

Sexuality and Space: Queering geographies of globalization
CLAGS, New York City, 27 February, 2001

session title:

**Revisiting the material world:
urban policy, design + activism
after queer nationalism & globalization**

Gordon Brent Ingram
gb_ingram@telus.net

Sex migrants: The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

abstract

This is a discussion of the kinds of information and sources necessary to explore how sexual minority, AIDS and anti-racial / multicultural activism further decolonised and reshaped Vancouver in the nineteen eighties and nineteen nineties. Vancouver, multicultural and socially fragmented since its inception, did not see significant gains in social spaces for sexual minorities until racial and ethnic barriers were relaxed in the nineteen seventies and eighties and broader alliances could be formed. Today new barriers are being formed as the metropolitan area is increasingly vulnerable to globalisation. The term 'sex migrants' refers the extreme forms of displacement of sexual minorities that Vancouver has seen -- that has often been associated with both colonialism and neocolonialism and now globalisation. There is currently a theoretical gap in understanding the relationships between the dismantling of neocolonialism and homophobia, over the last century, and decision-making around public space. For Vancouver, also referred to since its incorporation as "The Terminal City," there has been a dramatic inversion from early twentieth century imperial homophobia and localised homoerotic cultures. In contrast, today's city has a social matrix consisting of grudging tolerance of globalising homosexualities with increasingly de-institutionalized and spotty homophobia. Parallel but sometimes intersecting forms of decolonisation have also taken place. Today, this region has some of the best human rights protections in the world for racial and sexual minorities and thriving social spaces. But a half century before, the same area was still in the grip of repression of the same groups. How was the city built and then reshaped in terms of apportionment of social space for sexual minorities? For Vancouver, the relationships between postcolonial and post-heteronormative processes associated with human rights and anti-racist

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

activism, gay liberation, lesbian feminism, and queer nationalism -- especially in terms of specific events and sites -- warrant careful examination.



metropolitan Vancouver in the mid-nineteen eighties

Problem statement:

Identifying lingering neocolonialism & homophobia in urban space

Over the last two decades, The Terminal City, a name used for greater Vancouver since the city's incorporation in 1886, has come to embody particularly successful challenges of inequities around sexuality and race. How this particular set of decolonisation processes came to make public space for sexual minorities in the bleak first decade of the AIDS pandemic is the topic of this discussion. Vancouver, multicultural and socially fragmented since its inception, did not see significant gains in social spaces for sexual minorities until racial and ethnic barriers were relaxed in the nineteen seventies and eighties. Before that period, the homophile, gay liberation and lesbian feminist movements were largely anglocentric and lacked the numbers to be politically successful. It was only in the nineteen eighties that broader alliances could be formed. Perhaps more than most metropolitan areas, the processes of decolonisation, homoerotic space-making and placemaking, and globalisation occurred concurrently and generated dramatic and often positive results. But recent globalisation in The Terminal City, as the decline of the importance of the provincial and national states in relation to international links, never embodied a unified set of processes (Hardt and Negri 2000: 133). In fact, some developments have been contradictory.

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

These comparatively recent decolonisation processes are worth mapping for a number of reasons. The motives for such activist scholarship, discussed here, centre on the efforts and continued needs for an expanding and diversifying set of social spaces for various networks of sexual minorities. The axiom is that there cannot be more conscious planning and design interventions around spaces for sexual minorities without more historical knowledge. Paradoxically, these groups are in flux and are often being displaced. This is in no small part by the changing 'scenes' around identities as well as spatial apportionment of the city as related land values and how these inequities are played out in terms of gender, ethnic and language groups, and sexual desires and respective networks. Therefore, to understand the decolonisation of these homosexualities requires examining the residues of repression, related to race and sexuality, in both the history of and physical remnants in the city. This discussion illustrates how different are the uses of sources and cultural narratives in this queer environmental research that associated with early queer theory with its emphasis on literary narratives. The central question in this essay is what kind of sources are needed to map processes of decolonisation and the resistance sexual minorities. How do these methods differ from those used by queer theory for identifying literary narratives in the nineteen nineties? And what is the relevance of frameworks for conducting environmental histories that are often employed in urban planning?

How social groups come to know and negotiate in social space¹ has a direct bearing on how they use, enjoy and transform it. There is no reason to suggest that this axiom does not extend to strategic sites for sexual and ethnic minorities (Ingram 1997c) nor to how these places are used, modified, redesigned, redeveloped and otherwise purposefully reconstructed. And certainly inequities related to race, ethnicity, religion, and language can also be charted. This mapping can have a particularly strategic function. In unstable neocolonial (Young 1991) contexts with high levels of homophobia, the exchange of fragments of communal maps of territory and public space has been a central element of both resistance to repression and self-definitions of networks of sexual minorities. But questions of sexuality and place (and social space in more generic terms) remain marginalized in urban planning and design theory. In this discussion, some research projects and, in particular, the basic information that is needed to make conclusions will be explored.

Today, Pacific Canada, still called "British Columbia," is touted as a model for an inequitable society with relatively low levels of racism and homophobia compared to other parts of North America, much of the former British Empire, and even parts of Europe. But, in fact, a racialized homophobia was legal into the nineteen sixties and was a huge factor in what gay male and lesbian social space existed. This neocolonial repression dominated resistance and other forms of political organizing well into the nineteen eighties. What authentic gains in the making of social space for homoerotic and transgendered groups have been the results of overcoming not only internalised homophobia but also high levels of racialization (that fragmented potential 'gay and lesbian' social and political blocks). How can we describe the changes over the last several decades? There was no gradual transition out of homophobia and neocolonialism in Pacific Canada. Rather, there were numerous abrupt and far from synchronous shifts that, after considerable resistance both from state and capital, were only grudgingly accommodated. And such victories, when they did occur, often resulted in limited and spotty improvements in social space -- often limited to the central city.

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

What sources can help us understand the shift from a repressive colony and poorly decolonised province to the improved situation of today? What sources can help us chart relationships across a city that was originally engineered to maintain particular imperial and Victorian inequities around race and sexuality? How can we build on the narratives employed in queer theory and combine this work with a wider range of sources and modes of discourse?

Homoerotic colonial histories & queer maps

"[T]here were deep social and cultural cleavages in British Columbia in 1881 that corresponded, broadly, to the boundaries between 'white', 'Chinese' and 'Indian'. These categories provided simple racial ways of identifying the extraordinary late nineteenth century convergence in a vast little-populated territory of three broadly different historical experiences: one indigenous, one European, and one Asian."

(Harris 1997: 158)

The nineteenth century expansionist preoccupation with control of territory remains internalised in late twentieth century bodies and sexualities -- and well beyond the former imperial centres. This is certainly the case for contemporary British Columbia. Here, imperial and national mechanisms for domination of territory were overextended while less controllable cultural fusion began to take place. Social spaces of nineteenth and early twentieth century 'sexual outlaws' (Owens 1992: 218) have been associated with fecund though highly unstable sites of resistance and community-formation. Narratives of homoeroticism, social space, and place can illuminate neglected aspects of territorial domination. Transactions within such peripheries as British Columbia did not escape Victorian controls on erotic expression in public and semi-public places. For example, Perry (1997: 503) argued that social regulation in early British Columbia was particularly relaxed where,

"A society constituted largely by footloose working-class white men and indigenous peoples living in close contact threatened to destabilise many of the hallmarks of nineteenth-century gender and race systems."

But unfortunately for many members of sexual minorities, with heritages not of northwestern Europe, the latter phases of the neocolonial project institutionalized racialized inequities while often obscuring them.

In the first decades of the formation of The Terminal City, four ethnic groups emerged as demographic blocks. But they were often at odds with each other and unresolved about their internal identities:

- ❖ aboriginal / First Nations;
- ❖ British;
- ❖ Chinese; and
- ❖ Punjabis (from what is present day central Pakistan and northwestern India).

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

Each group remade their identities in the new hierarchy and urban architecture of The Terminal City.

- ❖ The aboriginal groups were made up of both local First Nations populations and seasonal or permanent migrants who journeyed up and down the coast as well from the interior of the province. There was a tremendous amount of linguistic diversity and well as long-standing conflict between some tribal groups.
- ❖ The dominant ethnic group of the British was the Scots who had long-standing tensions with the English. Into this white group, that positioned itself for a century of dominance, were other ethnic groups from western Europe notably Dutch, French, and Italian.
- ❖ Nearly all of the Chinese were from the southern coastal areas -- and area that was margin in space, language and customs from the mandarins of imperial China. The Chinese were far from homogeneous especially in language.
- ❖ The Punjabis were primarily of one religion, Sikh, and were from what are today the partitioned Punjab states of India and Pakistan. But there were Moslem and Hindu groups before long and other 'Indo-Canadian' groups, from other parts of south Asia, eventually became established.

But with all of this diversity, going back to the founding of the city except for the Punjabis who came a decade later, one group was able to determine and regulate social space -- even for sexual outlaws and resistance to homophobia. Until the last decade, English-speaking and northwestern European cultural experiences have defined and dominated the efforts to decriminalise homosexuality and to create gay, lesbian and queer space. In British Columbia in the late nineteen eighties and early nineteen nineties, the emergence of 'queer nationalism' (Berlant and Freeman 1993) signalled a widespread **attempt** at dismantling this cultural, linguistic and racial hierarchy. This decade's self-consciously 'multicultural' and 'queer' cultures in Pacific Canada have been increasingly defined by the other demographic groups. Recent community formation processes for gay men have been associated, vaguely, with partial decolonisation while still being constrained, contorted and sometimes expanded by conflicting forces of cultural chauvinism and resistance to it.

In the urbanisation processes in British Columbia over the last century, there have been unresolved transitions from colonialism to neocolonialism to nationalism to globalisation and today's pressures for authentically postcolonial culture. In each of these phases, both homoerotic bodies, and respective urban spaces, have been inscribed markedly differently.

1. In the **colonial** period homoerotic contact was dominated by notions of white men versus the 'other'. There was some tolerance to sex between white males of which there was an official perception of there being a shortage. Other homosexualities, particularly those involving white men in contact with other groups, were ruthlessly suppressed as part of social regulation.
2. In the long **neocolonial** period a gradient of anglocentricity, with some other northwestern European cultures also privileged, allowed a much wider group of males to negotiate places in modernity. But groups and individuals, not communicating in English, were at a distinct disadvantage, both economically and politically, with often

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

little homoerotic social space available.

3. The briefer **nationalist** period roughly corresponding to the gay liberation and rights movements emphasized engagement with and loyalty to central Canadian institutions. Groups less engaged in or not initiated into those older institutions were marginalised even in resistance to homophobia and the building of alternative institutions.
4. **Queer nationalism** has seen an expansion, to the point of exhaustion, of identity politics within the context of feminist-inspired dialogues on gender and culture, while there has been a decline of national institutions under globalization.

