and because “we share a common bond of being people of colour,” the link would naturally occur. However, upon further probing, Kevin acknowledged that in his policy work and when he speaks about diversity with his colleagues, he often does mean race, but because he uses diversity “differently,” in a more “strategic” and “innovative” way, diversity has “so much room for interpretation.” While my conversation with Kevin on the conflation of diversity and race does not entirely eliminate the concern of mutual identification, it does offer a context of how any aspects of shared identity might fall outside the scope of diversity work that staff do in the City.

Something else about my conversation with Kevin struck me. In our interview, Kevin immediately used diversity and race interchangeably, but then seemed to want to obscure this when describing his own work in the City. In fact, all staff I interviewed did this. As I will show, some emphasized that connections between diversity and race are made by others – bureaucratic and political staff, agencies, organizations, residents of Toronto – but not by them personally. Others insisted that diversity in the City was about not seeing race; or, as Tania described it, “just seeing people as people.” What inevitably became
clear was that my conversations with racialized City staff were not just about how staff “do” diversity in the City of Toronto. In fact, our conversations revealed more about how diversity shapes and is shaped by staff’s sense of who they are. And in this case, staff were each exceptionally capable of moving diversity beyond race.

This chapter begins the work of illuminating the production of racial subjectivities in the City of Toronto. Drawing on interviews with racialized City staff as well as City texts, I trace how the racial norms of diversity discourse enable the intelligibility of racial insider Others as exceptional, as a condition of their belonging in the diverse City. I also show how the bolstering tactics that racialized City staff engage in as they negotiate and maintain their subjectivity as exceptional in the City are premised on refusing racialization and race. And yet, because these tactics are legitimized against hegemonic conceptualizations of the racial Other, racialized City staff also inevitably re-inscribe racialization and race. I argue that these racial re-inscriptions are concealed by discursively inviting and producing racial insider Others to be not-raced subjects who belong in the diverse City.

Although the premise of this book is to trace the terms under which diversity discourse welcomes and excludes racial Others in the City of Toronto as well as how racialized City staff might take these terms up, I want to stress here that these terms are by no means fixed or seamless. I am also far too much of an optimist to align myself fully with Rose’s (1996) somewhat fatalistic view that spaces of war, where contestations of regimes of subjectivity occur, offer new but inevitably containable subjectivities in the present. As such, in this chapter I also begin to delicately unpack the collusions, complexities, and contradictions that arise when one is being exceptional as powerful moments that illuminate the anxieties of diversity discourse in the City of Toronto and thus, of race itself.

**Embodying Progress: Equity, Inclusion, and Intersectionality**

Throughout our interviews, racialized City staff expressed strong commitments to promoting “equity,” “inclusion,” and/or “intersectionality” in the City and how they saw diversity as a problematic term without an incorporation of these principles. Many spoke at length about how their interpretation of diversity includes an analysis of the intersections of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, geographic location, class/income, Aboriginal status, and/or immigrant status. Armed with this more critical view of diversity, racialized City staff
defined their own diversity work much like Nicole did: “strategic” and “much more systemic, structural … to change the organization.”

As racialized City staff described their investments in equity, inclusion, and intersectionality, many were tenacious about using these terms to position themselves and their work as the exception to how diversity is typically interpreted and/or done, specifically how diversity means race or people of colour for them, not me. For example, although Flora felt that others in the City as well as the general public use diversity to “describe multiculturalism, you know, Toronto in a multicultural context,” she explained how she has “had breakthrough moments” in teaching her colleagues in the City about intersectionality and how diversity is “not measured just by race.” Lisa also described how important it is to her that “diversity encompasses inclusivity and intersectionality … how various identities intersect to create unique experiences within and among individuals and groups.” Because she is both a woman of colour and an activist, the first thing that comes to her mind when she hears the term “diversity” in the City is actually “women, and intersectionality of women; but for the general public, it’s likely that they think of racialized people, generally … and like, people of different cultures.” As such, Lisa tries to use the term “diversity” strategically and “for political reasons” but “to also hint at intersectionality … but then I’ve also come from the background of, of understanding what intersectionality is.”

Others were less hopeful about their work. As Patricia offered in her critique of diversity in the City, “I find that they use the term ‘diversity’ as a sort of catch-all phrase when they actually mean race.” In Patricia’s view, the pride that is evoked through the City’s motto “Diversity Our Strength” makes it difficult for her to link diversity with “equity as anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic practices.” When I asked her to describe what would happen if she did make those links explicit in City policies, Patricia responded, “I, we, we’d probably get blown out of the window.”

It is worth noting here that many have critiqued the idea that institutions take up diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or intersectionality to foster institutional change. Matus and Infante (2011), for example, argue that discourses like diversity gain currency in higher education by being circulated with other attractive terms, such as “equality, equity, integration, and inclusion” (p. 294) to intensify and recirculate commitments to equality and democracy, in turn further marginalizing oppositional politics and non-normative identities. Bilge (2013) and Poisson (2018) point to how intersectionality – a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to describe the specific systemic oppression Black women face
at the intersection of multiple identities – has been co-opted and depo-
liticized by white liberals to signify an understanding of “different”
experiences while leaving institutional power relations intact. And as
Henry et al. (2017) poignantly argue in the context of Canadian univer-
sities, the silence around the under-representation of racialized faculty
in leadership positions, the extremely limited efforts to collect equity
data, and the lack of effort to retain racialized and Indigenous scholars
shows how diversity and equity policies are “at best ineffective and at
worst perpetuate structural racism” (p. 3).

But my concern was not with what equity, inclusion, and inter-
sectionality may or may not do in terms of achieving “progressive”
change in the City of Toronto. What struck me was that in our conver-
sations, staff persisted in drawing on equity, inclusion, and intersec-
tionality to position themselves as exceptional for moving diversity
beyond race, even as they also alluded to reproducing diversity as
race in practice. Daphne described how she finds diversity particu-
larly problematic because for everyone in the City and beyond, “white
people right here in this organization, in the media, in, you know, in
everyday life” it really means “racialized communities; for them it’s
been synonymous.” When she reconnects with people from her home
town, Daphne also explained how she sometimes feels as if she is in a
bit of a “time warp” and becomes frustrated because they too still see
diversity as being synonymous with people of colour. She shared how
doing international social justice work, being involved in social move-
ments, and her work at the City encouraged her to shift the meaning
diversity in the City to “being about achieving systemic equity,”
“to mean people who lack opportunity, access, power, on a range of
domains…. [I]t means race, yes, and it means income, it means geo-
graphic location, it means age.” Yet when I asked Daphne how she uses
diversity in her work, Daphne described how she has also “used it in
the ways that most people use it, meaning racialized people … and, so,
I think it’s confusing!”

