‘Nova Scotia’s Best Kept Secret’:

African Nova Scotian Perceptions of the Police in Digby

by

Jessica Bundy

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The examining committee for the thesis was:

_____

Dr. Robert Pitter, Chair

_____

Dr. Akwasi Owusu-Bempah, External Reader

_____

Dr. Anthony Thomson, Internal Reader

_____

Dr. Claudine Bonner, Supervisor

_____

Dr. Zelda Abramson, Head/Director

This thesis is accepted in its present form by the Division of Research and Graduate Studies as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree Master of Arts (Sociology).

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Author

_____

Supervisor

_____

Date

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to uncover the perceptions members of the African Nova Scotian community have of the police in Digby, Nova Scotia. This study aimed to provide a venue for the African Nova Scotian community to have their voices heard, to tell their stories, describe their experiences, and to have other communities and organizations hear these narratives. There has been a history of conflict between the police and the African Nova Scotian community that has been well documented. While there is a small body of literature exploring 'race' and policing, few studies done in the Canadian context look at African Canadian perceptions of the police; my research contributes to this gap in existing research. Critical race theory combined with intersectionality and Foucault's work on power created the theoretical framework for this research. I interviewed nine African Nova Scotians from Digby to determine their perceptions of the police. Participants revealed the atmosphere of racism entrenched in Digby and the ways they experience Blackness on a daily basis mainly through discrimination and racism. The dominant theme was that they felt they were not protected, but many also felt targeted by the police. Participants also explained the ways in which the African Nova Scotian community protects and supports itself, and gave several realistic ways in which the police could attempt to improve the relationship and the African Nova Scotian community's perception of them. This research highlights the importance of non-dominant narratives and the African Nova Scotian experience.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The African Nova Scotian[1] community in Digby has had a long history of confrontations with the police, so many that there have been numerous attempts to improve community–police relations. Attempts have included community meetings hosted by the police, the creation of Digby African Nova Scotian–police committees, and the hiring of external consultants to go to Digby to assess the situation and conduct workshops with both police and the African Nova Scotian community (Winbush and Allen 2008). Not one of these attempts has been successful. This study does what none of these prior attempts have done and documents the narratives of the Digby African Nova Scotian community in relation to the police.

Digby is primarily a fishing and tourist community located on the south shore of Nova Scotia, and is known as "Nova Scotia's Best Kept Secret" (Town of Digby 2016: np). The town was founded in 1783 by a group of Loyalists who were resettled in Nova Scotia by the British during and after the American War of Independence (Pachai and Bishop 2006; Town of Digby 2016). Black Loyalists were among those brought to Nova Scotia at this time, and between 1782 and 1784 approximately 3,500 free Black Loyalists settled in Nova Scotia (Pachai and Bishop 2006). The exact number of Loyalists, both Black and white, that settled in Digby is unknown. Black Loyalists combined with Jamaican Maroons, refugees from the war of 1812, and slaves, are the majority ancestors of the existing African Nova Scotian community (Pachai and Bishop 2006).

[1] African Nova Scotian refers to the group of people who are from Nova Scotia and are members of the African diaspora. African Nova Scotian, African Canadian, and African American are also interchangeably referred to as 'Black'.

When many of the Black Loyalists left for Sierra Leone in the late 18th century, several small Black communities were left in the Digby area, including Jordantown, Acaciaville, Conway, and Weymouth Falls (See Figure 1 on page 3, Weymouth Falls not pictured) (*CBC News* 2016a; Pachai and Bishop 2006). As the 2011 census did not have a mandatory long form, the statistics around populations of different 'races' was not documented. The 2006 census listed the town of Digby's population as 2,092, and there were 25 people who identified as Black (Statistics Canada 2007). Few African Nova Scotians live within the Digby town limits, and therefore these surrounding communities, along with the very few African Nova Scotians that live inside the Digby town limits, combine to create what I refer to in this thesis as the African Nova Scotian community in Digby. Although I have combined these communities to constitute the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, relative to the town of Digby, the size of the African Nova Scotian community is still very small.

Figure 1. The town of Digby, Nova Scotia in relation to Conway, Jordantown, and Acaciaville. (Google Maps 2016)

(1 km= 1 inch)

Michael Corbett wrote "Rural Education and Out-Migration: The Case of a Coastal Community" (2005) which focused on the town of Digby;

> With the establishment in Digby of a large hardware/automotive chain, two large mega-grocery stores, movie rental outlets, along with more than a half-dozen multinational fast food outlets, the town with a population of less than 2200 is now said to have 'just about everything you can get in a city.' At the same time, new people seek to consume the space as tourists, summer residents, and as industrial developers. These phenomena generate some form of employment, much of it temporary and part-time, and virtually all of it poorly paid. (P.63)

These poor paying jobs are often the only ones that the African Nova Scotian community has access to. The lack of permanent jobs affects all of those in Digby, especially the African Nova Scotian community. The role of rurality in the everyday lives of Nova

Scotians is evident, and this includes the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, often in the way of socioeconomic status. As Norris describes in terms of women,

> Poor rural women, particularly those of color, are faced with a different set of obstacles than their urban counterparts. Examples include job availability, sex and race segregation of occupations, lack of political voice, greater family care taking responsibility, less education, lower salaries and other common barriers to employment such as transportation and child care. (Norris 2012:450)

The rural experience of women will be different from that of urban women, and the experience of a rural African Nova Scotian will be different from an urban African Nova Scotian (Ching and Creed 1997). The reality of rurality needs to be acknowledged in this thesis in order to understand all of the ways in which the African Nova Scotian experience is shaped.

There is little research on African Nova Scotian–police relations, and of the studies that have been conducted, none have focused on the perceptions of the African Nova Scotian community. In terms of relevant existing research, in Canada, a study from Toronto looked at Black[2] males' perceptions and experiences with the police (Owusu-Bempah 2014). Other Canadian studies looked at perceptions of the police, but not from a minority lens. This research provides such a lens, from both researching a minority community, and the fact that I am a member of the African Nova Scotian community and have a racialized experience of the world as well. Knowing more about this history and relationship could provide a benefit in terms of improving community–police relations in addition to creating an understanding of the historical and day-to-day experiences of African Nova Scotians. This study therefore seeks to fill this gap in research as well as to open the door to subsequent research. In order to gain insight into African Nova Scotian–

[2] Black is capitalized throughout this thesis when it refers to the group of people of the African diaspora.

police relations, I have chosen to focus on the town of Digby and how the African Nova Scotia community there perceives the police. This thesis will document and discuss the anti-Black racism that exists within Nova Scotia. This case study of Digby is not necessarily representative of other communities because Digby has its own history, but this research can be seen as informing the wider understanding of the experiences of the larger African Nova Scotian community.

As an African Nova Scotian who lives an hour and a half from Digby, I was unaware of a majority of these media stories. As such, I assume other Nova Scotians, Canadians, and academics may be unaware as well. Part of what drew me to this topic was this history. I initially came across Brendan Clarke's case, which will be discussed in Chapter Two, and from there I went on to find other incidents. Reading story after story of Digby African Nova Scotian confrontations with the police made me reflect on why I had never heard of these incidents, and why they were reoccurring. Although my direct experiences with the police have been limited so far in life, I have experienced racism and discrimination in many other ways. Through the documentation of these repetitive incidents, it became apparent that nothing was improving, and the Digby African Nova Scotian community needed the opportunity to have their stories and opinions heard.

The long history of conflict between police and the Digby African Nova Scotian community combined with the absence of discussion of African Nova Scotian community–police relations in the literature makes this research an important and needed addition. By interviewing nine Digby African Nova Scotians, this thesis will document some of the experiences and perceptions that the African Nova Scotian community in Digby have in relation to the police.

THESIS OVERVIEW

Chapter Two provides a review of the literature surrounding relations between the African Nova Scotian community and the state. The literature review also includes Nova Scotian, Canadian, and American research relating to minority relations with the police and community perceptions of the police. Chapter Three reviews the dominant theory, critical race theory, as well as other supporting theories. Chapter Four discusses how qualitative critical race methodology allowed for data to be collected, coded, and analyzed. The subsequent chapter presents the results from participant interviews, introducing the narratives and experiences of the Digby African Nova Scotian community. Finally, Chapter Six is a brief discussion that connects the theories to participants' experiences and it ends with a conclusion that outlines what is now known after conducting this research.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

This chapter puts into context the gaps in research that this thesis on Digby African Nova Scotian community perceptions of the police aims to fill. I begin by discussing the media-documented history of African Nova Scotians and the State in Digby. I then explore past research that has been done in Nova Scotia that relates to race, the African Nova Scotian community, and the criminal justice system. Although little research has been done in this area, the articles included in this chapter inform my research as well as describe the particular context. The largest portion of the literature review focuses on how others have studied relations between minority communities and the police in the broader Canadian context. In addition to providing an overview of some of the work that has been done provincially and nationally in terms of race and policing, I include some discussion of the international context which details perceptions of race, crime, and the police. I limited the inclusion of international work for the purpose of attempting to focus on the Canadian context; however, three studies are based outside of Canada and were included because they include community perceptions of police. The goal of this chapter is to discuss the history between African Nova Scotians and the state, point to the gaps in the current research, to look at what has been achieved to date, and suggest what this thesis can add to existing research.

AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIANS AND THE STATE

African Nova Scotians have had negative relationships with the white community and the state since their arrival in the seventeenth century (African Nova Scotian Affairs 2016; Pachai and Bishop 2006; Smith 2006; Williams 2013). In Digby, this state

discrimination is blatantly evident when one examines the police and the education systems. Digby's education system has evidenced issues with racial tensions and discrimination for decades.

In 1978 the board, Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, released a report which called for more African Nova Scotian teachers, more Africentric curriculum, and more cultural awareness for staff within the education system in Digby (Riley 2014b). These recommendations were not implemented, and as a result, in 2003 the Digby Education Committee (DEC) was formed (Riley 2014b). The DEC consisted of several Digby African Nova Scotian community members who were all concerned about the racial tensions within Digby schools; this concern led to the DEC filing a complaint about these racial tensions with the Nova Scotian Human Rights Commission, naming the Digby school board, the Department of Education, and the teacher's union (Riley 2014a). Rather than a board of inquiry, as was chosen in 1978, the DEC chose mediation and reached a settlement that was signed quietly in 2011 (Riley 2014b). In December of 2014, a meeting was held consisting of nearly thirty members of the African Nova Scotian community, members of the Tri-County Regional School Board, representatives from the Nova Scotia Department of Education, and representatives from the Nova Scotia teacher's union, to gauge the progress of the terms of the mediation settlement (Riley 2014a).

The terms of the mediation included:

> [O]ffering more programs and curriculum specifically designed for African Nova Scotian learners; creating policies leading to the hiring of more African Nova Scotian teachers; creating a bursary to pay for the education of African Nova Scotians enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program who commit to teaching here [Digby]; cultural competency and sensitivity training for the board, teachers, other staff and administration; the appointment of an African Nova Scotian

> regional education officer; and facilitating teacher and student exchanges with school districts with a high number of African Nova Scotians. (Riley 2014b:n.p.)

Many of these recommendations were similar to those of the 1978 board of inquiry; however, in addition to the terms, there was a recommendation for the establishment of an African Nova Scotian community education centre in Digby (Riley 2014a). This community centre would support the academic development of African Nova Scotians in Digby, teaching them about African Nova Scotian history and culture, and giving access to technological supports (Riley 2014a). At the time this thesis is being written, in 2016, five years after a settlement was reached, there is still no community centre in Digby. Digby African Nova Scotians experience discrimination and the issues with the education system to this day, as will be shown in Chapter Five.

In the past few decades in particular, there have been several incidents of confrontations between the police and members of the African Nova Scotian community that were documented through media sources. These incidents provide a glimpse into the systemic and persistent racism that the Digby African Nova Scotian community faces. In the next section I summarize four of these incidents to provide a sense of the context relative to community–police relations.

The oldest of these documented incidents was the 1985 case of Graham (Jarvis) Cromwell, which still causes a rift between the African Nova Scotian community and the police in Digby and surrounding area. Cromwell, an African Nova Scotian man from Weymouth Falls (thirty-five minutes outside Digby), was shot by Jeffery Wade Mullen, a white man, on June 8, 1985 (Clarke 1992; Mannette 1986; Smith 2006). Mullen claimed that it was self-defense; however, Cromwell was shot from six feet away (Mannette 1986; Smith 2006). An all-white jury acquitted Mullen of all charges, and during the course of

these events, it was recorded that the pretrial judge had made discriminatory comments about Cromwell. There was a massive outcry from the African Nova Scotian community about the prejudice of the judge, leading to a judicial inquiry into his comments, although no charges were later filed, citing insufficient evidence (Clarke 1992; Mannette 1986; Smith 2006). The African Nova Scotian community viewed this case as representing a great miscarriage of justice. This is an example of one incident with the outcome of the community being frustrated by the outcome and the treatment from the judicial system.

On October 8th, 2002, Brendan Clarke was involved in an incident with a Digby police officer (Borden 2013). Clarke, then nineteen, had tried to pay for a purchase at a convenience store in Digby with a hundred dollar bill (Borden 2013; Humphreys 2013). The clerk refused to take the bill, concerned about it being counterfeit or from an illegitimate source, and threatened to call the police (Borden 2013; Humphreys 2013). Clarke thought that the police would side with him and that his money would be accepted, and he waited for the police inside the store (Humphreys 2013). When the two officers, Constable Geoff Quibell and Constable Jamal Gray, arrived Clarke's unprovoked assault began (Borden 2013). Clarke was struck in the face, punched in the head and neck, and kneed in the back (Borden 2013). Most of the assault that happened inside the store was captured on the surveillance camera (Borden 2013). Clarke was charged with assaulting a police officer, resisting arrest, and causing a disturbance in a public place, and at trial in 2003, he was convicted of causing a disturbance (Borden 2013). There was national coverage and outrage, and outrage from the Digby African Nova Scotian community.

Brendan Clarke filed a suit in 2005 against the Attorney General of Canada and Constable Geoff Quibell (Borden 2013). Clarke sued for force of battery and assault; he also claimed general, punitive and special damages, court costs and other relief (Borden 2013). The federal government reached an out of court settlement for $248,000 in June of 2013, eleven years after the incident (Borden 2013; *CBC News* 2013; Humphreys 2013; Southwick 2013). Clarke said: "as an African Canadian youth who grew up in Digby, there was definitely systemic racism" (Humphreys 2013:n.p.). Although the RCMP did not discuss particulars of the settlement, in addition to the monetary compensation, Clarke received a letter of regret from the RCMP for the incident and for his injuries (Borden 2013; Humphreys 2013). Clarke believes his assault was racially motivated, and when discussing the incident and settlement, Clarke said "There is no price that I can really put, [no] dollar value to sit there and explain to my children why I'm in handcuffs getting beat up by the RCMP" (Southwick 2013:n.p.). The long-lasting effects of this encounter continue to impact Brendan Clarke, his family and the Digby African Nova Scotian community.

Three years after Clarke's incident in 2005, two civilian staff members of the detachment filed a complaint of harassment against Digby Staff Sergeant Wylie Grimm (*The Leader-Post* 2008). The two white women complained that Grimm sexually harassed them and used racist comments around them over a two-year period beginning in 2003 (*CBC News* 2008a). As a result of the investigation, as well as the upset with both the community of Digby and the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, Nova Scotia's highest-ranking RCMP officer publicly apologized to the town of Digby in an effort to heal the town (*The Leader-Post* 2008). Assistant Commissioner Ian Atkins

apologized for "things that were inappropriate, things that were said and done, in relation to the Black community by a former commander" (*CBC News* 2008a; *The Leader-Post* 2008). Atkins said that the apology was necessary to allow the RCMP and the African Nova Scotian community to move on (*CBC News* 2008b). Here was public acknowledgement from the RCMP that there has been a negative relationship between the African Nova Scotian community and the police.

Reverend Michael Fells, a member of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, disclosed that during this period, the RCMP officers had been referring to their own Black members as 'niggers'—four of the sixteen constables at the Digby detachment were African Nova Scotian (*The Leader-Post* 2008). Reverend Fells noted that he believed that Grimm did not act alone in his use of racially inappropriate language, that his behaviour could not have gone on for that long "unless the system accommodated his behaviour" (*The Leader-Post* 2008:n.p.). He also vocalized the frustration that the African Nova Scotian community had over the incident because it took two white women to bring attention to the problem: "If there's been one complaint that's gone to the RCMP, there's been 100. What's painful to the Black community is this: We've been telling you this forever and we were never validated. Now because a white person says it, it's now valid. That causes the pain" (*The Leader-Post* 2008:n.p.). This sentiment was felt throughout participants' interviews.

This next incident came only five months after the apology from Nova Scotia's top RCMP officer (*CBC News* 2008b). On the night of June 22, 2008, William Drummond, twenty years old, and Nathaniel Fells, nineteen years old, were walking along a sidewalk when a man leaning against a van yelled a racial slur at them (Moore

2008). Fells said other men stepped out of the van and began calling them racial slurs (*CBC News* 2008c; Moore 2008). The confrontation escalated from verbal to physical with this group of men who turned out to be a group of off-duty police officers (*CBC News* 2008c; Moore 2008*)*. Drummond claims that a man tried to punch him and missed, he swung back and knocked the man out with one punch (Moore 2008). This self-defence prompted on-duty RCMP officers to taser Drummond several times (Moore 2008). Drummond was charged with causing a disturbance, uttering threats, and resisting arrest, while one off-duty officer was also charged (*CBC News* 2008c; Whitehead 2008). The Digby African Nova Scotian community was upset as the RCMP failed to take into account the off-duty police officers remarks and actions

After the African Nova Scotia community complained about the incident, the police conducted an investigation, in which they said they could not find any evidence that the fight was sparked by a racist taunt (*CBC News* 2008c). This finding was in spite of the fact that a camera owned by the town of Digby recorded the event, and members of the African Nova Scotian community who viewed the tape said it supported Drummond and Fells' version of the story (Whitehead 2009). Drummond and Fells filed a complaint against the Halifax Regional Police, the department that employed the officers that were off-duty and had assaulted them, as well as complaints with the provincial Human Rights Commission against the federal police (RCMP) (Moore 2008). This altercation in Digby drew several frustrated reactions across several generations and communities of the African Nova Scotian minority (*The Canadian Press* 2008). These incidents are some of the ones that have gained media attention. It became clear through participants'

interviews that these are not the only confrontations the Digby African Nova Scotian community has had with the police.

NOVA SCOTIAN CONTEXT

The controversy of former Digby Staff Sergeant Wylie Grimm, as discussed above, led a member of the African Nova Scotian Community in Digby to reach out to Dr. Raymond Winbush to assess African Nova Scotia community–police relations in Digby. Dr. Winbush at the time was the Director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University in Baltimore Maryland (Winbush and Allen 2008). He partnered with Harry Allen, a Hip-Hop activist and "media assassin" (Winbush and Allen 2008:10) to compile *The Digby Declaration on Racism: Seven Recommendations for Repairing the Broken Relationship between the RCMP and the Black Community* (2008). The aim of their project was to be the launching pad for the RCMP to work with the Digby African Nova Scotian community to develop a better relationship, as well as to begin to develop programs that would keep young male African Nova Scotians out of the criminal justice system (Winbush and Allen 2008). The *Digby Declaration* briefly discussed the Grimm incident and how it has been interpreted by the Digby African Nova Scotian community as well as by the Digby police: "the community feels it is a reflection of systemic discrimination and institutionalized racism, whereas the RCMP believes that it was a result of the leadership in the detachment and a few specific members" (Winbush and Allen 2008:1). Even after the replacement of Grimm, as well as most of the staff at the Digby detachment, the perception the African Nova Scotian community in Digby had of the police remained the same (Winbush and Allen 2008).

The methods of the project included individual interviews, meeting with members of the Commanding Officer Black Advisory Committee, and group forums over a two-week period (Winbush and Allen 2008). Winbush and Allen were also required to make recommendations, to give a lecture to the RCMP in Halifax and at the local Digby high school, and finally to be keynote speakers at a banquet held in Digby (Winbush and Allen 2008). The project produced seven recommendations, each of which is important to acknowledge because they are all relevant to this thesis. The first recommendation was to create an "Accountability Committee to Implement Our Negotiations (ACTION)" group that would ensure that the recommendations of the *Digby Declaration* were upheld (Winbush and Allen 2008:2). As I learned from my Informant[3] and a participant, this group no longer meets and no longer produces reports on the status of these recommendations.

The second recommendation was for the Digby detachment to put on a series of workshops that focused on eliminating white privilege and white supremacy, the post-traumatic slave syndrome, law enforcement amongst Indigenous populations, the history of Black Nova Scotians, and "Racism or the Future of Canada" (Winbush and Allen 2008:3). These workshops would be mandatory for all members of the Digby detachment (Winbush and Allen 2008). Winbush and Allen (2008) explained that police and the African Nova Scotian community in Digby have different views on why there is a negative relationship. These workshops would be a way to inform members of the police of the realities the African Nova Scotian community faces.

Another recommendation was that the Digby detachment should devote more time to non-policing activities with the African Nova Scotian community (Winbush and Allen

[3] The Informant is introduced in Chapter Four on page 67.

2008). As a member of the Digby African Nova Scotian community said: “We see RCMP members primarily in uniforms 98% of the time and know very few of them either on a personal level or in settings other than harassment and police work” (Winbush and Allen 2008:4). This recommendation also explained the need for an African Nova Scotian community centre and that the RCMP should do their best to fund such a centre (Winbush and Allen 2008). In 2016 at the time this thesis was written, the community centre blueprints are in the process of being finalized. The African Nova Scotian community already has bought land and are in talks about building in the next few years.

The fourth recommendation was to review the role of obstructionists in education and policing, and to hire a minimum of one African Nova Scotian educator per year for the next five years (Winbush and Allen 2008). The issue of racism and discrimination in education within Digby is nothing new, as reviewed above. Winbush and Allen were made aware that members of the Digby detachment and local educators were actively countering their efforts (Winbush and Allen 2008). African Nova Scotian members of the RCMP also made Winbush and Allen aware that other members of the RCMP had an unhealthy obsession with the project; an example mentioned was “the blizzard of emails concerning this consultant’s writings, research, and past [activities] as a scholar-activist around the world” (Winbush and Allen 2008:7). The consultants also describe a story in which they were allegedly followed by an RCMP vehicle as a “juvenile and sloppy attempt at intimidation” (Winbush and Allen 2008:7). This attempt at intimidation is only a glimpse at the daily experiences of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby.

The fifth recommendation was to begin a program that would address challenges and criminal behaviour among residents (Winbush and Allen 2008). Winbush and Allen

went on to say, "It would be a mistake to think that *all* criminal behaviour within the Black Digby community is the product of the excesses, intimidation and troublesome tactics by the Digby detachment" (Winbush and Allen 2008:7). To the reasonable person it would be evident that not all crime committed by African Nova Scotians is the exaggeration of police. However, the *treatment* of African Nova Scotians while dealing with the police, and all levels of the criminal justice system, is clearly discriminatory—whether the person is committing a crime or not—as shown in the entirety of this thesis. They end this recommendation by stating:

> The lack of jobs, plus job discrimination when those jobs are found, is one of the primary reasons young people, particularly young Black males, in the Digby community turn to drug dealing. This consultant heard several complaints from young Black men about how they were discriminated against during interviews and also how they were dismissed from employment after having racial slurs hurled at them and retaliating against the perpetrator who remained on the job. (Winbush and Allen 2008:8)

This comment acknowledges the fact that some young African Nova Scotian men do turn to drug dealing, often because systemic discrimination and racism prevents them from having access to viable employment in the community.