In Pacific Canada, the social and cultural maps of public space are being redrawn across landscapes that are increasingly contentious in terms of jurisdictions, laws, effective access, and distribution of environmental benefits and costs (Ingram 1995). In this remaking, the relationships between collective cognition, use, territorialisation, and architecture of homoerotic locations have been transformed. These social spaces were neocolonial at least from British Columbia's entry into Confederation in 1871 until the 1982 repatriation of the national Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In most areas of the British Columbia coast, neocolonialism lingers because of the lack of treaties with First Nations. In the colonial and neocolonial periods, racism dominated sexual identities and the use of public and private space. Within the shifting queerscapes (Ingram 1997b) of sexual minorities, it has been difficult to separate specific peripheries, local social relationships, and constraints on homoerotic communalities and expression. A historically and geographically rooted framework for charting the unevenness of contemporary decolonisation in gay male space has a range of current utilities in bridging more established forms of activism with new tactics of civic politics.

Lines of investigation & divergent sources

What happened in the last twenty years that radically reformed and expanded homoerotic and transgendered space in The Terminal City? There was:

- ❖ repatriation of the Canadian constitution in 1982 (largely symbolic);
- ❖ resistance to homophobia and community building from sexual minorities with declining repression;
- ❖ resistance from women to inequities and subsequent economic gains;
- ❖ resistance to racism and subsequent declines in spatial apportionment and a kind of decolonisation of public space (more 'Asians' and aboriginals in more expensive public places); and
- ❖ intense globalisation with Vancouver receiving a great deal of south Chinese capital.

How can we chart the relationships between the different segments of those decolonisation processes? One approach is to create some categories that are partially temporal as is listed below. Thus, there can be

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

past

for information on formation of neocolonial institutional relationships and social divisions (including across the landscape), (relatively unsuccessful) resistance strategies, and homoerotic and transgendered spaces;

contemporary

for data on (relatively successful) challenges and disruptions to those neocolonial relationships and social divisions; and

future

with projected impacts of decolonisation and globalisation on public (and private) space and indications of queer designs.

As for the kinds of information and narratives that we can look for and then use to confirm certain experiences, social relationships and environmental relationships, the following section provides examples of the kinds of historical fragments that have already been found. Along with these established points are strategies for identifying, in long-term research, more about the broader social and urban environmental matrices with which these confirmations were associated.

Charting race, sex, repression & resistance across time & space

'[I]t is the map that engenders the territory[.]'

Jean Baudrillard (1983: 2)

Even with the now waning enthusiasm for assertions and exchanges of cognitive maps as catalysts for civic activism (Jameson 1984: 89, Bhabha 1994: 214 - 223), data on sex in the city involves spatialized and cartographic strategies. And we can continue to assume that eroticism takes, is nurtured by, is constrained by, and is transformed by both physical space and cognition (individual and cultural) of particular places. An inherent characteristic of social space, including which is more overtly homoerotic, is that it can be charted along with respective human relationships and uses. Informal social mapping and resulting cartographies have a great bearing on enjoyment of such places and the nature of any collective interventions in respective locations.

Below is a sketch, a rough chart of some facts, about some social matrices around homoeroticism (with some relevance to transgendered experiences) that formed The Terminal City. After each point, I outline some of the significance of this information in terms of three co-ordinates:

institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism;
institutionalization / challenging of homophobia; and
formation of social space in the city

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

and then list some sources and strategies for further research -- with an emphasis on urban policy involving social programmes, economics, planning and design.

co-ordinate

- a. nature of information source(s):
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism:
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia:
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city:
- e. strategies and sources for further research:

By the late nineteenth century, the landscapes of British Columbia were being converted from 'nature,' as in native cultural landscapes, to production, controlled by neocolonial and national interests. There was a corollary preoccupation, in the colonial sexual culture, between supposedly 'aboriginal' heterosexuality and 'unnatural' homosexuality (Chapman 1983: 98). In this period, accusations of buggery were typically woven with suggestions of disloyalty to the tenuous (white supremacist and pointedly sinophobic) social hierarchy. But as soon as there was urbanisation, first in the colonial capital of Victoria and two decades later in the towns that would form The Terminal City, there are indications of homosexuality (and repression). The following are ten key fragments, or grouped co-ordinates of time and space, that are key to understanding the forces that lead up to the dramatic decolonisation and dismantling of institutionalized homophobia that took place in the last two decades.

co-ordinate 1: codification of anti-homosexual laws & selective application

One of the first trials for buggery was in the town of Victoria in 1860. The town crier, John Butts, was a well-known figure who expanded public discussion, often satirically, in the struggling colony. Men not British were treated more harshly. For example, in 1866 two 'Greek' seamen were charged 'for committing an unnatural offence on the high seas' (British Colonist 1866a: 3). The act was later described as 'sodomy'. One sailor was sentenced to death which later was commuted to life imprisonment while the other was forced into two years of hard labour.

- a. nature of information source(s): court transcripts, newspaper articles
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: The town crier opposed institutionalization of racism in the colony and was critical of the figures who eventually were successful in disenfranchising Chinese. The murder sentence was applied to two 'Greek' or Turkish seamen who were perceived at the time as being of a different, threatening race to northwestern Europeans.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: Homosexual contact was formally made illegal in the colony and men's bodies became a topic of interest of the state.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: The town crier was a major force in local public space and in oppositional politics. His trial and imprisonment removed him from that space. All 'Greeks' would have been a bit intimidated by that death sentence.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: other archived printed documents and photographs, diaries

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*co-ordinate 2: Some situational homosexuality from the small number of white women

But after the highly politicised exile of the town crier, there are few if any records of buggery trials, in the remainder of the nineteenth century, of Anglo-Saxon males for sex with each other, just for sex with people not of European heritages as well as with animals.ⁱⁱ Shortages of workers in the primarily male (Perry 1995) frontier labour force necessitated a tolerance of furtive homosexual contact. The demographic imbalance between the sexes was exceptional even for North American frontiers. In 1867, British Columbia's total population was no more than 40,000 aboriginals, utterly demoralised through a series of ongoing epidemics, and no more than 20,000 people of foreign backgrounds of which only bare majority were mainly of northwestern European heritages. Until well into the twentieth century, there was a perception, in ruling circles, of a 'shortage' of white womenⁱⁱⁱ. This situation for colonists and racists was considered a negative thing with pressure on women and men to have family.

- a. nature of information source(s): historical accounts related to demography, census reports, newspaper articles and editorials, diaries
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: Because of the higher proportion of women not of, or not completely of, European backgrounds, there was a significant number of mixed-race offspring in the nineteenth century. Many of these individuals were able to demand enfranchisement because of the European aspects of their backgrounds disrupting emerging notions of racialized citizenship.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: In discouraging mixed-raced liaisons and offspring, ruling circles effectively tolerated a kind of situational homosexuality where the major emotional (and some physical) 'support' for many workers was their comrades (along with partially tolerated prostitution).
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: What went on in men's dormitories was considered relatively private and there were no records of sex between men, in work camps, ever being prosecuted. Female prostitution was considered inevitable and neighbourhoods of male pleasure sprawled across larger towns.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: seeking out accounts to responses to the male-oriented domestic and work environments

co-ordinate 3: Attack on men not of European backgrounds through their homosexuality

The tolerance of affectionate friendships and even some homosexuality between white men, in nineteenth century British Columbia, was only ever grudging. By the turn of the century, the apparatus of the Canadian government, struggling to construct a rationale for itself, became interested in sex outside of marriage and prostitution. In the state's growing interest in sex between men, there were a number of ideological strands that would play out in the twentieth century. There was the 'anti-white slavery' movement, against prostitution, with its links to conservative factions for female suffrage. Perversion, as in homosexuality, was increasingly framed as male violence while violence against women was increasingly ignored under late Victorian laws. The demonised group of 'perverts' was typically not the paedophile of post-gay civil rights protections, but rather the supposedly over-sexed, violent, and dangerous males not of fully European heritages. As surveillance increased and police

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

agencies became more organised, the number of trials increased while the penalties diminished.

- a. nature of information source(s): court records with indications of the backgrounds of those charged
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: The current cases available indicate that a majority of the anti-homosexual charges and trials were against men where one or both were not of European backgrounds.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: Homosexuality was associated with the swarthy 'other' who was not British.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: People not of European backgrounds were often ghettoised into portions of towns where there was more tolerance of sexuality. Fusion of cultures often took place there and there became an association, a cultivated phobia, linking the racial 'other' with spaces of forbidden sexual pleasure (and opiates).
- e. strategies and sources for further research: early newspapers and newsletters in Chinese languages and Punjabi, oral histories, city records of the uses of buildings, police records, immigration records, photographs

co-ordinate 4: increasing state interest in homosexuality

Canada had already enacted a less severe anti-buggery law in 1869 which lessened life sentences to a maximum of ten years (Chapman 1986: 279). But this liberalisation came into effect slowly, after 1871, when the Crown Colony became a province of the Dominion. Prohibitions against homosexuality were broadened in 1892. Sections 174 and 175 of the Criminal Code of Canada proscribed male homosexuality under the labels 'gross indecency' and 'indecent assault'. Maximum prison terms were down to five to ten years. As control over territory was consolidated and 'the land' -- as in First Nations political organisations -- subdued with natural resources more securely and systematically exploited, there came a public preoccupation with the control of women and sexuality (Chapman 1986: 277). In western Canada, 'Oscar Wilde-type' (Chapman 1983: 99 - 101) became the code term for the unrepentant homosexual: the individual who resisted what today is called 'homophobia' and his cramped social place on the vast frontier of single men -- who were not always particularly lonely.

- a. nature of information source(s): the few court cases from the nineteenth century, the texts of laws, legal history
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: The supposed evils of homosexuality were sometimes framed in terms of negative associations with colonised groups.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: There was a shift from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century with state interest in homosexuality coming primarily from the British navy, then from the police, and then from medical professionals.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: White men living together as bachelors where increasingly under pressure to demonstrate good character (i.e. their supposed lack of homosexuality) and to marry (white women). By the early twentieth century, men were being pressured to move out of primarily male dormitory neighbourhoods and to marry.

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

- e. strategies and sources for further research: records of federal legislative debates, police records

co-ordinate 5: suppressing aboriginal homosexualities

It was the difficulties of controlling outlawed sexualities in the public realm, no matter how furtive, that was so troubling for the nascent state (and legal system). In this sense, the entire public realm in the late Victorian period became a landscape of potential immorality. But this particular periphery of the empire was rugged, isolated, and difficult to police.