For Stacey, diversity means access, equity, and representation of “the
composition of the community you serve” and that “it’s not about
race.” However, when I asked Stacey if she uses the term “diversity”
in her work, she replied, “I use it in every single management meet-
ing that I have, in terms of being mindful of things that we do. We’re a
diverse group. There are cultural differences that we need to be aware
of … and be respectful of.” Stacey later explained that even though she
pushes for access, equity, and human rights language, when she is hav-
ing conversations about achieving equity, she knows “it’s about white
females … it’s nobody else.”
In Edward’s view, when the City uses words like “diversity” and “inclusion,” it “only reinforces that difference and deviation from who we’re colonized by, the British, white male” as the norm in the City. Yet later in our interview, Edward offered that “inclusion and inclusivity” could push the City beyond its typical diversity practices – “ads with the Hispanic guy, the Asian female” – into “putting everyone on an equal playing field … with the same level of opportunity.” When I asked Edward to explain how he thought this could be accomplished through inclusion, the same term he critiqued just moments earlier for reproducing whiteness as the norm in the City, he laughed and responded, “It’s not inclusivity, it’s kinda more so, like control. I don’t know. It’s, it’s … you put me on the spot here, Shana.”

Moments of confusion like these led staff to reiterate and assert that they still saw and did diversity differently from most, and that equity, inclusion, and/or intersectionality were the means through which to, as Daphne said, “challenge the party line … to advance something different.” What began to unfold in interviews with racialized City staff led me to want to explore the kinds of subjectivities that were accessed when staff took up equity, inclusion, and intersectionality to do diversity “differently” in the City. My interest in subjectivity grew the more I witnessed staff investments in these terms continue to override any contradictions and collusions that arose in our conversations. Staff needed to maintain themselves as exceptional in the City. They needed to set themselves apart. The question that I was left with was whom they set themselves apart from, and why.

As I was thinking this through, an assertion by both Ahmed (2004) and Hook (2011) came to mind, that discourses align affective, bodily responses and emotion with historical norms to “make sense” of the encounter with racial Others. Here, I want us to consider what kinds of effects (and affects) might be generated specifically for racialized City staff as they negotiate their belonging in the City, under the historical norms of diversity discourse, which would also need to make sense of staff as racial insider Others. In this vein, we might consider how staff investments in equity, inclusion, and intersectionality to position themselves as exceptional illuminate the larger institutionalized processes that define and authorize racial subjectivity and belonging in the City, through the historical, racial norms of diversity discourse. And in this case, what I want to suggest is that staff are invited, produced, and bound through these norms to position and make sense of themselves as exceptional racial insider Others for being the racial exception.

Nicole and Salma further embodied the idea of being the racial exception in the City. Both were critical of past iterations of diversity, human
rights, equity, and access in the City and, by extension, how they were “done” by others before them. As Nicole explained, “this time” diversity, human rights, equity, and access would be coupled with her analysis – “an analysis that I don’t think many people here do” – to finally put a “strong anti-discrimination infrastructure” in place:

And that’s why I’m not mentioning diversity by itself, I’m calling it access, equity, diversity and human rights. To me, diversity without equity, access, and human rights is meaningless. Then it becomes just window shopping. So that’s why I insist on calling it, it’s a mouthful, I say E ... AEDHR, but you’ve got to call it AEDHR because it is important. Because to me the access, equity, and human rights pieces are far more important than the diversity pieces.

Although the actual work of inserting her analysis was frustrating and exhausting, Nicole felt energized by the small shifts that she was able to initiate. As she explained, “In a sense, I’m giving meaning to diversity in a way that I don’t think it has been before” (my emphasis).

In Salma’s view, past diversity work in the City was problematic because it was “just about achieving representation.” Although Salma believes that hiring people from racialized communities who bring a variety of perspectives would mean “diversity is a strength in the City,” she also felt that hiring and promoting particularly those with an analysis of equity, inclusion, and intersectionality was crucial to making the City “as strong as we could be”:

[...]here needs to be people in senior levels as well, that are from racialized communities, because they offer perspective and experience, hopefully. Not all of them do. Just because they are from racialized groups doesn’t necessarily mean they’re going to think progressively either, right? (my emphasis)

In our conversations Nicole and Salma set themselves apart and justified their belonging in the City by articulating a capacity for “progressive” analyses that would make the City stronger, better – a capacity that was ultimately lacking in other racial Others. These moments with Nicole, Salma, and others I interviewed show that, in taking up terms like “equity,” “inclusion,” and “intersectionality” to move diversity beyond race, racialized City staff also become intelligible and articulate as exceptional racial subjects who belong in the City because they have moved beyond the limits of their own race. To be an exceptional racial subject in the City is thus to simultaneously transgress and confirm the limits of one’s race.
In being exceptional, what also recedes further from view is that staff are *produced* to make sense of themselves in this way, under the racial norms of diversity discourse and in the contained space of the City, both of which have historically normalized and reconstituted the racial Other as the outsider. Indeed, we can think about how exceptional staff doing diversity “differently” is inextricably tied to racial thinking, which requires that they justify their positions in an otherwise rightfully white space. The justification for their positions in the City is enhanced by their specialized knowledge and recirculation of the most up-to-date “progressive” institutionalized terms when dealing with matters of race. The troubling paradox here is that staff’s desires to be exceptional change agents in the City are produced and contained by what Puwar (2004) calls “legitimate language” (p. 112), accessed and authorized almost exclusively by those in “civilized” professional white spaces. In taking up diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or intersectionality, staff thus exhibit their familiarity in and endorsement by other institutional spaces of whiteness. They are included, in essence, because they are credible racial Others.

Their production and inclusion has limits, however. As Hook (2007) reminds us, particular kinds of affective investments remain inextricably bound to racism so that even as racism becomes less explicit, even deniable, these affective investments continue racism’s historical effects in the present. Racism is thus a discontinuous interchange between particular political, discursive rationalities and individualized sentiments, where “each sets in motion a dynamics of implication for the other, most apparently perhaps through the conductor of affect” (p. 265).¹ And, as Thobani (2007) also reminds us, the racialized markings of the body cannot be overcome, as long as the raced body comes into existence as proof of the white subject’s superiority and knowledge.

What Hook and Thobani help us to see is that even as staff are produced to position themselves as and might desire to be exceptional racial insider Others, transgressive moments will occur as long the body is seen, felt, and/or experienced as race(d) and as out of place. At the end of our interview, Stacey recalled her experience of being racially profiled at an international airport and how this made her think that “no matter how much you want to define yourself and who you are, the preconceived notions people have of you as a racialized person will always be there.” For Stacey, diversity in the City enables these preconceptions because “diversity is a preconception.” As she explained, this is why, “no matter how welcoming of diversity the City might be,
you go for a job interview and the assumption is oh, you know … here’s another one.”