The sixth recommendation is as follows: "The Digby RCMP should rid itself of conflicts of interest and target known drug *suppliers* in the community" (Winbush and Allen 2008:8, italicized in original). The Digby African Nova Scotian community held a strong conviction that the RCMP "protects its own, above the law, to the detriment of the public that is, in fact, not only its clientele, but its proprietor" (Winbush and Allen 2008:8). The example used in the *Digby Declaration* is that there were rumors that claimed an establishment in Digby was co-owned by a former RCMP officer who served in the Digby detachment and was a place known for drug dealing (Winbush and Allen 2008). There were also rumors that there was a known agreement between this

establishment and the RCMP for them to look the other way, while simultaneously targeting African Nova Scotian men who sell drugs (Winbush and Allen 2008). This was the first and last mention of this establishment in the entirety of my research. However, the police protecting the police was mentioned. In the case of Wylie Grimm, for example, participants believe there was no way he acted alone in his comments and behaviour, and that other officers were aware of this behaviour and ignored it.

The final recommendation was the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) in Digby (Winbush and Allen 2008). This TRC would facilitate open and honest conversation between the African Nova Scotian community, the white community, and members of the RCMP:

> …creating a bridge of understanding about each community's experience. The dialogues should be moderated and encouraged by local business, civic, religious and fraternal organizations. The TRC should be the beginning of a long overdue exorcism of racial demons living in the Digby community and can start the long road of racial healing toward a community where justice keeps house. (Winbush and Allen 2008:9)

Having a 'race' relations professional, who is not associated with the RCMP or the Digby African Nova Scotian community, facilitate discussion should help both parties to realize the problem and to identify a solution to rectify the problem (Winbush and Allen 2008). Unfortunately, there were issues with the execution. The two-week time frame was not enough. A longer time frame would have yielded even richer results. A longer time frame may have also allowed for more specific instructions as to how to carry out each recommendation. While the consultants were not associated with the RCMP or the African Nova Scotian community, they also gave lectures to both parties. Their recommendations aimed to straddle the line in pleasing both groups. The *Digby Declaration* overall identified many of the problems that the Digby African Nova Scotian

community and the police experience. My research will add to it by focusing on the Digby African Nova Scotian community narrative.

The only other research dedicated to the issues in Digby was a thesis written in 1986 for St. Mary's University. Joy Mannette (1986) focused her thesis on the Cromwell incident in Weymouth Falls that, as discussed earlier, to this day still causes a rift between the Digby African Nova Scotian community and the police in Digby and the surrounding area. Mannette (1986) focused on the media coverage of the incident, the trial, and the aftermath of the trial, as covered by local newspapers as well as the *Toronto Star*. Mannette found that the two defining characteristics of news are that it must be dramatic and that it must be a departure from the ordinary; by constructing 'race' as dramatic, news reports necessarily neglect background stories (Mannette 1986). When discussing the depictions of African Nova Scotians in this case, Mannette claimed that: "…reinforced by social constructions of them as social problems, Blacks must be extraordinary/different…. Thus, race reporting of this kind finds a ready audience, fascinated with the fearful 'other'" (Mannette 1986:14). African Nova Scotians were depicted as the 'other', and she noted that the two local papers that covered the case were mindful of potential damage *within* the white community, and damage to the white community (Mannette 1986). There is not further detail on what is meant by this, but it is not too far of a reach to believe that the predominately white newspapers were conscious of the effect of their reporting on the white community.

In the coverage by the *Toronto Star*, the reporter, Alan Story, noted that in Digby there were no Blacks on town council, and no Blacks who worked in the banks (Mannette 1986). There was only one Black teacher, and only a few Blacks lived in town; Blacks

were structurally separated from key social, political, and economic institutions (Mannette 1986). This exclusion further separated the Digby African Nova Scotian community and alienated them. The fact that the local newspapers were cautious about the reaction of and impact on the white community suggests that the white community may be defensive when the perpetrator of a crime is white and the victim is African Nova Scotian. Mannette's (1986) thesis is vital to my research as her thesis was the only academic work that focuses on the area of Digby. Her work also corroborated that Graham Cromwell's case has had an impact on the Digby community.

The tensions between the African Nova Scotian community and the police have been ongoing for as long as the community has existed. In recent decades, however, the points of confrontation and frustration have also become points of discussion. A majority of the time these discussions are documented by some form of committee and composed in the form of a report. In order to further understand the Nova Scotian context, I looked at a report created in 1991 after a racially charged incident in Halifax. The recommendations of the report will further contextualize the systemic and unchanging hold discrimination and racism have on Nova Scotian society. The specific focus of this discussion will be the report of the Nova Scotia Advisory Group on 'Race' Relations (NSAGRR) (1991).

The NSAGRR was formed after an incident in Halifax on July 19th, 1991 in which several African Nova Scotian men were denied entry to a nightclub and caused a small riot in the streets of Halifax. The African Nova Scotian community uproar initially focused on immediate concerns regarding the admission of African Nova Scotians into bars and nightclubs, and then broadened to include longstanding concerns, such as

employment, housing, education, and police–community relations (NSAGRR 1991). The report of the NSAGRR acknowledges and discusses the history of racism and discrimination that the African Nova Scotian community has faced and how it is still present:

> Since 1606 Black people have lived in the Province of Nova Scotia. During this period, racism and racial discrimination have been part of their daily existence. These factors continue to act as barriers to equal opportunity and participation…. Today, Black Nova Scotians still do not enjoy equal access to jobs; their businesses have difficulty succeeding because they do not have access to adequate funding; the Black communities throughout the Province still do not benefit from economic development efforts; the education system does not reflect their history and experience; the criminal justice system does not treat them fairly; they are often negatively portrayed in the media; and they cannot gain equal access to places of entertainment such as bars. (Nova Scotia Advisory Group on Race Relations 1991:3)

As of 2011, African Nova Scotians had a significantly higher (14.5%) unemployment rate than the rest of Nova Scotia (9.9%) and other African Canadians (12.9%) in the country (African Nova Scotian Affairs 2014). This unemployment rate was even higher for African Nova Scotian men (17.2%) (African Nova Scotian Affairs 2014). African Nova Scotian incomes were lower than the Nova Scotian average, and 34.8% of African Nova Scotians were low-income versus 16.5% for the rest of Nova Scotia (as of 2011) (African Nova Scotian Affairs 2014). Education rates were similar, 77.7% of African Nova Scotians have a degree/certificate/diploma compared to 85.3% of all other Nova Scotians (African Nova Scotian Affairs 2014). Based on these statistics, it is clear that most of, if not that all of the conditions described by the NSAGRR are still true today in 2016, twenty-five years after their report was written.

The NSAGRR was comprised of three government representatives, at least one of whom was African Nova Scotian and eight African Nova Scotian community members

(Nova Scotia Advisory Group on Race Relations 1991). Although the idea of creating the NSAGRR was noble in theory, the actual execution was less than seamless. The NSAGRR was given a time frame of one month to execute their inquiry, and because of this time frame, they did not have time to travel across Nova Scotia. They sought input from a wide cross-section of individuals, agencies, government departments, and community organizations as time permitted (NSAGRR 1991). This short time frame was challenging and this research would be rushed. The information collected from individuals and communities may not have been as in-depth as possible because researchers need to establish a relationship with the person/community before gaining access to their thoughts and concerns about an issue as sensitive as this.

Their report consisted of 94 recommendations under eight general categories: Education; Employment/Economic Development; Black Community Participation and Access to Services; Policing, Justice and Human Rights; Black Community Development; Communication and Media; and Tourism and Culture (NSAGRR 1991). Throughout a majority of these recommendations, the onus was put on the African Nova Scotian community to make the highlighted changes. For the purpose of this thesis, the focus is on the category of Policing, Justice and Human Rights. The recommendations in this category are telling to the tumultuous history between the African Nova Scotian community and the police.

The report states, "The issue of police/minority relations is undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges within the field of race relations today" (NSAGRR 1991:13). It further claims that African Nova Scotians are "convinced" (NSAGRR 1991:13) they are policed differently than the white community. The NSAGRR saying the African Nova

Scotian community is ‘convinced’ they are policed differently does not take into account the long history of evidence that the African Nova Scotian community is and has been indeed policed differently. The report then discusses how the African Nova Scotian community believe they are policed differently, stating that “they [the African Nova Scotian community] point to the inability of members of their community to become members of the force; the hasty and often unnecessary use of force in altercations involving members of the community; the frequent expression of derogatory attitudes; and the lack of awareness of and sensitivity to Black Nova Scotian culture” (NSAGRR 1991:13).

The report goes on to their solutions for this category. In the preamble to the solutions, it suggests that police departments should allow their processes to be examined to increase public confidence, but does not say by whom or when (NSAGRR 1991). The African Nova Scotian community “on the other hand, must work with the police and come to a clear understanding of how police departments function and to suggest ways to improve the quality of life within their neighbourhoods” (NSAGRR 1991:13). The police organizations are told that they need to have their processes reviewed, and the African Nova Scotian community seems to be scolded. They must work with the police (as if they do not already) because they are unaware of how the police function and they need to learn, and it is their responsibility to come up with ideas of how to improve their own African Nova Scotian neighbourhoods. The onus is completely on the community to make changes, instead of the government and the police, or both working together.

The actual recommendations were primarily policy based and included amendments to the Multiculturalism Act of Nova Scotia, cross-cultural training, anti-

racist training for all federal and provincial judges, policy implementation within policing to prohibit racial slurs and stereotyping, creating a database of African Canadian RCMP officers to hopefully move some to Nova Scotia where African Nova Scotians cannot be hired locally, and having African Nova Scotian representatives on boards and committees (NSAGRR 1991). This is a summary of the twenty-one recommendations for the policing category, as is the report itself.

This type of report should not have limitations in time or cost. In one month they produced 94 recommendations; what could they have done with a year? This seems to be a theme within Nova Scotian 'race' research: *researchers are not given enough time to do their work.* This report shows a government document that acknowledges the history of racism and discrimination yet does not put forward any plans to implement their broad recommendations, and still puts responsibility on the African Nova Scotian community for change. Thus, it appears this report was merely to appease the demands for justice that the African Nova Scotian community had at the time, not a report for change.

Michelle Y. Williams' (2013) article analyzed how African Nova Scotian youth experience the restorative justice program, along with how this program had been shaped by a criminal justice system that has been structured by Nova Scotia's past racist laws, policies, and practices. Where the NSAGRR report analyzes African Nova Scotians' relations with the state and is twenty-five years old, Williams' article discusses how an aspect of the criminal justice system—restorative justice—is experienced by the African Nova Scotian community and was recently published. Using critical race analysis, Williams (2013) began her research with the "premise that racism and white privilege are constitutional elements in Nova Scotian society" (p.423). In order to determine how

African Nova Scotians experience the restorative justice system, Williams completed an in-depth literature review, conducted focus groups with restorative justice staff and criminal justice personnel, African Nova Scotian youth who had been through the restorative justice program in the Halifax Regional Municipality, and African Nova Scotian criminal justice personnel and community members in Halifax and Digby (Williams 2013).

The existing Nova Scotia Restorative Justice (NSRJ) program is for youth aged 12-17 who commit certain crimes (Williams 2013). These young people must take responsibility for their actions and meet with the victim, community members, and others who may have been negatively impacted by their wrongdoing "in an effort to examine the harm caused and explore the ways in which the relationships could be restored" (Williams 2013:445). While Williams acknowledges that this program is beneficial, she argues that it falls short for African Nova Scotian participants and outlines several criticisms (Williams 2013).

Relevant to the thesis at hand, Williams critiqued that restorative justice is falling short of addressing "fundamental structural, institutional, systemic, and individual anti-Black racism that exists in Nova Scotia" (Williams 2013:445). Williams further explains that restorative justice is often a two-dimensional exchange, meaning there are not only two parties, but the power relations between the two parties are not taken into account (Williams 2013). She goes on to explain that there are situations in which these underlying power imbalances are ignored, providing an example in which a Black youth responded to being called racial slurs by a white youth and the Black youth was held accountable for their actions, but the white youth was not and was instead perceived as

the ‘victim’ (Williams 2013). The power imbalances between the police and the African Nova Scotian community in Digby are often not taken into account when there are interactions between the two groups. Acknowledgement of this ‘third party’—power imbalances—would allow for a better understanding of these interactions.

There was also a questioning of procedural practices. The NSRJ is unable to address the selective enforcement of the law, specifically racial profiling. As one of Williams’ participants from Digby described the situation, “there is a lot of racial profiling and other forms of police harassment” (Williams 2013:448). On the other side of the selective enforcement coin is net-widening and gate keeping. Net-widening in Williams’ research is unduly referring youth to restorative justice when it may have been better to serve them with a warning (Williams 2013). The opposite to that is gatekeeping, which occurs when youth who are eligible for restorative justice are denied access (Williams 2013). One participant in the study even said that Black youth are excessively charged so they are not eligible (Williams 2013). Net-widening is evident in Digby in several occasions where an African Nova Scotian is charged with an offence when they are the victim of police assault. Gate-keeping can be seen when Digby African Nova Scotians are ‘kept’ from using police services because their past experiences have made then afraid or wary of using the police.

Overall, Williams also found that African Nova Scotians and non-African Nova Scotians have different opinions on the NSRJ. A higher proportion of African Nova Scotian respondents agreed that systemic racism affects NSRJ, African Nova Scotian restorative justice participants are treated differently than other racialized groups, and they viewed getting to the root of the crime as important compared to non-African Nova

Scotians (Williams 2013). More non-African Nova Scotians agreed that African Nova Scotians are treated fairly in restorative justice processes and that the NSRJ meets the needs of African Nova Scotians (Williams 2013). The differing opinions of the African Nova Scotian community and the non-African Nova Scotian community has had long-term effects in all of Nova Scotia; Digby is not exempt. These differences can often be seen and felt as tensions between African Nova Scotians and the rest of Nova Scotia. In Digby, these tensions are visible through the different perceptions of the police as well as in the ways police treat African Nova Scotians and non-African Nova Scotians differently.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Looking at research examining the perceptions minority communities hold is ideal to inform my current study; however, there are only a small number of studies that do just that. The following seven provide examples and insight into community–police relations. Henry P. H. Chow's article "Attitudes towards the Police in Canada: A Study of Perceptions of University Students in a Western Canadian City" (2012) acknowledges the lack of research and data on police–youth relations, and the factors that influence these relations:

> ...the influence of respondents' attitudes toward judicial punishment, property crime victimization experience, violent crime victimization experience, contact with the police, personal safety, police mistreatment or harassment experience, and socio-demographic variables on satisfaction with police performance will be investigated. (Chow 2012:512)

The data collected in Chow's study (2012) were a part of a larger study that aimed to explore academic honesty, campus life, and perceptions of the criminal justice system among students in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Chow conducted a survey of 317 students, and the participants were asked to what degree they agreed with a list of statements—on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being strongly disagree, 5 being strongly agree (Chow 2012). The participants were all undergraduate students, 31.9% were male and 68.1% female (Chow 2012). The participants were acquired by asking sociology and social studies classes to complete the survey; however, the students came from many different faculties (Chow 2012). Of the participants, the average age was 21 and a majority were white, Canadian, and middle class (Chow 2012). The survey consisted of the following eight statements:

> a) The police will only use lawful means to combat crime
> b) The police do a good job a stopping crime
> c) The police spend most of their time going after people who commit petty crimes and ignore most of the bad things going on
> d) the police are more likely to use physical force against minority people than whites
> e) The police are more likely to use physical force against Aboriginal people than whites
> f) The police always respond promptly when called
> g) Officers are usually fair
> h) Officers are usually courteous (Chow 2012:512)

The participants were also asked if they were recent victims of crime, had recent contact with the police, or had ever experienced police harassment/mistreatment (Chow 2012).

The two statements that are most relevant to my research were "d) the police are more likely to use physical force against minority people than whites" (Chow 2012:512) and "e) The police are more likely to use physical force against Aboriginal people than whites" (Chow 2012:512). Both of these statements relate to police–minority relations, and even more uniquely, relate to how white youth view these relations. Almost half of the participants agreed with both statements to some degree, that the police are more likely to use force against minorities and Aboriginals. Although Chow (2012) acknowledges in his overview that a sizable portion of participants expressed concerns about police treatment

of minorities and Aboriginal people, he does not go into any further analysis (Chow 2012). In relation to the significant percentage of participants who disagreed that police were more likely to use physical force against minorities, it may have been beneficial to ask why or have a follow-up survey question. Is it due to the fact a majority of participants were young white students who came from well-to-do families? Additionally, looking at why there were so many participants who were uncertain would have been valuable to Chow's study. If there were more details as to why these students felt this way, the results Chow could have found may have provided some explanations for the reasons the white community in Digby do not acknowledge the troubles the Digby African Nova Scotian community faces.

In the conclusion of his study, Chow states that participants were found to hold moderately favourable attitudes towards the police, and continued efforts should be made to improve these attitudes (2012). Chow does not suggest how these efforts should be made by the police, and this is a weakness in his research. When he discusses that a significant number of participants were concerned with the police treatment of minorities, he pairs the statement with the recent influx of minority immigrants to the city. These two things combined mean that "the provision of fair, equal, and non-discriminatory treatment of these community members should be a high priority for the local police force" (Chow 2012:517). Again, Chow does not give any suggestions for how the police could ensure this provision, or if he believes that this is a priority to the police already.

Chow (2012) acknowledges that his study did not explore if the contact the participants in his study had with the police was voluntary (as a victim or requesting police services) or involuntary (as a perpetrator or being stopped and searched). Had this

been explored, Chow likely would have found that the contact participants had was primarily voluntary, and this would have influenced their attitudes towards the police. The participants in my study primarily had involuntary experiences with the police and this contact negatively shaped their perceptions. Chow's study is also based out of an urban Canadian context, another example of urban perceptions of the police. My thesis will complement this research on community perceptions of the police as it allows inclusion of a rural perspective.

In terms of Canadian immigrant perceptions, Oriola and Adeyanju (2011) wrote an article that explored how Nigerian immigrants in Winnipeg, Manitoba perceive the Canadian criminal justice system. These perceptions, according to Oriola and Adeyanju, "are created and nurtured by one's, or other people's experiences, and a socio-psychological reading of events around a person's lifeworld" (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011:636). This exploration of perceptions of the criminal justice system and use of personal and vicarious experiences made this project relevant to the thesis at hand.

Participants in this study were chosen from a local church in Winnipeg that is populated mainly by Nigerians, participants filled out questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011). While questionnaires were handed out to 80 participants, only 67 returned questionnaires, 35 males and 32 females (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011). Of these 67 participants, 17 were Canadian citizens, 23 were permanent residents, and 26 were on student visas or student permits (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011). The perceptions of participants about the Canadian criminal justice system were described as mixed, however, in general more positive that what currently exists in 'race'-crime literature (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011). Participants compared their

experiences with the Canadian criminal justice system to their experiences with the Nigerian criminal justice system; participants trusted the Canadian criminal justice system more (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011).

What I found interesting in their research is that Oriola and Adeyanju explain these positive perceptions of the criminal justice by describing how negatively participants viewed the Nigerian criminal justice system: "There is a possibility that the Winnipeg police receive such favourable rating because of respondents' experiences with the Nigerian police and not essentially because of the performance of the Winnipeg police. Hence, a sort of comparison is going on in the mind of the participants making them implicitly assess the Nigerian police rather than the Winnipeg police" (Oriola and Adeyanju 2011:649). Oriola and Adeyanju state a major argument of their paper is that the experiences of African-Americans should not be used to generalize the experiences of all people of African descent. Their paper highlights that the experiences of people of the African diaspora are not the same.

In a monograph based on her research project, Frances Henry (1994) offers an extensive ethnographic examination of the Afro-Caribbean community in Toronto. Henry describes the history of the community and then the community's experience in Canada; data was gathered through participant observation, quantitative data, and intensive in depth interviews with 134 people of Afro-Caribbean descent (Henry 1994). 74 participants were women, 60 were men; 87 participants were between the ages of 30 and 45 years old, 20 participants were over 46 years old, and 27 participants were under 30 years old (Henry 1994). For the purpose of this view, I chose to focus on her chapter titled "Relations with the Police, Justice, and the Courts".

Henry (1994) explains that the police are usually the first point of contact with the justice system, and therefore they are most singled out by Caribbean Black people. Participants in the study mentioned the police without direct questions about the police, and their views differed based on social class (Henry 1994). Working-class males were the most concerned about police harassment and police racism, and working class women were concerned to a lesser degree (Henry 1994). Several middle-class men expressed concern and middle-class women did not bring it up, but when asked, could bring up at least on experience of police harassment or racism (Henry 1994). Middle-class participants were described as having ambivalence towards the police, they feel victimized and oppressed and some want to distance themselves from "the 'hooligans' in their own community" (Henry 1994:216). Student participants, both high school and university, viewed police as the "ultimate oppressor" (Henry 1994:202). Throughout this one chapter in a larger book, Henry (1994) describes the general fear of participants that the justice system as a whole is working against them.

Another study in the Ontario context analyzed data taken from a 1994 general population survey of Black, Chinese, and white residents in Toronto. Scot Wortley (1996) emphasizes that with the exception of the treatment of Aboriginal peoples, very little research looks at racial discrimination within the Canadian criminal justice system (Wortley 1996). The survey sample was representative of the Black, Chinese, and white populations and examined perceptions of bias within the Canadian criminal justice system.

Respondents answered questions via the phone, with a 60% response rate, there were 417 Black respondents, 405 Chinese respondents, and 435 white respondents (Wortley

1996). Respondents were asked if they thought the police and criminal court judges treat certain groups differently than others, specifically if they thought;

> 1) poor people are treated the same as wealthy people; 2) young people are treated the same as old people; 3) men are treated the same as women; 4) English people are treated the same as non-English people; 5) [B]lack people are treated the same as white people; and 6) Chinese people are treated the same as white people. (Wortley 1996:446)

For the purposes of the thesis at hand, I focused on whether or not respondents felt Black people were treated the same as white people. Wortley (1996) found that three-quarters of Black respondents think that police treat Black differently than white people, compared to just over fifty percent of the Chinese and white respondents. Black respondents were more likely to perceive discrimination against all groups, not just Black people (Wortley 1996). Overall, Wortley (1996) states that "regardless of how questions about the criminal justice system are asked, racial differences in the perception of fairness persist" (p.450).

Wortley (1996) asks "why do [B]lacks perceive higher levels of criminal injustice than whites and members of other racial minority groups?" (p454). This to me stood out as an important part of Wortley's work and also to the thesis at hand. Wortley (1996) gives several possible reasons, including that others have speculated that these perceptions are of a result of different experiences with the criminal justice system, that Blacks have more negative experiences with the police and court system, that Blacks face different racial stereotypes than other minority groups, and the long history of North America's institutionalized racism. While these were only a few of the possible answers, Wortley chose to try and explain why Blacks question the fairness and legitimacy of the Canadian criminal justice system more than other groups.

Robynne Neugebauer-Visano's (1996) article based on youth in the Toronto and York region, "Kids, Cops, and Colour: The Social Organization of Police-Minority Youth Relations" explores on youth experiences with the police. The article is part of a larger five-year study designed to track developing relations between the police and ethno-racial communities (Neugebauger-Visano 1996).