The state took a different tact than it did with colonists and transient workers in its reconstruction of aboriginal sexualities. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, police apparatus was increasingly used for nakedly colonial strategies of dismantling remaining claims to land and resources. What remained of traditional political economies, culture, and sexualities were attacked. One of the more substantial and intimate records of the repression of homosexuality in a northwest coast society was the biography of 'Kwakiutl' chief Charles James Nowell who was born in 1870 (Ford 1941). Nowell's generation was violently reshaped by the Canadian state as well as by resistance to the repression. Nowell recalled assaults on his own culture as soon as he began attending a mission school. Through the outlawed potlatch ceremonies, heterosexual marriage had been tied in with a system of wealth accumulation and prestige. Homosexual contact was placed in the freer realm of eroticism and love. The first aboriginals who engaged in homosexuality to be targeted by government officials and police were crossdressing males. Nowell recalled the fate of a transgendered companion.

'I guess the Indian agent wrote to Victoria, telling the officials what she was doing. She was taken to Victoria, and the policemen took her clothes off and found she was a man, so they gave him a suit of clothes and cut off his hair and sent him back home. When I saw him again, he was a man. He was no more my sweetheart.' (Ford 1941: 129 - 130)

A spatial narrative emerged around apprehension of the aboriginal homosexual other. Homosexual and gender ambiguous aboriginals were thought to persist in remote areas away from 'state church' missions and government agents. Aboriginal homosexuality became associated with the supposedly uncivilised frontier. When detected, these supposed deviants were taken out of their supposed 'backward' communities, transformed (brutalised) in the new administrative centres, and then sent back, broken, as another example of the new power of the state. In turn, police apparatus over aboriginal was to increasingly justify its expansion through supposed attempts to force these wards of the state to try to forget their traditional cultures (and sexualities).

- a. nature of information source(s): the one confirmed account described above
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: The state provided one more basis to attack aboriginal cultures and to control individuals (in ways that lessened the chances of resistance to increased control over land and resources).
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: Homosexuality was further associated with abjection and aboriginal communities became increasingly impoverished.

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: Aboriginals seeking same-sex intimacy and camaraderie has been an element of the city's 'Skid Road' (as in logged skidded through the muddy streets of poor neighbourhoods) since its inception.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: Department of Indian Affairs records, diaries, historical accounts, city records

co-ordinate 6: British panic over the lack of a demographic majority

One of the more severe periods of homophobic repression in British Columbia was in the years just before and during World War I. Since the turn of the century, Vancouver had been booming. There was a heightened level of wealth, increased British immigration, and further class differentiation informed by ethnicity. It was in this period that the majority of Vancouver's population became of British and Irish descent heritages (often via central Canada and the United States), replacing the increasingly marginalised multiracial population which had been numerically superior when the city was founded three decades before. As throughout the British Empire, inter-racial liaisons that were homoerotic (Bleys 1995: 160 - 185), were considered a threat to the stabilising but still tenuous social hierarchy. In this landscape of ethnic competition, the large Chinatown areas of the towns of Victoria and Vancouver became interzones with cultural fusion, prostitution, and homosexuality. Due in large part to this double ghettoisation of Chinese, fusion between European and other cultures, and supposed 'vice' and sexual outlaws, Vancouver's Chinatown was also referred to, since its inception, as 'Celestialland' (Anderson 1991: 88).

It was also in this period that concerns for 'good character', a previously undervalued trait in this brash frontier, began to be used against homosexuals and as another factor in class positioning. Males found to be engaging in homosexuality were pushed down severely in the local socio-economic hierarchy. In British Columbia, the number of court cases for buggery increased roughly ten fold in the first decade of the twentieth century. When the typical bribery was not possible, white, and particularly British, men shown to be having relations with less privileged groups particularly non-white males, were certain to lose most of their social standing. Men of 'non-white' backgrounds who were sexually aggressive to British males were considered outrageous. For example, the following trial charges against a Chinese man are similar to scores of others made in those years.

For that he the said Wing at the City of Vancouver on the 18th day

(1) of August 1911 did unlawfully assault Sam Brewe and then and there did unlawfully attempt to wickedly and against the order of nature have a veneral [sic] affair with and to carnally know and commit and perpetrate with the aid Sam Brewe that detestable and abominable crime of buggery.

(2) for the said Wing at the time and in the place aforesaid in public or in private did attempt to procure the commission by Sam Brewe, a male person, of an act of gross indecency with himself another male.^{iv}

- a. nature of information source(s): court records and police records
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: Any inter-racial contact between males could be framed as being potentially homosexual with (not-so) tender Europeans supposedly vulnerable to seduction.

Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: Homosexuality was increasingly associated with the abjection of the other.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: Homosexuality was increasingly associated with areas of cultural fusion and abjection (the overlapping zones of Chinatown, Celestialland and Skid Row)
- e. strategies and sources for further research: yet to be accessed court and police records, diaries, newspaper accounts, diaries, oral histories

co-ordinate 7: the anti-Sikh buggery trials

One example of the confluence of homophobia, the new preoccupation with racial and cultural superiority, and the utility of repression around supposedly deviant sexuality was the hysteria around homosexual Sikhs. The newspapers and the state constructed a spectre of the 'East Indian' male as aggressive homosexual. Soon after the first Sikh workers arrived, there was the 1909 *Rex versus Nar Singh* case. Singh was accused of attempting to procure acts of 'gross indecency'^{iv} [from persons with British surnames] and later from an undercover policeman. The cross-cultural map that emerged of the events on the edge of Vancouver's Chinatown is instructive. At 2 o'clock one morning in December of 1908, Singh was waiting for sex near the Great Northern Hotel, in Chinatown, which was well established as an early meeting place for homosexuality. The detectives had clearly been instructed to entrap.

The transcripts of the trials of a score of cases involving inter-racial homosexuality signal a new and intensified narrative of surveillance and repression. This new surveillance was more up close and personal and more aggressively culturally chauvinist. It was difficult to find a place to have sex and the officer described several attempts including one in a crowded room of sleeping Punjabi men. The subsequent defence revolved around questions of intoxication and intent. Singh's limited command of English was also mentioned by the defence in a way that almost pandered to the court's patronising notions of the British subjects of India. The prosecution of 'oriental cases'^{vi} became central to the operationalisation of homosexual criminality. This was one prong of a project of the nascent bourgeoisie to slow upward class mobility by non-British. One of the more transparent examples of the racism and absurdities of the early attempts to establish police apparatus was a 1915 case where charges of 'attempt [sic] buggery' were laid against two Sikh males^{vii}. This episode occurred in the months after the May to July 1914 crisis around the ship, the Komagata Maru (Johnston 1979) and its thousands of would-be Sikh immigrants. Because of racist hysteria, these British subjects were not allowed to embark in Canada. In February of 1915, one of the defendants, wearing a white turban, tried to 'pick up' a white, and most likely homosexual, driver. There was an initial two minute conversation focused on the Komogata Maru episode and the first defendant's activism around that event. This was not exactly light cruising talk and may have explained driver's motivation in bringing in an undercover policeman. The driver responded to the first defendant favourably, 'he asked me if I would like to fuck. That is just what he said to me, and I said "sure any old thing"^{viii}. The witness may well have been planning on being paid as 'trade' and to subsequently attempt blackmail. They made 'an appoint' for later that afternoon. At one point the driver informed on the first defendant -- thus becoming immune to prosecution from subsequent homosexual contact in the entrapment.

The police appear to have been attempting to target a broader network of male Sikh activists. The first defendant brought a friend, a man identified in court as having a 'blue

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

turban', while the driver brought the undercover policeman. A foursome was negotiated. The four proceeded along railroad tracks in Chinatown. Here the entrapment was botched. The other police officers commandeered for the entrapment were late for the appointment. The detailed court transcript chronicles several minutes of awkward homosexual contact. Both standing, the taller customer proceeded to attempt to penetrate the much shorter detective whose pants were now down around his ankles. The detective later claimed that the first defendant proposed a regularised *menage-à-trois* in a shack in the suburban Central Park. Upon arrival of the other police, the defendants were beaten with the first receiving a broken jaw. What makes this case so curious, historically, is that the first defendant claimed to have known the detective (whom he had attempted to penetrate). Sikh activists had accused the detective of harassing Sikh activists. In the court records, there was an extraordinary level of care in attempting to confirm that a certain 75 cents was received by the two white men for the agreed upon sexual services. This suggests a backup logic whereby the detective and the informant were indicating that even if they would engage in homosexuality with non-Europeans, it was primarily for money.

- a. nature of information source(s): court transcripts
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: A new group, not European, was associated with supposed perversion to discredit the entire group as predatory.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: This is the first time that an organized attack on an entire ethnic group, as somehow engaging in homosexuality, was employed. And this was the first time that a targeted group responded with relative solidarity.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: Sikhs were soon too intimidated to be in the city centre neighbourhoods and tended to stay on urban outskirts in subsequent decades.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: newspaper articles (if any), any written material in Punjabi, oral histories,

co-ordinate 8: enfranchisement and full citizenship to Asians with subsequent presence in public space

It was also in the early Cold War period, from 1947 to 1949, that east Asians, south Asians and some aboriginals were finally enfranchised and given more equal access to public space. The remaining group to scapegoat and demonise in the post-World War II period would be the homosexual of all backgrounds. There remained, however, a special upper class anxiety about individuals that were not 'Canadian' at a time of tremendous immigration and social changes and when notions of social citizenship continued to be unequally applied to various heritages. Northwestern Europeans were able to be considered citizens far sooner than those of east and south Asian backgrounds. Soon after enfranchisement, public establishments, such as beer parlours and hotels some with furtive meeting places for homosexuals, began to be desegregated.

- a. nature of information source(s): historical accounts, records of laws, newspaper articles in English, Cantonese, and Punjabi

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: This was the first major step in decolonisation though it took place while Japanese-Canadians were still being stripped of their citizenship and being forced back to Japan.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: The fully recognition of human rights was almost concurrent with the first homophile organizing on the West Coast (in California) and in a climate when marginalized ethnic groups were increasingly demanding equal rights and access to services and public space.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: Many groups were effectively ghettoised until 1949 and there were large demographic shifts in subsequent years.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: oral histories, (yet-to-be-available) census records, historical discussions

co-ordinate 9: the Cold War purges

Moving forward a half century to the Cold War, a political economy of homophobia had fully emerged. On the Pacific Coast, there appear to have been two purges of sexual minorities. Towards the end of World War II, numerous lesbians and gay men were court-marshalled and stripped of rights under the secrecy of the *War Measures Act*.

