cogitatio

URBAN PLANNING

Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance

Volume 8

Issue 2

2023

Edited by Alison L. Bain and Julie A. Podmore

Open Access Journal

ISSN: 2183-7635

Urban Planning, 2023, Volume 8, Issue 2
Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance

Published by Cogitatio Press
Rua Fialho de Almeida 14, 2º Esq.,
1070–129 Lisbon
Portugal

Design by Typografia®
http://www.typografia.pt/en/

Cover image: © KseniaBazarova from iStock

Academic Editors
Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University)
Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University)

Available online at: www.cogitatiopress.com/urbanplanning

This issue is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY). Articles may be reproduced provided that credit is given to the original and *Urban Planning* is acknowledged as the original venue of publication.

Table of Contents

Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance
Alison L. Bain and Julie A. Podmore 145–149

Homonegative Labyrinth of Representational Distortions: Planning Im/Possibilities for Higher Education LGBTQ+ Students in Mumbai
Chan Arun-Pina 150–163

Queering Housing Policy: Questioning Urban Planning Assumptions in Namibian Cities
Guillermo Delgado, Vanesa Castán Broto, and Takudzwa Mukesi 164–176

Radical Solidarities in Punk and Queer Refusals of Safety and Inclusion Narratives in Planning
Sarah Gelbard 177–186

Pinkwashing Policies or Insider Activism? Allyship in the LGBTIQ+ Governance–Activism Nexus
Karine Duplan 187–196

Planning in the "LGBTQ Capital": Choreographing Transgender In and Out of Policy
Matt C. Smith, Paul Gilchrist, and Jason Lim 197–207

Redistributing More Than the LGBTQ2S Acronym? Planning Beyond Recognition and Rainbows on Vancouver's Periphery
Julie A. Podmore and Alison L. Bain 208–222

At the Intersection of Equity and Innovation: Trans Inclusion in the City of Vancouver
Tiffany Muller Myrdahl 223–234

Community Support Organizations in Gay Neighborhoods: Assessing Engagement During the Covid-19 Pandemic
Daniel Baldwin Hess and Alex Bitterman 235–248

Territorial Inequality Driven by Tourism: A Queer Mapping of Urban Space in Acapulco, Mexico
William J. Payne 249–261

50 Years of Pride: Queer Spatial Joy as Radical Planning Praxis
Marisa Turesky and Jonathan Jae-an Crisman 262–276

Table of Contents

Re-Orienting Planning Practice
Petra L. Doan 277–280

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 145–149
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.7012

Editorial

Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance

Alison L. Bain [1,]* and Julie A. Podmore [2,3]

[1] Department of Human Geography and Spatial Planning, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
[2] Department of Geosciences, John Abbott College, Canada
[3] Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment, Concordia University, Canada

* Corresponding author (a.l.bain@uu.nl)

Submitted: 15 April 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract

To queer urban planning and municipal governance requires explicit civic engagement with sexual and gender minority inclusions, representations and needs in urban plans and policies across departmental and committee silos. This collection questions the hetero-cis-normative assumptions of urban planning and examines the integration of LGBTQ+ issues in municipal governance at the interface of community activism, bureaucratic procedures, and political intervention. The editorial summarizes the contributions to this thematic issue within a tripartite thematic framework: 1) counter-hegemonic reactions to hetero-cis-normativities; 2) queering plans and policies; and 3) governance coalitions and LGBTQ+ activisms.

Keywords

LGBTQ+; municipal governance; queer; urban planning

Issue

This editorial is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This editorial is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

As a technical and relational mode of state intervention into property relations, social conditions, and majority-minority interactions, urban planning is informed by national and provincial/state legislative frameworks but also by local political structures, histories, geographies, and moments of tension and collaboration (Cordes, 2019). Urban planners in their various roles as technocrats, mediators, advocates, coordinators, negotiators, and visionaries, translate knowledge into action through plans and policies (Barry et al., 2018). Nevertheless, how planning knowledge is produced, shared, and valued, makes everyday geographies possible for some people and forecloses them for others. This thematic issue focuses on one such "hard-to-reach" (Beebeejaun, 2012), invisibilized and excluded citizenry within urban planning, the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer) population. It addresses fundamental municipal governance dynamics about sexual and gender minority exclusions, representations, needs in urban plans and policies, and attempts at more explicit practices of LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Despite over a decade of research, LGBTQ+ urban planning issues have yet to be "mainstreamed" and evenly integrated into the everyday work of municipal governance (Cooper & Monro, 2003; Murray, 2015). The scholarly planning literature has only begun to address how planning ideology and practices reinforce hetero-cis-normativies (Castán Broto, 2021; Doan, 2011, 2015; Forsyth, 2001; Frisch, 2002). Planning scholarship on LGBTQ+ populations has attended to the regulation of sexual premises and gay bodies through bar licencing and health clinics (Brown & Knopp, 2016; Prior, 2008), the hetero-normativites embedded in municipal bylaws and housing policies (Hubbard, 2013; Oswin, 2019), but most research has focused on queer neighborhood formation with recent critical attention to neoliberal necropolitical displacements from urban spaces (Bell & Binnie, 2004; Gorman-Murray & Waitt, 2009; Haritaworn et al., 2014; Irazábal & Huerta, 2016). The decline of the "gayborhood" (Ghaziani, 2014) has stimulated urban

planning inventories of the LGBTQ+ "cultural infrastructures" of large global cities such as London (Campkin, 2023) and the creation of "best practice" manuals such as Planning Out's (2019) *LGBT+ Placemaking Toolkit*. Recognizing that municipalities need to respond to national equalities legislation and international human rights declarations, inter-municipal agencies such as the UNESCO-backed Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (2019) are also beginning to provide civic leaders with toolkits for LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Building on this scholarly legacy and growing practitioner interest, the current collection further questions the hetero-cis-normative assumptions of urban planning while also addressing the place of LGBTQ+ inclusion within municipal governance and the role of community activism at city hall. It takes up Doan's (2015) call for a greater understanding and knowledge of LGBTQ+ citizens and the need for inclusive queer urban spaces that are joyful, equitable, and something more than sites of festivalized rainbow washing. Across three sections and via differently sized and regionally embedded urban case studies (from Mumbai to Geneva, Windhoek and Walvis Bay to Los Angeles, Brighton to Acapulco, and Ottawa to Vancouver), this thematic issue accentuates the lived disjunctures of municipal governance for sexual and gender non-normative citizens. Discussion trains on LGBTQ+ inclusion in housing and community service provision, cultural and tourism policy, participatory and radical planning practices, advisory boards and strategies.

2. Counter-Hegemonic Reactions to Hetero-Cis-Normativities

Policy, law, and municipal planning are important local forms of governmentality through which hetero-cis-normativities continue to be enforced, but they also provide the legislative frameworks through which LGBTQ+ rights can be addressed (Cooper & Monro, 2003). Urban planning, however, needs to further disrupt long-held assumptions about what makes a "good" and "just" city beyond ordering land uses and services so as to reproduce two-parent, heterosexual families within a gender binary that fortifies divisions between public/private, formal/informal, institutional/commercial, propertied/tenant (Oswin, 2019). The three contributions in this section all work to counter this gender binary and accompanying normativities by questioning assumptions about student housing, informal settlements, and the radical potential of punk music culture.

Residential space makes up a significant component of land use in cities, rendering affordable housing a key queer urban planning and governance concern. For queer residents, private rental market housing does not necessarily ensure privacy and safety. Arun-Pina's (2023) depiction of the "representational distortions" involved in housing higher education students in Mumbai, India invites urban planners to confront their regulatory role in reinforcing the "cis-heteronormative familification" of the urban housing market that reproduces a sense of perpetual disbelonging for LGBTQ+ students. The heteronormative assumptions permeating housing policies is also the focus of Delgado et al.'s (2023) Namibian case study of housing injustices in rapidly urbanizing and economically unequal Windhoek and Walvis Bay. The ordering gaze of planners pushes LGBTIQ+ people and their communities into informal settlements that, even without services and security, afford relatively "safer" and more accommodating housing options that support alternate family structures.

In addition to housing, cultural policy can also impact upon the vitality of marginalized communities and the interstitial spaces of sociality upon which they depend. Gelbard's (2023) article on the solidarities of punk and queer refusal of displacement by creative placemaking practices in Ottawa, Canada asks urban planners to address participatory planning barriers and embrace the counter-narratives of underrepresented communities when developing cultural policies and promoting safety and inclusion. In the second section of this thematic issue, critical attention is directed to urban plans and policies that target LGBTQ+ inclusion within municipal governance.

3. Queering Plans and Policies

Within municipal governance, it is diversity committees, social planners, and cultural and recreational departments that provide key arenas for the integration of sexual and gender minorities. Progressive municipalities increasingly adopt anti-discrimination ordinances, signal inclusion through Pride proclamations and support for festivals, offer sensitivity training for municipalities (Bain & Podmore, 2021a), create LGBTQ2S advisory committees (Murray, 2015), or adapt municipal facilities to meet diverse gender needs (Patel, 2017). The process of LGBTQ+ inclusion through municipal governance, therefore, involves community leaders, enfranchised insider-activists and allied politicians and planners (Browne & Bakshi, 2016). The contributors in this section examine how networks of LGBTQ+ knowledge production circulate in and out of city hall through the actions and outcomes of individuals and groups striving for change and the conflicts, impediments, and contradictions resulting from these transformative projects.

