

**Laidlaw Scholars Undergraduate Leadership and Research
Programme**
Record of Reflection

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In my summer of research, I experienced a varied series of ultimate highs and ultimate lows. Moving forward with this topic, I was certain that, as a biracial person myself, I would experience extreme discomfort concerning certain issues. While I will not say that I was entirely comfortable with all that had to be discussed for this report, I highlight that the most experienced emotion throughout this process was, in fact, visibility.

Getting the chance to speak with people who share my heritage and my identity was so vital to my own growth and understanding of myself. Going into this seriously pressing issue in my life and the lives of so many bi/multiracial individuals out there, I was certain that I would be successful in finding a definitive answer to our identity. If you had asked me a month ago, even, I would have firmly told you: “There is already so much research — I am *sure* there is an answer to our questions of identity!” Thus, concluding as I have, I feel particularly proud of how this research has aided and abetted my personal journey in understanding myself.

If you have yet to read the report (which, in my totally unbiased opinion, you definitely should!), my research question sought to suggest a social identifier specifically for biracial people. Retrospectively, it was rather naive of me to believe that I could have a say in how one chooses to express their identity to others. Maybe the hands of identity politics had flooded my brain as well as it has the rest of society. However, upon speaking to young biracial women living in the GTA and reading theorists, including Delgado and Stefancic, Lorde, and even one of my personal favourite artists, Mitski, I realized that identity *is* a rather unique experience for us all.

To suggest a social identifier is to side with those whom I adamantly disagree with in the field of identity politics. Those who state that if we cannot fit into one box, then perhaps we should not exist. I continued to philosophize: if there are people who believe *I* cannot exist, then perhaps the issue lies not within myself, but in the system we have built. I stand to resist the norms of society that degrade and segregate in the name of “categorization.” I stand to confuse and be confused, for it is only my human right to exist as I wish.

Therefore, my conclusion was rather inconclusive, and if I am being honest, I do believe that is the best outcome to have derived from this research. Academia, just as society builds it to be, also has a knack for enforcing understanding. However, as evident through my studies, not everything is meant to be understood. Some people are monoracial, some people are multiracial, and if any of that seems like something that *we* are entitled to question, then I beg you to infer further as to where this entitlement comes from.

Resistance, as I see it, lives in the smallest and largest of spaces. Protests, speeches, and even research reports. These actively aid in educating the masses if made accessible. I think that reclaiming my identity as mine to keep, that is a quiet form of resistance that simply proves my own validity as a human. Just as — in my highest hopes — it has invoked a quiet form of resistance in you.

Identity, as I have discovered, is unintelligible. We may never know or understand many parts of it — for example, another begging question I continue to have is why I was born a lesbian. Not that I am ashamed of it; I am very proud of my participation and membership in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. However, I would be lying to say it has never crossed my mind why I do not feel the same about men as my friends do.

Race and racial politics carry a similar case. It is an uninvoked social factor that has no concrete evidence of existence aside from its physicality. I mean, at our core, we are innately all human. Thus, I do believe it is only right to end a chapter of my own queries with an answer that is up to interpretation. Perhaps as a reader, this comes across as unsatisfying. But as a person with your own identity, I hope you find it in you to dig deeper into its meaning.

My summer of research, with all its complications with REB approval, complicated readings, and much more, I have only grown stronger in my abilities and confidence since embarking on this. I am proud — so utterly proud — that I have pushed myself to take a risk, accept the chances of my biggest fear (failure), and nonetheless persisted in spite of it. I cannot express my gratitude enough for all the support I received during this process. The Laidlaw Foundation at the University of Toronto will forever be the highlight of my post-secondary career.

As well, just a brief shout-out to my research advisor (and self-proclaimed favourite professor), Ted Sammons. Your consistency with my inconsistencies will always be appreciated. Your unwavering faith in my seemingly crazy ideas has propelled me further into my highest potential. I owe you, at the very least, a perfect attendance score at our next course together.

I end this journey with confidence, grace, and the utmost gratitude for all those who assisted in this project. I am proud of the outcome. I am proud of my journey. And most importantly, I am proud of you, my dear fellow multiracial people, for sharing with me your experiences and permitting me the space to speak in these moments. In return, I hope you enjoy the report. In return, I hope you are proud of me.