One purge involved a police and more broadly public hysteria against male homosexuals^{ix}, and was again centred in Victoria, was in the 1958 - 1965 period and roughly coincided with the Progressive Conservative federal government, 'the Diefenbaker years'. In 1958, Leo Anthony Mantha, a former naval officer discharged for his homosexuality, murdered his lover in a jealous rage on the naval base. Such a crime of passion involving lovers was no longer grounds for the death penalty. But Mantha was Québec-born, bilingual and was of a mixed-raced background. In terms of the typical prejudices of English-speaking Canada, Mantha was perfect for demonising. A significant factor in Mantha receiving the death penalty was the prosecutor's portrayal of him as amoral and a monster of cultural hybridity. This was part of the now Canada-in-Commonwealth reconstruction of the superiority of relatively unadulterated Anglo-Saxon culture -- of which little actually remained in the region. The hanging of Leo Mantha, one of the last state executions in Canadian history, was a watershed event in the political economy of homophobia in Cold War British Columbia.

In subsequent years, the hysteria lead to such a 'witch hunt' against gay men that scores were entrapped, forced from their employment, forced to leave the region, and were driven into such despair that several committed suicide. The purges in the military and in the government probably went on as late as the mid-nineteen sixties being a significant factor in the initial galvanising of the homophile movement that formed relatively early in the first years of the nineteen sixties.

- a. nature of information source(s): court records, police records, some government records, oral histories, rumours
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: People not of northwestern European backgrounds may have been more vulnerable to being targeted.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: Homosexuality became one of the worst liabilities that an able-bodied individual could have for making a livelihood. But from a standpoint of resistance, a 1943-45 purge saw much of an entire village supported a targeted male couple.

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: Police under pressure to find supposed subversives staked out public sex areas in hopes of getting their quota. Unmarried men in areas of with concentrations of bachelors were targeted driving me out to the suburbs and small towns.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: oral histories, more police records, city records on zoning and land use, scrutiny of newspapers, family court records (this was the only period when lesbianism was criminalized)

co-ordinate 10: resistance to homosexuality as gross indecency

By the mid-nineteen sixties, the laws that criminalized homosexuality were in crisis. 'Gross indecency', the cornerstone of Canadian homosexuality law since the Wilde trials was not well-defined (Sanders 1967: 25). Unresolved legal questions were forcing police to shift the emphasis in arrests to control of sex in open areas of public space (Ingram 1997c). By 1965, Vancouver became an early centre in the international movement to decriminalise homosexuality. The first homophile organisation in Canada, the Association for Social Knowledge, was formed in Vancouver in 1964 (Kinsman 1996: 230 - 235) after a year of police harassment in the city's gay bars. Not coincidentally, this pioneering group had virtually no public involvement from individuals not of primarily northwestern European heritages. While purges were still going on, some of the more liberal churches as well as the legal professional began to talk about state repression of homosexuals and the need for greater tolerance. ASK sponsored parties, social spaces, and public discussions on 'homosexual marriages,' 'lesbians,' 'drag and transvestism,' and 'sadism, masochism, and fetishism'. But there were few discussions of racism and the experiences of sexual minorities not of the select group of northwestern European heritages. By mid-1965, even the right-centrist *Vancouver Sun* was running guest editorials from theologians calling for decriminalisation

An ironic discourse was constructed of supposed liberal and 'modern' whiteness versus homophobic and supposedly backward ethnicity (as in groups formerly colonised). The landmark year for the Canadian homophile and decriminalisation movements was 1967. Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau's federal Liberal Party announced its plans to decriminalise homosexuality (Bill C-150). As the overtly homophobic state apparatus began to be dismantled, at the end of the nineteen sixties, police remained preoccupied with less respectable homosexual males, often those of colour, and those who engaged in public sex. In this period of liberalisation, relatively visible gay and, soon after, lesbian space became visible very quickly.

- a. nature of information source(s): newspapers, magazine articles, newsletters, legal discussions, parliamentary and legislative debates
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: The struggle for decriminalisation of homosexuality was framed in white, anglocentric terms with the disparities of other groups, even in terms of being targeted for homosexuality, almost pointed ignore.
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: By the mid-nineteen sixties, homosexuals could be openly so without being considered criminals -- just deviant and mentally ill.

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: A proto-ghetto had formed before decriminalisation and gay and lesbian feminist placemaking and space-taking (especially about establishments for alcohol consumption) exploded in subsequent years.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: oral histories, city records, census information (yet to be available)

co-ordinate 12: gay liberation, lesbian feminism & the counterculture

In beginning to envision decolonising homoerotic space, the gay liberation movement reproduced new forms of cultural chauvinism and a continued privileging of anglophile Canadian culture. Gay liberation erupted and disappeared in only several North American urban centres in the three years after the 1969 Stonewall Riots. Of those cities, including New York and Los Angeles, Vancouver was the smallest. The Vancouver Gay Liberation Front marked the transition from neocolonial to more nationalistic, but still culturally chauvinistic, means of engagement and associated maps. The renewal of leftist politics in the nineteen seventies to include concerns for sexual (and not just gender politics) was in a region that has been a centre for labour, socialistic, and other oppositional politics within Canada. But the same period saw an awkward framing of disparities around race and ethnicity that was overshadowed by early twentieth century notions of class.

GLF Vancouver imploded in less than two years. Soon Vancouver's Gay Alliance Towards Equality (GATE), became one of the country's most influential and broadly based gay rights groups.^x But GATE was effectively all-white and overwhelmingly male. GATE's preoccupation with the working-class also functioned as a foil for avoidance of recognition of racial and culturally-based disparities in vulnerability to homophobia. GATE's inability to embody 'difference' and to address cultural chauvinism was rooted in a nationalism that continued to privilege the English language (and anglocentricity).

GATE effectively relegated concerns for racial and cultural disparities to French language through the support of Québec nationalism which in the case of British Columbia pushed the problem of difference to outside the province. And it was in Vancouver's emerging gay male ghetto, the West End, more than anywhere else in Canada that an anglocentric gay political discourse, more allied with that in San Francisco, was allowed to go largely unchallenged. But in contrast to Vancouver, there were sufficient numbers of 'people of colour' engaged in gay and lesbian rights struggles, often under the banner of 'anti-imperialism', galvanised by resistance to United States military in Viet Nam, to force a nascent analyses of the confluence of racism and homophobia. In contrast, leftist Canadian nationalism tended to deflect pressures to reflect on its own state's diverse mechanisms for constructing and maintaining racialized inequities by relegating the Viet Nam debacle to a supposedly essential aggressiveness of American capital and its republic. Problematic as were its politics, the formation of GATE represented the genesis of local strategizing for reconstructing public space through confronting institutional homophobia and racism.

The August 1971 national demonstrations in front of the Canadian Parliament thrust gay and lesbian rights into Canadian national consciousness and inspired a smaller demonstration on the steps of Vancouver's courthouse. The older political economy of homophobia was crumbling at a dizzying pace. In the same period, feminist groups began to support lesbian feminism and to confront homophobia. In 1980, GATE dissolved itself noting that 'The lesbian and gay movement in Vancouver has advanced to the point where there are

Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

numerous and **diverse** organisations^{xi} [emphasis this author's]. The dissolution of GATE was two years before the first human rights protections for sexual orientation, in the City of Vancouver (The Body Politic 1982), and three years before the first organizing against AIDS. GATE's achievements were substantial and perhaps more than any single organisation of sexual minorities in Canadian history. It was the first Canadian organisation of sexual minorities to recognise and between to consider confronting racism.

- a. nature of information source(s): newspapers, magazine articles, newsletters, oral histories
- b. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of neocolonialism: The struggle for decriminalisation of homosexuality was framed in white, anglocentric terms but there was solidarity with groups confronting racial and language discrimination (and imperialism).
- c. relevance to institutionalization / challenging of homophobia: The agenda quickly shifted from decriminalisation to equal rights for 'gay' women and men and then to separatist space for women.
- d. relevance to formation of social space in the city: Gay and lesbian feminist placemaking and space-taking intensified with alternatives to establishments for alcohol consumption sought and created.
- e. strategies and sources for further research: oral histories, city records, census information (yet to be available)

Revisiting resistance to racism, homophobia & AIDS in the nineteen eighties & nineties

Just a century ago an effectively segregated logging town with a railroad terminus, Vancouver now has one of the highest median income levels and standards of living in the world. But this has not happened without a great deal of pretension, environmental degradation (Howard and Cernetig 1995) and obfuscation of unresolved questions of aboriginal sovereignty and ownership of natural resources (Ingram 1995). While the levels of overt racism and segregation are relatively low for a large city, cultural contests continue to intensify. In this increasingly assertive multicultural context, ethnic and racial identities continue to fluctuate^{xii} and within networks of sexual minorities there appears to be no letup in cultural chauvinism and racialized fetishizing.

It has only been in the last two decade that the colonial and neocolonial burdens around homoerotic transgendered contact have broken down. Along with demographic shifts, successful challenges to racialised inequities and fuller assertion of a the range of cultural experiences in the metropolitan area, the widespread resistance to the provincial AIDS Quarantine bill in 1987 and the 1990 Gay Games strengthened cross-gender and multicultural alliances. But it is still difficult to see when sexual minority activism was decolonised and when often neocolonial-linked homophobia was successfully challenged in formerly marginalized ethnic groups. As the pace of the formation of homoerotic and transgendered social space accelerated and inequities were more nakedly confronted, new kinds of postcolonial co-ordinates for the city, the queerscape, began to emerge. These can be described in the following ways.

co-ordinate

- a. nature of information source(s):

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space:
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space:
- d. specific location within The Terminal City
- e. relevance to social policy:
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions:
- g. relevance to urban design:
- h. strategies and sources for further research:

co-ordinate 13: the first decade of AIDS

The ravages of AIDS illuminated the persisting disparities between groups of gay men in access to public resources as rooted in difference. Whatever initial gains were made for gay rights and in options for freedom of expression in public space were undermined by the homophobic hysteria around HIV. By 1985, the homosexual body in British Columbia was re-inscribed as diseased. This was just as the older stigmas were being discredited as it was being racialized in new ways. The experience of and vulnerability to this disease varied greatly in terms of race, ethnicity, and language further highlighting the need to deal with racism. As HIV infections in Pacific Canada soared in the mid-nineteen eighties (Brown 1994: 877), there was cultivated government indifference in a highly centralised socialised system of health care delivery.

Privacy around sexual contact, particularly for but not limited to gay men and lesbians, was transformed greatly in the nineteen eighties with the AIDS epidemic with British Columbia, particularly due to the high rates of infection in Vancouver, with the province having some of the highest per capita incidence of HIV infection in Canada (Brown 1995b: 160). The vulnerability of women to HIV infection, with high levels of bisexuality and IV drug use, was well-recognized in Vancouver as early as 1984 (Barnett 1984). In the displacements of the nineteen nineties, everyone has become a sex migrant in a New World: displacing older hierarchies and would-be oligarchies especially those that were anglophile identified - the new level of displace from globalization of capital. The institutions that developed in the nineteen eighties to respond to AIDS often had to answer to and modify their positions in line with federal and provincial health agencies whose heavy legacies of bias go back to earlier epidemics particularly other sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis (Kinsman 1996: 248).