Through a case study of Geneva, Switzerland, Duplan (2023) examines the governance–activism nexus that brings public officials charged with implementing legislated political equality agendas into fluid allyship coalitions with LGBTQ+ activists. She asserts that while the specter of pinkwashing looms large, this nexus increases the visibility of queer lives and improves access to public spaces and municipal services. Smith et al. (2023) use the concepts of "choreographing" and "non-decision making" in urban design and impact assessment to analyze how the needs of trans people and communities are articulated in municipal policy and practice in Brighton

& Hove, England's "LGBTQ capital." To address questions of justice in municipal governance, Podmore and Bain (2023) provide a case-study analysis of the tensions between contemporary planning's civic actions of LGBTQ2S recognition and its outcomes of redistribution for three adjacent peripheral municipalities in Canada's Vancouver city-region where an aestheticized rainbowwashing politics sidelines more transformative social inclusions. Moving from the periphery to Vancouver's city-centre, where the equity needs of transgender, gender diverse, and Two Spirit peoples (TGD2S) are prioritized, Muller Myrdahl (2023) examines the civic adoption of a 2016 trans-supporting policy strategy. The article questions what constitutes innovation with respect to social inclusion policies. Taken together, these four articles interrogate how LGBTQ+ policy inclusions circulate through city hall and identify the key actors and municipal arenas that bring forward or halt such policies across different national contexts. Beyond advisory committees and insider-activist advice on strategies and policies, planners have much more to learn from LGBTQ+ communities in terms of organizing and providing services, developing radical planning praxis, and understanding the impacts of policy on individuals and communities.

4. Governance Coalitions and LGBTQ+ Activisms

In the later half of the twentieth century, LGBTQ+ activists in the large metropolitan centres of liberal democracies have explicitly worked to resist municipal logics of erasure and discipline, and in the process, built community resilience through the establishment of grassroots organizations, services and support agencies and movements for human rights. Rather than simply incorporating LGBTQ+ activist coalitions into municipal governance, the articles in this section suggest that planners and civic leaders can seek transformative inspiration by way of such historical examples. There is, however, the perpetual danger of generalizing from specific and disconnected place-based examples that emerge from different political opportunity structures, resource landscapes and inter-organizational relations (Bain & Podmore, 2021b). Moreover, the hand-over of LGBTQ+ service provision to the state and its ensuing bureaucratization within urban neoliberalism reinforces activist professionalization (Browne & Bakshi, 2016) and reproduces the homo-cis-normative inequities across the acronym that compound exclusions for queer others (Haritaworn et al., 2014). Neoliberal municipal regimes of consumptive respectability that figure LGBTQ+ inclusion as central to their diversity brand, can also disempower activist coalitions creating tensions, disconnections and misrecognitions (Bain & Podmore, 2021a).

In their overview of American LGBTQ+ community service organizations (CSOs), Hess and Bitterman (2023) offer a taxonomy of community needs and analyze LGBTQ+ services provision. They document how, during the Covid-19 pandemic, CSOs adapted their historic services to meet the needs of vulnerable populations when governments could not keep pace, and, in so doing, re-established themselves as anchors for gayborhood communities. In contrast, the gay tourism destination of Acapulco, Mexico, long-exploited as a site of gay pleasure, exhibits, Payne (2023) argues, significant CSO gaps that exacerbate "territorial inequalities" between queer tourists and local residents. Despite the presence of an evolving LGBTTTI movement, queer locals continue to experience a loss of social rights, a deepening of socioeconomic segregation, and an ensuing lack of political voice within the urban governance frameworks of planning and policy.

Nevertheless, the potential exists to politically leverage queer pleasure as an expression of queer joy. Analyzing the 50-year history of the Los Angeles Pride parade, Turesky and Crisman (2023) provide a historical example of intersectional and insurgent planning wherein heterogeneous queer people organized themeselves and claimed agency. The event has created emphemeral spaces for queer bodies to resist policing, collectively express queer joy, and, in the process, advocate for more just cities.

5. Conclusions

The queer(ing) of urban planning and municipal governance is only partially underway in some "progressive" cities. It remains a highly localized, selective, and ad hoc process that is all too dependent on the political will of civic leaders, the knowledge of urban planners, and the resources available to local LGBTQ+ activists and residents. The most common approaches to queering municipalities involve practices of queer infrastructure preservation and rainbowization to symbolize civic recognition of gender and sexual diversity, but these are only preliminary transformative initiatives.

Planners need to continue to think "beyond queer space" (Doan, 2015, p. 257) since most LGBTQ+ populations are more diverse, dispersed, and much less visible than the more enfranchised gay male populations who have built communities in the gayborhoods of large urban centres. Despite such central-city queer infrastructure (both material and virtual), social isolation, with its accompanying experiences of depression, addiction, and suicide, remain prevalent and should be of concern to urban planners along with complex and cross-cutting issues of racism, ageism, surveillance, policing, and housing precarity. It also remains important to push beyond the discursive analysis of planning's hetero-cis-normative assumptions about how LGBTQ+ citizens live, work, travel, and socialize across metropolitan areas (Doan, 2011), and view the various realms of municipal governance as functionally intertwined rather than siloed. Without an intersectional lens, however, on the challenges facing specific groups of LGBTQ+ populations across municipal governance—implicating housing, policing, income, poverty reduction or health ser-

vice delivery—any synergistic benefits will only continue to accrue for those within the acronym who are already most visible and empowered (Irazábal & Huerta, 2016).

Acknowledgments

The guest editors would like to thank all the authors in this thematic issue for their contributions. A special thanks to Petra Doan for creating a space for this field and her continued commitment to queering urban planning and municipal governance.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Arun-Pina, C. (2023). Homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions: Planning im/possibilities for higher education LGBTQ+ students in Mumbai. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 150–163.

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2021a). Linguistic ambivalence amidst suburban diversity: LGBTQ2S municipal "social inclusions" on Vancouver's periphery. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *39*(7), 1644–1672.

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2021b). Relocating queer: Comparing suburban LGBTQ2S activisms on Vancouver's periphery. *Urban Studies*, *58*(7), 1500–1519.

Barry, J., Horst, M., Inch, A., Legacy, C., Rishi, S., Rivero, J. J., Taufen, A., Zanotto, J. M., & Zitcer, A. (2018). Unsettling planning theory. *Planning Theory*, *17*(3), 418–438.

Beebeejaun, Y. (2012). Including the excluded? Changing the understandings of ethnicity in contemporary English planning. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *13*(4), 529–548.

Bell, D., & Binnie, J. (2004). Authenticating queer space: Citizenship, urbanism and governance. *Urban Studies*, *41*(9), 1807–1820.

Brown, M., & Knopp, L. (2016). Sex, drink, and state anxieties: Governance through the gay bar. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *17*(3), 335–358.

Browne, K., & Bakshi, L. (2016). *Ordinary in Brighton? LGBT, activisms and the city*. Routledge.

Campkin, B. (2023). *Queer premises: LGBTQ+ venues in London since the 1980s*. Bloomsbury.

Castán Broto, V. (2021). Queering participatory planning. *Environment and Urbanization*, *33*(2), 310–329.

Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. (2019). *LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness: Toolkit for inclusive municipalities in Canada and beyond*. Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

Cooper, D., & Monro, S. (2003). Governing from the margins: Queering the state of local government? *Contemporary Politics*, *9*(3), 229–255.

Cordes, V. F. (2019). Planning interventions: Urban bias, social reform and the city. *Planning Practice & Research*, *34*(1), 84–102.

Delgado, G., Castán Broto, V., & Mukesi, T. (2023). Queering housing policy: Questioning urban planning assumptions in Namibian cities. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 164–176.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2011). *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice*. Ashgate.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces*. Routledge.

Duplan, K. (2023). Pinkwashing policies or insider activism? Allyship in the LGBTIQ+ governance–activism nexus. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 187–196.

Forsyth, A. (2001). Sexuality and space: Nonconformist populations and planning practice. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *15*(3), 339–358.

Frisch, M. (2002). Planning as a heterosexist project. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *21*(3), 254–266.

Gelbard, S. (2023). Radical solidarities in punk and queer refusals of safety and inclusion narratives in planning. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 177–186.

Ghaziani, A. (2014). *There goes the gayborhood?* Princeton University Press.

Gorman-Murray, A., & Waitt, G. (2009). Queer-friendly neighbourhoods: Interrogating social cohesion across sexual difference in two Australian neighbourhoods. *Environment and Planning A*, *41*(12), 2855–2873.

Haritaworn, J., Kuntsman, A., & Posocco, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Queer necropolitics*. Routledge.

Hess, D. B., & Bitterman, A. (2023). Community support organizations in gay neighborhoods: Assessing engagement during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 235–248.

Hubbard, P. (2013). Kissing is not a universal right: Sexuality, law and the scales of citizenship. *Geoforum*, *49*, 224–232.

Irazábal, C., & Huerta, C. (2016). Intersectionality and planning at the margins: LGBTQ youth of color in New York. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *23*(5), 714–732.

Muller Myrdahl, T. (2023). At the intersection of equity and innovation: Trans inclusion in the city of Vancouver. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 223–234.

Murray, C. (2015). Queering Vancouver: The work of the LGBTQ Civic Advisory Committee, 2009–14. *BC Studies*, *188*, 71–96.

Oswin, N. (2019). *Global city futures: Desire and development in Singapore*. University of Georgia Press.

Patel, N. (2017). Violent cistems: Trans experiences of bathroom space. *Agenda*, *31*(1), 51–63.

Payne, W. J. (2023). Territorial inequality driven by tourism: A queer mapping of urban space in Acapulco, Mexico. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 249–261.