Edward also shared his experience of feeling as if he was the “exception to the rule” as a racialized staff person at a community meeting because, in addition to his presence being somewhat surprising to several of the attendees, he felt they thought he should have looked and acted more in line with racial stereotypes. Edward described an experience with one attendee in particular: “My interactions with her [one attendee] should’ve been different, I should’ve been acting a different way.” He elaborated on this experience, to explain his overall thinking on diversity:

So when we’re talking about diversity, and we are supposed to put everyone on the equal playing field, and then, we have a Councillor, or whoever, let’s say someone from a minority community that has a power, like, is in a position of power … that’s not considered the norm. Still. They’re always just an exception to the rule, type of thing, right? We still haven’t changed the rule.

Corey described the questions that often come up when the City promotes racialized staff into higher positions: “Did that person really deserve the opportunity? I mean, really? Or is it just about fulfilling the ‘optics’ of diversity? Pfff. It’s a joke.” He continued:

And now, what kind of burden does that person have on their shoulders now? Because I’m sure in the back of their head they’re probably wondering, most people think they’ve earned their position. I mean, they’ve worked hard enough, they’ve achieved … there’s this little thing in the back of their head, they must think … I gotta make sure I don’t f— up … so you’re, you’re always conscious of that stuff. You kind of have to be.

Staff’s historico-racial affective experiences and encounters of the body figure in excess of the discursive logics of diversity in that, however momentarily, they threaten to collapse the distinction(s) between exceptional insider Others and racial other Others that make up the City of Toronto as a “diverse” space. And yet these threats are precisely what incite racial insider Others to take up being the exceptional racial subject and, by extension, reproduce the racial norms diversity discourse, as a negotiation of their belonging. The raced body thus betrays a seamless exchange between diversity discourse, desire, and subjectivity in the City, only in the end to keep the racial norms of diversity going.
I was interested to explore how discourses of equity, inclusion, and/or intersectionality are taken up in City of Toronto texts, specifically how they might constitute and be constituted by the varied “exceptional” positionings associated with moving diversity beyond race in the City. While countless City texts refer to equity, inclusion, and/or intersectionality, I wanted to focus on texts that introduce these terms as a way to shift conversations about diversity, race, and/or racism in the City, to support and/or reflect the view of many staff that the insertion of these terms is a strategic way of moving diversity beyond race. I found that while equity, inclusion, and/or intersectionality texts did introduce more firm language about racism – not necessarily tied to changes in recommendations and/or action – in many texts the familiar racial norms of diversity discourse seeped through and continued to circulate. I have included some examples below.

**Equity**

The term “equity” appears in City of Toronto texts largely to address the under-representation of racialized and other marginalized groups as employees of the City, or to address barriers to accessing City services. For example, in 1975 the City of Toronto created an Equal Opportunity Program to achieve “more equitable representation and fuller utilization of women and men at all levels and in all categories of the organization, as well as a full recognition of their contribution to the work of the City” (City of Toronto, 1980a, p. 8747). In the 1980 annual review of the program, Alderman Sparrow recommended that the program be extended to include “special groups such as the disabled and minorities” (p. 8809), which was subsequently expanded to “native people, people with disabilities, racial minorities, and women in the civic workforce,” in response to the *Equality in Employment: A Royal Commission Report* by Justice Rosalie Abella (City of Toronto, 1992a, p. 69).

After a full-scale corporate review of Equal Opportunity policies and practices during the period 1986–90, the City set up a plan to expand its equal opportunity initiatives to achieve *equity* because:

(A) People with disabilities have not been hired at the same rate as other designated groups;

(B) Designated groups have been, on the most part, hired into temporary positions, but they are underrepresented in external hiring into the permanent workforce;
(C) Designated-group employees have less seniority and have historically faced systemic barriers to employment; they do not, therefore, have equitable access to internal opportunities for mobility and promotions within the civic workforce. (p. 69)

The Toronto Mayor’s Committee on Community and Race Relations also submitted their comments for the corporate review, explicitly pointing to racism as a significant factor in the unequal hiring, retention, and pay practices in the City. In their submission, the Committee provided strong evidence that, despite the City’s efforts, “salaries among racial minorities in the civic workforce have been declining relative to whites,” racial minorities continued to be under-represented in the permanent employee category, and “in the permanent civic workforce, Native people are represented by less than half their proportion in the city labour force as a whole (2%).” In closing, the Committee argued that “the City of Toronto still lags behind other employers in the hiring of racial minorities and Native people” (City of Toronto, 1992a, p. 75).

On 23 March 1992, City Council responded. To achieve equity and “in order for the City to maintain its leadership role and its accountability to the diverse community it serves” (p. 70), Council recommended:

1. That City Council authorize the establishment of a corporate fund for internship/bridging/apprenticeship positions to enable designated groups to gain access into occupations where they are underrepresented.
2. That City Council authorize the Executive Director of the Management Services Department to ensure that training and development strategies give designated group employees the knowledge, skills, and experience to compete successfully for management vacancies in the permanent workforce. (City of Toronto, 1992a, p. 70; my emphasis)

Here, any systemic barriers to employment identified by the corporate review and the Toronto Mayor’s Committee on Community and Race Relations are effectively erased by assigning designated groups a lack of skills, knowledge, and experience. But perhaps not all designated groups. As I discovered in my review of subsequent “equity” texts, internships, training, skills development, and mentoring programs are overwhelmingly recommended for racialized, immigrant, and Native/Aboriginal/Indigenous groups in particular, to improve their access to and mobility within the City’s workforce.

For example, the City of Toronto’s (2014a) Aboriginal Employment Strategy, which “supports the City’s ongoing commitment to equity and diversity,” sought to ensure “that the representation in the Toronto
Public Service workforce mirrors the representation of Aboriginal peoples in the City” (p. 3). Recommendations in the strategy to achieve representation of Aboriginal peoples included mentoring, skills training, and apprenticeships “for Aboriginal residents to meet qualifications for specific City of Toronto jobs” (p. 5).

Through this deliberate association of racialized, immigrant, and Aboriginal/Indigenous Others with a lack of skills, knowledge, experience, and training in and across City texts, racial Others are read and rewritten as having a racial “essence” that renders them naturally inferior and incapable. Of course, this narrative is not new. But the recirculation of racial lack unless racial Others are mentored by those who are more established and capable additionally draws on and reproduces discourses of moral obligation and paternalism that are rooted in colonial, racial thinking, and also reproduce a natural association of the somatic white, male, upper-/middle-class norm (Puwar, 2004) in the City with power, knowledge, and capability. The denial of racism in the City through lack, embedded in the language of equity, is thus premised on historical narratives that are familiar but also reconstituting of the diverse City as a rightfully white space.