Data was gathered through informal interviews with youth between 1994 and 1995, observations at community centres and street corner transactions, and structured diaries (Neugebauger-Visano 1996). There were 62 informal interviews with youth, 37 identified as Black, 26 as white; 42 were boys between 15 and 18 years old, and 21 were girls from 16 to 19 years old (Neugebauger-Visano 1996). From these informal interviews, observations, and diaries, Neugebauger-Visano (1996) came to several conclusions, including:

> [B]lack youths perceive the police to be an occupying army; [B]lack and white youth perceive the police to be hostile… [B]lack youths highlight cultural factors in explanations of why they are reluctant to cooperate with police; and only four youths had anything positive to say about the police. (P:303)

These findings show that Black youth in this study have perceptions that are more negative than their white counterparts. Of the 62 interviews, Neugebauger-Visano stated that only four had positive things to say about the police, however she does not identify whether these youths are Black or white, this would have been an interesting inclusion.

Another study that focused on Black youth was Carl E. James' (1998) article "'Up to No Good': Black on the Streets and Encountering Police" that explored the nature of Black youth's encounters with the police. James conducted 50 interviews and focus groups with Black youth—60% male and 40% male—in six Ontario cities: Toronto, Ottawa, London, Windsor, Hamilton, and Amhurstburgh (James 1998). This sample was

a part of a larger study of 70 interviews with racial minority youth and their relations with the police (James 1998). James acknowledged that the participants came from different social classes, birthplaces, and some are first generation immigrants (James 1998).

Participants said that being stopped and questions by police and security personnel, was a common occurrence; some participants said that what they wore influenced the chances of being stopped, and others said they get stopped no matter what because of their 'race' (James 1998). Participants described being targeted by police in comparison to white youth, and when they are stopped, they felt they had to prove they were not a 'suspect' (James 1998). James further argued that through this repeated stopping of Black youth and placing the onus on youth to prove they are not guilty or the suspect, "law enforcement agents are engaging in a process of othering which in turn contributes to their criminalization of the [Black] youth" (James 1998:172).

In a unique research project, Giwa, James, Anucha, and Schwartz (2014) brought together fifteen young adults of colour and nine police officers, all from Ottawa, Ontario and conducted a three-and-a-half-hour group interview. This study was the only one of its kind in all the research reviewed and I included it here because I think looking at the dialogue between the police and African Nova Scotian youth could be an option for the community of Digby. The two main questions asked were: "What goes wrong in the relationship between police and youth of colour, and why? What would the police and youth of colour do differently in a relationship of trust?" (Giwa et al. 2014:224). Both of these are versions of questions I asked during my interviews. The two groups were brought together with the intention of discussing racial profiling and exploring factors

that contributed to the groups' difficult relationship, and to help both sides understand each other's perspectives (Giwa et al. 2014).

Of the nine police participants, one did not want his or her 'race' or age documented, seven were white, and one was a person of colour; eight were male, one female and the age range was twenty-three to forty-five years old (Giwa et al. 2014). The young adults of colour were aged sixteen to forty years old (Giwa et al. 2014). Each group separately took part in a two-hour pre-dialogue focus group that allowed participants to voice concerns, identify objectives, and possible outcomes for the dialogue before the two groups were put together (Giwa et al. 2014).

One of the prominent themes throughout the dialogue was the use of 'we' instead of giving individual opinions ('I'). Both groups tended to use 'we' in order to disperse ownership of thought (Giwa et al. 2014). As for the issues that contributed to their relationship, the interview revealed an absence of clear communication, lack of cooperation, lack of understanding, and insensitivity. The major ideas that came out of this dialogue were the following:

- Trust needs to be built between police, minority youth, and communities
- Police need better training in diversity and sensitivity to matters involving racial discrimination
- Police need to take seriously the complaints of ethnoracial minorities received through the Service's public complaint process
- Youth need increased opportunities to communicate with police, using existing channels of communication such as police/youth basketball leagues or SRO's [School Resource Officers]
- Newer approaches, such as dialogues, could be promoted to help the groups communicate with each other. (Giwa et al. 2014:239)

These conclusions are very important, although very idealistic. This research analyzes not only youth of colour's perceptions of the police but vice versa. I found that this article was focused primarily on the issues each group has with the other and the solutions,

whereas I intend to focus on only having the narrative and perceptions of the African Nova Scotian community conveyed. This was the same intention of research carried out by Dr. Owusu-Bempah (2014), and his work is the most similar to my research, except his research was in an urban setting.

Dr. Owusu-Bempah's PhD dissertation at the Centre of Criminology and Sociolegal Studies with the University of Toronto is an urban-focused example of African Canadian perceptions of the police. Owusu-Bempah (2014) chose to focus specifically on Black males, and he did so through three different studies, all focusing on Black males' experiences and perceptions of the police. Owusu-Bempah acknowledges that racism and racial tensions in Canada are still an issue and "[u]nlike our American neighbours, Canadians are uncomfortable discussing race and racial differences, preferring instead to use the language of ethnicity and culture" (Owusu-Bempah 2014:14). This is a sentiment that I found applied directly to my research but also through my personal experience as an African Nova Scotian.

The first of Owusu-Bempah's (2014) three studies was a survey of Black, Chinese, and white Torontonians, roughly five hundred participants in each group, where the survey asked questions about their relations and thoughts on police in Toronto (Owusu-Bempah 2014). This first study included both males and females, and found that Black Torontonians (both male and female) view police more negatively and report more frequent and more hostile interactions with the police than members of other racial groups (Owusu-Bempah 2014). What was most relevant to my research was that he found Black females had similarly negative perceptions of the police as Black males (Owusu-Bempah 2014). Owusu-Bempah theorizes that this is due to the relationship the men in

their lives have with the police. Although these women did not have the negative experiences firsthand, they are indirectly affected; this is something that has also been made clear through the stories of the female participants in my research.

The second study involved interviews with 328 young Black males, aged 13-26, all of whom were from four of the most at-risk neighbourhoods in Toronto (Owusu-Bempah 2014). These interviews revealed that young Black men received high rates of police stop and searches, and perceived the actions of the police officers during these encounters as unfair and disrespectful (Owusu-Bempah 2014). Participants were also asked if they had any positive experiences with the police, and though few of the men did, these positive experiences did not improve their perceptions and attitudes towards the police (Owusu-Bempah 2014). The men also discussed how their attitude towards a police officer during an interaction can influence the experience (Owusu-Bempah 2014). This may be true in some cases, but it does not account for or acknowledge the systemic racism under which many police officers operate.

The third and final study in Owusu-Bempah's (2014) dissertation involved interviews with fifty-one Black male police officers, focusing on their views and opinions as they are uniquely formed as both Black and as law enforcers. These officers reported receiving hostility from the Black community, but also racism from fellow police officers; they also suggested the Black people and Black neighbourhoods are often over policed and under protected (Owusu-Bempah 2014). The officers were asked to suggest solutions to the current tensions and issues, and they proposed the following:

> The officers suggested that Black citizens should be more cooperative and less suspicious of the police…. not to play the "race card" frivolously…. the officers also suggested that Black people develop a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the police and of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.…

> the officers suggested that the police must treat Black citizens and Black communities in a more humane manner. (Owusu-Bempah 2014:223-224)

Owusu-Bempah immediately identifies these suggestions as vague because they remove responsibility from police agencies, but he realizes that these suggestions are influenced by their immersion in police culture (Owusu-Bempah 2014).

Owusu-Bempah (2014) analyzes the similarities in thought between each group, noting that Blacks are treated worse than other racialized groups by the police. There are high levels of stop and searches for Black men and this leads to a negative experience, and police are more likely to use physical force with Blacks. The overall conclusion is that Black Torontonians perceive more police bias and report more frequent and more hostile interactions with the police than do members of other racial groups (Owusu-Bempah 2014). This study is unique; the inclusion of three different sets of Black people allowed for an extensive review of Black male's perceptions of the police. This study includes many examples of how Owusu-Bempah (2014) asked about perceptions of the police; nevertheless, it is still focused on an urban centre. While my research project may elicit similar conclusions, it will complement Owusu-Bempah's work in the sense that it adds a rural perspective.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Internationally, Jefferson and Walker's article "Attitudes to the Police of Ethnic Minorities in a Provincial City" (1993) compared three ethnic groups'—Afro-Caribbeans (referred to as Black throughout the article), Asians, and whites—attitudes toward the police in Leeds, England. The study was only done in enumeration districts (ED's), areas that authors describe as "socially deprived" (Jefferson and Walker 1993:253), which were estimated to have around 6% of the white population, 50% of the Asian population, and

60% of the Black population. While this article is dated, it is important to include research that directly relates to perceptions of the police, and as this research focuses on a minority community's perceptions of the police, Jefferson and Walker's article is directly relevant.

Walker and Johnson chose to only gather male participants, as they believed they were more likely to have experiences with the police; 641 males aged 16-35 years old filled out a questionnaire relating to their experiences and attitudes towards the police (Jefferson and Walker 1993). Of these, 171 were Black, 199 were Asian, and 271 were white, Jefferson and Walker investigated and revealed differences and similarities between these groups. They found that Blacks and whites were similar in that around two-thirds of each group had a critical perception of the police, whereas Asians had a more favourable perception (Jefferson and Walker 1993). Unlike a majority of the articles I read, Jefferson and Walker (1993) found Blacks had slightly fewer police-initiated contacts than whites. In addition, fewer Blacks had been found to be victims of offences and fewer reported incidents to the police; even with this lack of contact, very few participants were satisfied with the way the police handled the incident (Jefferson and Walker 1993). Including this article emphasizes the reality that the experiences of people of colour, specifically those of the African diaspora, are not universal.

In addition to exploring the wider Canadian context, Dr. Akwasi Owusu-Bempah recently published an article with Jennifer E. Cobbina and Kimberly Bender (Cobbina, Owusu-Bempah, and Bender 2016) out of the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University that addressed American perceptions of the police. In 2014, an unarmed young African-American male, Michael Brown, was fatally shot by a white police officer

in Ferguson, Missouri. There were several different reports of how the shooting happened, and the case was brought before a grand jury (Cobbina, Owusu-Bempah, and Bender 2016). The grand jury decided not to indict the police officer, Darren Wilson. This decision partnered with the shooting of Brown "sparked civil unrest across the nation, inciting conversations about policing and race" (Cobbina et al. 2016:210). These events are often referred to as simply 'Ferguson', and so the participants in this study self-identified as being engaged in some form of community action in Ferguson, Missouri (Cobbina et al. 2016). This work, "Perceptions of Race, Crime, and Policing among Ferguson Protestors" (2016), analyzes the perceptions of eighty-one self-identifying Ferguson protestors. They acknowledge that few studies focus on how African-Americans associate certain 'races' with crime and certain crimes with 'race', and that this a goal of their research.

The research drew on two bodies of research to inform their study, literature that establishes the presumed link of crime with African-American individuals, and literature on citizen's attitudes towards the police that demonstrates that African-Americans hold negative perceptions towards the police (Cobbina et al. 2016). Cobbina, Owusu-Bempah, and Bender (2016) also discussed how African-Americans are generally characterized as aggressive, hostile, criminal and violent. Of the eighty-one participants, forty-two were male and thirty-nine were female, seventy-five were African-American and six were white, and the age range of participants was eighteen years old to sixty-five years old (Cobbina et al. 2016). The researchers used semi-structured in-depth interviews to investigate,

> [W]hether and why racial minorities and whites racially typify crime. Specifically, to examine the connection of race to crime, respondents were asked to explain the

> reasons they thought African-Americans commit more or less crime than whites. Also.… we examined the respondent's views of whether and why police officers associate African-Americans and white people with criminal offending. (Cobbina et al. 2016:214)

The comparison of whites to African-Americans in terms of perceived likelihood to commit a crime is significant as these perceptions are likely to be held by members of the police force as well.

The researchers found that just over half of their participants felt African-Americans and whites were just as likely to commit a crime (Cobbina et al. 2016). Twenty-two percent of participants felt as though whites are more likely to commit a crime, due to two reasons related to the nature of the crime. Participants believed that crimes committed by whites are more damaging or heinous than crimes committed by African-Americans (Cobbina et al. 2016). They also suggested that the media tends to exaggerate African-American crime and that African-Americans commit fewer crimes than whites (Cobbina et al. 2016). However, 19% of participants said African-Americans were more likely to engage in crime, and this was due to three factors: socioeconomic status, inherent Black criminality, and media portrayals of crime (Cobbina et al. 2016). The socioeconomic status explanations claimed that because minorities are more likely to live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, their level of crime will increase due to economic need. Although this is well researched and has some level of truth, it is not the factor that stood out to be relevant to my research. Of the 19%, three individuals, all African-American, believed that some African-Americans were inherently criminal (Cobbina et al. 2016). The researchers state: "Though not a common theme, a small number believed that black people are inherently more crime prone that white people" (Cobbina et al. 2016:219). The only other place they address this theme is to state that all but one of this

19% were African-American themselves (Cobbina et al. 2016). To acknowledge this as a theme and not have an in-depth analysis of why this theme is present is frustrating because it does not address the explanations of why a Black participant believes Black people are inherently more crime prone than white people. In addition, if all but one of the participants who believed this was African-American, would it not have been beneficial to ask them why they are Ferguson protestors? The inclusion of this line of questioning would have strengthened this limitation as well as provided possible answers as to why some members of the Digby African-American community hold this belief.

Other relevant statistics that Cobbina, Owusu-Bempah, and Bender (2016) found were that 56% of participants reported that African-Americans were considered as culpable villains by law enforcement (Cobbina et al. 2016). This relates to Black criminality which will be discussed in the theory chapter of this study. Thirty-seven percent of participants emphasized that law enforcement views African-Americans as worthless and debased, particularly that the police viewed African-Americans as inferior to whites (Cobbina et al. 2016). Another 31% of participants felt officers/police viewed whites as blameless and above suspicion (Cobbina et al. 2016).

The overall findings of this study were that participants view the police as biased against African-Americans, and the police protect the interests and well-being of whites while simultaneously harming African-Americans, both physically and otherwise (Cobbina et al. 2016). This study ends with the statement that their participants would like to see a greater effort being made to improve police–community relations, but does not offer any solutions. Simply recording and publishing the perceptions of this group of participants is vital, especially with the current state of ‘race’-relations within the United

States. It may have been beneficial to have also asked participants what could be done to improve these relations. Even analyzing responses and suggesting their own solutions would have strengthened this article.

Sociologist Alice Goffman (2014) spent six years living in a predominantly Black neighbourhood in Philadelphia studying a group of Black men and their interactions with the law. *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City* (2014) was an ethnographic study that has received critical acclaim and also received serious criticism. Goffman told the stories of these men and their families, focusing on the their individual lives to build a community narrative (Goffman 2014). According to Goffman,

> The authorities' efforts to hunt, capture, try, and confine large numbers of young men in poor and segregated Black neighbourhoods are not only changing the way these men see themselves and orient to the world around them. The heavy police presence and the looming threat of incarceration are spilling out past their targets and tearing at the fabric of everyday life, sowing fear and suspicion into the networks of family and friends that have long sustained poor Black communities. (Goffman 2014:199)

Goffman used participants' stories to explain these themes, and this storytelling aspect of Goffman's research was criticized, as some believed that she should not have taken the stories she was told as fact (Rabben 2016). Through living with the community she was studying, studying participants lives through their perspectives, and sharing experiences, Goffman gathered her data. Due to the depth of the stories Goffman collected, and how she describes she took notes, there have been accusations that some details and points may have been fabricated (Lewis-Kraus 2016). Goffman, however, has been supported by her thesis supervisor, her university, and her publisher (Lewis-Kraus 2016). There were also accusations that Goffman was too involved within her research, an example being a moment she discusses when a friend had been killed and she drove herself and another friend (who was armed) looking for her friend's killer to take revenge (Goffman 2014).

While these and other criticisms, may have some validity, the findings from the research cannot be ignored. Goffman's book has received media and academic attention and she told the story of a Black community in the United States that details their relations to the criminal justice system and provides us with insight into these communities and their members, insights we would not otherwise have.

This chapter has presented and analyzed existing research on African Nova Scotians and the criminal justice system, and community perceptions of the police. There were only a few studies that looked primarily at minority perceptions of police, but those that have been done stress the importance of minority narratives. The other studies included informed the research in that they were similar in terms of research population (African Nova Scotians) or topic (researching community perceptions). My study will contribute to this body of literature by documenting Digby African Nova Scotian perceptions of the police, a study that has yet to be done. This study will address the lack of rural perspectives in the larger research. In addition, it will stress the importance of research involving the narratives of the African Nova Scotian community.

The importance of police legitimacy is important within a society, nonetheless, it is a status that needs to be earned through mutual respect and cooperation by both the police and the community. Within Digby there has been a long history of police discrimination and disrespect towards the African Nova Scotian community, so much so that the African Nova Scotian community in Digby does not feel protected. Having this documented is an important step towards mending these relations. Now that previous research on the topic of community's perceptions of the police has been laid out, the next section will look at the theories that will be used as a basis for data analysis.

CHAPTER 3: Theory

> White people have power and believe that they think, feel and act for all people; white people, unable to see their particularity, cannot take account of other people's; white people create the dominant images of the world and don't quite see that they thus construct the world in their image; white people set standards of humanity by which they are bound to succeed and others are bound to daily.
> (Dyer 1997:9)

Critical race theory (CRT) is the main theory framing this thesis and views 'race' as central to social and political structures and policies (Aylward 1999; Delgado and Stefancic 2007; Gillborn 2015; Solórzano and Yosso 2002; Treviño, Harris, and Wallace 2008). This theory is vital to my research at hand and influenced all aspects OF it, from conception to data analysis. While CRT is important to this thesis, it is complemented by supporting theories. This chapter will describe how Foucault's work on power, intersectionality, and CRT combine to create the basis of this research. These theories intertwine to create the skeleton on which data was collected and analyzed. Before discussing the theories used in this thesis, it is important to discuss the concept that is central to this thesis, 'race'.

Construct of 'Race'

'Race' is a social construct, meaning that it is "symbolic because it is created and recreated by human beings—the labels and categories used to classify humans are based on observed physical differences that are unique to different social and historical contexts, yet in all cases are viewed as natural and unchanging" (Owusu-Bempah 2014:39). Michael Omi and Howard Winant (2005) discussed this idea and labelled the

social construction of 'race' the "racial formation process" (p.4). Omi and Winant (2015) define 'race' as a "*socio-historical* concept…. racial categories and the meaning of race are given concrete expression by the specific social relations and historical context in which they are embedded" (p.11). This definition informs my understanding and therefore, every time the word 'race' is used within this thesis it is surrounded by single quotation marks. This is to acknowledge that 'race' is not a tangible term but one that is fluid. The exception to the use of quotation marks around 'race' is when there is a direct quotation from a journal article, book, or source, or in reference to critical race theory. 'Race' categorizes people and, historically, this categorization has reflected oppression, exploitation, and social inequality (Williams, Priest, and Anderson 2016). This argument will be clear as the experiences of the Digby African Nova Scotian community are analyzed.

Some researchers argue that "race as a concept should be abandoned because it signifies nothing and is 'analytically useless'. The ideology of racism, as opposed to race, is more important in understanding the effects of racism in society" (Chan and Chunn 2014:10). The reality is that while 'race' is a concept, it reproduces itself through society. Although 'race' is not real in the way society uses it, it is real in terms of the way racialized people experience 'race'. Racism is not conceptual—it is something people of colour experience every day. From microaggressions to outright racial slurs, 'race' impacts the lives of people of colour daily. 'Race' is a concept that changes from country to country and from decade to decade, it has fluidity, and is "used to differentiate, (dis)advantage, and (dis)empower each time it is uncritically invoked" (Hylton 2012:36). This is why 'race' is not simply an accepted term within this thesis and why there is a

need to acknowledge that it is socially constructed. As CRT does not deconstruct 'race', I felt it important to acknowledge 'race' as a social product while also not dismissing its impact on people's lives.

FOUCAULT AND POWER

Coming to an understanding of how power operates will lead to a better explanation of how the Digby African Nova Scotian community perceives and reacts to the police, a state structure that is often seen as holding power. This thesis relies on a Foucauldian understanding of power. According to Foucault, power is decentralized; he argues that knowledge is power, and power creates knowledge which then creates structures that power can function within (Foucault 1984). Power is a modality that creates locations and structure that it can work through, structures such as the criminal justice system (Foucault 1984).

Power in the mid-eighteenth century was defined as power over the physical body, the execution and prisoner were on exhibit in front of the masses; this display of power was thought to have deterred the rest of the masses from committing the same crime and also to not challenge those who are in a position to exercise power (Foucault 1984). However, Foucault then discusses the shift in thought and practice, a transition from outright physical power to a more hidden power. According to Deacon (2006) "Foucault suggests that the concern was less about inhumanity or violence per se and more about the kind or degree of violence that might best mould particular individuals" (p:180). There is a change from public executions to the trial and conviction of the prisoner; that threat of physical violence was no longer the deterrent (Foucault 1984; Turkel 1990). It was no longer the physical body that received punishment, but the new technology of

incarceration that worked to train and discipline both those who did not follow the rules as well as the masses. Within Digby, both the explicit use of power (physical force) and implicit (threat of punishment) are present. This section outlines how power can also be exerted through surveillance.

Panopticism is a model of governmentality within which the state is said to watch over and discipline others, it is a form of surveillance and power (Foucault 1984; Gane 2012). Notions of the Panopticon were originally used in prisons, but have been expanded into schools, hospitals, factories etc., for the purpose of surveillance. Part of Panopticon is the illusion or belief (real or perceived) of surveillance over all individuals; however, the Panopticon can only survey some individuals at a time (Foucault 1984). For example, in the prison setting, there is no way to tell which cells or which areas of the prison yard are being surveyed, yet most prisoners still behave as though they are being surveyed because they believe they are being watched. The same can be applied to how people think of the police: "[t]he police are characterized by their surveillance of the civil population. They are empowered to see everything; nothing should be too small or inconsequential enough to escape their gaze" (Johnson 2014:9). The simple implication of possible surveillance, paired with the possibility of punishment (either physical or disciplinary), means that people will submit to the power of Panopticism.

Through the game 'Cops and Robbers' and other variations of the game, children, in a very basic sense, begin to understand the role and purpose of the police. Analyzing the police through the lens of theory, we can better understand the role of police that has been implicitly reinforced throughout our lives. The police are viewed as a site of power and are able to exert power. How we respond to police has been molded from a young

age, in much the same way as Foucault describes that the solider is molded or made out of "an inapt body" (Foucault 1984:179). In some cases, the learning process may not even be as implicit as a children's game as mentioned before. This learning process aids in the function of the police which "is not to control, but to successfully manage" (Johnson 2014:18). This is similar to Foucault's discussion about looking at how instruments of disciplinary power train individuals. Tools of disciplinary power include hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement, and examination but only two are relevant to this work (Foucault 1984). Hierarchical observation coerces by means of observation, and through observation in a disciplinary institution (such as schools, prisons, a military training base), there is the creation of a mechanism of control (Foucault 1984). Normalizing judgements refers to the standard that is set that must be met for someone to be punished (Foucault 1984). The punishment is meant to be corrective so that one can eventually meet the standard (Foucault 1984). These tools discipline us, and also train us to discipline ourselves and others.