Planning Out. (2019). *LGBT+ placemaking toolkit*. Built Environment Communications Group. https://becg.com/lgbt-placemaking-toolkit

Podmore, J. A., & Bain, A. L. (2023). Redistributing more than the LGBTQ2S acronym? Planning beyond recognition and rainbows on Vancouver's periphery. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 208–222.

Prior, J. (2008). Planning for sex in the city: Urban governance, planning and the placement of sex industry premises in inner Sydney. *Australian Geographer*, *39*(3), 339–352.

Smith, M. C., Gilchrist, P., & Lim, J. (2023). Planning in the "LGBTQ capital": Choreographing transgender in and out of policy. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 197–207.

Turesky, M., & Crisman, J. J. (2023). 50 years of Pride: Queer spatial joy as radical planning praxis. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 262–276.

About the Authors

Alison L. Bain is professor of the Geographies of Inclusive Cities in the Department of Geography and Spatial Planning at Utrecht University. Her research examines the spatial, infrastructural, and creative affordances of cities and their peripheries for cultural workers and LGBTQ+ populations. She is a North American managing editor for the *Urban Studies Journal*, the author of *Creative Margins: Cultural Production in Canadian Suburbs*, and co-editor of *Urbanization in a Global Context* and *The Cultural Infrastructure of Cities*.

Julie A. Podmore is a professor in the Department of Geosciences at John Abbott College and an affiliate assistant professor in the Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment at Concordia University in Montreal. Her earlier research focused on the historical geographies of Montreal's lesbian communities. Recent projects examine LGBTQ+ neighbourhood formation, suburbanisms, activisms, municipal governance, and planning and policy inclusions in Canadian cities and suburbs. She is co-editor of *Lesbian Feminisms: Essays Opposing Global Heteropatriarchies* and *The Cultural Infrastructure of Cities*.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 150–163
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6311

Article

Homonegative Labyrinth of Representational Distortions: Planning Im/Possibilities for Higher Education LGBTQ+ Students in Mumbai

Chan Arun-Pina

Department of Geography, York University, Canada; chan09p@yorku.ca

Submitted: 22 October 2022 | Accepted: 8 February 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract

This article accentuates higher education LGBTQ+ (HE-LGBTQ+) students' lived experiences of off-campus housing in the Deonar Campus District of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India. It is observed that key urban stakeholders such as brokers, landowners, neighborhood resident families, and hostel wardens informed by cis-heteronormative moralities work in tandem in shaping the student housing market. The article argues, first, that these powerful urban stakeholders collectively contribute to two mutually feeding phenomena—"studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification"—which in turn effectuate a homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions of the HE-LGBTQ+ student-image. Secondly, when compounded with an increasingly unaffordable urban housing market in the finance capital of India, it results in relatively acute experiences of "spatial dysphoria" for HE-LGBTQ+ students that cannot be comprehended within the neat binary of socio-spatial un/belonging. Methodologically, this article takes a trans-disciplinary approach to analyze the spatial stories of disbelonging of 13 HE-LGBTQ+ students that follow three stages: (a) securing a home, (b) making a home, and (c) leaving home. The article concludes that what is needed to enable a sense of belonging for HE-LGBTQ+ students in India is not necessarily "LGBTQ+ inclusive" or, for that matter, "exclusively LGBTQ+" housing; rather, it is for planning practices to take on queer and trans approaches that undo cis-heteronormativity in urban housing and homes.

Keywords

cis-heteronormative familification; homonegativity; India; LGBTQ+; spatial dysphoria; student housing; studentphobia

Issue

This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

This article engages with two key questions posited within cultural geography: "what representations do" as "activities that enable, sustain, interrupt, consolidate or otherwise (re)make forms or ways of life" (Anderson, 2019, p. 1120), and "who speaks" as posed by "feminist, postcolonial and anti-racist movements" (Anderson, 2019, pp. 1121, 1125). The question of representation has arguably been central to advocacy in inclusive and participatory planning initiatives invested in working towards socio-spatial justice. Critical questions have been raised in the last two decades by urban scholars around representation, including, the question of underrepresentation of women (Listerborn, 2007), attempts to move away from token representations towards true partnerships with adolescents (Rhodes & Kovach, 2002), and cultural misrepresentation of participatory engagement of marginalized groups (Kamols et al., 2021) as well as of the aboriginal land itself (Natcher, 2001). Transformative planning processes are, however, yet to take queer and trans/non-binary approaches necessary to engage with, what this article recognizes as, distorted representations and its implications for socio-spatial sense of distorted belonging—spatial dysphoria—in particular, for higher education LGBTQ+ (HE-LGBTQ+) students in Mumbai, one of the most expensive cities to live in India.

In extension to gender dysphoria, this article offers the concept of "spatial dysphoria" experienced when queer ways of living are forced to fi(gh)t cis-heteronormatively informed domestic configurations

and administrations. In attending to HE-LGBTQ+ students' housing experiences of confronting the social stigma against queer ways of living in the postcolonial context of India, this article primarily draws on distortion as a theoretical concept from the social justice framework of liberation psychology. Moving away from the traditional cognitive psychological models that place the onus of minority distress on the individual going through it, the social justice framework of psychology critically reorients us to hold the nation and the society accountable for its systemic patterns of "distorted thoughts and beliefs that may lead to unfair behaviors as stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination" (David & Derthick, 2018, p. 3). More specifically in the context of a homonegative society, scholars have critically distinguished traditional models of psychology that frame internalized homophobia among LGBTQ+ individuals and its critique which observes such an approach as "a new pathway to pathologizing LGBT identity" by portraying internalized homophobia not "as a relational phenomenon but as an individual pathology" (Russell & Bohan, 2006, p. 346). In studying the psychological phenomenon of "sexual prejudice," Herek (2016) has also argued that there is a complicit mirroring of infrequent and negative portrayals of homosexuality (and, in extension, LGBTQ+ individuals).

This article then observes that key urban stakeholders such as brokers, landowners, neighborhood resident-families, and hostel wardens informed by cis-heteronormative moral sensibilities work in tandem in shaping the on- and off-campus student housing market in the Deonar campus of Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) University, Mumbai, India. Collectively, these powerful urban stakeholders perpetrate a "psychology of oppression" (David & Derthick, 2018) by contributing to what I argue are two mutually feeding phenomena—"studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification"—which in turn effectuate a homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions of the HE-LGBTQ+ student-image. When compounded with an increasingly unaffordable urban housing market in Mumbai, it results in relatively acute experiences of spatial dysphoria for HE-LGBTQ+ students that cannot be comprehended within the neat binary of socio-spatial un/belonging.

This article begins with a critical review of the studentification literature, a term first coined in 2002 by socio-economic geographer Darren P. Smith to study the negative changes neighborhoods (closer to university campuses) underwent due to an influx of student population: in its current form it is wanting a sexualities framework, is trans-negative, and altogether overlooks HE-LGBTQ+ students' perspectives. The article then introduces the emerging student-image within the national-urban-institutional research context and notes the trans-disciplinary methodological approach to the research. Next, three facets of the student-image are provided as they emerge from analyzing HE-LGBTQ+ student encounters with various in/formal social actors at the scale of the neighborhood home: the student-client, the promiscuous non-adult, and the ascetic. This is illustrated through "spatial stories" (de Certeau, 1984) of disbelonging accentuating the voices of 13 HE-LGBTQ+ at TISS University. These spatial stories, respectively, follow the three stages of (a) securing a home, or more colloquially known among students as "house-hunting"; (b) making a home; and (c) leaving home. Often contingent of cis-heteronormative actors, HE-LGBTQ+ students must navigate a homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions intensified by the two mutually feeding phenomena I mentioned before—"studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification"—which work together to "restore" residential landscapes to a homogenized "spatial purity and temporal order…and its carefully organized family activities" (Bain et al., 2018, p. 11). Finally, the article concludes by considering how sub/urban planning in a context where the unaffordable housing market gets routinely compounded with "studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification" might enable a sense of belonging for HE-LGBTQ+ students in India.

2. Queering the Student-Image Within the Urban Scholarship on Studentification

In the last two decades, a strand of urban geographical literature emerged—predominantly in the wealthy Anglo-American-Australian context—that attends to the rapidly changing university-city relationship, also referred to as the town-and-gown relationship. The scholarly focus on the changing town-and-gown relationship is committed to studying the historical "social rift" (Croog, 2016) and "inherent tensions" (Addie et al., 2015) between university students and the local neighborhood residents. "Studentification," "youthification," and "gentrification" have gained currency as concomitant concepts embedded in the contested territorialization of the town-and-gown relationship. Some scholars have attended to students' perceptions (Yu et al., 2018) within the binary relationship of university and the city, and rarely taken a non-dualistic approach by studying the "campus edge" (Croog, 2016).

Ehlenz (2019, p. 286) notes that often the urban scholarship on HE institutions is "one-sided, representing the university's perspective" to the neglect of non-student neighborhood residents. In contrast, the studentification scholarship has attended to the community side of the town-and-gown relationship, however, like the geographies of HE scholarship, it too neglects sexual and gender non-normative university student experiences. Both works of literature also reaffirm the dichotomous nature of the university-city boundary. Scholarly research employing the studentification concept often negatively portrays a homogenized student-image as the new young and transient "apprentice gentrifier" (Hubbard, 2012) at once responsible for neighborhood decline and change, social segregation,

and the displacement of longer-term residents (e.g., Haghighi, 2018; Kinton et al., 2018; Lager & van Hoven, 2019; Revington, 2021; Revington et al., 2020; Smith & Holt, 2007; Smith & Hubbard, 2014). Rapidly globalizing studentification, gentrification, and town-and-gown works of literature that pay critical attention to socio-spatial inequality and injustice in and around academic campuses across intersecting axes of class, race, age, and more rarely even gender (though trans-negative)—but not sexuality. There has been a normative absence of a queer framework for studying the town-and-gown relationship wherein the city, neighborhood residents, and university students are all as if de-sexualized. Although more recently, Revington (2021) has focused on different "lifestyles" among single students, post-student couples, and non-student families, it should be noted that LGBTQ+ identities are not "lifestyles," and that sexuality is central to defining "a home outside of heteronormative coupledom" (Wilkinson, 2014).