Michael Brown has argued that it was the first wave of the AIDS pandemic in the nineteen eighties that,

"exerted strong **internal** pressures inside the gay community that were hardly felt before. For the first time gay Vancouverites had to form a broad-based coalition to meet difficult material needs quickly." (Brown 1994: 876)

But a contradiction remains. There are unresolved questions of how to construct a community for sexual minorities. In particular, strategies for assuring safe spaces,

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

adequate services, a range of places for contact, and mechanisms of equity of access -- the typical of the decentred queer state^{xiii} in the nineteen nineties -- remain poorly explored.

- a. nature of information source(s): newsletters in various languages, newspaper articles, organization records, administrative and financial documents, oral histories, census data
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: newsletters in various languages, newspaper articles, organization records, oral histories, census data
- c. specific location within The Terminal City: The gay male residents of West End gay male ghetto and Yaletown were the hardest hit.
- d. relevance to social policy: AIDS disrupted the medicalization of the control of homosexuality and fostered formerly colonized groups to assert their needs for and control aspects of health care delivery and safer sex education.
- e. relevance to urban planning decisions: The gay male ghetto declined and there was a shift to the relatively discarded real estate in Yaletown.
- f. relevance to urban design: AIDS contributed to an diversification of the West End (and its emphasis on gay male pleasure and alcohol consumption) and to the gentrification of Yaletown. The needs of PWAs became part of the discourse on socially oriented architecture.
- g. strategies and sources for further research: oral histories, city records, agency records

co-ordinate 14: The formation of AIDS organisations & a temporary 'shadow state'

The first AIDS-related services organisation, AIDS Vancouver, was formed in 1984 and developed a coalition or umbrella model of administration that allowed for affiliations by smaller organisations often oriented to minorities. In the rightist homophobia of the late nineteen eighties, the provincial government was forced to effectively launder modest levels of funding for badly needed services. In this collaborationist bureaucracy, boundaries were increasingly blurred between 'the gay community', nongovernmental service agencies, and the state. There was "tremendous external pressures on the white gay male community to form a sort of shadow state" (Brown 1994: 876). The covert state homophobia became overt in 1987 when the provincial government read into law the *Health Statutes Amendment Act*. This legislation provided the legal basis for forcing into quarantine people suspected of testing positive for HIV. The bill developed the notion of a health hazard deriving from sexually active gay men. There were even politicians in ruling circles privately calling for 'a special ghetto' in Vancouver and the use of a former leper colony for quarantine.

- a. nature of information source(s): newspaper and journal articles, documents, interviews, video programmes
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: In the first decade of AIDS in Vancouver, there was poor service delivery to persons not from European heritages and whose English comprehension was not high. This highlighted the need for programmes oriented to and managed by specific groups.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: The 1987 bill highlighted the absurd level of homophobia (and paranoia) on the provincial government of the time -- hastening its discrediting.

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

- d. specific location within The Terminal City: The battlefields were largely confined to the streets and hospitals of the West End and the rented offices of Yaletown but began to bleed out towards more public places downtown.
- e. relevance to social policy: There was a split between federal and provincial policy-making that led to severe gaps in overall policy and service delivery. After the fiascos of this provincial government in the nineteen eighties, filling in such gaps, in contemporary Canadian policy-making, has become almost paradigmatic.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: No one will ever proposed special ghettos and quarantined areas for some time in the future for fear of being branded a 'fascist' and 'yahoo'.
- g. relevance to urban design: The needs of PWAs for designed private and public space began to be discussed (sometimes cynically).
- h. strategies and sources for further research: interviews with friends of PWAs who have died with an emphasis on caregivers; more interviews and investigations into the provincial cabinet discussion of the West End as a quarantine zone; interviews with the organisers of the unsuccessful resistance to the bill especially around how it prefigured the ACT UP Vancouver tactics of three years later.

co-ordinate 15: Service delivery for 'minority' communities

The AIDS bureaucracy in Vancouver was even less sensitive to racial difference than the federal and provincial governments at the time. As the enormity of the pandemic first became apparent, the initial mode proposed for service delivery was curiously neocolonial. There was some precedent for this nineteenth century Christian missions in hinterland British Columbia which functioned as surrogate states, key services for 'minority' and 'special interest groups' were relegated to these nongovernmental organisations with varying quality of services provided. Yet these semi-political organisations were forced to recognise cultural difference as a matter of life and death as well as for self-validation. For gay men of colour, AIDS generated additional motives for alliances with heterosexuals with similar ethnic experiences. The primacy of whiteness and the exoticisation of the supposed (non-European) 'other' began to be effectively contested in gay male environments. By the late nineteen eighties, AIDS groups for people of east Asian, south Asian, and African heritages had formed -- often with as much if not more support from heterosexuals from respective ethnic communities as from white gay men.

- a. nature of information source(s): newspaper and journal articles, documents, interviews, video programmes
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: In British Columbia, the medicalizing of race and culture, around AIDS, significantly contributed to the movement for sensitivity in and specific health care delivery for specific cultural groups.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: The articulation of culturally specific homosexualities expanded notions of sexual minorities.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: Much of the service delivery for these 'minority' groups was outside of the West End -- effectively expanding the 'queer space' beyond the ghetto. Much of the work of these minority AIDS groups involved discussing

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

safer sex in a range of spaces frequented by those groups -- effectively expanding the presence of those groups in queer space.

- e. relevance to social policy: Racial difference, particularly in terms of socially-transmitted diseases, in health-related service delivery could no longer be ignored or discounted.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: More money was needed to service these now better recognized groups. Needs for space for education and discussion, for these groups, were acknowledged.
- g. relevance to urban design: More space was needed to accommodate these now better recognized groups. Needs for space for education and discussion, for these groups, were acknowledged.
- h. strategies and sources for further research: more interviews, agency documents, statistics around AIDS-related service delivery and related impacts

co-ordinate 16: The brief coalescence of ACT UP Vancouver & queer nationalism

ACT UP Vancouver came to be the harbinger of queer nationalism and a style of gender and culturally specific coalitions. There was more cultural space for acknowledgement of disparities related to race and culture in relationship to erotic difference and homophobia. ACT UP Vancouver was formed in July of 1990 three years after the celebrated New York group emerged and well after there were functioning essays in most large North American cities. Originally, Vancouver's relatively small chapter consisted of a telephone tree of 80 people with consensus decision-making at semi-regular meetings. As well as appropriations of public space, such as 'die-ins', there were demonstrations at the constituency offices of the provincial Minister of Health. ACT UP Vancouver sparked queer nationalism in Vancouver because it was one of the first coalitions of sexual minorities not controlled by white, middle-class gay men. In the words of a co-founder, 'surprisingly, few people coming to meetings are white, middle-class gay men. I think a lot of the disapproval we're getting is coming from that community' (Buttle 1990: A17). Short-lived ACT UP Vancouver became one of the few venues in which to express public rage especially for people with AIDS.

ACT UP Vancouver emerged as much from a century of western Canadian traditions of activism on the left, with strategizing to take public space, as the globalising network of activism to fight AIDS. Much of the local precedents of civil disobedience and other forms of resistance in demanding social services, that laid the basis for ACT UP Vancouver, had emerged in the previous three decades of the modern women's, labour, and environmental movements. Vancouver's short-lived queer nationalist group, **Queer Planet**, recognized globalization nearly a decade later, if only intuitively and with a perspective largely informed by eurocentric notions of Canadian culture.

- a. nature of information source(s): newspaper and journal articles, organization documents, interviews
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: ACT UP Vancouver was one of the most diverse organisations, that had ever emerged to confront homophobia, in the history of the region.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: ACT UP Vancouver was one of the most diverse organisations, that had ever emerged to confront homophobia, in the history of the region.

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

- d. specific location within The Terminal City: High profile public sites mainly in the centre of the city -- with a particular gravitation towards Robson Street the traditional site for public demonstrations in the area.
- e. relevance to social policy: ACT UP confronted the actual disparities behind all of the promises of more funding for AIDS prevention and services. It was highly embarrassing for the provincial government to be denounced in this way and one incident, in particular, signalled general public disgust of their use of PWAs as scapegoats.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: By 1990, the AIDS shadow state relegated to Yaletown had been shown to be inadequate for servicing many groups with AIDS especially in outlying neighbourhoods of the metropolitan region.
- g. relevance to urban design: ACT UP Vancouver showed how the postmodern city is particularly vulnerable to symbolic disruption -- stimulating tighter security around trespassing and appropriation of the media.
- h. strategies and sources for further research: more interviews, agency documents, statistics around AIDS-related service delivery and related impacts

co-ordinate 17: human rights protections

Less than two years after the founding of ACT UP Vancouver, a new social democratic government changed British Columbia's human rights code to include protections from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. After years of broad public pressure, the federal government amended its human rights protections, similarly, in 1996. Continuing problems with ineffectual implementation aside, it was finally possible, legalistically, to examine social inequities in a matrix that acknowledges gender, ethnicity, race, language, and sexuality. However, it was more than five years before effective procedures were in place for the agency to begin to respond to homophobia.

- a. nature of information source(s): laws, legislature debates, cabinet debates, newspaper articles
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: Homophobia was integrated into a broader matrix for dealing with social inequities -- that often were linked to neocolonial relationships.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures / assertion of homoerotic space: Queer visibility was expanded and overall incomes increased through declines in losses in jobs and recognition from homophobia.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: inside and outside of the ghettos
- e. relevance to social policy: It would take another nine years until federal and provincial laws and programmes were made consistent with those protections.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: Homophobia in urban policy and specific planning decisions could be more effectively confronted (though rarely, so far, has this happened).
- g. relevance to urban design: Design decisions to discourage or constrain queer presence in public space could be challenged as homophobic (though rarely, so far, has this happened).
- h. strategies and sources for further research: legislative debates, laws, human rights complaint transcripts and decisions, interviews

co-ordinate 18: treaty negotiations

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

It was also in this period that the provincial government resumed negotiations for treaties. First Nations on the coast have been denied treaties after the government of British Columbia broke with London on its policy of engagement thirteen decades before. The late nineteen eighties saw the beginning of the dismantling of the nineteenth century social and cultural hierarchies that put British Columbia on the map. Unfortunately, few new treaties, if any, have actually been implemented so far.