In Foucault's later writings, he describes another form of power, biopower (Foucault 1984). Biopower at its core is similar to disciplinary power; both are aimed at the normalization of society. Biopower or biopolitics, controls the society based on biological markers, including issues of birth, death, illness, disability, and the environment (O'Farrell 2005; de Ville 2011). The regulation of the general population, through both disciplinary and biopower, de Ville argues, "ultimately and inevitably leads to (state) racism" (2011:220). This state racism can be defined as the instruments in place in society that make possible a separation between perceived 'superior' and 'inferior', "[i]t furthermore allows for the killing or letting die of the abnormal, the degenerate, the

inferior, in order for the species as a whole to remain alive" (de Ville 2011:220). This state racism brings into play the politics of disposability, the ways in which people and communities are considered excess to be discarded (Evans and Giroux 2015). Relating to biopower, the politics of disposability means "certain bodies are inscribed with meaning such that they can logically and reasonably be disposed of within the everyday order of things" (Evans and Giroux 2015:137). Racialized bodies are controlled externally through these modes of power, and this can then cause a physical reaction through internalization.

People often react simply to the presence of the police; if you are driving and you see a police car you may slow down, your heartrate may pick up, you begin to think if you have your licence, registration, insurance; these are all ways in which we have been trained to react. While I myself have experienced implicit training in terms of how to react to police agencies, I have also experienced explicit training. An example of this explicit training was when my father was teaching me to drive a standard transmission and he taught me using a leased sports car. One day as we were on a backroad driving, he instructed me to always drive ten kilometers under the speed limit. When I asked why, he said 'Because we're Black and we're driving a nice car'. Driving while Black is often seen as a crime in itself, and therefore my father gave me that explicit lesson; common knowledge in the Black community is that Black people must be aware of the music they are playing when they get pulled over, what they are wearing, to make sure both hands are on the steering wheel, and how many friends they have in the car. This experience I had with my father, paired with the implicit (through media, culture, and social norms) enforcement from a young age means that when I see a police officer, I now have a physical reaction, and I become the perfect citizen in every sense, a perfect citizen who

conforms to society's expectations and laws enforced by the police. Drawing on Foucault's writings, Griffiths, Whitelaw, and Parent argue that the police don't need to use force anymore; "[t]he proof of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder" (1999:2). The public has been trained to obey, trained each other to obey, and will uphold this obedience through their mere presence. This understood and embedded power that the police exert over the public influences how the African Nova Scotian community relates to police.

INTERSECTIONALITY

While my use of Foucault serves to explain how we police ourselves as well as how people react to the police—specifically marginalized people—it is important to acknowledge that a theoretical framework that embraces multiple intersecting inequalities is needed to adequately analyze this context. An intersectional lens "can reveal, on a given issue and between separate identity groups, perspectives of both privilege and victimhood, and thereby create a connection around shared experiences of discrimination, marginalization, and privilege" (Carbado et al. 2013:306). In this context, I will also interrogate the ways in which 'race' and racialization, 'gender'[4], class, rurality, and criminality have worked together to shape the experiences of African Nova Scotians in Digby (Hylton 2012).

Intersectionality can be linked to Black feminist politics of the 1960s and 1970s, although this connection is often overlooked (Hill Collins 2012). Intersectionality began to gain traction in the 1980s, with many of the main ideas of intersectionality being

[4] 'Gender' is within single quotations throughout this thesis as it is a social construct that is highly debated and for the purposes of this thesis, males and females are the 'genders' used, based on participants' self-identifying.

"honed within the context of [B]lack women's activism" (Hill Collins 2012:449), in the form of pamphlets, poetry, essays, art, and other creative venues. In 1982 a small group of African American women in Boston, the Combahee River Collective, released a paper called "'a Black Feminist Statement'.… [that] laid out a more comprehensive statement of the framework that had permeated [B]lack feminist politics and that subsequently came to be known as intersectionality" (Hill Collins 2012:449). This paper argued that a 'race'-only or a 'gender'-only framework allowed only a partial or incomplete analysis of the role of Black women, and this intersectional lens has been applied to other marginalized groups in society. The term 'intersectionality' is said to have been coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her 1991 article "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color". The term intersectionality "emerged in this border space between social movement and academic politics as a term that seemed to best capture the fluidity of this emerging, influential, yet amorphous knowledge project" (Hill Collins 2012: 51). The importance of bridging the academic analysis of this project with the social justice aspect of creating a space for the Digby African Nova Scotian community's narrative to be heard requires the inclusion of intersectionality.

To better understand the racism and discrimination that African Nova Scotians in Digby face, other axes of marginalization must be examined. Ignoring these axes of oppression would undermine the work of other critical race theorists as well as weaken this research through disregarding other ways in which African Nova Scotians are marginalized (Hylton 2012). There are criticisms that an intersectional lens can lead to paralysis of research as there are endless ways in which different concepts intersect. That is why a balance must be found between "remaining sensitive to intersectional issues

without being overwhelmed by them" (Gillborn 2015:279). There are many others that were beyond the scope of my research; what is included will help put into context the experiences of African Nova Scotians.

The following are the dominant ways in which the African Nova Scotian community is marginalized. I chose to discuss: Black criminality, Black masculinity, Black femininity, socioeconomic status, and rurality. These axes are based on the literature, my knowledge of the region's history and context, as well as my own experience as to what shapes the lives of African Nova Scotians in Digby.

Black Criminality

When discussing African Nova Scotians and the police, the notion of Black criminality must be taken into account. Black criminality refers to how "members of the black community still play the role of the 'dangerous' other in contemporary Canadian society" (Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2011:1). The association of Blacks with crime as well as crime with Blackness is a way in which the social order is upheld and there is continued social control of Black people (Eberhardt et al. 2004; Owusu-Bempah 2014). The racialization of crime has historically influenced public opinion and police practices (Chan and Chunn 2014; Skolnick 1966; Wortley 2002). This confluence is also perpetuated by the media, specifically in how they portray the perpetrators of crime (Chan and Chunn 2014; Eberhardt et al. 2004; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2011). While white crime is explained as a product of individual pathology, Black crime is explained as a group phenomenon (Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2011). The long-term effects of the racialization of crime can be felt within the African Nova Scotian community in Digby:

they are wary of the police, they are hesitant to call the police for help, and often assume they are going to be arrested.

This claim of prejudice on the part of the Black community as a whole is nothing new. In W.E.B. Dubois' 1899 book, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*, he made a note that "it has been charged by some Negroes that color prejudice plays some part, but there is no tangible proof of this, save perhaps that there is apt to be certain presumption of guilt when a Negro is accused, on the part of the police, public and judge" (p.249). This study was conducted over a century ago; yet the same attitudes and presumptions are present within the town of Digby. As DuBois (1899) says, there was no tangible proof of prejudice, and this same issue of tangible proof can be applied to the concerns of the Digby African Nova Scotian community.

Black criminality cannot be discussed without discussing the role the police have in perpetuating the stigma Black people face. The police—because of media, culture, history, and police culture—associate certain people—in this instance, Black people, with crime—making Black people symbolic assailants. The nature of policing means that police are exposed to criminals and crime on a daily basis and they begin to expect who is a criminal or who may commit a crime based on body language, behaviour, dress, and unfortunately, colour (Skolnick 1966). Several studies have shown that the police are more likely than the average person to associate Blacks with crime or danger (Piquero 2009; Ruby and Brigham 1996; Skolnick 1966). This police association of Blacks with crime and crime with Blacks has led to a higher rate of incarcerated Blacks, as well as a negative relationship between Black communities and the police (Jordan and Freiburger 2015; Steffensmeier and Demuth 2001). A study by C. L. Ruby and John C. Brigham

(1996) discusses how, when members of law enforcement investigate Blacks, they may overlook or reinterpret actions that may prove them innocent, interpret ambiguous information as a sign of guilt, or perceive things that indicate guilt when they may not be present. The findings of this study, done twenty years ago, I would argue, are still applicable to the town of Digby. According to Piquero (2009); "In the end, race/ethnicity matters, and its relation to crime is, without questions, a criminological fact" (p:367), but it also relates to how the criminal justice system—specific to this thesis, the police—treats members of society.

Black Masculinity

All of the media stories reviewed for this thesis involve African Nova Scotian men, and all of these stories depict the men as victims. For every one article in which the Black male is the victim, one can find many more where he is the perpetrator. This is not only in relation to newspaper articles; other media outlets are very similar:

> Read any article or book on [B]lack masculinity and it will convey the message that [B]lack men are violent. The authors may or may not agree that [B]lack male violence is justified, or a response to being victimized by racism but they do agree that [B]lack men as a group are out of control, wild, uncivilized, natural-born predators. (hooks 2004:44)

The media reflects the discriminatory thoughts and practices the rest of society hold in relation to Black men, and it perpetuates it (Cobbina et al. 2016). The victimization of Black males is in terms of the stereotypes they face—being seen as "animals, brutes, natural born rapists, and murders" (hooks 2004:x), but also through the actions of the police and the entire justice system, "police are likely to view [B]lack males as dangerous when engaged in noncriminal or minimally criminal behaviour" (Jones-Brown 2007:103).

Black men are often targeted when they are not committing crimes; *if* they are committing crime, they are receiving heavier punishments than their white counter-parts.

Black Femininity

African Nova Scotian women also hold a lower status in society, as they are subjected to both racism and sexism. Some call this the "'double jeopardy' hypothesis" (Lewis and Neville 2015:290; Sesko and Biernat 2010:356; Settles 2006:589), which states that it is necessary to look at how 'race' and 'gender' intersect with Black women, "because of their intersectional identity as both women *and* of color within discourses that are shaped to respond to one *or* the other, women of color are marginalized within both" (Crenshaw 1991:1244). The role of a Black woman is one that is often ignored (Sesko and Biernat 2010). Highlighting the role of Black women is not to say that Black men and men in general do not experience misogynistic society in a different way. The position Black women hold in society is frequently labeled as 'invisible', meaning that Black women "are treated as interchangeable and indistinguishable from each other, and in this sense are less 'visible' compared to other groups" (Sesko and Biernat 2010:360). Participants had few accounts of African Nova Scotian women having direct interactions with the police, the interactions were primarily vicarious. However, there is often a comparison of the levels of discrimination Black men have versus Black women:

> When comparing [B]lack women to [B]lack men, it has been argued that within the [B]lack population, discrimination against women has decreased much more rapidly than discrimination against men. Black women are said to have increased their occupational, educational, and economic status at a pace far greater than have [B]lack men.… However, this approach fails to take into account that [B]lack women are regarded as making such remarkable progress in comparison to [B]lack men in large part because they are actually compared with white women, a severely disadvantaged group—not with white men, the group with the greatest occupational/economic advantage and with whom [B]lack men are typically compared. (Sokoloff 1992:95)

Without taking into consideration other historical and current comparisons, Black women are often overlooked in terms of research and society's attention for justice. In order to supplement this, the vicarious experiences of participants will be explored within the discussion chapter.

Socioeconomic Status

Both African Nova Scotian men and women face marginalization in terms of socioeconomic status (SES), which for the purposes of this thesis will be measured as a complex and multidimensional combination of education, income, occupation, resources, power, and prestige (American Psychological Association 2016; Williams et al. 2016). This definition is important as in some research SES is based solely on financial status which does not take into account the complexities of class and status. 'Race' and SES are not independent of each other (American Psychological Association 2016; Horton and Horton 1983; Shariff-Marco et al. 2015; Tapia 2010). A few participants mentioned segregation, specifically how difficult it is for an African Nova Scotian to find a place to live directly in Digby, but instead they live in surrounding communities like Acaciaville, Conway, Jordantown, and Weymouth Falls. This residential segregation is an example of institutional racism that creates racial differences in education and employment that produce racial inequalities in SES (Williams et al. 2016). It only reinforces the lower SES of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby and continues the cycle of marginalization. As W. E. B. DuBois wrote in 1899, "in convictions by human courts the rich always are favoured somewhat at the expense of the poor, the upper classes at the expense of the unfortunate classes, and whites at the expense of Negroes" (p.249). The

African Nova Scotian community in Digby is likely targeted by the police because of 'race', but also because of their lower SES (Ruby and Brigham 1996).

Rurality

The town of Digby, as defined by Statistics Canada is a small population centre. Moving away from the duality of urban/rural, the Government of Canada expanded urban into three definitions: small population centre, medium population centre, and large urban population centres (Government of Canada 2011a). Halifax is a large urban centre (population of 297,943 people), Cape Breton-Sydney is a medium population centre (population of 31,597) (Government of Canada 2011b). The rest of Nova Scotia was defined as small population centres, the largest being Truro (population of 23,261) and the smallest being Bridgetown (population of 1,014) (Government of Canada 2011b). This reclassification of urban but not rural is telling to how the government understands rurality. Instead of categorizing both terms, anything that is not urban or a population centre is considered rural. In the case of Digby, even though the population (as of 2011) is 2,152, and their population is ranked 24th out of 37 areas in Nova Scotia, they are still considered urban, if only a small population centre (Government of Canada 2011b). This implies a government misunderstanding of what should be defined as rural: "[p]opular conceptions of the rural are of places of tradition rather than modernity, of agriculture rather than industry, of nature rather than culture, and of changelessness rather than dynamism and innovation" (Ward and Brown 2009:1239). Rurality is more than just an opposition to urban. Those who are classified as rural are often also seen as those who are not urban, however in my experience, there is more depth and differentiation to rurality.

Exploring through the lens of intersectionality the ways in which the Digby African Nova Scotian community i marginalized helps to explain how their experiences are shaped in various ways. What is also important is the way in which the African Nova Scotian community in Digby is marginalized through the absence of power, an overarching theme in all of the previous mentioned branches of intersectionality.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

The origins of critical race theory (CRT) are based in law and the justice system. In 1977, a group of American radical scholars—left-leaning white males—within the legal academy created critical legal studies (CLS) (Aylward 1999). CLS "criticized the five basic and interrelated tenets of legal liberalism: law, formalism, neutrality, abstraction, and individual rights" (Aylward 1999:19). African American, African Canadian, and other scholars of colour were attracted to CLS because it challenged the objectivity of the laws that oppressed people of colour (Aylward 1999). Thirty legal scholars of colour attended the 10th annual National CLS Conference in Los Angeles in 1986 (Aylward 1999). Of these thirty, six presented papers on topics of racism and the law (Aylward 1999). CRT originated among these scholars who attended this conference (Aylward 1999). These scholars of colour felt alienated from existing legal discourse as well as from CLS (Aylward 1999). One of the founders of CRT, Richard Delgado, said "CLS has not paid much attention to the minorities, not placing racial questions on its agenda until this year, ten years after its formation as a legal movement" (Aylward 1999:27). Despite the criticisms of CLS, CRT owes many of its insights to CLS, including CRT's scrutiny of the criminal justice system and hidden relations of power (Giwa et al. 2014). The development of critical race theory in Canadian society has been

much slower than our American counter-part due to the exclusion of African Canadians and other people of colour from the Canadian legal academy, which in turn has led to significant underrepresentation of legal scholars of colour (Aylward 1999). The relevance and importance of CRT in Canadian society has been overlooked. By applying CRT to this thesis, there is hope the importance of CRT in the Canadian context will be highlighted.

Critical race theory puts 'race' as central to social and political structures and policies; it also asserts that racism is an ordinary event and that it is an everyday experience for people of colour (Delgado and Stefancic 2007). Critical race theorists argue that racism "remains hidden beneath a veneer of normality" (Gillborn 2015:278). This is why CRT challenges the normalization of 'race'. CRT advocates for those who occupy the margins of society, specifically people of colour, and aims to give the marginalized a voice. CRT advocates for the marginalized, but also "contests liberal notions of objectivity, neutrality, and colorblindness, ideas that perpetuate systemic discrimination and maintain the invisibility of racism among those in positions of power" (Giwa et al. 2014:221). The notions of objectivity and neutrality are discussed more in depth in the methodology chapter, but the premise is that there is no policy or research that is objective or neutral, everything produced comes from a standpoint. A colourblind approach assumes that racism no longer exists and therefore no decisions made by the government can be based on 'race' (Aylward 1999). This approach promotes the myth that race has never been a factor in Canadian society or that it is still not a factor.

Microaggressions were also discussed by participants, and this is an everyday experience of racism. Microaggressions were first defined in 1978 by Pierce, Carew,

Pierce-Gonazalez, and Wills as: “subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are ‘put downs’ of [B]lacks” (p.66). This definition was further developed over the years since, and for the research at hand microaggressions are defined as:

> [A] form of systemic, everyday racism used to keep those at the racial margins in their place. They are: (1) verbal and non-verbal assaults directed toward People of Color, often carried out in subtle, automatic or unconscious forms; (2) layered assaults, based on race and its intersections with gender, class, sexuality, language, immigration status, phenotype, accent, or surname; and (3) cumulative assaults that take a psychological, physiological, and academic toll on People of Color. (Huber and Solórzano 2015:298)

Common types of microaggressions minorities experience relate to “being treated like second-class citizens, being made to feel invisible, and having assumptions made about their cultural ways of being and communication styles” (Lewis and Neville 2015:290). These subtle slights are often delivered unconsciously and unintentionally, and perpetrators often underestimate the impacts of microaggressions by minimizing the incidents and reactions of those harmed (Sue, Capodilupo, and Holder 2008:330). The inclusion of microaggressions in this thesis is based on the frustration participants expressed about having their reactions and experiences minimized. By understanding microaggressions through a CRT lens, one can understand that racism often intersects with other forms of oppression. Microaggressions can be experienced based on “race and/or ethnicity, gender, class, language, sexuality, immigration status, phenotype, accent, surname, and/or culture” (Huber and Solórzano 2015:310) and have many layers and complexities that target minorities. Whether conscious or not, microaggressions are a symptom of the larger environment of racism.

Critical race theory has three main goals: “(a) to present story telling and narrative as valid approaches through which to examine race and racism in the law and society; (b)

to argue for the eradication of racist subjugation while simultaneously recognizing that race is a social construct; and (c) to draw important relationships between race and other axes of domination" (Parker and Lynn 2002:10). This thesis employs a narrative or a storytelling approach. The hope is that narrative "can debunk the myths of neutrality and objectivity by placing emphasis upon the confrontational nature of an encounter" (Aylward 1999:35). Confrontations within marginalized communities need to be analyzed within the social and historical context of racial discrimination. My thesis also discusses the relationship between 'race' and other axes of domination by looking at several axes and how they combine with 'race' to shape experiences with the police and the criminal justice system. While CRT allows for this type of broad analysis, there are still many criticisms surrounding CRT.

Every theory faces criticism, and CRT is no exception. One of these critiques is from the critical legal studies base of CRT. Critical race theorists argue about injustices in the law using CRT, but they do not challenge the law itself (Treviño et al. 2008). Challenging the criminal justice system would be ideal in terms of deconstructing how it came to be formed, who wrote the laws, and who laws were intended to protect; however, in the time being, highlighting the existence of injustice and improving the conditions of African Nova Scotians in relation to the criminal justice system is still beneficial. There is also an argument that CRT is not a theory to begin with, but instead a jumble of analytical tools used in different situations (Treviño et al. 2008). This same argument asserts that because not all critical race theorists agree on a fundamental set of beliefs, that CRT is more of a movement and less of a theory (Treviño et al. 2008). CRT may be disputed among its theorists, but its fitting application to research cannot be ignored. To counter

these criticisms within this thesis as well as to direct my analysis, CRT is supported by other theories.

This research project that involves participants' narratives and life experiences needs to have a framework in which to theorize, understand, and communicate the situation to the public. The combination of Foucault's work on power, intersectionality, and critical race theory allows for a strong understanding of how the Digby African Nova Scotian community is marginalized, and therefore why their narratives need to be shared. The following chapter on methodology will explain critical race methodology, as well as how data was collected and analyzed.

CHAPTER 4: Methodology

Critical race methodology is a theoretically grounded approach that centers around 'race' and racism while challenging the traditional ways in which the experiences of people of colour are explained (Solórzano and Yosso 2002). Critical race methodology also analyzes the different axes that shape the experiences of people of colour and values these experiences as sources of strength (Solórzano and Yosso 2002). This thesis has and will consistently bring 'race' and racism to the forefront of each chapter. This thesis uses theories that explain the experiences of people of colour, and draws on theories that explain the various themes found throughout participant interviews. My research draws on history, sociology, criminal justice, philosophy, women's and 'gender' studies, and family studies to further analyze the participants' experiences and narratives; "A CRT methodology should demonstrate a response to challenging subordination and oppression.… *it is informed by active struggle and in turn informs that struggle*" (Hylton 2012:35, italicized in original). This thesis is also a response to incidents that have continually happened in Digby over the past five decades, with the hope that this research will provide the community an avenue by sharing their stories, to make other communities and organizations aware of the experiences and perceptions of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, to add to the literature on police–community relations, and also to open the door for further research into this specific community.

CRITICAL RACE METHODOLOGY

As briefly touched on in the theory chapter, critical race theory often utilizes story-telling to counter the culturally dominant narratives that distort and silence the

experiences of people of colour (Solórzano and Yosso 2002). In this thesis, I will use the tool of story-telling to build a community narrative that does not currently exist in the literature, as the African Nova Scotian community in Digby has not had many opportunities to publicly share their stories. Critical race theorists "recognize that stories or discourses have been a privilege of those historically influential in knowledge generation and research. Counter-stories however, can present views rarely evidenced in social research" (Hylton 2012:27). The literature review demonstrated that minority communities' views of the police are extremely under-researched and provided evidence of the lack of counter-stories. These counter-stories oppose the dominant narrative and bring awareness of the experiences of a marginalized community. In the literature review there are few studies that include counter-stories, the clearest use of counter-story was present within a doctoral dissertation. Owusu-Bempah's (2014) thesis was a combination of three studies, which included African Canadian police, African Canadian men, and a survey of several 'races' about their perceptions and relationship with the police. This thesis created a counter-story of the Black males in Toronto (Owusu-Bempah 2014). My research is focused on the African Nova Scotian community, including a range of ages and 'genders', and their counter-stories. It conveys personal racialized experiences, but it is a way to counter the dominant culture that maintains racial inequality (Treviño et al. 2008).

CRT is often fundamentally seen as "'talking back' through the production of counter-narratives" (Baszile 2015:240) to interrogate and tease apart the ways in which racism is reinforced "under the guise of integration, assimilation, colorblindness, and, more recently, post-racialization" (Baszile 2014:240). Building a counter-narrative

challenges the meta-narrative and preconceived notions of race but it is also a tool for analyzing and challenging dominant narratives (Parker and Lynn 2002; Solórzano and Yosso 2002). These counter-stories are created from the data gathered through research, the existing literature, one's professional experience, and one's personal experiences (Solórzano and Yosso 2002). The counter-stories within this thesis are exactly that; the raw stories from participants, the (lack of) literature surrounding community perceptions, my process as a researcher, and my personal experience as an African Nova Scotian.

There are always criticisms, some claiming "even with their cloaks of validity and reliability, stories are socially constructed and can represent a limited version of reality" (Hylton 2012:27). However, these counter-stories have always been used by marginalized people to assert themselves and resist the dominant Eurocentric culture (Baszile 2014). Critics have also called critical race theory " 'just a bunch of storytelling,' the insinuation being somehow stories do not represent 'legitimate' knowledge, that they have no revolutionary potential" (Baszile 2014:240). The response to this is that some will always believe legitimate knowledge is objective, neutral, and universal. CRT "does not pretend to be neutral, objective, or apolitical, it embraces the realization that knowledge comes from thinking and feeling bodies that are raced, gendered, and sexualized…. from the bodies that are located in hierarchical relations and places of differences" (Baszile 2014:239). The same premise applies to this thesis; I am in no way claiming that this thesis is unbiased. 'Race' is central to this thesis and the stories of those who are marginalized in terms of 'race' are central to this research.