Central to the town-and-gown, studentification, and gentrification scholarships is, unarguably, the question of belonging. The homogenized student-image, representative of students' bodily behaviors and spatial occupations, is routinely perceived in not-in-my-backyard terms by long-term residents as that which does not belong in "their" neighborhood. Yet, to the dismay of residents, the transient outsider student body seems to have been gaining the power to displace them symbolically and materially from their original place of belonging. The concern of "territoriality," whether in the context of changing university-city relationship or in the formation of student ghettos and exclusive student enclaves, is inherently connected to the geographies of belonging.

In the 2009 themed issue of *Environment and Planning A* titled "Geographies of Belonging" (Mee & Wright, 2009), the editors highlight two key strands of scholarship in which belonging has emerged as a core concept: geographies of home and geographies of citizenship. Located between the spatial scales of the home and the nation, neighborhoods function as "sub-national territorial spaces" (Cameron, 2006, as cited in Mee, 2009, p. 843) that possess many resources for intensifying "chrononormative" (Freeman, 2010) performances of "domestic" belonging. Therefore, transient students may experience a temporary sense of disbelonging away from their parental home and presumably on their way to marital home (representative of a spatiotemporal conflation with adulthood). But not all students will marry, nor—even if desired—can marry. In the national context of India which is yet to legalize same-sex relationships, LGBTQ+ students live with an acute and perpetual sense of socio-spatial disbelonging across the spatial scales (national, neighborhood, and home) where they are routinely infantilized for "belonging outside" (Probyn, 1996) the marital domesticity. Away from home and their respective parental family units, "free-floating" university students are, due to their transient nature, governed by local communities firmly grounded in cis-heteronormative family values. Landowners and neighborhood residents as key community stakeholders in the provision of local student accommodation assume authority as the moral gatekeepers of students' bodily and spatial relations and occupations outside of a heteronormative marital home. Elsewhere, I discuss how "reproductive heteronormativity also informs advertising slogans" such as "home away from home" (Podmore et al., 2022, p. 303) by uncritically "attaching a sense of home [as] a positive value in itself" (Boccagni & Miranda Nieto, 2022, p. 2) to student housing (Figure 1). To ensure that all students stay on the "straight time" pathway, not only the student-image but also transient homes that students occupy during their education witness "representational distortion."

This irremissible proximation of the spatiality and the spatial conduct of "floating homes" (Arun-Pina, 2021) with a heteronormative marital home as a datum, results in continued experiences of spatial dysphoria for HE-LGBTQ+ students. Marital homes, conflated with adulthood, are not an option for LGBTQ+ students in India, even for those who might desire them. Thus, representational distortion has implications for symbolic as well as material disbelonging for HE-LGBTQ+ students in India. This article now turns to the national-urban-institutional context of the analysis.

3. Research Context and Approach

The aspirational global-nationalist dimensions of contemporary India produce a peculiar brand of neoliberal urbanism that works to fundamentally define who and what belongs to "real India" (Banerjea, 2015; Shah, 2015). Such a rebranding of the image is not limited to "an ideal city" alone, but also translates onto the image of "an ideal citizen." In the case of HE-LGBT+ students, what has emerged is an extremist student-image in its duality—"the anti-national terrorist" or "the future global citizen-leader"—as an empty signifier. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aspires to a global expansion of a knowledge-based economy casting the ideal student-image as "a truly global citizen" (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020, p. 6). Such aspirations are also reflected institutionally in the university's vision statement of "moulding responsible and socially conscious citizens and citizen-leaders" (TISS, 2018, p. v). Concomitantly, there has been a hike in the mass criminalization of faculty members, student leaders, and student activists for participating in virtual and/or physical peaceful protests under the anti-terror Unlawful Activities Prevention Act law, tagging them as "anti-national terrorists" ("Those booked by police under draconian laws," 2020). Students have massively protested NEP 2020 citing, among other things, privatization and centralization of education. Utilizing Twitter hashtags such as #rejectNEP2020 and #NEPQuitIndia (PinjraTod, 2021), student groups were committed to a both virtual and physical presence beyond classrooms

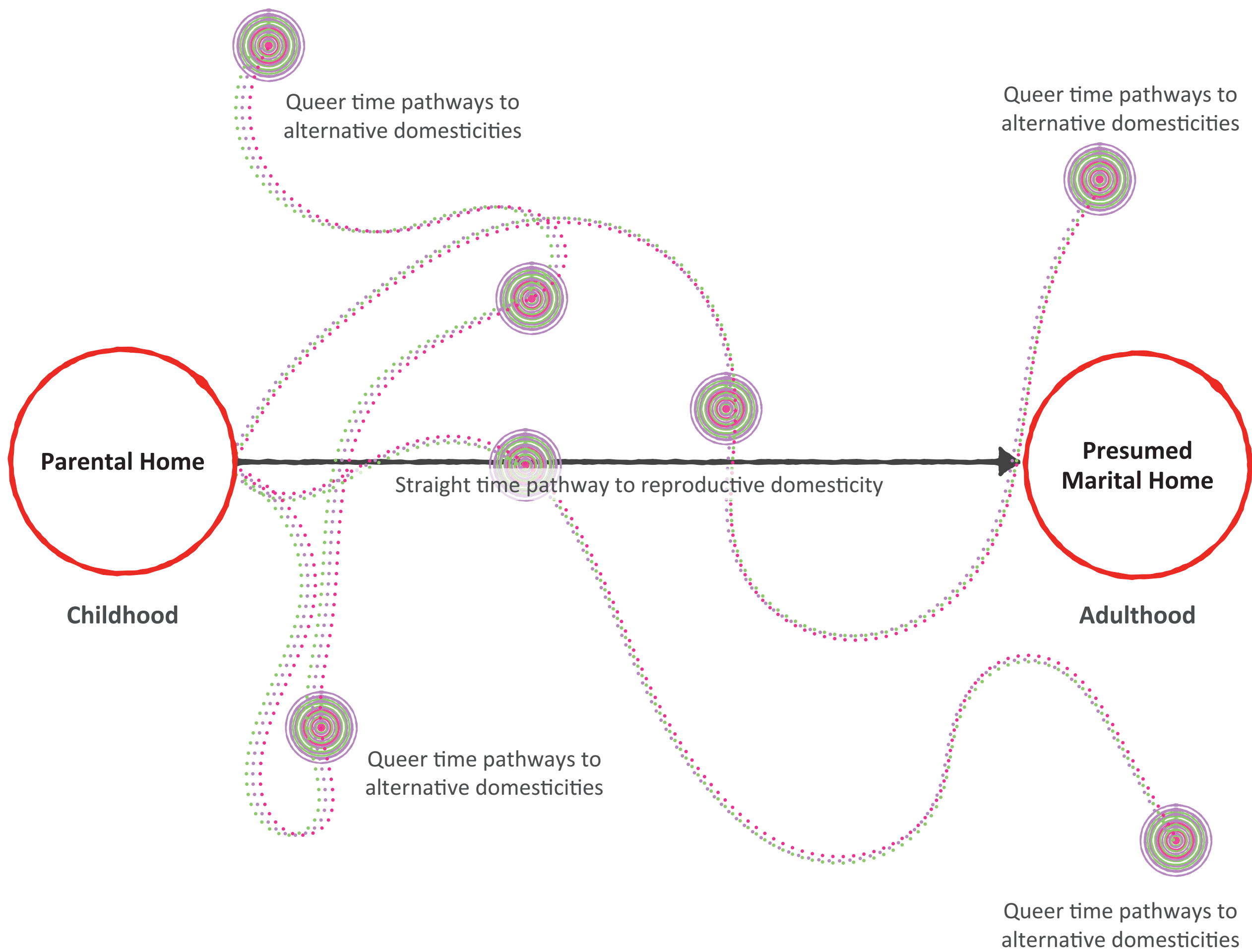


Figure 1. "Home away from home."

to extend "an act of pedagogy" (Flock, 2021, p. 532) to wider non-academic communities. Despite embodying the primary objective of NEP 2020 of producing "truly global citizen[s]" through these activities, several students were arrested for protesting in both virtual and physical public spaces. A new student-image emerged—that of an anti-national terrorist. Following the charge sheet filed against 50+ persons, mostly students during the Queer Azadi March, the campus became a panic ground for students (Hafeez & Jain, 2020). In the wake of ongoing government violence on university campuses in India, where student-leaders are forcibly evicted, found committing suicide, and have gone missing from their hostel rooms in university housing, students have realized a need for autonomy in student housing. However, for LGBTQ+ students, living off-campus presents its own set of challenges for navigating the homonegative labyrinth. As one Mumbai-based urbanist, urban manager, and academic argued: "The traditional idea of housing lies embedded in community and neighbourhood; but students are running away from them because of the constant surveillance and gaze, being perceived by them as 'an alien,' and being denied privacy" (PS, interview, September 7, 2022). Elsewhere, I provide an in-depth discussion on how privacy is exclusively validated for married couples through National Census constitution of a "congested household" in India (Arun-Pina, 2021).