- a. nature of information source(s): traditional texts, oral histories, historical accounts, newspaper and journal articles, interviews
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: Treaties would de-institutionalize racial inequities on the British Columbia coast.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: Treaties could lead to more self-sufficient and affluent communities -- with individuals better able to make decisions about their sexualities.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: poorer urban areas and the various Indian Reserves in the region
- e. relevance to social policy: Treaties, if they are ever successfully negotiated, would create more of a basis to consider aboriginal sexual minorities as part of community development strategies.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: Indian Reserves would be further integrated into decisions made for surrounding metropolitan areas -- including services for sexual minorities.
- g. relevance to urban design: Improving the environments of many First Nations communities, involving design, could be one of the benefits sought in the treaties.
- h. strategies and sources for further research: interviews

co-ordinate 19: decolonising public space

It was no coincidence that a 'queer' politics, that was self-consciously multicultural and anti-racist, finally emerged. Whites recognised the ascendance of globalisation over neocolonialism, the inevitability of multiculturalism, and an increasingly diverse nature of Pacific Canadian culture. People of non-European heritages developed new strategies for confronting what has been effective, tied to race and culture, in access to and impact on public space. There emerged a popular awareness that Canadian political and cultural nationalism, could be used as foil for latent xenophobia (Ng 1993).

On the West Coast, gay and lesbian aboriginal groups began organizing in 1977. The distinct, 'two-spirited' identity, linked more directly to native spirituality around gender ambiguity and homoeroticism, emerged publicly in the nineteen eighties. Much of the focus of early organizing was on providing peer support to urbanised aboriginal people and assistance around obtaining social services including for substance dependence. While originally marginalised by mainstream aboriginal organisations, two-spirited and First Nation feminist groups became active in broader coalitions around native self-determination. In recent years there has been a growing interest in building links to and presence in often more rural First Nations institutions.

In the early nineteen eighties, lesbians 'of colour' began to articulate themselves. This was years earlier than their gay male counterparts. The Spring 1983 issue of the Canadian feminist journal, *Fireweed*, signalled that racial disparities between groups of sexual

*Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver**

minorities could be talked about on the West Coast. By the late nineteen eighties, the implications of racism, to the public lives of gay men, was finally being more seriously, and sometimes more humorously, discussed.

- a. nature of information source(s): newspaper and journal articles, interviews
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: Subtle racism and more commonly cultural chauvinism is effectively being confronted.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: Notions of homosexuality, related to a wider range of cultures, have been expanded.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: throughout the city
- e. relevance to social policy: Any policy on sexual minorities must consciously recognise a range of heritages and cultures.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: Policies on sexual minorities must recognise that individuals will be from a wide range of heritages and cultures.
- g. relevance to urban design: This movement coincided with increased concerns for disabilities and other limitations. This concerns have warranted design responses.
- h. strategies and sources for further research: interviews

co-ordinate 20: asserting a wider range of sexual cultures

Lingering racism became identified with an unsuccessful historical project of cultural erasure and censorship. Young artists, such as Paul Wong, framed discussions of censorship of homoeroticism within broader, increasingly global, cultural terms. The struggle around the 1984 censoring of his video, 'Confused: Sexual Views', by the Vancouver Art Gallery left an indelible mark on culture on the West Coast (MacKillon 1984, Paul Wong / Richard Fung 1998). In Vancouver's communities of sexual minorities, the public recovery of the experiences of the Native, the Chinese-Canadian, the South Asian and the African-Canadian began to hasten as the older anglophile world views (and regional views) lost credence.

The last decade has seen a growing assertion of the exoticisation of Chinese-Canadian males and the contesting of a largely eurocentric body culture (Koo 1994: 17). The Lotus Root Conference, in March 1996, created new cultural spaces for gay men and lesbians of east Asian heritages. There were the meetings that lead to the conference, the conference itself, and the subsequent formation of new networks, only part of which were public.

- a. nature of information source(s): catalogues, videos, newspaper and journal articles, interviews
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: Cultural chauvinism was confronted in the museums and academies.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: Notions of homosexuality, related to a wider range of cultures, have been expanded.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: primarily the central part of the city
- e. relevance to social policy: Any arts policy must now embody effective strategies for inclusion of both sexual minorities and a wide range of ethnic groups.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: Public art must now represent a wider range of heritages and cultures.
- g. relevance to urban design: Art that does go into public space and institutions must represent a range of cultures and sexualities.

*Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver**

h. strategies and sources for further research: interviews, portfolios

co-ordinate 21: the cocktail & improved care for middle-class PWAs

Vancouver, and Yaletown in particular, had a historic position in the pandemic. In the 1996 XIth AIDS Conference, AIDS emerged clearly as two different diseases: one of gay men, where a partial cure through expensive drugs was foreseeable, and a more lethal affliction for women (Picard 1996 & Jaffer 1996), the poor, the Third World. Vancouver was the relatively affluent location for such a stark message to the developing world -- and as almost an advertisement with the increased penetration of the drug companies into gay lifestyles. Yaletown became the site for the reconstruction of AIDS as a social disease and the spectacle often functioning to obfuscate the widening disparities (Immen 1996). In Yaletown in 1996, AIDS emerged clearly as two different diseases: one of gay men, where a partial cure through expensive drugs was foreseeable, and a more lethal affliction for women, the poor, and the developing world. Vancouver was the relatively affluent location for such a stark message to the developing world -- and as almost an advertisement with the increased penetration of the drug companies into gay lifestyles.

nature of information source(s): newspaper and journal articles, interviews, agency documents

- a. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: Racial and class-based inequities in AIDS service delivery has been further exposed.
- b. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: Gay men are less terrorised with limited decreases in the ravages of the pandemic.
- c. specific location within The Terminal City: Benefits have been especially seen in the West End.
- d. relevance to social policy: Awareness of inequities around AIDS services increased.
- e. relevance to urban planning decisions: There has been highlighting of gaps in delivery for areas associated with particular minority groups.
- f. relevance to urban design: Architectures for PWA must be taken outside of the gay and lesbian enclaves.
- g. strategies and sources for further research: government statistics, agency records, interviews, designs

co-ordinate 22: queer immigration

The mid-nineteen eighties saw a re-emergence of a homosexual migrant subculture of often displaced immigrants. The Canada *Immigration Act* banned homosexuals until 1977 (Girard 1987: 13 - 16) and the wheels of bureaucratic reform moved slowly. As gay urban enclaves emerged in southern European and Third World nations, and there was intensifying displacement, Vancouver, along with Montréal and Toronto, became a major international destination for refugees and other displaced persons. Barriers to same-sex partners were only dismantled in the nineteen nineties. The shift away from family-oriented immigration of better-trained individuals also tended allow the increased immigration of more sexually unattached adults some of whom came to make homes within queer networks and enclaves. But the new sex migrants from other countries have moved into a new world, a Vancouver, where globalised capital, culture, and sexually transmitted

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

diseases, to name a few factors, have transformed the lives of most people, for better or worse, into new worlds.

Vancouver, along with Montréal and Toronto, became a major international destination for political refugees with flight from homophobic prosecution being one basis for sanctuary. Barriers to immigration by same-sex partners were only dismantled in recent years. Another significant cultural development, some white men have finally begun to admit an erotic interest in east or south Asians dismantling yet another taboo (Gawthrop 1999). However, these developments, outside of universities and social service agencies, have rarely translated into more than relatively few and ephemeral social spaces.

- a. nature of information source(s): statistics, interviews, articles, culture
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: Increasing portions of sexual minority users of queer space are from cultures that are not primarily European.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: Immigrant cultures have become less oriented to maintaining heteronormative families.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: throughout with a growing impact on the gay and lesbian enclaves
- e. relevance to social policy: Gay and lesbian immigrants have become an identifiable group with a range of rights.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: Sexual minority immigrants with a range of heritages, languages and religions will makeup a growing portion of lesbian and gay enclaves (and ethnic enclaves).
- g. relevance to urban design: unclear
- h. strategies and sources for further research: interviews, articles, portfolios, designs

co-ordinate 23: queer doings in Chinatown

It was also in this period that Chinatown was imploded, then exploded and has been reconstructed. The following dialogue from 1994 is one example of the destruction of the older spaces and cultural sensibilities of Chinatown.

"Dear Auntie Dot,

I'm a seventeen year old Canadian of Chinese descent and I'm just coming to terms with my sexuality. I've known all along since I was a kid that I was different, especially when my mom and I would have huge fights in the shoe stores about which to buy. Yes, I'm butch, and I'm fashion conscious...my question is, how can I get into the pages of *Elle* and *Vogue* like Jenny?

"Channelled to Accounting"

Dear "Channelled",

...My advice, girl, is go for it...Not only is there modelling, but there's film, theatre, television etc., where we can place ourselves boldly where no other APLs have been accepted before...There's only so many Melrose Places we can stand, and it's about time we got to see two APLs kiss on screen. Auntie Dot"^{xiv}

Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

But images of many south Asian and middle eastern groups, particularly of lesbians, remain difficult to find in Vancouver except in a few regular meetings and annual cultural events.

- a. nature of information source(s): zines, video, interviews, gossip, portfolios
- b. challenge to racism or cultural chauvinism / assertion of formerly marginalized cultural space: These are precisely the sexual minority cultural spaces that have been constrained when it has existed at all. Asserting these spaces expanding recognition of a diversity of sexual minority experience and needs for new social spaces.
- c. challenge to homophobia or heteronormative pressures/ assertion of homoerotic space: Assertion of more sexual cultures provides a stronger matrix for supporting homosexuality and challenging homophobia.
- d. specific location within The Terminal City: both in the lesbian and gay enclaves and in ethnic suburbs
- e. relevance to social policy: Members of sexual minorities will be increasingly trying to assert their cultural experiences in conjunction with their sexualities.
- f. relevance to urban planning decisions: More cultural spaces where sexual minorities are safe will be necessary across the city.
- g. relevance to urban design: A diversified set of cultural spaces, across the city, warrant being designed.
- h. strategies and sources for further research: interviews

Sex migrants: The homoeroticised city as indefinite displacements

So far in this discussion, culture in terms of more formal artistic production has been de-emphasized for a number of reasons. The arts on the West Coast, while often thriving, have been marginalized with output more linked to scenes in Toronto, London, New York, and now even to some Asian centres. Art production specifically placed in this region, as a strategy in decolonisation, is a relatively new development over the last two decades. Certainly there are tremendous potentials for describing decolonisation and formation of more homoerotic and transgendered social space. But culture, as early queer theory has already recognized, is situated and defies treatments that neglect its context. In addition, the media and venues in Pacific Canada of what is commonly called queer cultural production have been diverse and almost consciously, as a kind of strategy, marginal. The area was first of all of centre for homoerotic poetry, as a northern satellite of The Beats, and remains a centre within North America, especially in comparison to its population, for production of pros by both lesbians and gay men.