Significantly, the circulation of City “equity” texts that recommend mentoring also co-produce racial and/or immigrant lack with Aboriginal lack. As Coleman (2015) asserts, (fear of) proximity and settler guilt determines how encounters with Aboriginal people are interpreted and by whom, as well as what discourses we draw on to make each encounter repeatedly intelligible to ourselves. In City texts, conflating Aboriginal, racial, and immigrant Others under the racial norms of diversity discourse – continued through equity – is an attempt to “make sense” of ourselves and the City as being beyond our colonial “past” and as non-violent, through the erasure of Aboriginal bodies who put these senses most at risk. Aboriginal Others are thus (re-)produced as “diverse” to further their erasure.

Equity also appears in City texts to frame barriers to access for racialized groups in terms of language difficulties and/or “cultural” differences. For example, in May 1991 the City of Toronto created the Multicultural Access Program (MAP) in response to problems that members of ethnic and racial minorities had encountered in getting access to municipal services (City of Toronto, 1990b). During the implementation phase of MAP, Mr. Allan Rodney of the Native Canadian Centre submitted his concerns about the focus of the program:

That the emphasis on multiculturalism may obscure the real issue of concern to Native people which is the issue of racism. The document is very soft
In its treatment of racism and the City’s intention to eradicate racism at both an institutional and a personal level. (City of Toronto, 1991b, p. 251; my emphasis)

In response to the assertion of Mr. Rodney and others that the program was not adequately addressing racism in the City, an external consultant was hired to evaluate MAP. The consultant recommended that the program be renamed “the Service Equity Program (SEP),” along with a series of initiatives that would “make City of Toronto services available to racial and ethnic groups” (City of Toronto, 1992b, p. 120). These initiatives were to resolve what he identified as the core reasons why racial and ethnic groups were inhibited from accessing City services: language issues, “organizational complexity” (p. 120), and the lack of racial/ethnic representation in the City’s workforce (which City Council later sought to resolve through mentoring). Although the consultant also requested that City policies and procedures be reviewed for discriminatory barriers, he offered no specific direction on why, how, or when this would be done. Again, the City was absolved from any responsibility for racism by drawing on familiar, historical racial norms that, through their recirculation in City texts, remain largely unquestioned.

It is important to note that in 2006, City Council passed a resolution that Equity Impact Statements accompany all City reports, to ensure that City departments were identifying and working to remove barriers to access for equity-seeking groups and that addressing these barriers was also prioritized in City decision-making (City of Toronto, 2006). In more recent years, the efficacy of these statements has come into question (see, e.g., City of Toronto, 2014c). However, in some cases, City staff have used Equity Impact Statements to explicitly refer to the social, political, and/or economic exclusion of various groups in the City.

For example, the Equity Impact Statement for the TO Prosperity: Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy 2017 Report and 2018 Work Plan (City of Toronto, 2017c) outlines how the ongoing “racialization, feminization, and geographical concentration of poverty in Toronto” (p. 3) formed the basis for recommending that a series of program and service initiatives be considered as part of the 2018 budget process. Importantly, the Report/Work Plan goes on to directly challenge the historical conflation of racialized and immigrant that also underpins the City’s diversity narrative: “This [higher rates of poverty and lower incomes among racialized groups] is not simply a function of visible minority groups being newer to the country” (p. 4; my emphasis). Of course, Equity Impact Statements do not guarantee that the City will take any action; in the case of the
Report/Work Plan, the majority of budget asks were not approved by Council. It is thus worth considering what the impacts of these few “intervention” texts are, especially as they are produced and emanate largely in isolation in the City. If indeed these texts exist, circulate, and are taken up by the City-at-large as exceptional texts – perhaps prepared by exceptional racialized staff – the question we must return to is about the relationship(s) between race, space, being exceptional, and direct action to address racism; again, what these exceptional moments and siloed spaces do for the City, for staff, and if their effects (and affects) are such that they might largely contain action. ⁶

My search also led me to quite a few texts describing the City as a leader, role model, and/or exceptional at achieving “equity.” ⁷ For example, in 2009 the City crafted a *Diversity and Positive Workplace Strategy* in response to a report from Ryerson University, which detailed the “underrepresentation of visible minorities in the supervisory level at the City of Toronto” (City of Toronto, 2009a, p. 4). The City’s response was to implement a strategy that would build upon its current “leading edge best practices in equity”: the Black African Canadian Employment Equity Pilot Project (mentoring program for Black/African Canadian employees), Career Bridge (internships for internationally trained professionals) and the Profession-to-Profession Mentoring Program (mentoring for immigrants) (p. 4).

Here, the *Diversity and Positive Workplace Strategy* draws on the language of equity to continue the City’s legacy of linking the lack of racialized and immigrant employees in the City with a lack of knowledge, skills, and training. However, the Workplace Strategy also recommended that City supervisors and managers be trained on “Inclusion in the Workplace: Race” and “Duty to Accommodate” (City of Toronto, 2009a, p. 2), to “capitalize upon the Human Rights Office’s trends analysis to provide training to prevent complaints” (p. 5). While this recommendation hints at racism in the organization, no details are provided on why this particular recommendation is offered, what the “trends” are, what the complaints are, or why these trainings are specific to race.

As I discovered, the City is often written about and taken up as a leader in equity through occluding institutional racism. A lack of skills, knowledge, training, language, and/or cultural adaptability continues to be identified and recirculated in City texts as reasons why access for racialized groups is limited, despite claims that racism is the core issue. But there is also something to be said for the fact that, in and across several City texts, the City’s leadership in achieving equity is tied almost exclusively to the City’s ability to recognize and address lack in racial Others. The City’s stellar reputation thus depends on the reproduction and
familiarity of historical racial norms as well as what racial and discursive anxieties they alleviate, across multiple contexts.

_inclusion_

The word “inclusion” appears in City texts largely in terms of seeking to increase the social, political, and/or economic participation of marginalized Torontonians in the life of the City.\(^8\) Notably, “inclusion” rarely circulates in City texts without equity, diversity, and/or human rights language. In the few times the language of inclusion does appear by itself and in reference to race/racial barriers in the City,\(^9\) it also perpetuates and recirculates racial lack.