3.1. Deonar Campus, TISS University, Mumbai

TISS was established in 1936 in Bombay, India (then under colonial rule). Offering one of the first professional education and training programs in social work, post-independence the university moved the campus to its current location to Deonar, Chembur in 1954, aiming to integrate work with the community. Chembur, a north-eastern suburb of Mumbai, is known as the gateway to Navi Mumbai, a planned city and an active business hub that is part of the extended Mumbai Metropolitan Region (Figure 2). The Deonar campus district reflects the city's deep socio-economic inequality, surrounded by various gated bungalow societies for families of the government service sector (such as Teachers' Colony) and industrial workers (BSNL telecom factory), Bollywood celebrities' farmhouse bungalows, as well as high-density living in slums and chawls.

Between both its old and new campuses, TISS has six gender-bifurcated hostels and one gender-neutral hostel (GNH) wing housed within the PhD women's hostel. Hostel rooms may be double-, triple-, or multi-seater

Figure 2. Contextualizing Deonar Campus, TISS. Map of Deonar Campus district, TISS (top left); Regional Plan for Mumbai Metropolitan Region (top right); axonometric drawing of Deonar Campus, TISS, by the author (bottom). Sources: Google Maps, annotated by the author (top left); Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (2021; top right).

rooms. With an ongoing shortage of hostel capacity, TISS is currently able to house only one-fourth of its total number of students. As a result, the university has additionally rented two buildings as "add-on off-campus hostels" for "men" students. However, students easily pay double the annual rent for off-campus living. Despite little financial mobility, senior doctoral candidates responsibly move out to make room for their junior colleagues who cannot afford to live off-campus.

3.2. Trans-Methodological Approach

I first met and interviewed some student-members of the student-led Queer Collective at TISS University in 2017 when I was an in-resident research assistant for the education and housing-focused teams for An Exploratory Study of Discriminations Based on Non-Normative Genders and Sexualities project housed at TISS University. Three years later, as part of my doctoral research project (forthcoming), 13 HE-LGBTQ+ student participants were recruited through the trusted queer network of the Queer Collective. All student participants were enrolled in the graduate program at TISS at some point between 2010–2020 and had lived for anywhere between one and ten years in different on- and off-campus living arrangements. The dissertation focuses on the decadal period of 2010–2020 when India witnessed rapid socio-legal mobility in queer politics, student politics, and protests, expansion of HE and knowledge hubs, as well as the introduction of national education and urban housing policies. All students variously self-identify as queer and trans/gender non-conforming individuals from a diverse mix of class, caste, religion, regional, and ethnic identity backgrounds. Between November 2020 to April 2021, three-hour long, in-depth semi-structured interviews split into two to three sessions with each student-participant were conducted virtually via Zoom due to Covid-19 related travel

restrictions. Semi-structured interviews had thematically guided prompts for student participants to share their "spatial stories" on the changing university-city relationship, student life, and housing biography. For this article, I primarily focus on the second theme (what does it mean for them to be a student), and the third (their off-campus housing biography). While HE-LGBTQ+ students' voices are accentuated in this research, the voices of urban stakeholders such as housing brokers, and landowners, as well as urban professionals such as urban planners are also taken into consideration.

An anthropologist and architect, Stender (2017) advocates for collaborative research approaches that transgress disciplinary boundaries. Although I take on this research work "solo," in effect it is a transdisciplinary collaboration within myself being professionally trained as an architect, a visual artist, and a geographer. My multiple trans-location—disciplinary and gendered—critically informs the approach of this article invested in reworking normative disciplinary boundaries by putting "pictures, diagrams, and other graphic materials [in communication with] the text" (Stender, 2017, pp. 34–35). I first draft architectural technical drawings of the case study site in AutoCAD 2020 which is then digitally overlaid with graphical narratives of students' spatial stories. Simultaneously, transcripts were coded and thematically analyzed using qualitative data analysis software NVivo 11. In addition to the pre-identified themes from analytical diagrammatic drawing as part of the fieldnote-taking practice, new themes emerged from open coding during analysis primarily foregrounding the accepted, the contested, and the persecuted student-image.

Distilled from these three themes are three facets of a student-image as they emerge from LGBTQ+ students' encounters with various in/formal social actors at the scale of the neighborhood home: the student-client, the promiscuous non-adult, and the ascetic. What implications do these representational typologies have on LGBTQ+ students' access to and experiences of housing? Often contingent of cis-heteronormative actors, HE-LGBTQ+ students must navigate a homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions intensified by two mutually feeding phenomena—"studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification"—which work together to "restore" residential landscapes to a homogenized "spatial purity and temporal order…and its carefully organized family activities" (Bain et al., 2018, p. 11). Having established the context and methodologies, the article now turns to the empirical section.

4. Three Facets of the Student-Image: In/Formal Social Encounters

4.1. Student-Client: Securing Home

When asked how they found a place to stay when they first arrived in the city, most students responded that they relied on the vetted list of housing brokers, landowners, paying guest owners, and other students looking for flatmates that were posted on the university website. Some of these vetted brokers would also set up a desk on campus to better reach out to student-clients. After securing an initial landing place in the city, students would connect with other LGBTQ+ peers whose had first-hand experience with brokers, landowners, and the neighborhood they could rely on. Often students stayed in the same homes their LGBTQ+ peers had lived in and had pre-established a rapport with landowners and neighbors to avoid navigating unpleasant and distressing, if not outright threatening experiences of house-hunting. Housing-hunting as a non-cis-heteronormative student—whether solo, with a friend, or a partner—routinely involves confronting cis-hetero-gazing, layered screening, and profiling of students' bodies and behaviors, patronizing and discrediting students' sense of adult*ing* outside the chrononormative straight time pathway (Freeman, 2010; Halberstam, 2005; Jaffe, 2018), discrimination, and refusal of housing, prohibiting visitors and their sense of building a community. In a sense then, outgoing LGBTQ+ students informally paved secure and trusted housing pathways for incoming LGBTQ+ students. In what follows, I attend to forms that one set of urban actors—housing brokers—function as the first steppingstone on the housing pathways of LGBTQ+ student-clients.

Housing brokers cater to the housing needs of their student-clients as well as the tenant preferences of their landowner clients. As mediators interested in their double brokerage for both their clients, their role as negotiators is (neo)liberally market-oriented. They have developed a keen sense for swiftly profiling their student-clients. They diligently foreground characteristics that present the student to the potential landowner as "responsible" and "docile," while tactfully pushing the undesired aspects of their identity out of the landowners' sight. While brokers are usually unbothered by students' gender and sexual identification, the expression and embodiment of their gender and sexual identity are intricately scrutinized. This entire process is often very quick because the demand for real estate is high, supply is limited, and the market is hot.

The moral upper hand remains with landowners, for example, the client-with-the-property. Yet, with the inside knowledge of the real estate market and their network of tenant clients, housing brokers enjoy local power in establishing successful lease agreements. For LGBTQ+ students, the possibility of securing a home in neighborhoods where cis-heteronormativity is routinely compounded with the unaffordable housing market could appear bleak. They noted, however, that their housing needs were often better understood when the network of the housing broker had been gradually queered. I illustrate challenges to queering of housing networks through excerpts from LGBTQ+ students' recollections of their house-hunting experiences in the residential neighborhoods proximal to the TISS Deonar campus.

PK, a queer woman and a former postgraduate student at TISS, could not stay on campus where hostels prohibited students from cooking in their rooms due to her dietary restrictions. She had no option but to rent an off-campus apartment, where she was the first student to live because the landowners preferred to rent only to families. Ultimately, according to PK, she was able to move in because the broker persuaded landowners to consider PK based on her upper-class/caste identity. Recollecting her experience of house-hunting, PK says:

> My [upper class/caste] privilege has protected me. While I may have [been asked] personal questions on expressing my gender, it has never really affected my [securing] housing. Negotiations were always about the rent and [the prohibition on] getting boys in the house. (PK, interview, September 13, 2020)

In the context of deep social stratification, most landowners prefer, as far as possible, to lend their properties to tenants belonging to the same class, caste, region, and religion as them. For instance, so long as PK is a member of an upper-class/caste community, her landowners were unconcerned with her status as a single woman student with "queer" gender expression. They did however prefer to presume PK was straight by reinforcing cis-heteronormative rules in prohibiting entry to "boys in the house." While talking to me, PK uncomfortably admits having never encountered difficulty or discrimination in securing housing. Arguably, however, what she experienced as an upper-caste queer woman may be understood as "heterosexism, invisibility, and double consciousness" (Lewin, 2018; Wallace, 2002). PK enjoys the caste privilege which then protects her queer selfhood. The oppressively normative network of the student housing market around her creates and intensifies the distance between the two selves of PKs—the self with privilege and the self that needs protection. The question then truly is, who secured the housing? Arguably, it is the upper caste PK who got housing whereas the queer PK got the benefit. PK, like many other LGBTQ+ students, does not experience a neat un/belonging in urban housing. Rather, she experiences a sense of distorted belonging, a form of spatial dysphoria.