As an African Nova Scotian, I must also acknowledge the two different roles I occupy, as both an insider and an outsider. The researcher, in this case myself, plays a direct and

intimate role in data collection and analysis, and therefore recognizing my two roles allows me to be as transparent as possible (Dwyer and Buckle 2009). For the following discussion, the term insider refers to "[the researcher] sharing the characteristics, role, or experience under study with the participants" (Dwyer and Buckle 2009:55), and outsider is a researcher who is an "outsider to the community shared by participants" (Dwyer and Buckle 2009:55). The two roles are often presented/described as a dichotomy, however, this presentation is overly simplistic and does not take into account the many roles a researcher can hold.

I am insider because I am also a member of the African Nova Scotian community and "one's membership [to a community] automatically provides a level of trust and openness in your participants that would likely not have been present otherwise" (Dwyer and Buckle 2009:58). I believe that the reason participants were so open with their answers is because I am also African Nova Scotian. Each participant wanted to know where my family was from, and who else I was related to other than Bundys, my insider status had to be verified. With this trust and openness, there was also the risk that participants would not go into as much detail because they may have already assumed I knew facts; there were incidents in interviews when I had to ask a participant to clarify because they were making the assumption that I had 'insider knowledge'. I approached the research assuming I knew nothing and that my participants were the experts in the field I was researching.

Although I am a member of the African Nova Scotian community, I am not a member of the Digby African Nova Scotian community, something raised by Dwyer and Buckle when they acknowledged that, "[h]olding membership in a group does not denote

complete sameness within that group" (Dwyer and Buckle 2009:60). Being a member of the broader community does not mean I understand the sub-culture of the Digby African Nova Scotian community. Being an outsider to the community proved difficult when I was looking for participants as people were hesitant to talk to someone who was not from Digby. Once I made contact with a few well-known members of the community, they gave me credibility and it began to be easier to access participants. This was only in the last month of my interviewing process. I am also an outsider in my role as a researcher, "because our perspective is shaped by our position as a researcher (which includes having read much literature on the research topic), we cannot fully occupy one or the other of those positions" (Dwyer and Buckle 2009:61). Balancing between associating with the community and conducting research was a new experience for me, and made me aware of what I was projecting to others. This is described as one of the greatest challenges as an insider/outsider. We need to take into account the "power and privileges we possess in relation to people" (Yakushko et al. 2011:281) in the communities that we study.

METHODS

Through nine semi-structured in-depth interviews, this thesis unpacked the perceptions that the African Nova Scotian community in Digby has in regard to the police. In-depth interviews allow necessary topics to be covered while allowing for individual experience to guide additional questions. The process began with introductory questions that were short and structured to facilitate direct answers. Introductory questions established the stage for the interview, set tone, jogged participants' memories, and provided context for later data analysis (Miller and Crabtree 1999). Then participants were asked to recall their experiences with the police, how they felt about relationships

between the police and the African Nova Scotian community, and if they believed these relationships are in good standing; and if they were not, what could be done to improve these relations. The interviews took place from November 2015 to May 2016 and varied in length, anywhere from forty-five minutes to just over two hours, indicating the need for this type of qualitative research whereby the community has the opportunity to fully detail their experiences and perceptions. All interviews were voice recorded. Interviews were conducted in the participant's location of choice—wherever they indicated they were most comfortable. Four interviewees preferred to be interviewed via phone and this was also accommodated.

Participants were members of the African Nova Scotia community in Digby who have resided in or near Digby for a majority of their lives, although it was not required that they lived in Digby at the time of the interview. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling, meaning after making one contact in Digby, he/she connected me with other members of the African Nova Scotian community who were interested in participating (Bryman, Bell, and Teevan 2012). Although I used snowball sampling, each participant took me in a new direction. At the end of each interview, participants were encouraged to ask any questions they had about the research and I answered them to the best of my ability.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The nine participants were assigned pseudonyms that corresponded with their self-identified 'genders'. The participants were the following: Alan, Pamela, Russell, Wyatt, Susan, Ben, Henry, Michelle, Patrick. Having a short description of each participant would have given some background as to why they perceive the police in a

particular way; whether based on profession, whether they are a parent or not, how long they lived in Digby, if they still live in Digby, or age. Because Digby is such a small place, and the African Nova Scotian community is even smaller, I will not be assigning characteristics to specific participants.

The following table (see Table 1) includes 'gender', age, parental status, and years spent living in Digby.

Table 1 Participant Demographics

	Number of Participants
'Gender'	
Male	6
Female	3
Parental Status	
Parent	7
Non-Parent	2
	Range
Age	25 years old- 60 years old
Time Spent Living in Digby	20 years- 50 years

As shown in Table 1, there were six male participants and three female participants. I did not restrict this study to solely male or female for two reasons. First, I wanted to get a sense of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby as a whole, including both male and female perspectives. Secondly, since I initially had trouble accessing any person who was willing to participate, it would have been nearly impossible to get enough interviews of one 'gender' for this research. Seven participants were parents and two were not, I did not actively seek out parents or people who were not parents. I included this in the characteristics as I was coding data, I found that parents often had vicarious experiences

through their children, and the frequency of this made parental status important to mention. The youngest participant was around 25 years old and the oldest was around 60 years old, the mean age being 45 years old. I hoped to have participants who would come from different age groups, in order to gain an understanding of the police that ranged through different generations. I did gather participants in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s. Ideally, I would have liked to have more participants that were 18-24 to gather a better idea of the younger generation's perceptions. Finally, I included how long participants lived in the Digby town area, the longest being 50 years, the shortest time was 20 years. This characteristic was to show that the perceptions participants hold were not based on of one or two incidents, but decades of confrontations and experiences. Participants have felt unprotected by the police for decades.

In-depth interviewing is a powerful qualitative research tool that allows researchers to see the world from a participant's point of view (Marvasti 2004; Miller and Crabtree 1999). An in-depth interview can be beneficial to the researcher in terms of collecting rich data.

There was also an Informant, who is referred to as 'the Informant' throughout this thesis. This person lived in Digby for a short time, but has an extensive knowledge of the African Nova Scotian community and its history. The Informant signed the same consent form as other participants, but was aware that their involvement would not be as direct as other participants. Instead of interviewing this person via phone or in-person, I e-mailed them a list of questions pertaining to the Digby African Nova Scotian community. A majority of the information the Informant provided was to provide a better understanding of the context of Digby, and is used to set a context in several places in this thesis.

Ethics

All efforts were made to maintain anonymity. However, due to the small geographic region of Digby, no guarantees of anonymity were made. Participants in the study were informed of the possibility that their identity could be determined because of the size of the community and therefore they entered into the process with full knowledge of this as a risk of participation. As there is a risk that participants' identities could be revealed, I feel it must be acknowledged that each participant showed bravery by speaking with me. This thesis will be accessible to the public, which includes community members and members of the police. Through having these open conversations with me, participants opened themselves up to responses from the community and the police; their courage to speak has not gone ignored.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of data was an iterative process meaning that after I collected preliminary data, this expansive impacted the collection of further data and finally analysis; this often lead to a change in either the kind of information I sought or the way I gathered research (Bryman et al. 2012). Qualitative analysis is often described as "a loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data as additional questions emerge, new connections are unearthed, and more complex formations develop along with a deepening understanding of the material.… qualitative analysis is fundamentally an *iterative* set of processes" (Berkowitz 1977:n.p.). This repetitive process of gathering data, learning from it, and having it inform further data collection allowed me to narrow my research process as well as strengthening the process as a whole.

When discussing the analysis of data, reflexivity must be taken into account, referring to my awareness as a researcher of the implications of my methods, values, biases, decisions, and mere presence on my research (Bryman et al. 2012). This acknowledgement of reflexivity in research is a recent trend, the belief being that the reader is entitled to know "the aims, expectations, hopes, and attitudes that the writer brought to the field" (Bryman et al. 2012:29). Throughout this thesis I have made you as the reader aware of my connection/role within the research, the point being to explain how this may have 'influenced' my findings (Bryman et al. 2012). This bias is often attributed to social sciences, yet this emphasis is unfair, as all 'knowledge' that is produced, from both natural and social sciences, is influenced by the researcher's location in time and social space. *All* research is from a reflexive position; research is directed based on what the researcher wants to know and how they interpret the data (Bryman et al. 2012). Reflexive iteration is reflecting on the initial data, and also your goals and aims for the research.

Before analyzing data, I transcribed each interview. I transcribed exactly what was said, with the omission of 'ums' and 'ahs', pauses were also recorded. After transcribing each interview, I began coding. The process of coding was three-fold. The first was line-by-line coding which involved making notes directly on each transcript while reading line by line, it is a fairly superficial analysis. Charmaz (2004) states that this first step of qualitative analysis "frees you from 'going narrative' or from becoming so immersed in your respondent's categories or world view that you fail to look at your data critically and analytically" (Charmaz 2004:506). This approach was useful to my analysis. I coded as I transcribed, and I found it kept me close to my data. The line by line aspect allows you to

see the data in a new light (Charmaz 2004). The next step in coding is axial or 'focused' coding; this is less open-ended and more directed than line by line coding (Charmaz 2004). "Focused coding allows you to create and try out categories for capturing your data.… by raising a code to the level of a category, you treat it more conceptually and analytically" (Charmaz 2004:509). This was taking commonalities among all the transcripts and looking for ways in which each participant's narratives intertwine; then recoding each transcript according to these themes. Through axial coding, I created 28 codes (See Appendix A on page 133). The final stage of coding is theoretical coding. Theoretical coding moves away from what the participants say to explore broader themes conceptually (Bryman et al. 2012). Theoretical coding "enables you to define how various categories and connected in an overall process" (Charmaz 2004:511), this translates into the themes found in the data, and this is then supported by the theories discussed earlier.

After theoretically coding 26 axial codes, I came to three final themes/codes, the first being the Trump environment. This theme spoke to the environment of racism participants faced not only in terms of police but in Digby and Nova Scotia. This included axial codes that spoke to the atmosphere that the African Nova Scotian in the Digby community faces. The second is Daily Blackness, things that the Digby African Nova Scotian community experience on a day-to-day basis that add to their oppression. Finally, Community Experiences, this refers to the collective experience that the Digby African Nova Scotian community has with the police. This collective experience is described through perceptions of the police, personal and vicarious experiences, and how participants described their relationship with the police.

Data Limitations

There were several limitations I came across while conducting my research, many of which were in relation to data collection. I began interviewing participants in November of 2015, and by the beginning of April 2016, I had conducted only three interviews. The initial contact I had in Digby gave me quite a few names, but they were unable to give me telephone numbers. Because of this difficulty, a majority of my recruitment efforts were cold-calls using numbers from the phone book, and I found many people no longer have home phones, only cell phones. I had many names, but no contact information. As I began interviewing people, I asked for names and numbers of people they knew who may be interested in participating. This resulted in being able to contact more people, but I found there was still hesitation from several people I contacted. I believe part of this hesitation was because I was not from the community, but with the permission of interviewees, I was able to use their names as someone who recommended I contact the possible interviewee. This seemed to make people less wary of me and more likely to participate. I was still struggling to find interviewees, and asked if I could attend a community meeting about the possibility of a community centre being built[5]. The African Nova Scotian community has wanted a community centre for decades, and just recently had made headway. The meeting I attended was to explain the different blueprint options for the proposed community centre and to let the community give input and make a decision. I thought this would be a good opportunity to make my face known as well as get contact information for possible interviewees, but the latter proved fairly difficult. I believed it was beneficial to put a face to the person who had been cold-calling members of their community as many people already seemed to know of my research. I would

[5] This is the community centre that was mentioned in earlier discussion.

introduce myself, give an overview of my research and the reaction was often: 'Oh I heard about you' either through word of mouth or via e-mail, even when I had not emailed the person. I would often get shrugged off by the person after this encounter and the conversation would continue in another direction. From this community meeting I gathered that the community was focused and more interested in the progress they were making with the possible community centre than they were with the state of community relations with the police. I can understand this; they are able to improve the community through a community centre, which is more physical and financially beneficial than telling their stories about their relations with the police. However, after this community meeting, cold-calls were more successful and I was able to conduct six interviews in the month of April. The role of outsider was more prominent than I had thought and finding ways to work around this status proved a stronger obstacle than I had initially anticipated. In similar studies, such as Owusu-Bempah's (2014) Toronto study, he gathered participants through organizations for African Canadian Youth and through police departments. Digby is a very small community and accessing the few organizations they do have proved difficult due to lack of contact information and the small size of the community.

While the outsider status proved difficult, I also found challenges with how I dealt with my insider role. The more research I did—be it literature review, interviews, or data analysis—the more aware I became of how others may perceive me when I went to Digby. With respects to the African Nova Scotian community, I was hyper-aware of how I looked; I'm bi-racial, half African Nova Scotian, half white, and I was aware of how light I am in terms of colour, and whether I left my natural curly hair down or if I had it

straightened. I was overly mindful of whether I 'looked' African Nova Scotian enough. When I was in Digby, I visited public places such as stores and restaurants, and I could feel members of the white community staring at me. It made me wonder if it was because I was African Nova Scotian or because I was not a member of the Digby community. This in turn made me aware of how I came across to strangers, was I smiling enough? Did I look friendly enough? Were they making assumptions about me because of my natural hair? Did I look suspicious? Was my tone of voice pleasant enough? The more stories I heard from interviewees, the more I monitored my behaviour and appearance, almost bracing myself for an experience similar to those I interviewed. The tension I sensed between the African Nova Scotian community and the rest of the Digby community was more palpable each time I was exposed to it. There was one interview that was done in a restaurant, and as patrons began to come in, they stared at the participant and myself, and sat as far away as possible. As the interview ended, there was a circle of empty tables around ours and the restaurant was fairly full. This hyper-awareness was something that felt familiar, but it hadn't been this constant since I had moved to the Annapolis Valley ten years ago, I had become comfortable, and the moments of being hyper-aware were fleeting. Constantly being conscious of your 'race' and how that may come across to others was a shocking and humbling reminder, one that I felt needed to be acknowledged and included in my thesis.

This chapter has described how critical race methodology adheres to the theoretical framework of this thesis while building the methodological framework. Critical race methodology heavily influenced how I saw myself in this research as well as my awareness of how others perceived me throughout this research. Through nine semi-

structured interviews, I gathered data that was analyzed through three steps of coding. This coding led to three dominant narratives that will be discussed in the next chapter. The results chapter will use the voices of nine African Nova Scotians from Digby to explain the Digby African Nova Scotian community's perception of the police.

CHAPTER 5: Results

This chapter is dedicated to presenting the participants' voices in the form of narratives as they explain their perceptions of the police in Digby. To do this, I will chronicle the findings of nine interviews conducted to reveal African Nova Scotian perceptions of the police in Digby. Findings have been categorized into three main themes; The Trump Environment, Daily Blackness, and Community Experiences. The analysis of these categories will be in the following chapter. Each main theme has several relevant sub-themes that relate back to the overarching theme. As the focus is narratives, this chapter is heavy with excerpts from participants' transcripts, staying true to the theoretical framework of this thesis, and focuses on racialized narratives that counter the dominant discourse. This dominant discourse promotes objectivity, neutrality, and colourblindness, ideas that perpetuate systemic discrimination and the invisibility of racism.

TRUMP ENVIORNMENT

In 2016, businessman Donald Trump campaigned to become the Republican Party's nominee for the American Presidency. Trump's campaign and speeches often included racist, sexist, classist, and ableist comments. Trump's racist comments towards Mexican-Americans, African-Americans, Mexicans, and immigrants in general brought 'race' to the forefront in American politics and news, and by association, Canadian politics and news (as Canadian television networks and radio stations feature high American content). This theme is referred to as the Trump Environment because it describes an atmosphere of racism in Digby that the African Nova Scotian community

faces, and how this atmosphere has shaped their experiences and perceptions. In discussing this theme, the focus will be on the Digby community, systemic racism in Digby, the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, and Black versus White Digby.

I struggled with whether or not I should include discussion of Trump within participants' interviews, but the frequency—four of nine participants—and how long participants talked about Trump was unignorably significant. The environment in Digby resembles that being created by Donald Trump through his campaign. Most of the discussion around Trump was in terms of how he has brought racism back into the public sphere of attention and discussion:

> Then you got Donald trump—the rise of Hitler I mean he's doing the same thing Hitler did, 'it's not your fault, you poor old white working people, it's those people's fault'.… but the fact is all these millions of people support him, and it's just bringing out their embedded hatred of *those* people, whoever *those* people are. (Susan)

> It's 2016 and I mean look at the Republican party, Trump's talking about building walls everywhere.… thanks to Donald Trump, holy shit America is still really racist. (Ben)

Trump brought racism to the forefront of discussion in the United States of America, but also in Canada. Participants made a clear connection between what happens in the United States and what happens in Canada:

> The reason you'll hear about Trump is because regardless if it's an American problem, it's a North American problem.… Hell yeah what Trump says speaks to Canada because you know what, how many Canadians do you hear say 'oh I agree with Trump, Trump's not playing the political game, Trump's not worried about being politically correct I like that'…. it is unfortunately part of what we have to deal with, the problem is that it also allows more people to be racist here in Canada. (Ben)

The connection between what happens in the United States and what happens in Canada is clear to participants. Canadian society is often a reflection of American society, and

unfortunately at this time, that reflection is full of racist overtones. Ben again clearly connected those who are discriminatory and racist in Digby to Trump supporters:

> It's just ludicrous but then you see the heart of America and you see the heart of Canada because you have those people who think Trump's the bees' knees (pause) and I'm sure there's tons of them in Digby. (Ben)

While Ben believes that there are many Trump enthusiasts in Digby, this is not how the Digby community is defined in this thesis. A better way of gauging 'race' relations is through looking at how participants describe the Digby community.

Digby Community

Here, 'the Digby Community' refers to the overall geography of discrimination in the Digby community and atmosphere in Digby. The atmosphere in Digby was repeatedly described as racist and as being decades behind 2016. As Patrick expressed:

> It's frustrating, it sucks because we're in 2016 and we may as well be in the 50s and 60s. (Patrick)

This sentiment refers to Digby as being five to six decades behind the rest of the world in terms of 'race' relations. This was not the only reference to Digby being decades behind, Dr. Winbush, while visiting Digby to conduct a study with Harry Allen about police–African Nova Scotian community relations, spoke to Russell about Digby:

> He said it's kind of like I'm back in the 50s here in Digby…. he said usually people are kind of embarrassed about being a certain way, he said these folk have no shame, they just feel like Black people have a place and they're going to keep us in it, and that's how he read Digby, and that was only there for a two-week visit. (Russell)

A short visit led the two researchers to come to the conclusion that Digby was a racist and discriminatory place. Five participants also described Digby as a discriminatory place. Ben said:

> Digby (laughing) oh me oh my, it's the strangest place, you couldn't have a more beautiful place, your downtown is on the waterfront, and you know there's hills and somewhat of mountains and everything is so peaceful and nice and then you just have this environment of hate. (Ben)

The ways in which participants describe Digby to give context to their experiences.

Russell further explained the culture of discrimination and seasonal employment:

> Look it's a tourist community, it's a seasonal community, it's a fishing community…. so when I speak about Digby, it's a culture there of how comfortable they are or not comfortable with Black people in everyday life and the police are a part of that. (Russell)

Participants explained that it is not just the police that discriminate against the Digby African Nova Scotian community, but the Digby community as a whole. In addition to setting the context, there were also explicit examples of racism that the African Nova Scotian community has faced in terms of trying to live within the limits of the town of Digby. As previously noted, a majority of the African Nova Scotians in Digby do not live within the town limits, but in smaller communities surrounding Digby. Russell explained that there was an African Nova Scotian family that bought a house just inside Digby town limits and the town moved the 'Welcome to Digby' sign to the other side of this family's house so that technically, they lived in Conway. This overt example is telling to the larger atmosphere of racism within Digby. The atmosphere of Digby was explicitly discussed:

> It's the schools too, it's local businesses, when Winbush came here—he's a stranger and he's about six foot four, Black guy with dreadlocks, he also interviewed some of the business people (pause) and they blatantly told him they would not hire any Black guy because they were thugs, like who does that? But that's the environment of this racism that has been entrenched in our society. (Susan)

Susan perfectly verbalized what seemed to be present within all of the interviews. I felt that atmosphere on a smaller scale in the times I visited Digby; whereas participants as

well as the entire African Nova Scotian community in Digby face it every day in nearly every aspect of their lives. It's larger than the Digby police; it's in all facets of society.

While the police in Digby will be discussed more in-depth later in this chapter, Henry spoke about the police as a part of the environment in Digby:

> You come into the situation and you don't actually engage the community and you police (long pause) and you don't interact with the Black community or you run into an incident with a person of African descent, then you wouldn't necessarily believe there are tensions, but when those tensions are evidence through those incidences, you can't keep denying it because you're denying somebody's—you're denying somebody's reality. (Henry)

Henry highlights the existence of tensions between the African Nova Scotian community and the police while also discussing how these tensions are often viewed as an over-exaggeration. In reality, Henry says this perception is not an exaggeration but a historically negative relationship that is reinforced over and over through confrontations and the larger community seeing these repeated incidents as an anomaly instead of a pattern. Henry also broadens the understanding of these tensions and "examples of rubbing up against authority" as a Nova Scotian problem.

This was also apparent in other interviews. Participants discussed how pervasive racism and discrimination were not confined to Digby alone, but that the South Shore is similar. Participants expressed the view that a negative atmosphere existed not only in Digby, but in the entire province of Nova Scotia. This atmosphere allows for discriminatory practices to continue in all aspects of society. In Digby specifically, this atmosphere combined with systemic racism shapes the Digby African Nova Scotian community's experience.

Systemic Racism

Racism within Digby is not solely experienced through interactions with the general population and the police, but through many aspects of daily life. The participants' discussion of systemic racism generally centered around education, employment, and the criminal justice system. Noting the history the African Nova Scotian community has had within the education system as discussed in the introduction, it is not surprising that eight of the participants mentioned discrimination within the school system. This ranged from their own experiences while in school, their children's experiences, or dealing with those who work for/within the system. To include direct quotes from participants' experiences may give away identifying experiences, instead, I include generalizations from the interviews.

The lawsuit that the African Nova Scotian community in Digby won in the eighties has not translated to an improvement in the experiences of African Nova Scotian children in schools. Since then, participants have described seeing police officers coming into schools to arrest African Nova Scotian youth, when this has not been witnessed happening to white students. They also described having teachers treat them or their children differently than other students, for example, having an African Nova Scotian student break up a fight at school between two white students and the ANS student was the sole receiver of punishment. Experiences and perceptions of systemic racism within the education system were most prominent. Participants explained that African Nova Scotian youth in Digby are being targeted within the education system by students, teachers, and administrators, and they are also slipping through the cracks[6]. For example:

[6] See the BLAC report on Education (Black Learners Advisory Committee 1994).

> I know a Black guy in Digby that graduated from high school and couldn't read or write a sentence, so how did he get through? (Susan)

It has to do with students, but also with who is working in the education system. Participants pointed out the lack of African Nova Scotians working within the Digby education system. The discrimination and racism within the education system appears to be where the experiences and perceptions of the Digby African Nova Scotian community begin to be shaped.

From the education system, African Nova Scotians in Digby enter the world of employment, their experiences there are no different than they were in school. Alan applied for a position for which he was highly qualified and to which he provided a strong recommendation, but:

> Two weeks later they had hired somebody, a white person for that same job that I applied for, but I never went back and said how come this person—I just left it alone, and but to me in my opinion that was an experience of racism.