For example, in the _Recreation Service Plan 2013–2017_, inclusion is listed as one of four guiding principles that would help the City’s Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Department to further “recognize diversity and encourage participation of marginalized and racialized people and groups” (City of Toronto, 2012a, p. 8). To gauge just how inclusive recreation programs and services were, a survey of residents was conducted that asked if the City’s recreation centres were “welcoming to newcomers, accommodating to those with a language barrier, and meeting the culturally diverse needs of Torontonians” (p. 57; my emphasis). Here, potential barriers to access and participation in the City’s programs and services are already “pre-framed” as language difficulties and cultural differences, not racism. Importantly, this pre-framing shaped the survey in ways that occlude and/or could preemptively discourage claims of racism in the City’s recreation centres and programming.

And yet racism still pokes through. Included in the collation of survey data was the observation that “some people from racialized backgrounds were less satisfied” (City of Toronto, 2012a, p. 47). This is the only place in the 92-page Recreation Plan where racism and/or racial barriers are hinted at, yet there is no discussion beyond this; only “these results tell us that the foundation is in place, but that we cannot lose sight of active inclusion as a principle of service” (p. 47). This is what I found particularly interesting: the language of inclusion methodically divorces the City’s recreation centres and programming from racism/claims of racism right at the outset, specifically through the survey sent out to Toronto residents seeking to determine if services and programming were instead “culturally” appropriate and/or accommodating to various forms of racial lack. Yet once racism in the City’s recreation centres and programming is identified by the survey, inclusion – or “active inclusion” – is invoked as the way to address racism. In short, a report
determining that the City’s “inclusion” paradigm might not work also then determines and confirms that inclusion works.

In addition, the brief “hint” about racism is, in the report, placed immediately adjacent to the following quote from a survey respondent (and in larger text):

It is very challenging to get information and know what is available as a newcomer. I needed someone to introduce me. It was easier after I knew my way around. I imagine it would be even more challenging if I didn’t speak English. (City of Toronto, 2012a, p. 47)

In this text, not only are claims of racism shrunk to one line, the strategic placement of it also suggests an attempt at further occlusion/erasure. Also in this text, as in others, the language of inclusion occludes barriers to access and participation for racial Others in the City through further normalizing Others as the site of language difficulties and/or cultural inadaptability. Importantly, recirculating lack in these ways – which, as I will show throughout this book, the City does repeatedly – also assumes and naturalizes a conflation of racialized and immigrant, and furthermore, with those whose first language is not English. These assumptions are deeply raced, in that they assume that all racial Others are immigrants and experience “difficulties” simply because they are not from here. In this, the white male somatic norm is again naturalized in the diverse City, as one who rightfully belongs and is also innocent of racism.

Intersectionality

The term “intersectionality” appears in City texts to make gender issues a priority in the City, which, as I discovered, can also be premised on racial lack. During the 2002 public consultations for the City’s Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination, the Chair of the City’s Community Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, City Councillor Pam McConnell, introduced the concept of intersectionality as a way for the City to account for the different experiences women and men have in the City’s programs and services. Councillor McConnell asked that a gender-based intersectional analysis tool also be developed that would examine the differential impacts of policies and services on gender identity as they intersect with other identities. Importantly, Councillor McConnell saw this tool as a way to ensure that the City did not make women’s issues peripheral when discussing issues of racism (City of Toronto, 2002f).
As Councillor McConnell was pushing for an intersectional analysis in the City, she also put forward a Notice of Motion to the October 2002 meeting of Toronto City Council regarding the case of Amina Lawal and, more broadly, Sharia Law in Nigeria (City of Toronto, 2002e). The Notice of Motion asked Toronto City Council to convey the concerns of Torontonians regarding the case to the Prime Minister, and to help petition the government of Nigeria to ensure that the “horrific sentences against Amina Lawal” (p. 2) were not carried out. In her Motion, Councillor McConnell issued the following statements:

WHEREAS the people of Toronto have been in the forefront of efforts to create a compassionate society and have demonstrated a long commitment to women’s equality and human rights; and
WHEREAS in March 1883, Toronto City Council supported the founding of the Toronto Women’s Suffrage Association at a meeting held in Council Chambers; and
WHEREAS in 1909, a member of Toronto City Council presented a petition of more than 100,000 signatures to the Premier of Ontario in support of women getting the vote; and
WHEREAS in 1973, the City of Toronto established a Mayor’s Task Force on the Status of Women, which brought about major changes in the delivery of municipal services, particularly health care for women and children, day care, employment equity and equal pay; and
WHEREAS Amina Lawal, a 30-year-old Muslim woman was sentenced to death by stoning by a Sharia court at Bakori in northern Nigeria, for having a child outside of marriage; and
WHEREAS the sentence on Amina Lawal has provoked a world-wide wave of shock and revulsion;
WHEREAS the sentence imposed on Amina Lawal constitutes torture and is cruel, inhumane and degrading and runs counter to international human rights standards; and
WHEREAS Toronto City Council takes a leadership role in the fight of all forms of discrimination and is committed to human dignity, social equity, social justice and solidarity…. (City of Toronto, 2002e, pp. 1–2)

Although Councillor McConnell introduced intersectionality with the aim of analysing “the needs of our diverse communities” (City of Toronto, 2002f, p. 3) as they intersect with gender, in practice, intersectionality was taken up to prioritize gender in the City, under specific terms. In the
case of the Motion, prioritizing issues of gender was undergirded by the reproduction of colonial, racial thinking, positioning “them” – a primitive, backwards, uncivilized, sexist/misogynist/patriarchal Nigeria – against “us,” the diverse City of Toronto, an exceptional space where progress for and solidarity among women are of the utmost importance.

I am reminded here of Smith’s (2010) assertion that the pursuit of equity in the Canadian academy has historically been about pushing for gender equity, a “women first” approach that has almost exclusively benefitted white women. In a similar vein, intersectionality was co-opted and institutionalized in the City of Toronto in a way that made issues at the intersections of race and gender peripheral (if not completely non-existent) unless and until issues of gender could be extracted, isolated, and then serve as proof of the need for their ongoing prioritization. In this, the multiple, oppressive experiences of racialized women inevitably served to reinforce a longstanding political agenda seeking equality/equity for white women in the City.

Significantly, the splitting off of issues of gender from issues of race also enabled the reframing of the experiences of racialized women because they were outside the bounds of gender and/as whiteness. For example, the City’s Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Department issued a response to the report If Low Income Women of Colour Counted in Toronto (Khosla, 2003), which drew on an intersectional analysis to show how women of colour in low-income neighbourhoods across the city, including immigrant and refugee women, faced barriers to accessing public recreation opportunities. The department’s response assured that with women being “an identified target group within the access and equity agenda” in the department as well as the City at large, Parks and Recreation was “committed to increasing the variety and number of recreation opportunities (i.e. sports, fitness, and other activities) for women” (City of Toronto, 2004, p. 3).