AS, another queer woman student, recollects that while finding herself a studio apartment she was left feeling so exhausted by the "screening at so many levels" by brokers that she felt like altogether giving up on moving. She recalls:

> [F]irst, you get screened whether you are married or not. Then, you are screened based on your gender. Brokers tell you that houses are either rented to only boys or girls which for my trans/genderqueer friends was insufferable screening of their bodies. Brokers kept telling me, "[S]ingle woman? *Bohot mushkil hai, nahi ho payega*" [it is impossible to find a place for a single woman]. The few places that did match my needs were simply unaffordable. (AS, interview, November 15, 2020)

HE-LGBTQ+ students, especially when they do not pass as cishet, ubiquitously experience what AS described, a multi-layered screening by a cis gaze. Brokers and landowners perform extensive demographic profiling of potential tenants often by asking a line of questions—what Guru (2012) calls an "offensive archeology"—to determine their bodies and behaviors for moral acceptability often along the lines of caste and religion, but this also implies normative gender and sexuality. Most landowners consider single women as a liability and thus, prefer to rent to boys; for others, however, the house would presumably be unkempt by the bachelor lifestyle of men, and prefer women-tenants who are expected to bear homemaking and other domestic responsibilities (Bhargava & Chilana, 2020). In such residential landscapes meticulously coded in gender binary, trans/genderqueer students perpetually find themselves in a state of mental homelessness, if not also material.

Ultimately, AS could not afford to live on her own even in the smallest available studio apartment close to the campus. Instead, she decided to look for a bigger 1BHK apartment and a housemate to share it with. Sharing an intimate space of home can be tormenting if the housemate (or roommate) is trans/homophobic. Consequently, LGBTQ+ students uniquely face multiple roadblocks to securing housing which their cis-heteronormative peers and colleagues do not. AS was finally referred to a broker from her network who understood what she was looking for (see Figure 3). She further recollected experiencing a deeper sense of belonging in this home because for the first time ever, her landowner was a young single mother who was "very cooperative" unlike all her previous landlords "who were intimidating cis men always threatening to throw us out" (AS, interview, November 15, 2020).

What does this provisional and partial acknowledgement of their housing needs as student-clients mean for LGBTQ+ student-tenants? As the story will illustrate, mediators such as the university and housing brokers may, to an extent, initiate the housing pathway for student-clients. However, they soon disappear for student-tenants in their journeys to homemaking.

4.2. Promiscuous Non-Adult: Making Home

Several HE-LGBTQ+ student-participants reflected on how uncomfortable they felt living in gated societies that were heavily surveilled and morally policed environments with particularly religion-, caste-, and class-based constructions of "respectability." They recall experiencing of everyday socio-spatial disbelonging, either directly or vicariously through their friends and colleagues. As DL, a transmasculine doctoral candidate recollects, "this is not my story, but is still part of my story" (Figure 4).

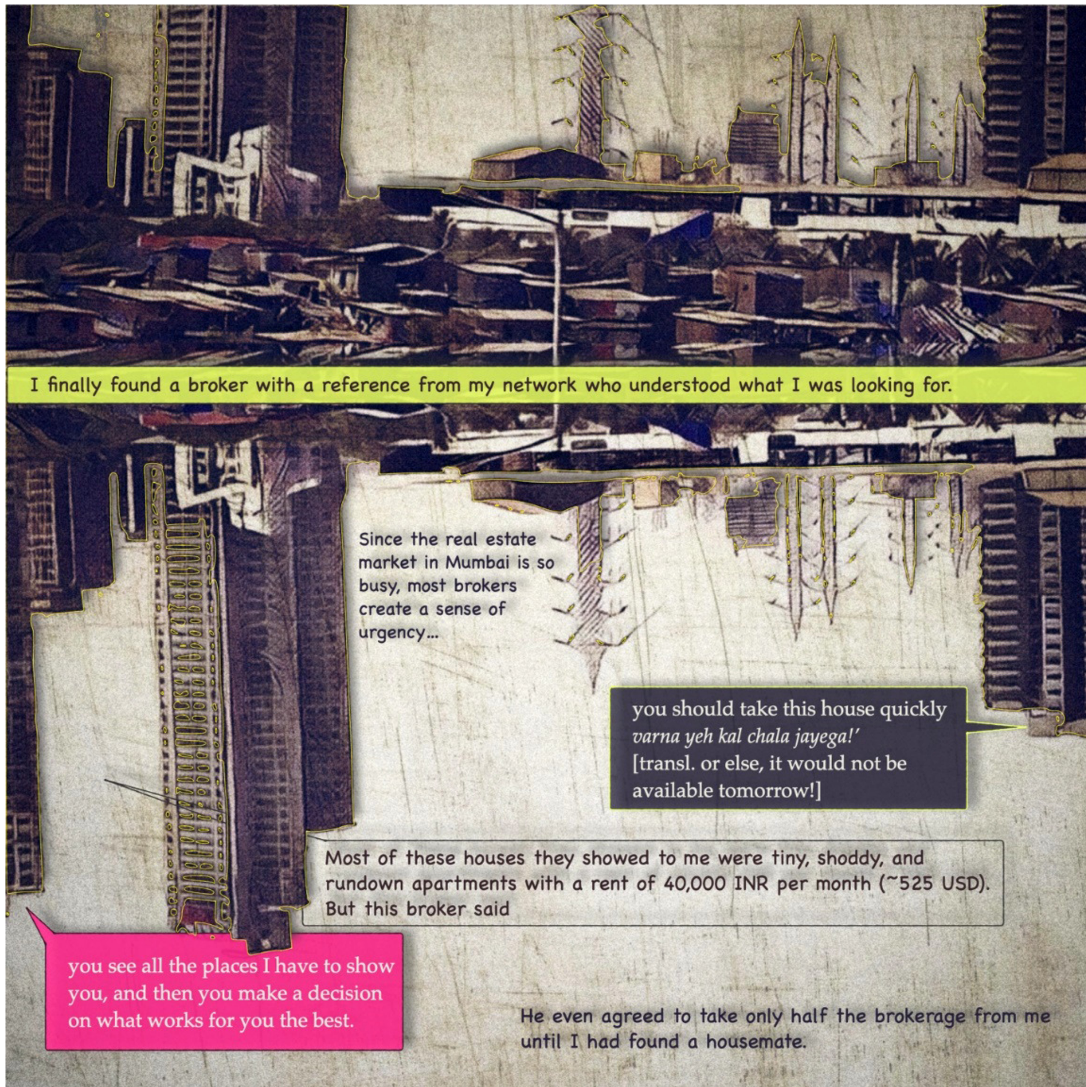


Figure 3. The "urgent" disaster that is the real estate market.

Ultimately, to avoid controversy and to secure his newly appointed position as a tenured professor, the hosts refused to register a formal complaint with either the institution or the police. A few days later, another similar incident of a mob fussing about "girls and boys partying together" was reported to the TISS Students' Union. Since the GNH wing was the only place on campus where all gendered students could stay (Figure 5), students rescued from off-campus housing disputes were always temporarily accommodated in the GNH. Consequently, several queer, trans, and non-binary students recalled imposition of excessive surveillance and tighter housing rules in the GNH. It became "the first place to be attacked" by the administration, claimed one of the transfeminine residents. Informed by cis-heteronormative moral sensibilities of the hostel warden and security guards, these exclusive rules made their living environment in the GNH-wing "toxic, scary and repressive" contrary to the university's proclamation of it being "liberating, progressive and novel" (AF, interview, December 16, 2020).

DL's remark before recounting the above conflict as "still a part of my story" is critical to note here. It is neither possible nor the intention of this article to reinforce a neat division of the student body into LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students. The host couple and their guests in their encounter with the community residents get rendered as "queered subjects" (Arun-Pina, 2021; Oswin, 2010) which require "queer approaches that understand heteronormativity not as a universal policing of a heterosexual–homosexual binary, but as the geographically and historically specific coincidence of race, class, gender, nationality and sexual norms" (Oswin, 2010, p. 257). In the contemporary Indian context where marriage, family, and home get conflated with one another as morally inseparable concepts, studentphobia can be understood as a subset of queer/transphobia. Even as a heterosexual married student couple, socializing with a mix-gendered group of single students resulted in their persecution by neighborhood residents. For these long-term residents, marriage is not a one-time contract. It must be