Alan attributed this job loss to racism and chose not to pursue it any further, but according to my participants, his experience is not uncommon. As Pamela noted:

> I find just with jobs you know, I mean they say there's no jobs and they're not hiring right now and then you look three days later and it's a white person who's got the job, and you say oh I thought you said you wasn't hiring and they say they wasn't at the time but you know, there's a lot of that.

Although level of education is likely a factor, participants also described discriminatory practices held by employers that bar African Nova Scotians in Digby from employment. Level of education and other issues in gaining employment are both realities of systemic racism. The criminal justice system's view of the African Nova Scotian community is in part tied to how African Nova Scotians appear not to succeed in education and in finding gainful employment.

Participants mentioned exact cases, and therefore I again must generalize to avoid giving away any identifying information. Discrimination within the criminal justice system is from the point of entry, the police, all the way to the courtroom. Michelle further explained:

> You see it everyday.… we see our guys being overcharged, we see you know, we see defense lawyers not defending you know to the fullest, we see all these bullshit charges everyday and it's to get our kids in the system, once they get them in the system, it's easy to keep them in the system.

The focus of my research is the Digby African Nova Scotian community's perception of the police—which will be discussed later in this chapter—but for this section I will discuss the other aspects of the criminal justice system that participants have discussed which contribute to the environment of racism. Participants mentioned getting charged with things that they or someone they know didn't do, a lack of concern from police if they are victims of a crime, unreliable witness testimonies from white community members that were taken as fact, poor public defenders, ignoring witnesses that cleared them of crimes, and convictions based on cases that had many holes in them. These incidents are all examples of Black criminality in action; African Nova Scotians in Digby are believed to be seen as the dangerous 'other' and are associated with crime. This association is clear as many participants described African Nova Scotian community members in Digby getting convicted, charged, or arrested despite clear evidence they were innocent. Michelle described the Digby African Nova Scotian experience by saying:

> We are terrorized, don't trust the police, don't trust the system, once they got their hands on you they'll throw everything at you and hope something sticks, they won't give you a break because some of it they have discretion, because sometimes they can give you a warning or something like that, not when it comes to Black people, they will just hope something sticks.

The lack of trust is with the police, and with the criminal justice system as a whole. The perceptions of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby are shaped through negative experiences with the police, through the education system, through employment, and through the criminal justice system as a whole.

Understanding the Digby community as a whole is vital. It puts into context the atmosphere the African Nova Scotian community in Digby faces. While their perceptions are the center of this research, understanding more about the African Nova Scotian community itself will better explain why this community feels unprotected by the police.

Digby African Nova Scotian Community

The African Nova Scotian community in Digby is part of the African Nova Scotian community and Nova Scotia in general. The atmosphere of Digby and participants' experiences make this community a specific subculture. While throughout this thesis I have made reference to the African Nova Scotian community in Digby as a singular group, it is important to recognize that this in no way means everyone is the same or has the same responses to the discrimination they experience. For example, Susan articulated that what makes the Digby African Nova Scotian community different from other African Nova Scotian communities is that they are verbal about the discrimination and racism they face. However, that is not the case for everyone. As Alan described:

> There's a lot of boisterous people in Jordantown as well, when they spoke the whole town heard them, and they had a reputation of doing that too, and there are some families today that still as soon as they say their last name, they know and they roll their eyes.

Alan's view, after further questioning, was that there were some members of the Digby African Nova Scotian community that were overly vocal and exaggerated many incidents.

The Informant supported the view that the African Nova Scotian community did not always share one opinion:

> You also had factions within the Black community who did not support everyone who was opposed to the RCMP. This was most evident by the lack of participation in the march which took place within the weeks following Drummonds and Fells arrest. (Informant)

In opposition to Alan, Wyatt described 'don't disturb the pot' people in the community:

> You have some Black people who the police treat well, because one, they're either what some call snitches and they're usually snitching on their own community and or they're what I like to call 'don't disturb the pot' Black people.

The reason why not all African Nova Scotian community members in Digby believe there is a problem with the police in Digby was discussed by Russell:

> It's interesting how the community, you know the larger—where we're sharing these things, what their standard is for calling something racism, their standard is very different, if you treat me different and you can't explain why you're treating me different, I'm going to say okay it's because of my race, but their standard is well did they call you a name, did they spit on you—it has to be something really extreme.

Russell says that it may be because most of the racism that they experience is not explicit enough for them to classify it as racism. On the other hand, Ben argued that it's because some Digby African Nova Scotian community members don't want to be targeted by the police. Both are possibilities, but there is no denying that each participant believed they experienced racism in some form within Digby. This experience of racism is one of the commonalities that all participants had, making them a community.

Community Support

Communities that are marginalized, like the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, rely on one another for support (Barnes 2005). In some cases, this community support was there in a broad way:

> A lot of the community people would help, like if I needed a babysitter or something like that.… I had the community help me get there. (Pamela)

The community relies on one another for childcare, for travel needs/restrictions, and support in general. I witnessed this at the community meeting I attended, there was a full meal put together, there was laughter, there were rides home for those who walked to the meeting, and there was a strong sense of community support. They spoke of coming together in times of need:

> You know it got to a point where the community said 'enough is enough'. Black parents would go downtown Saturday nights when the bar as supposed to close, and police the streets, to make sure that Black youth were safe….and *it was to protect our children because the law wasn't protecting them*. (Michelle, emphasis added)

This period where a group of African Nova Scotian parents in Digby stepped in to police the streets for the summer was brought up by three of the nine participants. There was a feeling in these participants that the police were not there to protect, but instead there to target African Nova Scotian youth:

> They would say to the young people look 'Let us give you a ride home, get off the streets, we don't want you and the police engaging' this is what they were doing, that's how bad it was…. and it worked for quite a while because you know the rate of people being charged on Saturday night after the club dropped considerably. (Russell)

> They [the police] had dogs, dogs target the big Black guy, make no mistake about that, the police drove up and down up and down with the dogs in their paddy wagons and stuff but it didn't escalate physically, but it was like they wanted it to escalate. (Susan)

This is a strong example of how the Digby African Nova Scotian community felt they had to be self-sufficient in protecting themselves and how they felt unprotected by the police. The role of parents is also highlighted in the fact that it was parents who began this initiative to protect their children. The need to protect their youth comes from the

experiences of African Nova Scotian youth in Digby being targeted and having confrontations with police as well as white youth in Digby.

Black versus White Digby

The relationship between African Nova Scotian community members and police is antagonistic, and the differential treatment between the African Nova Scotian community members and white community members goes beyond the environment of racism. This differential treatment was often mentioned. Of the nine participants, when asked if they felt that all members of Digby are treated the same by police, *eight* answered no. These two responses exemplify what was said:

> How they police the Black community and how they police the white community, you know when they're called to an incident if there's Black and whites, who do they go to first to get a story, and once you've got the story from those you perceive to be you know, honest and forthright individuals, anything else I tell you is a lie, right? So it's the same and it's you know, it's the—it's their attitude (pause) it's their own biases, it's you know it's their expectations, it's you know, it's their stereotypes. (Michelle)

> Based on my experience as a person of African descent (pause) I don't know how white folks feel about their interactions with the police, but from my life experience—you know this is what's so—so the answer is no, I don't believe they're all treated the same. (Henry)

Patrick answered 'No' so quickly that I couldn't even finish the question. I interviewed him in a restaurant and after I asked if he could elaborate, we both found ourselves looking at our surroundings—white patrons:

> It's just like, there's two of us and 15-20 [white patrons], like if a clerk calls the police right now and says there's a problem and doesn't go into details, who do you think they're gonna come in and stare at, who do you think they're gonna automatically assume is the trouble, who are they gonna ask to leave, so (laughs) and it doesn't matter like what position you hold in the community…. it doesn't matter, if you're out in public in street clothes (pause) relaxing with family, friends, like god forbid if we were here with a group of us, like that would be a scene half these people would get up and leave. (Patrick)

Patrick comments speak to both the attitudes of the police towards African Nova Scotians, but also to the wider racism among the white community in Digby. Patrick's expectations are based on his past experiences in restaurants in Digby, and these past experiences were not positive.

The only participant to not answer 'No' was Alan. Here is our exchange:

> Interviewer: Do you feel that all members of the community are treated the same by the police in Digby?
> Alan: I would hope so yeah
> Interviewer: Has that been your personal experience though?
> Alan: Yes, that has been my personal experience yeah

Even though Alan did not say yes or no definitively, by acknowledging that it has been his own personal experience, he is not denying the possibility that it may be different for other members of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby. Despite this, earlier in the interview, Alan spoke about growing up decades ago and said:

> Tensions were high, especially in Digby and the Black and white community in Digby and racism was pretty evident.

Additionally, according to Susan, tensions were so high that African Nova Scotians and whites can't be in the same place while drinking, because conflict is inevitable. This speaks to the relationship between the African Nova Scotian community and the white community in Digby.

Patrick described an incident in the summer of 2015 in which he had an altercation with a white woman in Digby for which she was clearly in the wrong. She was not charged, as Patrick explains:

> Because as soon as they seen the white girl that I came to them about, it was immediately her word was true, I'm a liar and that was it, yeah so we can't even go to them [the police]. (Patrick)

Similarly, Ben explained:

> Any time and I say this, I will stand by it, I will sign on the dotted line on it, any interaction I've ever had with a cop, even if the white person is bold dead in the wrong, if there's a Black person there, they're going in. Every. Single. Time. (Ben)

The treatment of Digby African Nova Scotian youth by police was a common theme that participants mentioned as examples of how police treated the community differently:

> You know we were afraid that somebody was going to get killed (long pause) and you know when white youth were—were harassing and bullying Black youth, where Black youth were being confronted and confronting and where police would—would you know arrive on scene and basically support the white youth. (Michelle)

African Nova Scotian youth and white youth in Digby were the main comparison in terms of police treatment. Four participants mentioned that a prime example of how the police treat the African Nova Scotian community differently than the white community is through youth loitering:

> If you got a white young guy walking downtown or two or three of them standing in front of a store, the police would drive by and not say nothing to them but if two or three Black guys were standing in front of the store they'd stop and tell them to get moving. (Pamela)

> You know there could be four or five Black youth, twelve white youth and the police would go to the Black youth and say get going you're loitering and would speak over the white youth to address the Black youth…. It was just blatant-blatant racism and discrimination and you know profiling and bullying. (Michelle)

Participants made clear that it is publicly evident who the police are policing and who they are not. Police are targeting young African Nova Scotian males in Digby. The targeting of the Digby African Nova Scotians by the police can be seen though the daily lives of the African Nova Scotian community. The African Nova Scotian community's perception is also shaped by how they experience Blackness.

DAILY BLACKNESS

Participants discussed experiencing Blackness on a daily basis. In this context, I am referring to the *negative* experiences Black people face based on their 'race'. An examination of these frequent oppressions helps to provide an understanding of what the Digby African Nova Scotian community endures daily. The daily experiences of Blackness included the ways it combined with other axes of intersectionality and the use of the 'race card'.

Axes of Intersectionality

Intersectionality was discussed in the theory chapter and provides insight into the ways in which the African Nova Scotian community may be marginalized, as the ways different aspects of one's identity may intersect and shape how they experience the world. Throughout the interviews, it was clear that a majority of the axes I chose to discuss in the theory chapter were significant within participants' everyday lives and essential in shaping their experiences and perceptions. Rurality was the only one not explicitly mentioned; however, the rurality of Digby shapes access to services, employment, education, etc. and influences both the African Nova Scotian community and the police in Digby. In discussing the axes of intersectionality, I will explore Black criminality and how it applies to Black men and women, and socioeconomic status. Black criminality alters how the public and police view African Nova Scotians as well as how they treat them. Black criminality is also apparent in how the criminal justice system treats the African Nova Scotian community in Digby.

(a) Black Criminality

The racial profiling described by participants provides prime examples of Black criminality in action. Racial profiling is generally in reference to law enforcement agencies, and it is the discriminatory practice of an officer targeting an individual based on 'race' (Tator and Henry 2006). Seven participants discussed racial profiling that they had experienced in Digby and all of them in some way alluded to being treated differently based on their 'race'. When talking about what the white community does not have to go through in terms of racial profiling, Ben said:

> Like you haven't went into an office to get financing for a vehicle and them basically tell you well do we even need to run a credit score, 'I don't think you can afford this', you've never walked in a jewellery store and someone starts showing you the $200 rings when you're looking at the $2000 rings, you've never had that happen, you've never asked them to open the case and have them go get their manager to open the case to show you something (pause) you don't know that feeling. (Ben)

The frustration in Ben's voice when he described these experience was palpable, it was evident that these incidents had and continue to have an impact on him. Ben said he experienced these things in all of the places he had visited and lived, it was not only in Digby.

Participants described being racially profiled most often while driving:

> He [a police officer] just seemed like every time I was driving and he would stop me wherever I was going he would stop me every time, wherever I was going he would stop and pull me over... you know he just always be stopping me, I mean for no reason. (Pamela)

> I have friends that work for you know.… government agencies who come in for meetings and are stopped, are stopped for no reason, absolutely no reason (pause) and you know one guy gets stopped on a regular basis, and it's nothing but the fact that he's Black, the fact that they don't know who he is, and he comes town in a suit, not a ball cap on backwards and you know track gear. So you know, nothing has changed, nothing. (Michelle)

Pamela's account is another of the few examples of police interactions with a Digby African Nova Scotian woman directly. She spoke about how a specific officer began to recognize her car and that increased the number of times she was stopped. Participants all recounted experiences that African Nova Scotian men in Digby have with the police, both personally and vicariously, each in a different way. Wyatt spoke of an incident in which he was targeted because police were looking for a vehicle that was carrying drugs. Even though Wyatt, his car, and his companion in the car did not match the police description; but he was still stopped and was ticketed on an unrelated charge. Five participants described an experience in which they believed they were pulled over because they were African Nova Scotian. Two participants received formal apologies from the police through their complaints from being unjustly pulled over. These apologies were the exception, not the rule and they provide evidence that their perceptions are real.

Ben was visiting Digby as he lived elsewhere at the time, and rented a Cadillac as there was nothing else available from the car rental agency. In his two-day visit, he was stopped three times. Ben said he was unsure if it was because he was an African Nova Scotian man driving a nice car, if it was because the police in Digby did not recognize him, or if it was both; he leaned towards the latter. According to Russell, the police stopping African Nova Scotians that they did not recognize in Digby was fairly common practice:

> Then you're coming into Digby, say if you were in Digby for about a week, the police would have to know who you are, 'who's this new Black person in Digby?', honestly that was our experience, they would actually engage you, like 'how are you' and kind of talk like they're doing that community policing thing but they're really—they know who the Black people are in Digby. (Russell)

From these sentiments, it seems the African Nova Scotian community in Digby has been 'inventoried' by police, and any change in 'inventory' needs to be investigated by police.

It is obvious to participants as to who the police are policing. This selective policing and targeting of the African Nova Scotian community can also be felt through microaggressions.

Microaggressions, discussed earlier in Chapter Three, are defined by study participant Henry as "little incidences that steal your humanity that aren't necessarily overt expression of racism". Henry continued:

> [Microaggressions] make you self-conscious to a certain extent about your identity and how other people understand you.… I think the policing component takes it to a whole other level because they have an authority to extend beyond those microaggressions into pressing charges and then those inequities that exist in our community are actually exasperated. (Henry)

African Nova Scotians in Digby face racial profiling by the police, and these incidents of racial profiling can also be seen as microaggressions. A clear example of racial profiling and a microaggression together is when Wyatt was pulled over by police, who were looking for vehicle containing drugs. Neither he nor his car fit the description of the APB, yet he was still pulled over and questioned beyond what would be classified as a normal interaction. These examples of racial profiling and microaggressions help to illustrate Black criminality, and Black criminality was also evident in how the Digby African Nova Scotian community understand how Black men are perceived.

(b) Black Masculinity

Participants were not unaware that the African Nova Scotian men in their community were primary targets of police. Eight participants spoke about Digby African Nova Scotian men in some way or form. Susan and Michelle said:

> Black men are seen as hood, as thieves, rapists, always wanting white women and so it keeps on perpetuating. (Susan)

> When Ray Winbush was here what we did is we went to the community and every male between the age of sixteen and thirty we identified, and of those males, *one* had never had an encounter with the police, *one.* (Michelle)

Susan blatantly named the stereotypes that Black men face, stereotypes that influence how they are treated and perceived. Michelle discussed tangible data that shows that African Nova Scotian men in Digby are targeted more by police. Male participants discussed this by describing their own experience:

> I was already like a professional because that's how I hold myself and it irritates white people and it irritates Black people for the same reason—who does he think he is, I think I'm a proud Black man and I think I'm going to die a proud Black man. (Wyatt)

> I'm already a target, they're not gonna rest until—I'm convinced—they're not going to rest until they tag me with a criminal record. (Patrick)

Above are two different perspectives from two different African Nova Scotian men in Digby. Wyatt discusses how his confidence in who he is bothers the white community, but also the Black community. This reiterates the fact that there is not a singular African Nova Scotian community, that there are disagreements and differences. In addition, he identifies the problem. When combined with Patrick's comment, this finding highlights the fact that the police continuously target African Nova Scotian men to the point where these men are convinced they will not be left alone until the police have charged them with something. This conviction is not so much a fear as it is an expectation of something being inevitable. It is so inevitable that the Digby African Nova Scotian community actively teaches young African Nova Scotian men about how to deal with the police:

> And of course a young Black male (pause) police don't want to hear you know, 'why are you harassing me? You know, I'm doing nothing, you know I have rights and these are my rights.' So we told you know—we would meet with all the children, Black youth—especially males, and tell them, you know if the police stop you, comply and you know we'll deal with it later. (Michelle)

This, paired with other tactics taught by the African Nova Scotian community, allowed the African Nova Scotian men in Digby, particularly youth, to be prepared for unwanted police attention and focus.

Other steps have been taken by Digby African Nova Scotian parents to protect their youth. Seven participants—both parents and adult children—discussed how they taught their children to know their rights in regards to the police or how their parents taught them what a police officer can or cannot do when you're being pulled over. Michelle expressed another way they taught young African Nova Scotian males in Digby:

> The only thing we can do is prepare our children to deal with it and that's what we've been trying to do for a number of years here and we still tell our Black males you know whether or not you're in the right or in the wrong, you know if the police approach you and they ask for you know this this and that, if you have the you know ID's produce them and give them your name, let them do what they have—let us deal with it later, you know because they can always find a bullshit charge to throw on you.

This research underscores the Digby African Nova Scotian community's belief in a need to educate youth on how to handle confrontations with the police, what rights they hold in relation to the police, and how to protect themselves in situations in which they encounter the police. This education is self-protection speaks clearly to the racial profiling and assumed criminality African Nova Scotian men in Digby face.

Giving special education to African Nova Scotian youth did not, however, stop the parents of these young men from worrying:

> When my sons were out, my wife and I did not go to sleep…. we did not go to bed until they came home, and not because of what they would encounter dealing with the citizens of Digby, but what they would encounter dealing with the RCMP. (Russell)

For Russell and other participants with sons, male relatives, or male friends, the reality is daunting. Henry described this reality by saying:

> I still feel to a certain extent that I am subject to racial vulnerabilities.… by virtue of my Blackness and virtue of my size, you know and I've heard these—actually these police officers say—it's true when you look at Black Lives Matter and such in the States when they're talking about, 'well he was large and he was Black', so people automatically stereotypically in their mind can construct an angry large Black man.… you know what I'm trying to say—that I can't trust that who I am as a person (pause) will rise to the surface in terms of somebody in a position of authority's characterization of me, and I think there are cultural gaps that are connected to that as well, and racial gaps connected to that. (Henry)

Henry articulated further that the perception of a Black man is not a positive one. This perception can have deadly effects; the recent events in the United States show that clearly[7]. Henry also encapsulates the stereotypes of large athletic Black men, and how this in turn makes him vulnerable to being a victim. Feeling targeted means you don't feel protected, he furthers this by saying that a person in authority may not be able to look past the Black male stereotype to see who he is.

The perception of Black men, young Black men in particular, has impacted how police have interacted with African Nova Scotian men, this, in turn, has impacted how African Nova Scotian men in Digby are taught to interact with the police. As Michelle explains:

> We tell our children you know if you're ever anywhere and you need help you find an RCMP or a police officer, well we can't tell them that, and I can't even tell my grandchildren that….and I can't tell them that (pause) you know I will half-heartedly (pause) what I tell them is they should—they're there to serve and protect, you *should* be able to go to them if you need help….but you know as a member of the Black community, someone who's you know had a not great experience with the police, and you know how Black males are treated, as their grandmother it's difficult.

Here is the sad reality that, as a grandmother, Michelle is not comfortable teaching her grandsons that the police are there to protect them. It seems that she can say 'in theory' they're there to protect you, but reality will be different.

[7] For further detail, see for example the cases of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Trayvon Martin, who were all African American males whose lives were lost in inter-racial confrontations in the U.S.A.

The media plays a big role in the perception of Black men, and Black men themselves are not oblivious to it. Wyatt spoke of how *Cops*, an American TV series that follows police officers, constables, and sheriff's deputies on their patrol and other duties, often portrays perpetrators as young Black males and what this means in Digby (Langley Productions n.d.). All male participants of this study, with the exception of one, do not feel protected by the police, and a large part of this is because they believe they are targeted due to a skewed and discriminatory perception.

(c) Black Femininity

African Nova Scotian women in Digby experience the police primarily through vicarious experiences. Vicarious experiences are interactions that one has through family, friends, and community; although you may not have had a direct contact with the police, people you know have had them and their interactions help shape how you come to perceive and understand the police and policing. For example, stories of African Nova Scotian sons were frequent:

> My son had a little thing one day—like he was walking up the road and the police stopped him and they thought he looked like somebody else, another Black guy from the community…. but it wasn't really anything, they stopped him and asked him what's his name and he just gave them his name and they said okay. (Pamela)

These descriptions of vicarious experience as mothers, show that the experiences of African Nova Scotian men in the community do not affect these men alone; they also vicariously influence how their loved ones and community members perceive the police. As Michelle said "as their mother and guardian, that there were times where it really wasn't great" when talking about her children's experiences with the police. Vicarious experiences appeared to play a larger role for female African Nova Scotians in Digby than for African Nova Scotian males in Digby. Despite their lack of direct experience,

two participants explicitly said that they do not have a good relationship with the police. The third woman, who did have a personal experience with the police, said her relationship with the police was good but then described incidents that were negative.

Pamela discussed an incident her friend had with the police:

> She was on welfare so he [a police officer] kept kind of mentioning something about being on welfare and she said 'shut up 'cause you don't want me to tell you where your family come from' because his mother and father were raised on welfare too.

This vicarious experience does highlight that African Nova Scotian women do have confrontations with the police, but they may be mostly verbal altercations. Pamela's mention of welfare leads into a discussion of socioeconomic status and how it plays a role in relations with the police.

(d) Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic Status (SES), according to participants, plays a role in how the police treat you. This includes white community members of Digby who have a lower SES:

> It doesn't happen to white people (long pause) unless they're poor, they might pick on poor white people…. Digby has poor white folk that are already being abused by the system, Black people that are abused by the system, it's got Natives that are abused by the system, so unless you're a middle upper class white person in Digby you're really already getting shafted by the cops because they'll arrest a poor white person and beat the shit out of him too. (Ben)

The difference between white community members being targeted and the African Nova Scotians being targeted in Digby is that regardless of SES, Digby African Nova Scotians are constantly being targeted. The only white community members being targeted have a lower SES. Several participants described this reality, but stressed that SES does not determine how Digby African Nova Scotians are treated by the police.