The department then reiterated several of its existing low- to no-cost recreational opportunities for women and for recent immigrants. In this, low-income racialized women were pigeonholed as either women or immigrants, leaving little room for an understanding of the specific experiences and/or differential access for low-income racialized women who were not immigrants or who might still face barriers, despite the department’s numerous “women-only programs” (p. 3). However, as a cultural initiative for women, the department offered those who were new Canadians, “especially those from warm climates, opportunities to learn and play Canadian winter sports” (p. 3).

Intersectionality was thus taken up within existing diversity frameworks to render all low-income women of colour as immigrants, culturally
“different,” and/or needing to adapt. In addition, the response’s claim that women-only programs were already in place and were providing many opportunities for women to “come together, to share, to show support and to socialize” (p. 3) discounted the very premise of Kho-sla’s report: that low-income women of colour in Toronto were over-whelmingly not participating. The question of which women were participating in women-only programs (and by extension, which were not) also became irrelevant under the historical terms of intersectionality and gender in the diverse City, which almost exclusively bypasses race by relying on its familiarity in the present, to abject and exclude racial other Others and their experiences.

So what does this all mean? As I have begun to illuminate, recirculating a lack of skills, knowledge, experience, language, and/or cultural adaptability in City texts is how the City reinscribes and normalizes the historical, racial norms of diversity discourse, in order to continue to disavow the racism that would otherwise threaten its status as an exceptional and diverse space. I give several more examples throughout the book. However, in the context of equity, inclusion, and intersectionality, I ask that we pay particular attention to how experiences of racism in the City are the trigger for the incitement and reproduction of these racial norms. In this, a paradox emerges. In inviting and seeking to advance critical insights into systemic barriers to access and other forms of racism in the City, equity, inclusion, and intersectionality can also risk re-authorizing and recirculating historical, racial thinking in the present and ultimately the City of Toronto as a space that is innocent of racism.

The texts I have presented are not to be taken as representative of what all equity, inclusion, and intersectionality texts might “do” (or not do) in the City. The key takeaway I wish to put forward – in line with my project’s aim to trace how racial norms and practices continue to operate and through what means in the City – is that the familiar racial norms of diversity discourse can and do continue to circulate through these “more progressive” terms. An additional paradox thus arises when we consider that equity, inclusion, and intersectionality are also bound to and further legitimized by staff bolstering themselves as exceptional, to justify their belonging in the diverse City. Staff take up equity, inclusion, and intersectionality in part to refuse their own racialization in the City, only to reinscribe and justify the racialization and abjection of racial other Others on the “outside.” Although there were moments of contradiction and collusion in my conversations with racialized City staff on what equity, inclusion, and intersectionality actually do in the City, I suggest that these contradictions and collusions become less evident (or
relevant) because many staff understand themselves to be exceptional, agentic subjects. Taken together, City texts and interviews on equity, inclusion, and intersectionality point to important processes of refusal and re-inscription and how they are co-authored.

As Davies (2000) writes, our desires for freedom, autonomy, and agency in institutions can lead to an idea of ourselves as being outside of power, which is integral to the continuity and occlusion of “both the discourses and subject positions made available within them” (p. 55). Importantly, the desires for freedom, autonomy, and agency continue to be made relevant and are validated in the space of war (Rose, 1996) where discourses and power are contested. In a similar vein, I suggest that although the desires to be exceptional and agentic racial subjects in the City might be produced through diversity discourse, they intensify and are validated through the recirculation of equity, inclusion, and intersectionality, enabling, racialized staff to position themselves further outside of diversity discourse, race, and power in the City. Perhaps the most difficult contradiction to consider here is that staff’s agentic positionings outside of power, as an effect (or affect) of diversity discourse, race, and power in the City, can further conceal the failure of equity, inclusion, and intersectionality to move diversity beyond race.

At this juncture, I feel it is necessary to again stress that the purpose of my discussion on contradictions and collusions is not to blame racialized City staff. Instead, I see the contradictions and collusions that arose in conversation and in City texts as sites of illumination into the productive force of diversity discourse to simultaneously create the perception of an individual, autonomous, and agentic Self and conceal how that Self comes to be spoken into existence through race and power. Earlier in this chapter, I argued that moments of tension in my conversations with staff are powerful in that they show how the production of the exceptional racial subject in the City can never be fully complete as long as the body is seen and felt as race(d) and out of place. In other words, the subjectivization of the exceptional racial subject in the diverse City cannot fully contain the materiality of race.

The argument I have been carefully building here is that contradictions, collusions, tensions, and/or anxieties do not preclude the possibility of strategy or agency for racialized staff in the City; rather, they are the beginnings of what makes agency possible. As Davies (2000) argues, agency occurs when we recognize that desire is integral to the reproduction of discourses that make up our “essential Selves” (p. 64) in relations of power. Our work, then, is to expose the desires, positions, and practices that are mired in contradictions, so that our essential Selves and the discourses that contain them begin to unravel. Following Davies, I
suggest that an awareness of contradictions, collusions, tensions, and anxieties also makes visible the powerful investments in and continued relevance of race in the diverse City, including the terms, discourses, and bodies through which it thrives and is occluded.

**Not Seeing**

In my interviews with racialized City of Toronto staff, tense and at times contradictory moments also arose as staff were describing the City of Toronto as diverse, colour-blind, and welcoming to all. Tania began our conversation by describing how she felt very lucky to live in Toronto, where everyone is so “welcoming, open, and open-minded.” However, Tania also admitted that her identity and sense of belonging in Toronto is tied to how she views experiences of racism in the city, including her own:

I have that kind of mentality, so I guess I don’t even really allow myself to see anything but like, of course, I’m Toronto. Like, I’m the city of Toronto because I was brought up here. Yeah, so I don’t really see it. I don’t let myself see … like even with the, when you were asking me about the outsiders, like, there is obvious racism and there is stuff, but I’m like, no. Like, it’s OK. Like, only see the good. Is that weird? Does that make sense?

What Tania was describing was something I later understood to be quite central to my analyses of diversity in the City: identity, subjectivity, and belonging for racialized City staff are discursively and spatially constituted. As Ahmed (2007) explains, certain bodies are included, belong, and constitute what a space “is” and is known to be in discursive terms (i.e., “diverse”), while others who contest what it is are deemed a threat. At the same time, how a space is articulated and known in discursive terms (i.e., “diverse”) shapes which bodies are included and belong in that space, and under what conditions. Following Ahmed’s logic, we can begin to understand how discourse, space, belonging, and the granting of subjectivity for racial Others in the City are co-produced.