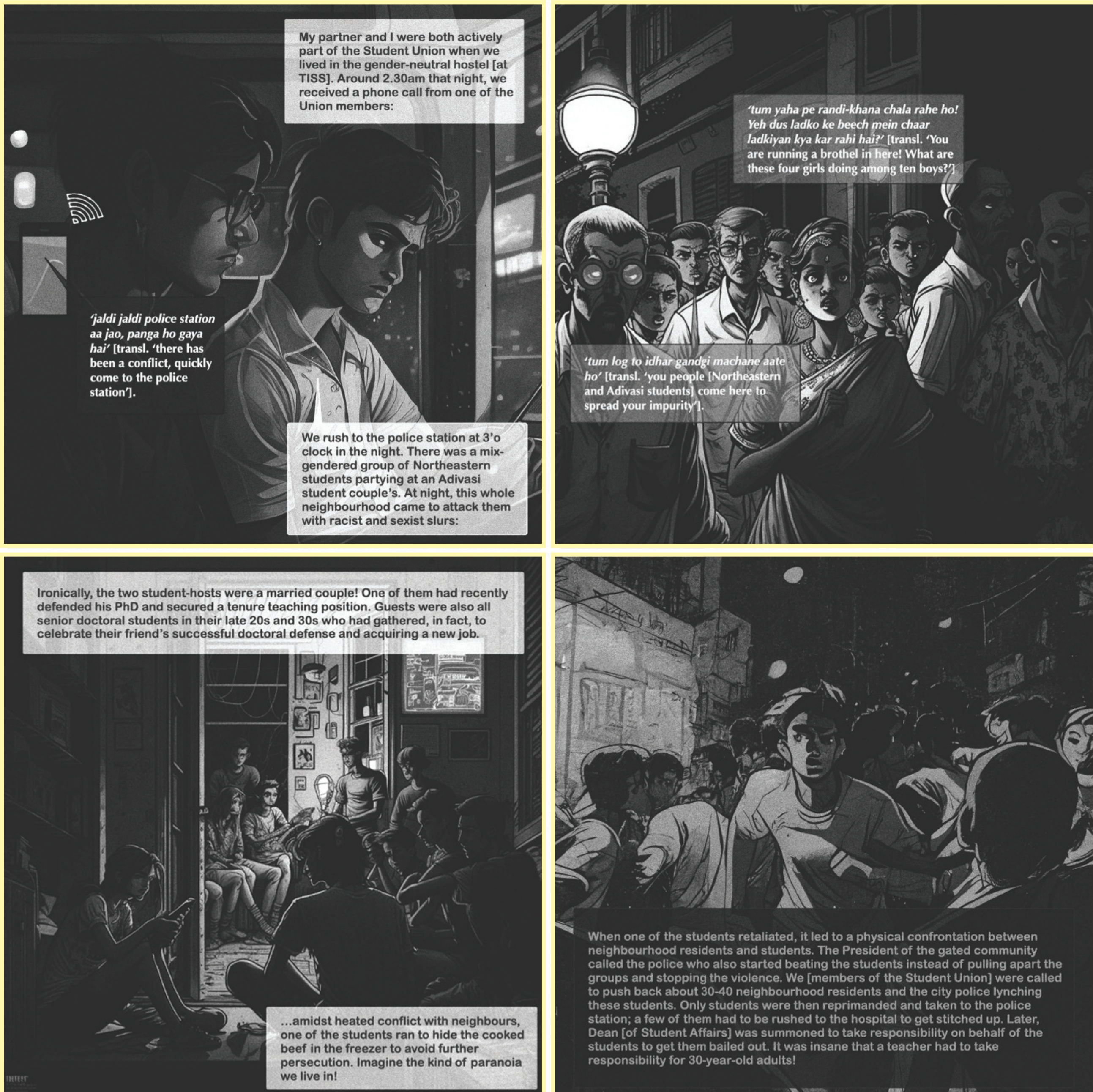


Figure 4. *What's the beef?* Images courtesy of DL (interview, December 12, 2020); AI generated renderings with conceptual/visual prompts and layer-edits by the author.

ritualistically performed every day as a reassurance of heteronormativity. For the married student-couple to host a mix-gendered group of "unrelated" students was equivalent to "running a brothel" in their otherwise "respectable" society. Although no LGBTQ+ students were "directly" involved in this account, such reinforcements of the acceptable cis-heteronormative embodiments, relationships, and spatial occupations have a disproportionately adverse impact on LGBTQ+ students.

Further, post-students and early career scholars, despite gaining some financial stability, continue experiencing the same discredit and precarity they did as students. Here, gender and sexual identity are intricately interwoven with class, caste, region, religion, and ethnic identity locations especially intensified at the scale of housing and home–a "purified" space that checks and gets rid of all the "filth." This domesticated desirability for "purity" is at once rooted in casteism (also ethnophobia and racism), homogeneity over heterogeneity, and chastity over sexual freedom.

"It may be in your interests to deposit your impurities in us, but how can it be in our interests to remain repository of your dirt (moral)?,'' asks Babasaheb Ambedkar (as cited in Guru, 2012, p. 200), a Dalit jurist and one of the key architects of the Constitution of India who first instituted the Dalit movement against untouchability in India.

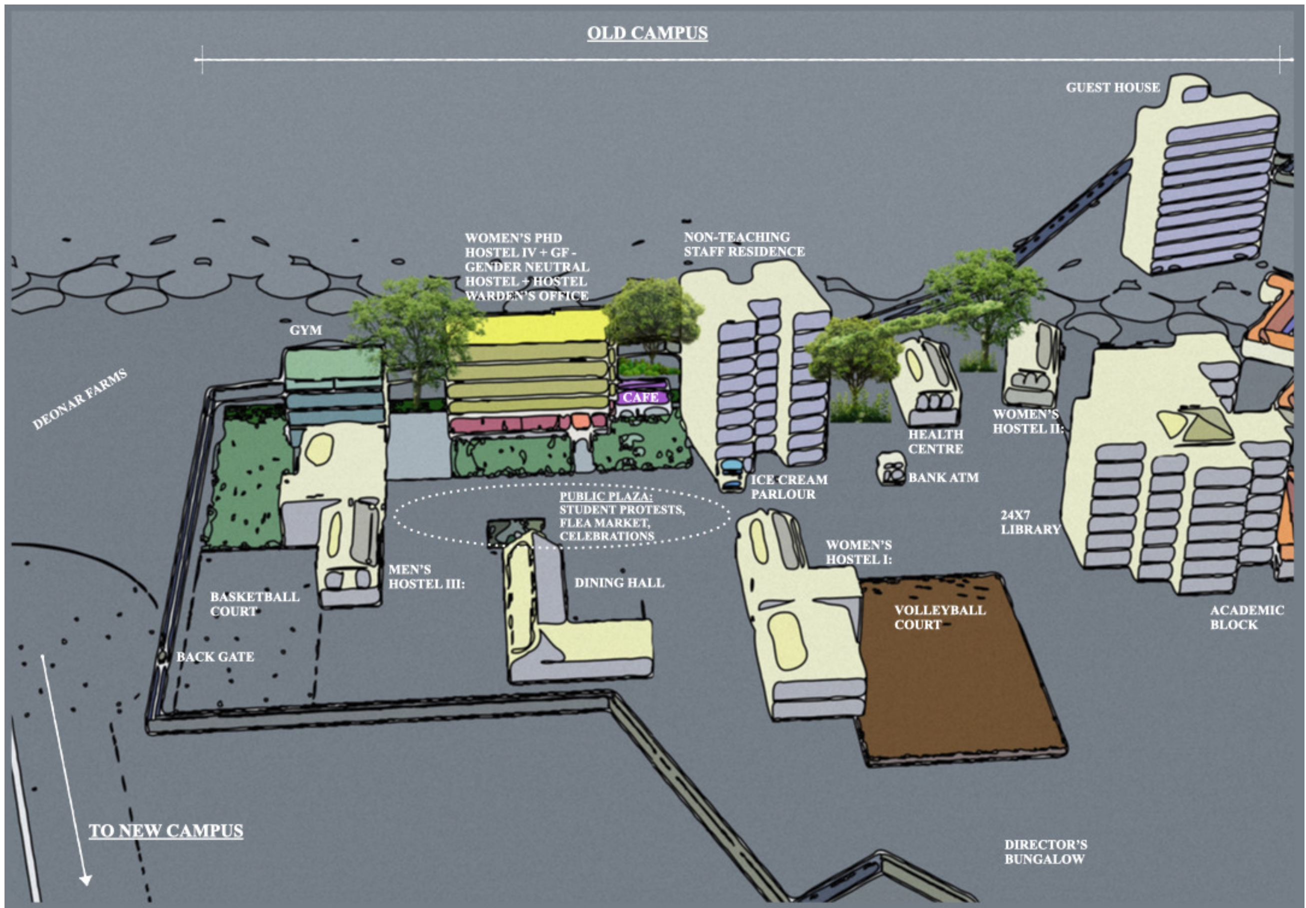


Figure 5. Axonometric drawing locating GNH-wing within the PhD women's hostel beside Hostel Warden's Office, Deonar Campus, TISS.

Notions of morality and (im)purity particularly at the spatial scale of the neighborhood and the domestic have been critical to the Dalit theory. In the "Archeology of Untouchability," Guru (2012) observes that the "domestic sphere offers the space for conducting purificatory functions" and for safely practicing untouchability in modern times where the public realm otherwise exerts pressures due to "social vigilance" (Guru, 2012, p. 219). Guru adds, "some parents hose down their kids after they return home from school, not because their bodies are mired in mud or dust, but because they might have messed with the untouchable kids while in school" whereby "practicing untouchability at home becomes the major source of sovereignty…for the members of the upper caste" (Guru, 2012, pp. 219–220). "Purity" is also a governmental tool to project and maintain a political image of "one nation," a move towards the "uniform civil code," and considering only Hindi as the national language overruling all other regional languages. Finally, "purity" also represents chastity, especially for women in India. Cis-heteronormative marital domesticity is founded on the same footing of purity, homogeneity, and respectability.

The socio-spatial notion of an academic campus and a home environment then is arguably contradictory. An academic campus is supposedly an expanding environment that exposes students to heterogeneity while a home assumes a contained environment that reinstates the "pure" self. The dispute that student housing—an environment at once academic and domestic—confronts is because of this conceptual and socio-spatial translocation on the borderlands of the university and the city (Arun-Pina, 2021). LGBTQ+ students thus, multiply experience a sense of socio-spatial disbelonging where they often have nobody to turn to in their familiar spatiotemporal context, as illustrated in the following subsection.

4.3. Ascetic: Leaving Home

According to the ancient Vedic Āśrama system in India, the human lifespan is divided into four key stages: Brahmacharya, the first quarter of a bachelor student-life focused on education while practicing celibacy; Grihastha, the second quarter of a householder; Vanaprastha, the third quarter of a forest dweller; and Sannyasa, the fourth quarter of an ascetic characterized by renunciation. According to this linear four-stage order, Brahmacharya implies chastity during the bachelor student stage, Grihastha morally validates only reproductive sex within the confines of a heteronormative marriage, and the last two stages of Vanaprastha and Sannyasa are transitional stages from the material life to spiritual

liberation. This upper caste system of four life stages is comparable to what elsewhere Oswin (2012, p. 1625) has critically called the "'straight time' of progress, development, and reproduction…against a 'queer time' that is out of step, out of place, and, at best, productive rather than reproductive.''