More important than the literary production, the last two decades have seen a strong association between queer cultural production and video -- as The Terminal City has been dubbed 'Hollywood North' as the second largest centre, after Los Angeles, for film and video production in North America. The following is an only slightly modified text from a 1995 review of an AIDS educational video. How can we query such cultural material as sources for more contemporary maps, ones reflecting dynamic contemporary processes? I propose, as my concluding guideline for expanded research methods, an emphasis on identifying designs for living: the trajectory of desires, goals, locations and modes of movement. In this way, the sex migrant becomes a bit like a *flâneur* (the 'a' here needs the

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

upright < symbol). with no fixed address and no permanent home to go back to. Part homeless and part global nomad, this experience of flux and instability reflects much of the labour history of the region and the nature of the pressures for intellectual labour under globalisation. But how can we trace the implications for urban space? First, is the now dated review of the work.

*

One of the most intriguing illustrations of today's flux that was once, not so long ago, called the (Canadian) West Coast scene is Paul Wong's latest video, **Blending Milk & Water: Sex In The New World**^{xv}. Wong worked within and subverts the genre of the AIDS educational video and maps a new world of displacement, loss, and compelling, though fractured, optimism. Over the last fifteen years, the AIDS "educational" video has become one of the most important means for defining queer culture and for asserting a range of experiences of erotic and communal marginality. Put into dry, already somewhat stale, postmodern jargon, the **Blending Milk & Water** illustrates how the AIDS pandemic and the responses to it have destabilised the hegemonies, the hierarchies and boundaries, of lust, love, and death. Perhaps contemporary video can say it all better or at least in a way that is compelling and with authentic emotion. **Blending Milk & Water** is more than a good introduction to the new worlds on the West Coast and is the stuff for new Canadian mythology. The video says more about the emotional, social, and cultural fragmentation than much of contemporary Canadian culture since the coining of that term, one that seems increasingly cliché, the postmodern condition.

With the third decade of the pandemic soon upon us, the impacts of AIDS have intersected those of other fundamental social and political economic change, such as demographic migrations and formation of local cultures. This might be generalised as the shift from neocolonial, still clinging to the supremacy of British and other Western culture, to what, today, is barely conceived of in such vague terms as postcolonial narratives. Education has different functions for different social groups and obstacles to the flow of information and conditions for better environments for safe and consensual sexual practices. And the target groups, both the labels of the more stable identities and the affinities related to culture and place, are shifting. In this not-very-brave new world, nearly everyone who is sexually active experiences some kind of loss and terror around sexual transmitted diseases that is both internalises and that forces various migrations involving physical space and social affinities.

Wong's montage of interviews^{xvi} focuses on the West Coast and on Chinese communities in North America. In this new geopolitics, Vancouver is near the centre of East and West. But to slot **Blending Milk & Water** into a mostly-gay-Chinese-and-AIDS category would be to ghettoise it and miss most of its broader implications. There are more than token non-Chinese and a few heterosexuals. Most North Americans, whether they have been born in Hong Kong or Halifax, have and are experiencing the loss of older forms of community and a rootlessness that forces many to larger metropolitan areas such as Vancouver and Toronto. And most of us are leading lives as sexual beings where the advent of AIDS has displaced our erotic and emotional worlds in ways that in many ways make us migrants. The perilous of sex has made many of us into new classes of social migrants, moving within and between communities, in ways that make the distances between Vancouver and, for example, Hong Kong not seem so far^{xvii}. The underlying

*Sex migrants:****The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

narrative of **Blending Milk & Water** has far broader implications than to relegate it to a sort of discrete, queer Chinatown. AIDS has broken down the old gay ghettos and homophobic responses to it have cordoned off erotic life in new ways. In short, Wong began with an AIDS education video centred in Vancouver but leaves us with an important new map of the emerging geographies of spatial, cultural, social migration and displacement on the west coast of Canada. In this New World, communality is more difficult to find than physical isolation modified by digital links. Yet life remains almost terminally optimistic. **Blending Milk & Water** delves into the means by which people survive, travel, attempt to transform their lives, and to remake where they live. **Blending Milk & Water** illustrates the Pacific Rim future that is increasingly bound to be one part *Blade Runner*, one part information superhighway, and one part increasingly unstable political economies. In this New World societies such as those of Pacific Canada may well be increasingly fragmented almost like twentieth century China before Mao. The current affluence of the West Coast of Canada is occurring, paradoxically, along with the continued destruction of its forests and decline of its industrial base - masked by convenient infusion of foreign investment, provides a testing ground for new forms of survival, culture, and, even sometimes, community. In this way, **Blending Milk & Water** is a series of excerpts from a latter-day Canadian saga where the end is far from being settled.

Blending Milk & Water is not just about being of one of numerous divergent Chinese and related overseas heritages or loving someone who is. The video is not just about having to worry about HIV and having safer sex or with finding comfort and communality in trying best to cope with these ongoing losses. In this period of increasing social instability, of migrations and displacements, the personal terrors and losses of living through an epidemic collide with arid theory. The West Coast is a Canadian region hit especially hard by AIDS from gay ghettos to Indian Reserves. This transformation, or at least the initial displacements, of the roles and experiences of sexuality and erotic relationships have taken place in a period of relatively subtle demographic shifts but ones that are major in terms of culture, class, and broader economic relationships.

*

How can we query culture about decolonisation? The following are some partial strategies.

- ❖ Some aspects of video material can be treated as oral history and even interviews.
- ❖ Artists can also be interviewed directly.
- ❖ Many works involve spatial information and can be recorded and reworked as maps.
- ❖ Many works make indications of designs that can be explored.
- ❖ The physical and political economic contexts of art production continue to provide links between individual and collective experiences and social options for the future.

Conclusions:**The (new) Terminal City built with postcolonial maps & homoerotic designs**

With all of the queries and sources, what new conclusions emerge about the coalescence of decolonisation, resistance to racism, homophobia and cultural chauvinism, AIDS activism, globalisation and the expansion and diversification of queer social space? The following are some tentative conclusions.

*Sex migrants:**The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver*

- ❖ Decolonisation, resistance to racism, homophobia and cultural chauvinism, AIDS activism, globalisation and the expansion and diversification of queer social space embody numerous complex and sometimes contradictory processes (and tactics). Research on these topics warrant more specificity -- typically with a spatial dimension.
- ❖ While these processes occurred relatively concurrently, the specific impacts of each set of tensions, in relationship to specific parts of urban space, are uneven and warrant description with better indicators. Notions such as 'more' queer space, or even 'diversification' beg more specific concepts.
- ❖ The landscapes of The Terminal City, with specific forms of racial and sexuality-related difference, resistance to institutionalized inequities and confounding globalization, are quite specific and sometimes quite different than adjacent cities, such as Seattle. Urban environmental histories provide yet one more indication of the specificity of particular strategies to resistance, community building, space-taking and placemaking.
- ❖ All social and cultural processes, including decolonisation, have underlying spatial agendas -- ones that are reshaping each city and metropolitan area.

What links these historical sketches is a rough correlation between construction of communal maps of what today are sometimes called 'queer space' and greater agency and collective design-processes in remaking such refuges for social and erotic engagement. Homoerotic life in Pacific Canada, particularly as long it is still called 'British Columbia', remains a long way from being truly decolonised and postcolonial. Even with a large portion of the gay male population made up of individuals with non-European heritages, the culture of homoerotic public space, and how it marks bodies and the body politic, remains overwhelmingly white, anglocentric, and overshadowed by the neocolonial. Without more sophisticated forms of homosocial cartography and the sharing and reconstruction of maps reflecting a fuller range of 'queer' experiences, few new maps can be constructed that will lead to effective collective plans. The prerequisites for an activist 'queerscape architecture' (Ingram et al. 1997) are only partially in place. In fact, such a barely articulated project should expand on and 'uncollapse' knowledge of processes of intercultural contact, including sex, and racial, cultural and gender privileging of these cultural transactions. One of the first initiatives that can emerge from such a postcolonial (though this usage of 'postcolonial' is optimistic) perspective for sexual minorities is to provide the basis to highlight both historical and contemporary disparities in how supposedly queer space is used and enjoyed.

The internal pressures to redesign public space with recognition of a wide range of cultural experiences of eroticism, in relatively safe and affluent cities such as Vancouver, continue to intensify (Bombardier 1995). This situation is similar to a host of other relatively tolerant cities in the world where sexual minorities comprise an influential or potentially significant electoral block. But the continued structural weakness of civic 'dialogue' (Debord 1994: 127), around cultural and erotic privileging in urban design and the needs for social space of sexual minorities, limit options for creative planning and design responses. Multiple maps, inferring emerging designs and agendas, may better define places for which to intervene but they do not constitute plans.

Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as
decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

Funding for this research and essay was provided by several generous the Canada Council and the Chicago-based Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts on landscape architecture and related theory. Thanks to many friends and colleagues, most notably Don Hann, Ron Dutton, Michael Brown, Paul Wong, and Cornelia Wyngaarden, for sharing information and their perspectives.

References

- Anderson, Kay S. 1991. *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial discourse in Canada 1875 - 1980*. Montréal: McGill-Queen's Universities Press.
- Baudrillard, Jean. 1983. The precision of simulacra. In *Simulations*. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (trans.). New York: Semiotext(e).
- Barnett, Robin. 1984. AIDS problem includes women. *Angles* (March 1984): 18 - 19
- Berlant, Lauren and Elizabeth Freeman. 1993. Queer nationality. In *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer politics and social theory*. Michael Warner (ed.). Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. pp. 193 - 229.
- Bhabha, Homi K. 1994. How newness enters the world: Postmodern space, postcolonial times and the trials of cultural translation. in *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge. pp. 212 - 235.
- Bleys, Rudi C. 1995. *The Geography of Perversion: Male-to-Male Sexual Behaviour Outside the West and the Ethnographic Imagination 1750 - 1918*. New York: New York University Press. pp. 160 - 185.
- Boddy, Trevor. 1994. Plastic Lion's Gate: A short history of the post modern in Vancouver architecture. in *Vancouver: Representing the postmodern city*. Paul Delany (ed.). Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press. pp. 25 - 49.
- Body Politic, The. 1982. Vancouver's pre-election surprise. *The Body Politic* (Toronto) 89: 7.
- Bombardier, Sylvain, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, Michael Carroll, Trolley Bus, Michael Hoeschen, Jeff Gibson, Michael Howell, Gordon Brent Ingram, Bryan Langlands, Ian Pringle, Kathleen Morrissey. 1995. queers in space vancouver manifesto. *UnderCurrents: Critical environmental studies* (Toronto) 7: 56 - 57.
- British Colonist, The. 1866a. For trial. *The British Colonist* (Victoria) 15(50) (February 8, 1866): 3.
- British Colonist, The. 1866b. Regina vs. Mat Rosid and Andrew Patrico, Sodomy. *The Daily Colonist* 15 (67) February 28, 1866): 3.
- Brown, Michael. 1994. The work of city politics: citizenship through employment in the local response to AIDS. *Environment and Planning A Society and Space* 26: 873 - 894.
- Brown, Michael. 1995a. Sex, scale and the 'new urban politics' HIV-prevention strategies from Yaletown, Vancouver. in: *Mapping Desire: Geographies of sexualities*. David Bell & Gill Valentine (eds.). New York: Routledge. pp. 245 - 263.
- Brown, Michael. 1995b. Ironies of distance: An ongoing critique of the geographies of AIDS. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13: 159 - 183.
- Michael Brown. 1997. The cultural saliency of radical democracy: Moments from the AIDS Quilt. *Ecumene* 4(1): 27 - 45.
- Buttle, Jeff. 1990. AIDS protestors won't stop confrontations, protests. *Vancouver Sun* (13 September 1990): A17.

Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

- Chapman, Terry L. 1983. 'An Oscar Wilde type': The abominable crime of buggery in Western Canada, 1890 - 1920. *Criminal Justice History* 4: 97 - 118.
- Chapman, Terry L. 1986. Male homosexuality: Legal restraints and social attitudes in Western Canada, 1890 - 1920. *Law and Justice in a New Land: Essays in Western Canadian legal history*. Louis Knafla (ed.). Toronto: Carswell. pp. 277 - 292.
- Debord, Guy. 1994. *The Society of the Spectacle*. (Donald Nicholson-Smith trans.). New York: Zone Books.
- Dua, Enakshi. 1992. Racism or gender? Understanding oppression of south Asian-Canadian women. *Canadian Women Studies* 13(1): 6 - 10
- Ford, Clellan. 1941. *Smoke From Their Fires: The Life of a Kwakiutl Chief*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.
- Gawthrop, Daniel. 1999. Hail, the conquering Asian. *Vancouver Sun* (October 2, 1999) E1-2.
- Girard, Philip. 1987. From subversion to liberation: Homosexuals and the Immigration Act, 1952 - 1977. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 2: 1 - 27.
- Harris, Cole. 1997. *The Resettlement of British Columbia*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. 2000. *Empire*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Ho, Rosa. 1994. Site-seeing Vancouver, positioning self. in *Vancouver: Representing the postmodern city*. Paul Delany (ed.). Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press. pp. 60 - 80.
- Howard, Ross and Miro Cernetig. 1995. City planning: 2010: A Vancouver odyssey. *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto) April 15, 1995: D1, D5.
- Immen, Wallace. 1996. AIDS hope tempered with caution. *Globe and Mail* (July 4, 1996): A6.
- Ingram, Gordon Brent. 1995. Landscapes of (un)lawful chaos: Conflicts around temperate rain forest and biological diversity in Pacific Canada. *RECIEL: Review of European Community & International Environmental Law* (London) 4(3): 242 - 249.
- Ingram, Gordon Brent. 1997a. sex migrants: Paul Wong's video geographies of erotic and cultural displacement in Pacific Canada. *FUSE* (Toronto) 20(1): 17 - 26.
- Ingram, Gordon Brent 1997b. Marginality and the landscapes of erotic alien(n)ations. in *Queers in Space: Communities / Public Places / Sites of Resistance*. Ingram, G. B., A.-M. Bouthillette and Y. Retter (eds.). Seattle: Bay Press. pp. 27 - 52.
- Ingram, G. B. 1997c. 'Open' space as strategic queer sites. in *Queers in Space: Communities / Public Places / Sites of Resistance*. pp. 95 - 125.
- Ingram, Gordon Brent, Yolanda Retter, and Anne-Marie Bouthillette. 1997. Strategies for (re)constructing queer communities. In *Queers in Space: Communities / Public Places / Sites of Resistance*. pp. 447 - 457.
- Jaffer, Fatima. 1996. Which world? Whose hope? *Kinesis* (September 1996): 3, 15.
- Jameson, Frederick. 1984. Postmodernism, or the cultural logic of late capitalism. *New Left Review* 146 (July-August 1984): 53 - 92.
- Jameson, Frederick. 1989. Marxism and postmodernism. *New Left Review* 176 (July / August 1989): 44.
- Johnston, J. M. 1979. *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh challenge to Canada's colour bar*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Sex migrants:***The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver***

- Kinsman, Gary. 1996. *The Regulation of Desire: Homo and Hetero Sexualities*. Montréal: Black Rose Books.
- Koo, Henry. 1994. Caucasian and Asian men together in Lotusland. *Xtra West* (March 25, 1994) 16: 17.
- MacKillon, Michael. 1984. Gallery politics kill sexuality. *Angles* (Vancouver) (April 1984): 26.
- McLeod, Donald W. 1996. *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada: A Selected Annotated Chronology, 1964 - 1975*. Toronto: Homewood Books & ECW Press.
- Warren Magnusson. 1992. Decentered the state, or looking for politics. in William K. Carroll (ed). *Organizing Dissent: Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice*. Toronto: Garamond. pp. 69 - 80.
- Mort, Frank and Lynda Nead. 1999. Introduction. *New Formations* 37: 5 - 10.
- Newman, Peter C. 1993. The master builder. *Vancouver Magazine* (September 1993): 35, 36, 38, 40, 42.
- Ng, Roxana. 1993. Sexism, racism, and Canadian Nationalism. Himani Bannerji (ed.). *Returning the Gaze, Essays on Racism, Feminism and Politics*. Toronto: Sister Vision. pp. 183 - 184.
- Owens, C. (1992). Outlaws: Gay men in feminism. in S. Bryson, B. Kruger, L. Tillman, J. Weinstock (eds.) *Beyond Recognition: Representation, power, and culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 218 - 235.
- Perry, Adele. 1995. "Oh I'm so sick of the faces of men": Gender imbalances, race, sexuality and sociality in nineteenth century British Columbia. *BC Studies* 105 - 106 (Spring / Summer 1995): 27 - 44.
- Perry, Adele. 1997. "Fair ones of a purer cast": White women and colonialism in nineteenth century British Columbia. *Feminist Studies* 23(3): 501 - 524.
- Picard, André. 1996. Women unseen victims of AIDS. *Globe and Mail* (July 11, 1996): A1.
- Sanders, Douglas E. 1967. Sentencing of homosexual offenders. *Criminal Law Quarterly* 10 (November 1967): 25 - 29.
- Smith, Miriam. 1998. Social movements and equality seeking: The case of gay liberation in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XXXI(2): 285 - 309.
- Warner, Michael. 1993. Introduction. In *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer politics and social theory*. Michael Warner (ed.). Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. pp. vii - xxxi.
- Young, Iris Marion. 1990. The ideal of community and the politics of difference. In *Feminism / Postmodernism*. Linda J. Nicholson (ed.). New York: Routledge. pp. 300 - 323.
- Young, Robert. 1991. Neocolonial times. *The Oxford Literary Review* 13 (1 - 2): 2 - 3.
- Wong, Paul interviewed by Richard Fung. 1998. Misfits together: Paul Wong on art, community and Vancouver in the 1970s and '80s. *FUSE* 21(3): 41 - 46.

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

NOTES

Unless otherwise noted, all material that is not published is on file at the British Columbia Archives in Victoria and the codes relate to that catalogue system. Some names are obscured in compliance with research permits as related to protection of privacy.

ⁱ In the recent journal issue on sexual geographies of London, editors note that "[S]pace is conceived here as a constitutive part of the cultural and social formation of metropolitan modernity." (Mort and Nead 1999: pp. 5 - 6).

ⁱⁱ GR 0419 Volume 197, File 31; Volumes 878-884, Microfilm reel #B00395 (British Columbia Attorney General, 1857-1966).

ⁱⁱⁱ Perry (1997: 516) notes that "In 1870, women made up 27 percent of the adult, non-aboriginal population. Approximately thirty years later, they still were only 29 percent of the adult non-indigenous population."

^{iv} Charge Book Provincial Gaols in Vancouver. November 1908 - December 1911. Gr 0602 V.3 (C1816). pp. 131 - 132.

^v Crown brief - compiled 5th May 1909. on file BCA - BC Attorney General documents GR 419, V. 134, file 50 (1909)).

^{vi} BC Attorney General documents GR 419, V. 197, file 31 (1915).

^{vii} *ibid.*

^{viii} *ibid.*, point 16.

^{ix} This was notably in the brief 1954 - 1969 period that was the only time in Canadian history when lesbianism was specifically criminalized.

^x This author was a member of GATE in 1977 and 1978, to a gay men's study group on race and class in the same period, and to a number of gay men's, AIDS education, and 'queer' political projects in the late nineteen eighties and nineties.

^{xi} GATE. June 24, 1980. PRESS RELEASE: The dissolution of GATE Vancouver and Gay Tide. on file Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Toronto, (GATE 82-005/10 (Vancouver)). 2 pp.

^{xii} Joan W. Scott. 1992. Multiculturalism and the politics of identity. *October* 61: 12 - 19.

^{xiii} Magnusson (1992: 71) argues that "[t]here is not doubt that 'the individual' is the sovereign identity of our age: the ideological source of both the state and the market."

^{xiv} Acuwomen. 1994. APL (Asian Pacific Lesbians) ASK: Dear Auntie Dot...*Triangles*

Sex migrants:

The coalescence of AIDS, queer & multicultural activism as decolonising public space in globalising Vancouver

('private' Asian queer women's zine - Vancouver) 1: 6 - 7. on file BC Gay and Lesbian Archives, Vancouver.

^{xv.} *Blending Milk & Water: Sex in The New World.*

28 minutes, stereo, 1996

Languages: Cantonese, English, and Mandarin

Executive producer and Director: Paul Wong

Original soundtrack by Frederick and Jeet K

Producers: Ming Chaing, Davina Chan, Nancy Li, Henry Koo

A Project of ASIA, Vancouver

Distribution: Video Out International Distribution, Vancouver

fax: 604.876.1185 email:video@portal.bc.ca

^{xvi.} This review is based on the first screening of *Blending Milk & Water: Sex In The New World* at the XIth World AIDS Conference in July, 1996 in Vancouver.

^{xvii.} "Contrary to the racist discourse that some ethnically Chinese virus has infected the urban form of Vancouver, it is rather that both cities are subject to different stages of the same forces. The architectural and urban form of Hong Kong had not antecedent in China...the only difference in the False Creek rebuilding is that with land owners and many of the first purchasers being from Hong Kong, there was more direct knowledge of the developments in urban form there." (Boddy 1994: 34).