In Tania’s case, not letting herself see race/racism, which she viewed as a necessary function of belonging as a “Torontonian,” also shaped how she took up being racialized staff in the diverse City. Despite knowing that she was “filling the [skin colour] quota” and was “being used for, because of my background,” Tania thought it was more important to continue “to find the silver lining” in her work, including that she “gets to be on the inside.”
Still, tensions crept in. As Tania was describing how she felt when she was officially hired by the City, racial anxieties bubbled to the surface:

I was just, I was happy that [her supervisor] accepted me as well. Hey, that’s weird, that I would think that! That I had this whole like, oh, they accept me. Anyhow, now that I’m here, I’m gunna show them what I can do. (My emphasis)

We can begin to get a sense here of how staff “not seeing” is integral to their being exceptional and to their belonging in the diverse City. However, what really captured my interest in my conversation with Tania and others I interviewed was how the co-production of the diverse City and the exceptional racial subject who does not see race/racism also depends on the ongoing containment of affective, embodied responses associated with being race(d) and out of place in the diverse City. In interviews, staff’s affective responses to being race(d) – e.g., “Hey, that’s weird, that I would think that!” – repeatedly collided with their almost utopian view of the diverse City and by extension, their positionings as exceptional racial subjects. In continuing to explore the co-production of the diverse City and exceptional “not seeing” subject below, I emphasize and then unpack some of these affective responses so that we can better understand how diversity is revitalized in the present through the bodies of racialized staff in the City.

In Michelle’s view, the City’s motto “Diversity Our Strength” conveys how people in Toronto come together, live together, and work together, regardless of skin colour, background, culture, or religion. Working in the City of Toronto has been a prime example:

Everyone’s friendly. You know, you could see a Chinese person walking down the hall, they’ll get treated the same as the white person or the Black person … [W]e’re in a professional environment where we understand that, you know, everyone deserves respect and should be treated with equity.

As our conversation on diversity progressed, however, Michelle conceded that, in terms of who works in the City, it “really is very, very white.” In fact, Michelle returned to this point a few times during our interview, yet when I asked Michelle to share her thoughts on why the City is so white, she replied, “It may be that my judgment is wrong.” Later, she returned to the question: “I don’t know what it is, to be honest. I don’t know why it’s like that.” For Michelle, racism in the City and/or the City’s hiring practices was simply not a possibility.
Michelle also drew on her experiences helping racial Others to access City services to further justify her view that racism does not exist in the City. As she described it, “they” often say “I am being discriminated against blah blah blah” if they do not get the help they want. As such, Michelle sees claims of racism largely as “a card that people try to use” to get more attention. Equally frustrating for Michelle are racial Others who assume that she will help them or be more sympathetic to their needs “because I’m [her ethnicity] or because I’m [her skin colour].” For Michelle, diversity was about change, about moving beyond racial differences. The problem in the City was not racism; rather, it was the people who continued trying to make race and racism relevant.

Stacey was also adamant that she “never looks at people in terms of their race” but that some racialized staff do and try to use it to their advantage. For example, some staff who share the same racial background as Stacey will often “circumvent their supervisor” and “jump the queue” to gain direct access to her for help with work issues. In fact, as Stacey explained, it is quite common for “visible minority” staff in departments across the City to want direct access to their “visible minority” supervisors, but because she personally values competency and skills above all else, she maintains strict boundaries: “If you’re not skilled at your job, forget it! I’m not rewarding you for bad behaviour!” Implicit and perhaps explicit in Stacey’s comments is the sense that other racialized City staff were “jumping the queue” because they were unskilled and/or bad at their jobs, not because of racial tensions and/or racism that might exist in various departments across the City. However, the undercurrent that ran throughout my conversations with Stacey, Michelle, and others I interviewed was that racial Others become the problem in the diverse City when they see race/racism, because seeing race/racism means seeking special treatment. In the diverse City, seeing race/racism is an attempt to jump the queue.

Staff thus positioned themselves as exceptional racial subjects for having “made it,” in the City and beyond, entirely on their own merits. They had the “right” education, skills, language, behaviour, and social capital (Henry et al., 2017; Puwar, 2004), which earned them a place in the City – again, a space where racial Others would otherwise not belong. In doing so, however, staff were also implicitly aligning themselves with the historical, racial narrative of diversity discourse: other racial Others were not participating and/or employed in the City because they lacked the proper education, language, culture, skills, and knowledge.

At certain moments, staff felt compelled to separate themselves even further from racial other Others who “see.” They invoked examples of
how bad/backwards racial other Others were for seeing race/racism, again confirming the historical racial norms that underpin the diverse City narrative, but this time also justifying the denial of racial other Others who make racial claims. In my review of interview transcripts, I was able to trace how staff reinforced this separation most in moments when, by other racial Others seeing race, staff were seen as and/or felt race(d) too. In “seeing,” racial other Others got too close. Importantly, these were moments when, again, the distinction(s) between the exceptional insider Other and the racial other Other who make up the City of Toronto as diverse began to dissolve.

In this vein, I want to suggest that staff emphasizing their separation from “them” is an effect of the production of the exceptional racial subject in the City, which, as I argued earlier, cannot fully contain the materiality of being race(d) and out of place. In this case, staff making these distinctions clearer further contains racial other Others who, in seeing race/racism, ultimately betray the production, positioning, and desires of staff as exceptional, not-raced subjects who belong in the diverse City. Staff thus refuse their own racialization and race in the diverse City by locating them in racial other Others who “see.” In doing so, staff uphold and continue the racial scripts of diversity discourse that insist on the irrelevance of race and racism in the City. Yet in these moments we also begin to understand how some staff seeing or even naming race and racism in the City is contained by the threat of them becoming race(d). Again, I emphasize that these affective moments are powerful in that they expose the racial anxieties of diversity discourse and the desires for an essential Self beyond the binds of race in the City that suture them, however temporarily.

What I have described thus far are some of the insidious ways in which racialized staff are produced as exceptional for not seeing race and racism in the City. I would be remiss at this point to not also discuss the more obvious, tangible ways in which some racialized City staff are “encouraged” to not see. For example, in our interview, Alison described how she is not invited to dinners or BBQs with management because management does not know if she will “play ball” and “have their backs” when managing issues of diversity: “whether when the chips are down, I’m going to align myself with them, or am I going to be the person that’s going to be the whistle-blower, right?”