'Race Card'

A frequent complaint participants brought up was being accused of 'playing the race card', by both police and the larger Digby community; meaning that instead of taking claims of racism and discrimination seriously, claims are treated as the Digby African Nova Scotian community trying to get out of trouble or exaggerating their claims of 'race'. Six participants mentioned they have been accused of 'playing the race card', either from the police, the white community, or other members of the Digby African Nova Scotian community. This was also noted in the 2008 *Digby Declaration* by Raymond Winbush and Harry Allen (2009): "[s]aying that 'race cards' are being played by a few members of the Black community at best trivializes effective discussion of racism and bad policing in the community and as previously stated, may border on the delusional" (p.9). This thesis is being written eight years after that report came out, and the issue of the 'race card' is still being raised by members of the African Nova Scotian community:

> It turns the Black community into a further victim because every time we said we felt like we were being picked on, oh you're 'playing the race card' again or you're screaming racism or you know the boy that cried wolf. (Russell)

This is one of many quotes from lengthy discussions of the 'race card'. Being accused of using the 'race card' in every situation was a point of frustration for participants. When I inquired further, Patrick and Wyatt spoke more about the reasons why it is a big issue in the African Nova Scotian community:

> Nothing ever comes of it whatsoever, it's always us crying racism and that's the real frustration, because when it's racism they flagged it so all they ever do is cry racism. Black people always cry racism, it's never racism. (Patrick)

> They want to invalidate people's thoughts and who wants to speak up if every time you speak—it takes away your dignity and your self-respect, and who wants

> to challenge anything when they know your challenges are going to be ignored or devalued. (Wyatt)

According to participants, the greater Digby community believes there is no racism. That instead, the Digby African Nova Scotian community is always crying racism; this perception of the larger Digby community invalidates claims of racism, which Wyatt and Henry explain. By saying that the Digby African Nova Scotian community is always 'playing the race card', it minimizes and invalidates African Nova Scotians' thoughts and experiences. It also makes others hesitant to come forward, as Wyatt says, who would want to challenge anything if what you say is going to be either devalued or ignored? Henry highlights the fact that the white community is applying their experiences of privilege and power to the Digby African Nova Scotian community's marginalized experiences.

Alan was the exception to the rest of the participants, as he believed that the African Nova Scotian community in Digby did indeed 'play the race card' in excess:

> In *my* opinion they were using the 'race card' a lot in Digby, thinking that maybe they could—by using that card they could scare people into doing things as far as the white public but again—in my opinion that's what I thought, they used it a lot because every time there was an altercation with the police it was always because I'm Black, it was never I did something wrong, it was always because I was Black.

Alan's opinion confirmed that there is not a completely unified African Nova Scotian community in Digby. Although Alan was the outlier of my nine participants, in the entirety of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, he is likely not alone.

Alan's sentiments are important because they allow for a discussion of how some members of the Digby African Nova Scotian community are accusing the community itself of 'playing the race card'; it is not only the police and the white community.

Participants did acknowledge that there may be some false claims of racism, but that does not discount those who are actually pointing out experiences and incidents of racism. As Henry rationalized:

> I think that it's one thing to make a claim that Black people 'play the race card' when they're in difficult circumstances and it's another thing to make that claim in spite of the evidence of it, and so the evidence of it through those incidences, were not obviously all Black people playing the race card because Brendan Clarke won a $248,000 settlement on that issue, you know what I mean? (Henry)

Henry states the obvious, that the white community and the police seem to be overlooking reality. The claims of racism are not without merit. The numerous events that have been covered by the media are just a fraction of the events that have happened in Digby that are evidence of racism.

The moment a member of the Digby African Nova Scotian community verbalizes that something is racist or discriminatory, they face more problems than solutions. Problems that include facing more racism and discrimination, especially from the police. The police need to know how they are being perceived in addition to the African Nova Scotian community having an outlet to safely verbalized their experiences, concerns, and opinions.

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

This theme describes the African Nova Scotian community experience in Digby in relation to the police. The community experience includes personal experiences with the police, perceptions of the Digby police, relationship with the police, and the lack of police protection.

Personal Experiences

The importance of having the narrative of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby heard has been overlooked in many facets over many years. Their direct and indirect experiences with the police are the largest factor that shapes their perception. The telling of just a few of these stories will give insight into the African Nova Scotian experience in Digby as well as why they do not feel protected by the police in Digby. While I would love to share every story that participants shared, the small size of Digby community needs to be kept in mind. I have taken every measure possible to keep participant's identities confidential, and as many of their personal stories would give away their identity due to the fact that Digby is such a small community; I am able to tell a few individual participant's stories that don't have identifying elements, and I also summarized several participants' stories so they could still be included.

Ben explained that the Digby African Nova Scotian community continually has bad interactions with the police:

> You could sit down and interview any Black person in Digby and they're going to tell you a negative thing about the cops there, and it's not an exaggeration. (Ben)

Participants' stories included dealing with: officers who appeared to be belligerent and drunk, officers who saw violations when they were off the clock and issued tickets hours later while on the clock, being arrested while in school, not having their claims be taken seriously by the police, being followed by the police, having nightmares about the police, blatant intimidation on the part of the police, being physically assaulted by the police, and most commonly, being pulled over without a valid reason. After getting pulled over while acting as a designated driver, Patrick was charged with having open liquor in his backseat because one of his passengers left it behind. While the police acted in accordance with the

law[8], Patrick believed they were excessive in other ways with him. The officers admitted to watching Patrick drop off passengers, that he wasn't swerving on the road nor smelled like alcohol; but they still asked him to step out of the vehicle and searched his car. After adhering to police requests to prove he was sober, Patrick calmly refused a breathalyzer test, which is a charge. As the officers were informing Patrick of this, other police car pulled up and as Patrick describes:

> Another police car rolls up so I said 'well what is going on, like I'm not doing anything, you haven't even told me I was under arrest yet', so then I just get on the ground, well I was like 'I don't feel like dying so I'm getting on the ground I'm putting my hands on my head', and I was like 'just cuff me please just cuff me I'm begging you please cuff me' and they're like 'what are you doing?' and I was like 'well I don't know why there's another cruiser that showed up with two other officers so, I haven't been yelling I haven't been resisting I've done everything you've asked me to and passed with flying colours so I was like just cuff me' and they were like—they kind of made it like I was the weird one, and I was like 'no, you guys can make me out to be a fool all you want *I just don't want to die*'. (Patrick, emphasis added)

Patrick began the interaction by being respectful and cooperative, getting out of his car to take and pass two sobriety tests and the officers did not smell alcohol on him, but still the officers pushed for the breathalyzer. When Patrick refused, which he has the right to do, the police seemed to interpret this as having a bad attitude and the interaction began to go awry. Without any warning another police cruiser with two more officers showed up. Through Patrick's past experiences and his knowledge of other's experiences, he realized that the possibility of him being assaulted or worse was fairly high. In response to this second cruiser, Patrick got on the ground, put his hands behind his head, and *begged* to be handcuffed. With his hands cuffed, he hoped nothing he did could be interpreted as threatening and the four officers would not have a 'valid' reason to harm him. Patrick was

[8] See Nova Scotia Liquor Laws (Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation 2005)

never given a reason as to why the second cruiser showed up and stated he was dealing with the incident, but did not describe how.

This interaction emphasizes how the African Nova Scotian community feels targeted or unprotected by the police, but similarly the community feels threatened by the police. Henry explained:

> I have experiences to validate that perception, where it's just like you feel like (pause) you can't take for granted what other people can take for granted in terms of interactions with police because you always have to be aware of judgements and the power that they have to actually follow through with those judgements. (Henry)

The African Nova Scotian community's (negative) perception is constantly validated through their experiences with the police, through personal experiences, and vicariously through family, friends, and other African Nova Scotian community members in Digby.

(a) Vicarious Experiences

A sub-theme of personal experience is that of vicarious personal experiences, which proved important to participants. Eight participants spoke about vicarious experiences; about people they know having had interactions with the police. Stories were primarily about male African Nova Scotians they knew. Of seven single-spaced pages of vicarious experiences, only one was about the experiences of an African Nova Scotian woman. Russell recalled:

> What happened was a call went into the RCMP that a male teacher had taken some students against the parents [wishes]—so it was all points bulletin out for this male teacher, they had described him he was white and age about blah blah blah, so anyway the police pull over, now she is visibly Black.… so they pull her over, they get her out of the car, right cause she's driving some children home, they interview the children. (Russell)

This woman did not see this incident as racism, but as the police doing their job and being concerned about the safety of the children. However, this stuck out to Ben as an incident

where this African Nova Scotian woman was targeted even though she did not fit any of the characteristics of the male the police were looking for.

The highly publicized incidents in the last few years were also brought up by participants. Four participants described Brendan Clarke's confrontation with the police, and four participants described Nathan Fells and William Drummond's confrontation with the police. Two participants also brought up the Wylie Grimm case as well; the Staff Sergeant who made sexist and racist remarks was initially placed on administrative leave. He then retired with his pension two years after the remarks were brought to light, and he was not allowed to wear his decorative uniform in retirement (Ben; Susan). Participants described each incident as though they were there, and included details that were not in any of the media stories I reviewed. Not only were big cases mentioned, but less-publicized ones as well. Ben's young nephew, who was visiting Ben in Digby, experienced first-hand that the police in Digby target African Nova Scotian youth, even when they're only skateboarding.

As African Nova Scotian women have little direct confrontation with the police, these vicarious experiences through male family members and community members are what shape many of their perceptions. This is not confined to mothers alone; parents in general are shaped by their young African Nova Scotian children being targeted by the police day after day. These stories are then discussed throughout the community, further shaping the Digby African Nova Scotian community's perception of the police.

Relationship with the Police

The Digby African Nova Scotian community's relationship with the police was studied by Winbush and Allen (2008) and through analysis of media confrontations by the media by Mannette (1986). As my Informant explained:

> The majority of young Black men and women within Nova Scotia have an underlying mistrust or misgivings when it comes to the police. One on one there are individuals that some of the youth connect with but on the whole institutionally there is uncertainty. Influenced historically by unresolved incidents here within the province…. some of this is due to oral history and with others it's due to lived experiences…. the older generation have respect for the organization but they also have been around long enough to see some of the mistakes made. They provide respect to those who have earned it but they really don't see the police as always having their best interest at heart.

While this Informant does have knowledge of the area, they are not from Digby, therefore I relied more so on participant experiences which confirmed what the Informant had explained. When I asked participants what their relationship was with the police, these are some of the answers I received:

> I've always felt like a target for the police from a very early age, I had terrible relationship with the police. (Patrick)

> Personally I've had some (pause) absolute (pause) terrible relationships with the police, not myself but with my sons, their mother and guardian, that there were times where it really wasn't great. (Michelle)

> Straight up as you were reading that consent form the first thing I thought was how often I've felt that I or my children, our lives were at risk with the RCMP in Digby, so my relationship with them is not a very good one. (Russell)

> I would say it existed, it was just terrible, I would say it was (pause) probably one of the miserable relationships I've had in my life (pause) would be with the police officers in Digby. (Ben)

Participants described negative relationships with the police, with the exception of Alan and Pamela. Pamela said she had only good experiences with the police, but later on in the interview she also described incidents that were not positive experiences. Alan

acknowledged tensions between the Digby African Nova Scotian community and the police but would not go any further, even when pressed. Russell discussed the characteristics of police officers in Digby:

> Digby was a place where two things happened, a lot of rookies were sent there and if you will, a lot of cops who were a problem in the system got sent to Digby that's what I felt and you know because Digby is a small community and you know if complaints or situations happen there, it wasn't really going to make the waves or make the noise that might happen if it were in a larger community so yeah I felt we, we experienced bad policing based on that too.

The consensus was that Digby was a dumping ground for officers who caused trouble. In addition, new officers that would come into Digby learned who in the community would be a (perceived) problem from officers already stationed in Digby. This created a cycle of officers targeting certain people, often members of the Digby African Nova Scotian community. Patrick discussed how every time an African Nova Scotian reports an incident as a victim, they are threatened with being also charged along with their perpetrator:

> Every freakin' time, like it always has to come to—'well if we charge them we gotta charge you too', there's never any law and order there's never any (pause) justice going from African Nova Scotians to the police, it's always 'well if we're charging them we're charging you', there's 'no we're gonna take this and we're gonna charge this party and sorry for you being abused assaulted whatever', it *never* happens for Black people that way, *ever*, so in my experience anyway. (Patrick)

This distrust in the police was echoed through many interviews. The lack of protection, while also feeling threatened by the police solidified the community's distrust of the police. Even when the African Nova Scotian community takes steps to hold the police accountable it isn't guaranteed to work:

> What's the word I'm looking for (pause) they're I guess for lack of a better word they're out of control right now, and the only time that they seem to (pause) to be in control is if they're being recorded, and even *then* some cops are like I don't care if they're being recorded or not.…now me personally like outside of those

> incidents I've never been manhandled by the police but I also have always had a phone or something on me, so who knows what would have happened if I didn't. (Wyatt)

Again, there is a clear mistrust of police. Wyatt records police confrontations with his phone to hold the police accountable—which doesn't always work as participants explained that police may still act discriminatory when being recorded—and without that he is unsure as to what would have happened. Patrick's story from earlier is similar, Patrick did not trust the situation. Patrick was afraid that the four police officers would have killed him if he hadn't gotten on the ground and begged them to cuff him. The Digby African Nova Scotian community is highly aware of Black criminality and the perceptions of Black men and the implications this has on how police perceive and police them. These perceptions of Black people alter how police officers deal with African Nova Scotians as victims of crime as well as how they treat them in general:

> Victims don't have to explain themselves (pause) you shouldn't have to justify being harassed…. [white community members say] 'well if you don't want any problems from the cops just do as they say', well no because the cops enforce the law they *aren't* the law. (Ben)

Ben's point raises the question of how far does the arm of the police go? When do we reach a point that the police are overstepping bounds and being disrespectful? Henry discusses the suspicion that arises out of mistrust:

> There's a level of kind of suspicion, a level of concern and I think it comes from—it's multifaceted because I believe it comes from a multiple experiential interaction with authority and power, but I think the police are that ultimate kind of power. (Henry)

The mistrust the African Nova Scotian community in Digby is one aspect of not feeling protected by the police.

The African Nova Scotian community of Digby has been mistreated over and over for decades by the police, therefore they have little trust or faith in the police. Participants

also described how they felt about Black police officers they may look like members of the African Nova Scotian community, but they do not share the same experiences with power or the police. Pamela described how in her experience Black officers are seen as worse than white cops because they act just as racist and superior. Participants were also aware that these Black officers are not always from Nova Scotia:

> They'll bring people in who are of African descent from all over the place, like it could be Québec or it could be Ontario or whatever, and so they designate them as a person of African descent to the Black community but they're not in the communities, they don't connect with the community members but they're understood as you know from the system as being able to be connected to the community and natural kind of police for the community. (Henry)

Patrick reaffirmed the sentiment about Black officers by saying, "You know they send out their token Black cop to come 'talk us down', that just infuriates me when they do that" (Patrick). This 'token' Black officer was often brought up, and there was definitely resentment towards these Black officers:

> You brought in the biggest Uncle Tom, partnered him with the most racist cop here, and he's giving me a hard time now that the other guy was…. but yeah they got the one token Black guy, 'hey we're not racist we got a Black cop'. (Ben)

While participants said there always seemed that there was always one Black officer stationed in Digby, they were rarely seen unless there were issues with the African Nova Scotian community

The practices of the police included ignoring and silencing the African Nova Scotian community, as Ben said" "They don't care, the cops don't care what our opinion is in Digby, they never have". This perspective was evident when interviewing participants as the stories, opinions, and experiences were almost endless. It was apparent that the community needs and wants to have their narratives heard. The police have never been an outlet for that voice to be heard:

> The police really didn't want to hear the complaints and if they did hear them they certainly didn't want to act on them. And they didn't—they never want to consider this, they *never* want to consider that there may be an officer who is acting inappropriately with somebody based on their 'race', they want to be absolved of that entirely like 'no that does not happen, now if you felt that way'—and that really bothers me when they do that—'if you felt that way Russell or if someone felt that way'— no, if someone punches me in the face I don't want someone to say 'Russell *if* you felt bruised right? (laughing) *if* you felt hurt, we're sorry, our intention wasn't to punch you in the face or make it hurt', you know so when the police say 'we're sorry you felt that or your community feels like, we're just doing our job'. (Russell)

Russell's statement speaks to this silencing, as well as how the police are not likely to take a claim of racism against one of their own officers seriously.

(Lack of) Protection

What became evident through interviews, is that the Digby African Nova Scotian participants did not feel protected by the police. *Seven* participants said they did not feel protected by the police. The two exceptions were Alan, who said he felt protected, and Pamela, who also said she felt protected but also talked about several negative experiences she and other community members she knows of have had with the police. Those who said that didn't feel protected by the police had varied answers:

> It all depends on what the situation is, on one hand yes I do (long pause) but it's all situational, and on the other hand absolutely not, absolutely not. (Susan)

Susan's reply was that feeling protected was situational. When I further asked if she was the victim of a crime would she feel respected and listened to while reporting to the police, her answer was that she would make them listen and respect her. She did not detail as to in what situation she would feel protected by the police. Patrick explained that. to him, no such situation exists:

> God no, oh my gosh no, I will handle any situation that comes my way by myself, I will do my very best to keep the police out of it, because it's only gonna get worse for me and I will (pause) if I'm stabbed, shot whatever, I'll crawl to the

> hospital myself, I won't call them, I won't report nothing, ever, for the rest of my life, and I'm gonna teach my kids that, and I'm gonna teach them the cops are not there to protect you, sorry but they're not, nope. I've been burned by that too many times. (Patrick)

Patrick blatantly said that any situation that arises he would deal with himself. He barely let me finish the question before answering "no" repeatedly. He was so passionate about not feeling protected by the police that he said that even if he was critically injured, he would not call the police. This attitude will continue to shape the attitudes of the next generation. Ben seemed to think the same:

> Interviewer: do you feel protected by the police?
> Ben: I wouldn't call a police officer unless there was somebody in my house and he had me at gunpoint.
> Interviewer: so that's a no?
> Ben: yeah, a huge no.

Ben would also not call the police unless under duress. This speaks loudly to how averse Ben is to calling the police when in need. Russell seemed to think the same:

> No I did not feel protected by the police, I didn't feel I could call them, I felt if I did call them with a complaint I would have to be able to fully establish that this was clearly talking place without any (pause) without any room for you know doubt that I really needed their service. (Russell)

Again, there is a feeling that if an African Nova Scotian in Digby was a victim of a crime they would have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a crime or incident had taken place. Russell said he would have to prove that he was a victim, but also prove that he needed police services. In Wyatt's response, he talked about who he did feel protected him:

> No (long pause) I feel protected by my parents my family, my brothers, my kids, and people who I consider family, I've never considered—I don't feel protected by them, I feel like the police are, *not* all police but a majority of police are looking for stuff that isn't even there. (Wyatt)

The Digby African Nova Scotian community support again comes into play here; Wyatt does not feel protected by the police but by his support system. The reason he does not feel protected by the police is because he feels they are looking for things to charge him with even though there aren't any. Henry expanded beyond just being charged, but being believed by the police:

> Henry: (very long pause) no (long pause).
> Interviewer: could you expand a little bit?
> Henry: (laughing) (long pause) uh (long pause) do I feel protected by the police, no because well…there are different levels of comfort around being trusted being understood being believed and I think that those components aren't always true for me.

Henry took a bit of prodding before answering, but he voiced that he didn't feel as though the police trusted, understood, or would believe him in a confrontation. These are common concerns about the police by the African Nova Scotian community. Michelle similarly said:

> Do I feel protected, to be honest, no I don't feel protected…. it's the fact that you know we've had to challenge the racist practices and the racism within the RCMP, people don't like the challenge.

This thesis aims to do just that, challenge the racist practices within the police by documenting the narratives of the marginalized African Nova Scotian community in Digby. As Patrick described the situation,

> I see it as us versus them…. I don't feel that they feel there to protect us, I think it's very much, we're here to try and make us, keep us down and keep us in order I guess so to speak, and I'd never call the police for help (laughing) never ever, because I know what's going to happen, every time. (Patrick)

Patrick describes the Digby African Nova Scotian community's relationship with the police as 'us versus them'. He sees this as due to the fact that the police are not protecting the community but attempting to put down the African Nova Scotian community.

This entire chapter has chronicled the lived experiences of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby. These experiences in turn have shaped their perception of the police. Having the participants' voices to be dominant in this chapter was important to me; I am simply the researcher. The participants are the experts of their own community and their own perceptions. In the next chapter, I will apply my analysis and interpretation of what participants talked about and how this related to how they feel unprotected by the police.

CHAPTER 6: Discussion and Conclusion

> *Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side, a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life, and new growth possible. It is the act of speech, of "talking back" that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of moving from object to subject, that is the liberated voice.* (hooks 1986:128)

Throughout this thesis, it has been established that historically and presently, African Nova Scotians have been and are marginalized and silenced. The intention of this thesis was to enable the Digby part of the African Nova Scotian community to have their voices heard. By having the Digby African Nova Scotian community's perceptions of the police explored, this disregarded narrative could be shared.

I interviewed nine Digby African Nova Scotians about their experiences, perceptions, and feelings towards the police in Digby and learned more about police–community relations than had been included in all of the news articles. The relationship participants had with police was generally not a positive one and the experiences they have had with the police, both personally and vicariously, have left-long term scars.

The following two sections will act as the final chapter of this thesis. The first will discuss how the theoretical lenses can be applied to participants' lives and narratives, and how world-events have coincided with the writing of this thesis. In closing, I review what is known after conducting this research, and how the Digby African Nova Scotian community believes improvements can be made. This chapter in its entirety reviews the narrative of the Digby African Nova Scotian community.

DISCUSSION

While the previous chapter was broken into many different themes based on participants' experiences, the following discussion focuses on the most prominent findings: the acknowledgement of intersectionality, African Nova Scotians in Digby are targeted by police, socialization as a shield, and sincerity. In addition to these findings, it is important to discuss how this study relates to what has been happening in the United States during the period surrounding this project. While this study is a case study of a small rural Canadian community, findings echo issues of 'race' present throughout the North American context.

In recent years, specifically during the last few months of writing this thesis, there have been multiple shootings of Black men by the police in the United States and Canada[9]. These numerous shootings have brought about a movement within the Black community in the United States and internationally, Black Lives Matter (referred to online as #BlackLivesMatter or #BLM). Created in 2012 after seventeen year old Trayvon Martin was shot and killed, and the shooter's trial became a trial of Martin and his character, Black Lives Matter (BLM) works towards the validity of Black lives (Black Lives Matter n.d.). BLM aims to broaden the conversation around state violence to include all of the ways in which Black lives are deprived of basic human rights and dignity (Black Lives Matter n.d.). In Canada, there have been BLM events in Vancouver, Edmonton, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax (Morgan 2016). The parallels between BLM and this thesis are undeniable. My research documents an ignored and overlooked

[9] Recent Canadian cases include Jean-Pierre Bony and Abdirahman Abdi, who were African Canadian men killed in interactions with the police.

Black narrative; BLM aims to bring this narrative to the forefront in media, politics, and international attention.

Acknowledgement of Intersectionality

Black criminality, Black masculinity, and Black femininity inform how police perceive Digby African Nova Scotians as the 'other' or as suspicious. This view as African Nova Scotians as the dangerous 'other' negatively influences how people, including the police, react and treat African Nova Scotians. Participants described how they felt singled out based on the sole fact that they were Black, regardless of any other social determinants. This perception of the African Nova Scotian community is not new, and it has been documented through reports and research (Mannette 1986; Nova Scotia Advisory Group on Race Relations 1991; Williams 2013; Winbush and Allen 2008). While participants never mentioned rurality explicitly, being in rural Nova Scotia affects access to community services, schools, hospitals, and the size and demographic of a police force. The lack of research that is based on rural communities highlights the importance of this rural study. Rurality influences the lives of everyone living in Digby, including the African Nova Scotian community. African Nova Scotian men in Digby face more confrontations with the police, African Nova Scotian women are marginalized through 'invisibility', and both are marginalized through rurality.

Finally, in terms of socioeconomic status, Pamela explained that the African Nova Scotian community is generally employed in fast-food, retail, and grocery stores. According to participants, the better jobs that are available are unlikely to go to an African Nova Scotian. Like most of rural Nova Scotia, there is a lack of permanent and well-paying jobs in Digby (Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre and Coastal

Communities Network 2003). In terms of other members of Digby, participants spoke about how the police rarely mistreat white members of Digby "unless they're poor, they might pick on poor white people" (Ben). Several other participants echoed the same perception, that poor white community members are also treated poorly by police. This acknowledgement by participants draws on intersectionality. Participants used an intersectional lens (without perhaps knowing it) to reveal another marginalized group and understanding that the Digby African Nova Scotian community shares the experience of negative policing with members of the poorer white community in Digby (Carbado et al. 2013). Participants understood that while they have had negative experiences with the police based on the fact that they are African Nova Scotian, white community members may have a negative experience with the police based on socioeconomic status. Participants noted, however, that regardless of their status, African Nova Scotians in Digby are targeted. This case study acknowledges the ways 'race' relates to other axes and also how 'race' trumps class, 'gender' and all other aspects of participants' identities including rurality.

African Nova Scotians in Digby are Targeted by Police

In a database that has documented the number of people killed by police in the United States, as of early November 2016, 903 people were killed by police (Swaine et al. 2015). Of these 903, 221 were Black, and only eleven were Black women (Swaine et al. 2015). Direct experiences of Black men and women are significantly different, but when relatives, partners, and community members are subjected to discriminatory policing, Black female's lives and perceptions are affected. While I did not come across any deaths by police in Digby, these differing numbers are reflected in the various ways male and

female participants in my research experienced the police. Goffman's ethnographic book focused on how young Black men are treated and mistreated by the police, which parallels the experiences of participants in this study (Goffman 2014).

Throughout the literature and theory I reviewed, Black men were the primary targets of police harassment and brutality, more than any other group in society; and this was also the case for Digby, as eight participants, both male and female, described. The targeting of Black men is not new. Owusu-Bempah's study (2014) on the Toronto area found that Black men perceived more police bias and reported more frequent and hostile interactions with the police than any other group. Furthermore, the Nova Scotia Advisory Group on Race Relations (1991) was instated after a police incident in Halifax in which African Nova Scotian men were denied entry to a night club. As Patrick said;

> I'm already a target, they're not gonna rest until—I'm convinced—they're not going to rest until they tag me with a criminal record. (Patrick)

Participants felt that the police continuously target African Nova Scotian men to the point where these men are convinced they will not be left alone until the police have charged them with something. This conviction is not so much a fear as it is an expectation of something being unescapable, indicating that participants understand biopower and the politics of disposability, specifically, that their Black male bodies are considered excess to be discarded, and that this process is inevitable (Evans and Giroux 2015). It is seen as so inevitable that the Digby African Nova Scotian community actively teaches young African Nova Scotian men about how to deal with the police. Black criminality combined with Black masculinity and a large body of literature explain why African Nova Scotian men are disproportionately targeted by police.

Participants were able to recall larger stories, including Brendan Clarke's incident, the case of Wylie Grimm, and Nathan Fells and William Drummonds' incident, with more details than any news article I could find. This implies that these incidents were discussed throughout the African Nova Scotian community in Digby and these events have had long-term effects on the community. These cases have helped shape the perception and the oral history of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby hold in relation to the police. These experiences—both direct and vicarious—affect how the Digby African Nova Scotian community perceives the police and how they react to the police.

BLM highlights how Black women bear "the burden of relentless assault on our children and our families" (Black Lives Matter n.d:n.p.). The role of the Black woman is often ignored, and their experiences rendered invisible (Sesko and Biernat 2010). Black women bear this weight as they are often what ties a family together, whereas Black men are those who are experiencing the 'assault'. This finding aligns with what was found in this thesis, that African Nova Scotian men in Digby directly experience the discrimination and racism by the police, while African Nova Scotian women in Digby experience the police vicariously through male family and community members. Black women also bear the emotional and psychological burdens that come from their sons, brothers, fathers, and male community members having violent interactions with the police.

Based on what participants described—and did not describe—in the Digby African Nova Scotian community, the Black female experience is being ignored and overlooked. To supplement this lack of direct female African Nova Scotian experience in

Digby, I describe importance of vicarious experiences. Vicarious experiences, whether negative or positive, have a direct effect on perceptions of the police, even if an individual has not had personal experience (Paternoster and Piquero 1995; Weitzer and Tuch 2004). As Weitzer and Tuch (2004) explain;

> [P]ersonal experience is by no means a necessary condition for evaluating the police. Some people who have had no contact with officers view police negatively…. [knowledge of others' negative experiences] may be internalized and "vicariously experienced" by an individual. (P.308)

Female participants' perceptions were affected by their vicarious experiences. One of the studies in Owusu-Bempah's (2014) thesis had a similar finding: Black men and women both viewed the police more negatively and reported more frequent and more hostile interactions with the police than members of other racial groups. This vicarious contact with the police is important not only as it describes how African Nova Scotian women come to perceive the police, but it explains why these women then teach their children to be wary of the police, and why they socialize their children in a specific way to protect them.

Socialization as a Shield

Living within and having to resist multidimensional practices of oppression and domination has given participants a certain understanding of the police and the world. Several participants described that even seeing the police caused them to sweat, to have an increased heartrate, and caused anxiety. This physical reaction can be related back to the interpretation of Foucault's (lack of) power theories and how they socialize us. As already established, racialized bodies are controlled through disciplinary power—ways in which we are disciplined to self-regulate—and biopower—how the population is controlled in biological ways, and how racialized bodies are viewed as disposable (Evans

and Giroux 2015; Foucault 1984). These powers can be internalized and as the police is a site at which power is exerted, the presence of the police causes racialized bodies (and sometimes bodies that are not racialized) to physically react to the police. This physical reaction can also be related to how Foucault says our bodies can be 'trained' to respond to power (Foucault 1984).

Through the results chapter, it became clear that the African Nova Scotian community was not passive to the actions of the police. In addition to individual physical responses, there was a community reaction. Participants described how they and other members of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby were teaching their children and the youth in the community—particularly young African Nova Scotian men—what to do in confrontations with the police and ways to try and hold the police accountable. This education is reinforced by 'reasons' as to why Black people have been killed by the police in America—for example walking home with a friend, missing a front license plate, wearing a hoodie, making eye contact, the list goes on—and leads to a Black community that has to educate its youth that they have to adhere to different practices and behaviour based on the fact that they are Black (King 2016). This is similar to the way Digby African Nova Scotian parents are forced to educate their children and was stated as a mandatory educational process in the African Nova Scotian community by several participants.

This unsettling ritual is often referred to as 'the talk', a discussion with Black children and youth about how to interact with police (Bouchard 2016; Kwong 2016). This could be telling Black children to know their rights and how to make themselves as human as possible to an officer (*CBC News 2016b)*; or telling them to be polite, don't

antagonize, “and always, make sure they can see your hands” (Bouchard 2016:n.p.). In this thesis, African Nova Scotian parents were teaching their children their rights, to comply with officers but to not take abuse, and do this by videotaping or recording an officer to hold them accountable. This socialization is an ongoing dialogue;

> It’s threaded with recent and past experiences, both personal and rooted in the [B]lack community as a whole, and born from a complex mixture of common courtesy, practicality and fear. (Bouchard 2016:n.p)

As participants described the situation, this often meant telling African Nova Scotian youth to simply cooperate with the police and afterwards the community as a whole would deal with the incident. In terms of accountability, videotaping or recording interactions with police on a cellphone was what participants described, and even then they claimed there are no guarantees. While this may not be unique to the Digby African Nova Scotian community, the description of how African Nova Scotian parents teach their children about the police adds to the existing literature and strengthens our understanding of the racial climate and the ways it has shaped Black lives and families in this region.

Along with this socialization, there was discussion of how parents in the African Nova Scotian community react to police harassment. At one time, African Nova Scotian parents in Digby felt that the police were not protecting African Nova Scotian youth, but excessively policing them. A few parents, primarily mothers, in the community formed a committee that would go to downtown Digby on the weekend to “police the streets” (Michelle) when youth were leaving bars and clubs. Foucault describes how we as a society begin to police ourselves and the police are figureheads, however participants policed themselves as they knew police were not figureheads. By actively ‘policing’

themselves and socializing their youth as described above, the African Nova Scotian community is acknowledging that the Digby police are a threat to their community.

Sincerity

Throughout a majority of the interviews, participants either implied or had an outright discussion about the lack of sincerity on the part of the police. There was often a doubt about the efforts that the police have made and are making to address their police practices, Russell said it directly:

> There was not—and there still isn't in my opinion—there is no sincerity as far as the RCMP to really tackle and to address what it will take to really address the issues. (Russell)

Even past attempts, like the apology from Nova Scotia's highest RCMP officer (at the time), Assistant Commissioner Ian Atkins about the former Digby staff sergeant Wylie Grimm, were not seen as sincere (*CBC News* 2008b). Patrick said, "actions speak louder than words". Past efforts, such as the "Digby Declaration" (2008), while well-meaning, were not fully carried out and have not impacted how the African Nova Scotian community perceives the police. Although there may be officers who are not overtly racist or discriminatory, they likely have knowledge of members who are. The police as an institution upholds and adheres to racist practices and maintains a silence about these practices.

The Digby African Nova Scotian community is highly critical of the repercussions for a police officer who is actually found to be in the wrong. Participants saw the light punishment of these offices as a way the police are enabled to continue to mistreat and discriminate against the African Nova Scotian community. Community–police meetings and committees were criticized as stunts by the police to placate the community. Patrick spoke about community meetings and said: "and then when it's time

to make some action—or put an action plan in place, they're done sitting and talking, they don't want anything to do with it". Participants said that these police–community committees are assembled by the police; "Instead of the community deciding who's going to the table, they go interview and they bring the people to the table that are going to be the safest for them…. people who are (pause) non-controversial" (Russell). Participants described these meetings as a way the police can appear to be working with the community but in actuality the police are dismissive of community input.

The community–police committee that Winbush and Allen recommended as a part of their assessment of Digby was supposed to meet every sixty days; however, it no longer meets (Winbush and Allen 2008). Recommendations put into place by the NSAGRR were not enforced, and Mannette's thesis, which pointed to racism and discrimination in Digby seemed to be forgotten. Historically, the African Nova Scotian community has been overlooked, ignored, and silenced by many aspects of the state and society. Participants also described not being believed by the police, however, there should be a realization on the part of the police that just because you don't see or refuse to see an incident as racism, does not mean it is not racism. In terms of Goffman's reference to how the police treat poor Black men, critics turned to police and Philadelphia city officials to fact check several of Goffman's participants' claims (Lewis-Kraus 2016). In an interview in which this was brought up, Goffman replied:

> The point of the book is for people who are written off and delegitimated to describe their own lives and to speak for themselves about the reality they face, and this is a reality that goes absolutely against the narratives of officials or middle-class people. So finding 'legitimate' people to validate the claims—it feels wrong to me on just about every level. (Lewis-Kraus 2016)

Goffman makes a strong point. The interpretation of someone in a position of authority is going to be different from that of the marginalized community actually experiencing it. It is not surprising that participants do not feel Digby police are sincere in their efforts to improve relations or sincere in day-to-day police activity. Police claiming the African Nova Scotian community was 'playing the race card' is another way in which someone in a position of authority may interpret something differently. The importance of what the "Digby Declaration" (2008) stated is vital here: "Saying that 'race cards' are being played by a few members of the Black community *at best trivializes effective discussion of racism and bad policing in the community and as previously stated, may border on the delusional*" (p:9, emphasis added). Despite the mistrust the community has towards the police, they can verbalize what the police need to do to earn some trust and respect, as Wyatt commented;

> You gotta do more than that and not just be like 'we're trying to build—rebuild a positive relationship with the Black community' or are you doing this because you're forced to do this because of everything that's happened or is this something that you genuinely believe inside yourself that needs to be done, those are two different scenarios.

The police need to not only try to improve the way the African Nova Scotian community perceives them, but also ensure that the community believes their actions towards improving relations are sincere.

One of Patrick's interactions with the police stood out to me because it encompassed all of the findings just discussed. Patrick was pulled over one night while he was a designated driver, Patrick, as he was socialized by the African Nova Scotian community, co-operated for the officers, even though they were going beyond the scope of duty. Through the lens of Black criminality and Black masculinity, it is clear as to why

Patrick was racially profiled and pulled over, as both theories expect that Patrick, as a large Black male, will be seen as the dangerous 'other' and targeted. He was followed while acting as a designated driver, and even when he was cooperative the officers still wanted to search his vehicle and administer a breathalyzer. When two more officers arrived, Patrick got on the ground, put his hands behind his head and begged to be handcuffed. Patrick was reacting to the police (a site of power) as he had many vicarious experiences that shaped his perception of what was happening to him. He physically reacted to the police, even though there was no physical exertion of power on the part of the police. My interpretation of Foucault explains this as Patrick understanding the embedded power of the police, and through the politics of disposability, that he as a Black body has a high risk of being seen as excess and hence disposable (Evans and Giroux 2015; Foucault 1984). Patrick's reaction of laying on the ground and begging to be cuffed speaks to his knowledge of what the police do. The officers left out that a second cruiser showed up to alter how Patrick was perceived in their report; officers likely did not perceive the second cruiser as a threat as Patrick did. Patrick trusted the police so little that he felt he had to take steps to try and ensure that it was impossible for the officers to misconstrue any of his actions as threatening. This misreporting of how the incident unfolded contributes to how Patrick, and the larger African Nova Scotian community, see the actions of the police as insincere. It speaks to not only how Patrick perceives the police, but also how the community as a whole perceives the police as Patrick's experience is experienced vicariously through the community.

Limitations

Throughout this research, there were several instances in which I was not able to conduct research as I had originally planned. I was a full-time student and working part-time while gathering interviews; therefore, I would travel to Digby for interviews. Ideally I would have liked to reside in Digby while conducting interviews. Being in the environment that participants are describing would have allowed for a stronger understanding, and as an African Nova Scotian, may have meant that I experienced an incident similar to participants. In the times that I was in Digby, I entered stores and walked the streets, and got a small glimpse of what participants described, and living in Digby would have broadened this understanding. As I describe within the methodology, I struggled to find participants. If I had lived in Digby, this may have been different, and I would have been able to have a larger sample of participants. Through my difficulty finding participants, I was not able to specify an age group or 'gender'. Had my study limited participants to a specific age or 'gender', I do not believe my results would have been as diverse; however, the results would have been more pointed. I would have also included more aspects of an ethnography, spending more time at places in Digby where there are a lot of people or a place where people tend to socialize. By asking general questions, I gathered a variety of data themes and I was able to begin to landscape African Nova Scotian perception of the police. However, asking questions on a specific topic, for example questions pertaining to how African Nova Scotian youth are socialized or about how participants believed different axes of intersection interacted (e.g. Treatment by rural police versus urban police, or rich African Nova Scotian woman versus poor white woman), my scope would have been narrower and data would have

been more in depth on a focused topic. I would have also tried to gather more information about the African Nova Scotian communities surrounding Digby. Participants mentioned Acaciaville, Jordantown, Conway, Weymouth Falls, and Danvers, and I wish I had asked more about living in those communities and the differences between those communities.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research on African Nova Scotian community perceptions of the police could extend the knowledge of the African Nova Scotian narrative. Examining community perceptions could be broadened to other minority or marginalized communities, or broadened to other African Nova Scotian communities. Specific to Digby, a 'gendered' study, a study based on age of participants, or a study based on whether participants are parents would further describe the landscape of Digby in terms of perceptions of policing. There may be a benefit in directly relating Black Lives Matter to Digby or Nova Scotia as a whole, or looking at the possible benefits a chapter of BLM within Nova Scotia may provide. In reference to methodology, a participatory action research (PAR) approach may benefit the Digby African Nova Scotian community. PAR is a collaborative process between researchers and participants where both parties benefit, and focuses on participation and creating an action plan (Datta et al. 2015). PAR focuses on engaging community participation, respecting local input, and increasing benefits for participants (Datta et al. 2015). PAR would allow for the African Nova Scotian community to have a bigger role within the research and for them to have a stronger voice within the research.

By simply asking the question of how the Digby African Nova Scotian community perceives the police, the many different ways in which that community

experiences racism and discrimination is revealed and, this research could be beneficial to other communities and research.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has documented the perceptions that the Digby African Nova Scotian community holds in relation to the police. Through nine semi-structured interviews with members of the African Nova Scotian community in Digby, this thesis has recorded and analyzed their narratives. Current research does study community perceptions of the police, a few focused on a single marginalized community, but none were in a rural setting. This thesis documents a rural African Nova Scotian narrative, and is the first of its kind. Participants described how the African Nova Scotian community in Digby feels targeted and unprotected by the police. This negative perception was shaped and reinforced through negative experiences, both direct and vicarious, the discriminatory atmosphere of racism, and how participants experienced Blackness in Digby. Throughout this research, it has become clear that anti-Black racism is present within Nova Scotia and is a part of everyday life for African Nova Scotians.

Significant findings include how participants acknowledged or described several axes of intersectionality. Racist acts within patriarchal actions and class exploitation aid in defining the Digby African Nova Scotian community as marginal oppressed subjects who are seen as expendable, denied resources, silenced, ignored, and targeted. Participants understand their context and are the best people to tell it; that is why their voices need to be heard. I argue that the police in Digby set two standards, one for African Nova Scotian community members and one for white community members. The police standard for how African Nova Scotians should behave does not take into account a history of discrimination, and therefore African Nova Scotians are punished so they

learn to meet the standard. The personal and vicarious experiences of participants illustrated that Digby African Nova Scotians are targeted by the police. Through both male and female participants' accounts, it became clear that African Nova Scotian men in Digby are targeted more by police than female African Nova Scotians. Male participants, as a result, had a stronger reaction when I asked if they felt protected by the police—four of five men (strongly) felt unprotected. Female participants were impacted primarily by vicarious experiences. Due to the lack of protection and targeting on the part of the police, the African Nova Scotian community in Digby has relied on one another for support. Participants described how the community socializes their youth as a tool of self-defense against the police, and in some cases the community feels this is not enough and steps in to 'police' themselves. What this case study has found is that the Digby African Nova Scotian community experience echoes the literature on 'race' and policing and suggests that, while Digby is a small rural community, the experiences of Blacks across North America in relation to the state are similar.

It was also clear through interviews that participants felt that the police in Digby were not sincere in their efforts to mend relations. While past research on community–police relations has often put forth recommendations from a committee or the researcher themselves, I asked members of the Digby African Nova Scotian community directly what could be done to improve community–police relations.

Improvements

As this research is based on narrative, it was important to ask participants to share what they thought could be done to improve community–police relations and include their recommendations as part of their narrative. Participants described several different things that could be done on the part of the police to improve their relationship with the

Digby African Nova Scotian community, and therefore improve the perception the community holds of the police. Patrick suggested immediate actions, like an apology to the African Nova Scotian community to show that the police are willing to make things right and build a trust. Michelle echoed the same, that the police need to hold their members accountable and recognize that there is a problem within their institution. Henry was doubtful that there can be institutional change, that as a whole, society may not be willing to change. Four participants suggested that the way officers are trained needs to be changed, from suggesting culturally responsive training, or having potential officers submit to lie detector tests, or ensuring that officers are willing to put in the work with the community to ensure there is positive change. How the police handle future interactions with the Digby African Nova Scotian community was also emphasized. According to participants, the police should be spending more time within the Digby African Nova Scotian community *outside* of policing. They should be engaging with the African Nova Scotian community in Digby in ways that are not mandated, for example meetings with the community about confrontations and ways that are positive, like sports events through the school or community benefit events. While community involvement is one step, participants also said that when an African Nova Scotian in Digby in is need of police services, the police need to take these claims seriously. As Russell said:

> For start they could say to the Black community 'not only are we going to meet with you, we're going to take every complaint and investigate it and interview from your lenses, not from ours, we're going to do it from your lens, the way you see it, we're going to act as if this is factual until we find out otherwise'. (Russell)

Participants described how the Digby African Nova Scotian community does not feel comfortable calling the police. Several participants stated they would not call the police no matter how severe the situation was.

I asked participants what could be done to improve Digby African Nova Scotian community–police relations so that the community's opinion could be truly heard. While past community meetings and committees have appeared to listen to the African Nova Scotian community, this thesis aims to listen and convey the community's wants. Valuing the Digby African Nova Scotian community's narrative will hopefully enable the community to feel as though their voice is important and heard.

Although there is no action plan, this thesis is a venue through which the police can read and understand how the African Nova Scotian community in Digby perceives them, which in turn can lead to possible change. Out of nine participants: eight had negative experiences with the police, describing how they are consistently targeted by police, how their opinions are ignored by the police, and police officers are not discipline. Seven said they did not feel protected by the police, many participants explaining that they would rather handle a situation themselves than call the police. These are experiences that cannot be dismissed or ignored.

Community perceptions are important as they can be used to evaluate the police but also to determine if the police treat all community members fairly and equitably (Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2009). The Digby African Nova Scotian community's perception of the police as documented by this thesis demonstrated that the police in Digby are not meeting expectations or treating all community members equally. Relations with the police are so damaged that the Digby African Nova Scotian community does not trust the police when there are efforts on the part of the police to improve relations. I am hopeful that this thesis will incite change, and through the interviews alone, participants

vocalized that talking about their experiences helped them on a personal level. For example:

> That's why when we come together and can share our stories, it's a kind of consensus building, like that happens to you too? (pause) and then you know because you don't always get that opportunity, like sometimes you know you feel like, 'is it just me' and you have your doubts and all that stuff. (Henry)

> I'm having a very good, *healthy* helpful conversation with you and I could talk for hours because I feel like my time is not being wasted. (Russell)

Henry discussed the importance of sharing stories to know you are not alone in your experiences, and Russell indicated that the interview we had felt more like a conversation and could continue for hours. In Russell's case it did; his interview was one of the few that went over two hours. For me as an African Nova Scotian researcher, that means my research has already been successful.

Appendix

Appendix A- Axial Codes

African Nova Scotian community	Digby community	'Race'	Black men
Education	'Race card'	Criminal justice system	Improvements
Systemic racism	Donald Trump	Personal experiences	Vicarious experiences
African Nova Scotian community relationship with police	Socioeconomic status	African Nova Scotian community vs white community	'Race' based discrimination
Black criminality	Black officers	Racial profiling	Mistrust
Police in Digby	Black women	Education	South Shore
Sincerity	Microaggressions		

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