Puwar (2004) writes that when racialized bodies talk about racism in diverse institutions, they are engaging in “renegade acts” (p. 138). Those who call attention to racism risk whatever safety, security, and racial anonymity they have built in their careers. In diverse institutions especially, speaking about racism is not only unjustified, it is offensive.
After my years as political staff in the City, I can vouch for the claims Puwar is making. Even so, the idea that racialized staff and other racial insider Others cannot talk about race and racism in the City is dangerously simplistic. I was hired in part because I talked about race and racism in the City and continued to do so despite several tense encounters. Committees are formed in the City specifically to talk about racism. The City hosts many consultations with Toronto residents on how it can do better at addressing racism in its midst. Racialized staff are also hired in the City, particularly in the People, Equity & Human Rights Division (formerly Equity, Diversity & Human Rights, and before that, Access, Equity & Human Rights) because of their “expertise” in racial issues. In fact, they contribute significantly to the City’s diversity narrative, not just in terms of the racial representation they bring, but also because of what they do in and for the City to tackle racism and discrimination. This, I argue, is why we need to pay close attention to how and under what terms race and racism in the City are discussed, and by whom.

Exceptional via the “Outside”

The common thread that ran throughout all of my interviews with racialized City staff was that they needed to justify their belonging in the City. Whether staff were more progressive than most, or had the “right” language, or were going to be “the one” to finally do diversity differently, or didn’t see race, or didn’t need to rely on race/claims of racism to get their positions or to be good at their jobs, they belonged in the City because they were exceptional – in many respects “better” than most Others at thinking through diversity. And yet these exceptional subjectivities were premised on and accessed through racial norms that reproduce a racial outside(r). The argument I have begun to carefully sketch out in this chapter and will continue to build throughout the rest of the book is that subjectivity and belonging for the racial insider are authorized (though not necessarily granted) through the reproduction of this outside(r).

Before I conclude this chapter, I want to spend a bit of time focusing on how the City also pulls the outside(r) – as the site(s) of race/racism – into its reproduction as exceptional. There are several examples in City texts. For example, in May 1994, Toronto City Council rescinded its economic sanctions against South Africa as a result of its “ending [of] 46 years of constitutionalized apartheid” (City of Toronto, 1994). The motion to Council to rescind economic sanctions congratulates the African National Congress and the South African government for “the progress being made toward racial harmony and democracy” (p. 1813)
and then explicitly states, in a number of places and in a number of ways, the City of Toronto's role in making the end of apartheid in South Africa possible:

Further be it resolved that City Council, in acknowledging of the significant role its policies and advocacy for disinvestment in South Africa have played in the bringing down apartheid through economic sanctions, recognize its continued responsibility to support South Africa in the process of achieving its goals as a peaceful, non-racial, non-sexist, economically viable democratic nation where all of its citizenry are empowered to achieve their aspirations for food, clean water, housing, health, education, employment, and culture. (p. 1812; my emphasis)

In this text, the City is also presented as a role model for South Africa, specifically through positioning the exceptionally progressive and healthy state of the City against the exceptionally desolate state of South Africa:

[I]n conjunction with the Federal Government, [the City of Toronto] could offer to share with South African municipalities their municipal government expertise, particularly in the areas of public health, housing, and public works so that South Africa achieves its goals of providing good health for all its citizenry and housing for the more than 10 million Black South Africans who live in squatter camps or unsafe, inadequate, overcrowded conditions without benefit of basic services. (p. 1813)

The City’s Supplementary Report: 2011 Progress Report on Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Achievements (City of Toronto, 2012b) draws on and recirculates familiar “celebratory” diversity rhetoric:

Toronto welcomes the cosmopolitan diversity from immigration. It brings with it tremendous cultural richness and cross-cultural knowledge. From street names, heritage architecture, cultural celebrations to art, music, literature and sports, the diversity created by immigrants and refugees has enriched the quality of life for all. (p. 8)

And then, “It is remarkable that Toronto is free from the social tension and conflict that trouble some American and European cities” (p. 8; my emphasis). The October 2013 Notice of Motion: Reaffirming Toronto’s Strong Support for Freedom of Religion and Expression (City of Toronto, 2013) put forward by Councillor James Pasternak and seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc, pulls in the Government of Quebec’s proposal for legislation that would
prohibit public employees from wearing visible religious symbols in the workplace, only to “assure residents and visitors to Toronto that our City will always welcome people of all faiths, and protect their freedom of religion and expression,” “as one of the world’s most diverse cities, and in keeping with our motto ‘Diversity Our Strength’” (p. 1). The motion makes only one recommendation:

That City Council reaffirm its support for freedom of religion and expression, and, further state its opposition to any legislation that would restrict or prohibit such freedoms. By doing so, Toronto states its position that the City continues to be a source of worldwide inspiration. (p. 1)

The irony in these examples, as in several others, is that the City needn’t actually do anything about racism in the City to be exceptional for addressing racism. In this, race and racism are expelled and expendable; the diverse City can at any point draw on and then reproduce the outside(r) to suture its own spatial and racial anxieties, triggered by increasing encounters unmanageable by diversity. But if what Razack (2002) says is true, that bodies produce space and space produces bodies, we might need to concern ourselves with how the exceptionally diverse City invites, produces, and co-authorizes the exceptional racial subject to draw on the outside(r) as well, to reassure their anxieties of belonging in a space that would otherwise not have them.

**On Diversity and Racial Inclusion**

In interviews, we never fully arrived at the question of why racialized City staff needed to be exceptional in the City or why they felt they needed to set themselves apart. Indeed, this is the power (and precisely the point) of the production of subjectivity: its hailing and engendering of individualities and potential meeting of desires obscures or even invalidates deeper questions centred upon how race and power might continue to manifest through us. But perhaps more importantly, the need for racial insiders to be exceptional in the City also speaks volumes about the space of the diverse City; more specifically, who belongs there as well as why and the terms under which racial Others are “included.”

In this regard, we as racial insider Others must ask ourselves what we are doing for diversity. Of course, this question is not new. But research and scholarship on diversity, equity, and inclusion (including the growing body of research and scholarship on racism and racialization) still tend to focus on how racism and whiteness are maintained in institutions through racial exclusion (see Henry et al., 2017, p. 300, for list of
scholars who write about this). One of my aims in this chapter is to get us thinking about how, in the age of diversity, racism and whiteness in institutions are maintained and increasingly authorized through racial inclusion. This is perhaps the most central paradox for racialized City staff who take up the position of being exceptionally critical of diversity in the City of Toronto: they are produced, included, and authorized in the City through the very racial terms they seek to challenge.

That being said, the terms of inclusion for racial insider Others in the City are anything but seamless. As I have begun to show, moments of tension in speech acts and in City texts expose the anxieties of racial inclusion and belonging in the diverse City and also bring into question the production and psychic separation(s) of “us” and “them” that diversity seeks to guarantee through the production and inclusion of exceptional racial insider Others in particular. Through racial inclusion, the racial norms of diversity discourse in the City thus also become unstable. The instabilities are what drive this book. The next chapter continues to trace the instabilities and anxieties of diversity discourse, this time through the production, inclusion, and proximity of racial Others like no Other in the diverse City.