In contemporary cis-heteronormative practice, while the last two stages of the Vedic Āśrama system are never taken on, the first two stages remain as staunch datum responsible for the continued conflation of reproductive marriage with family-home. It thus also conflates the bachelor life with celibacy and sexually active life with reproduction within marriage. This Āśrama system continues to manifest itself in the configuration and the administration of both domestic spaces of family housing as well as student housing (read non-family homes).

In my conversation with LT, a local queer woman, and a former day scholar who lived at her parents' home, she said to me:

> In the grand scheme of my family wanting me to get married, and *start my life*, I was often able to push back by asking to let me first complete my studies. I knew I just had to keep being a student [to postpone the familial pressure to marry]. However, for my extended family it was still a matter of shame for a 21-year-old woman to be unmarried. They persuaded themselves by putting me on an *ascetic…asexual…celibate-like pathway living in a different world.* In a way, being a student has been a shield for me. Even if it is not naming and "coming out" as such, it was for me, resisting these normative expectations. (LT, interview, August 18, 2020, emphasis added)

LT's experience with her family is not unique. For her distant relatives, her choosing to not marry at the "right age" (or at all) was equivalent to being on an "ascetic, asexual, celibate-like pathway"—"the student pathway." Wilkinson (2014) posits "the single" as the queer subject; here, the opposite also holds true where the queer student must be single. Conflating marriage with having sex works to "domesticate sex" (Hubbard, 2012) and "distort" the student image as promiscuous non-adults if they are openly sexually active but not married. Close family members become well-intentioned intimate policers of cis-heteronormativity. LT, like many other queer/trans students, found student-hood "as a shield" to defend herself against "normative expectations" at the cost of being pushed to "living in a different world." LGBTQ+ students are also forced to experience a double spatiality—spatial dysphoria—where queer inclusion effectively diminishes our queer worlds, subsuming them/us within what is made to seem a straight universe.

HE-LGBTQ+ students in Mumbai variously confront crisis in housing across all three stages of securing a home, making a home, and leaving home. Their "specific vulnerabilities" (Gorman-Murray et al., 2014) are deeply intersectional, i.e., their gender and sexuality identities are not neatly separable from their class, caste, region, religion, and ethnic identities. Yet, cis-heteronormative gaze and micro-governance of queer students' embodiments and spatialities manifest in relatively implicit ways, especially intensified at the intimate scale of neighborhood and home. Through transdisciplinary storytelling, this article works to counter the homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions of the student-image in postcolonial India.

5. Conclusions

My intention with this article and by referring to the ancient Vedic text is not to reinforce the stereotypical binary perception of a regressive Global South and a progressive Global North. Instead, I provide here a radical queer and trans spatial reading as an ongoing praxis. The "objective goal" is not of a binary resolve: "LGBTQ+ inclusive" or for that matter, "exclusively LGBTQ+" housing. Rather, it is to recognize and be committed to dismantling the socio-spatial normative traps as an ongoing project of reworking. Here, queer and trans space is an approach, not a location or an (un)achievable end goal. Thus, this article works to formulate and emphasize attending to spatial dysphoria and not simply homelessness or eviction; spatial dysphoria will and did, for instance, continue for HE-LGBTQ+ students even inside the GNH for so long it is configured and administered with—however "modern" and "progressive''—cis-heteronormative moral sensibilities.

This article has worked to queer the student-image within interdisciplinary studentification, gentrification, and town-and-gown works of literature to reveal three common observations: first, persistent dichotomous approaches to studying the university-city territory; second, a negative homogenized depiction of a student-body that is often conflated with power and privileges of the university; and third, an underlying treatment of students and neighborhood residents as if they are de-sexualized. In examining the role of various urban stakeholders in "distorting" the student-image, the article has argued that they work in tandem in producing two mutually feeding phenomena—"studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification"—which in turn effectuate a multiscalar homonegative labyrinth for HE-LGBTQ+ students to navigate on their housing pathways.

This study revealed that the student-image is particularly susceptible to distortion when students are perceived as "free-floating" transient subjects between their parental home and presumed marital home. Parallel representational distortion of the student-image and non-normative homes by cis-heteronormative urban actors from their fixed location on a "straight time" pathway results in a perpetual sense of spatial dysphoria for HE-LGBTQ+ students in the Deonar campus district in Mumbai. How might urban planning, in a sub/urban context where the unaffordable housing

market gets routinely compounded with "studentphobia" and "cis-heteronormative familification," enable a sense of belonging for HE-LGBTQ+ students in India?

Various queer urban scholars noting "barriers that prevent the integration of queer concerns" (Broto, 2021, p. 310) in planning have challenged heteronormativity (Broto, 2021; Doan, 2011; Vallerand, 2020). Architect, spatial pedagogue, and community activist Olivier Vallerand (2020, p. 194) critically observes:

> The idea of queerness has yet to fully transform the way we practice, teach or even experience spatial design. If queering design means multiplying possible experiences, queering design pedagogy in turn could mean multiplying points of views and resisting design norms.

Doan (2011, p. 11) points out how "planning lags behind other related disciplines" and sub-disciplines and is "mostly silent on queer issues." Sandercock (2003) has called attention to the important role of stories and storytelling in the practice of planning for difference. Even as I find resonance with this call, and have myself employed spatial stories in this article, storytelling in planning practice might be overdue if the pedagogy of spatial design remains cis-heteronormative. To challenge this orientation, planning (planners?) should attentively consider questions that have emerged in other spatial disciplines: "Who speaks? And who listens?" (Listerborn, 2007); and "Where are the lesbian architects?" (Vallerand, 2019). Many queer/trans students of spatial studies, like myself, get pushed out of the discipline to follow the questions that we want to ask of space, gender, and sexuality, but are not allowed to pursue from within the discipline. Socio-spatially fragmented and alienated themselves, LGBTQ+ university students often have nobody in their "familiar" spatiotemporal context to witness their "everyday stories of queer experiences" (The Glass Closet, 2017), except, rarely, their own semi-formal LGBTQ+ support network of friends and teachers "beyond 'the family'" (Wilkinson, 2014). In taking inspiration from Listerborn's (2007) reorienting the representational question of "who speaks?" to "who listens," this article calls for extending the emerging planning advocacy for stories and storytelling to storylistening as a queer-sensitive planning practice. While listening may seem passive to practice-based and problem-solving disciplines, active listening is a call to urban practitioners for being receptive in taking lessons from HE-LGBTQ+ students' spatial stories towards queer and trans approaches to home that undo the cis-heteronormative conflation of reproductive marital coupledom and family, adulthood, and (the permanence of) home.

Acknowledgments

I am tremendously grateful to the student-members of the TISS Queer Collective for placing faith in and generously sharing their everyday spatial stories of student housing with me. I express my gratitude to the guest editors of this issue, Alison L. Bain and Julie A. Podmore, the journal editor, and the peer reviewers for their invaluable feedback on earlier versions of this manuscript. Thanks to Kiley Goyette for proofreading this article.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Addie, J. D., Keil, R., & Olds, K. (2015). Beyond town and gown: Universities, territoriality and the mobilization of new urban structures in Canada. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, *3*(1), 27–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2014.924875

Anderson, B. (2019). Cultural geography II: The force of representations. *Progress in Human Geography*, *43*(6), 1120–1132. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132518761431

Arun-Pina, C. (2021). Autoethnographic re-drawings of floating homes: Narrating trans experiences of rental homes in Bangalore. *Emotion, Space and Society*, *40*, Article e100807. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2021.100807

Bain, A. L., Podmore, J. A., & Rosenberg, R. D. (2018). "Straightening" space and time? Peripheral moral panics in print media representations of Canadian LGBTQ2S suburbanites, 1985–2005. *Social and Cultural Geography*, *21*(6), 839–861. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2018.1528629

Banerjea, N. (2015). Critical urban collaborative ethnographies: articulating community with Sappho for Equality in Kolkata, India. *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, *22*(8), 1058–1072. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2014.939145

Bhargava, R., & Chilana, R. (2020). A flat of my own: Singlehood and rental housing. In D. U. Joshi & C. Brassard (Eds.), *Urban spaces and gender in Asia* (pp. 95–108). Springer.

Boccagni, P., & Miranda Nieto, A. (2022). Home in question: Uncovering meanings, desires and dilemmas of non-home. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *25*(2), 515–532. https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494211037683

Broto, V. C. (2021). Queering participatory planning. *Environment and Urbanization*, *33*(2), 310–329. https://doi.org/10.1177/09562478211019377

Croog, R. (2016). Campus sustainability at the edges: Emotions, relations, and bio-cultural connections. *Geoforum*, *74*, 108–116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2016.06.001

David, E. J. R., & Derthick, A. O. (2018). *The psychology of oppression*. Springer.

de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. University of California Press.

Doan, P. L. (2011). *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice*. Ashgate.

Ehlenz, M. (2019). Gown, town, and neighborhood change: An examination of urban neighborhoods with university revitalization efforts. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *39*(3), 285–299. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X17739111

Flock, F. G. C. (2021). Making a zine, building a feminist collective: Ruptures I, Student visionaries, and racial justice at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, *20*(5), 531–561. https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1918

Freeman, E. (2010). *Time binds: Queer temporalities, queer histories*. Duke University Press.

Gorman-Murray, A., McKinnon, S., & Dominey-Howes, D. (2014). Queer domicide: LGBT displacement and home loss in natural disaster impact, response, and recovery. *Home Cultures*, *11*(2), 237–261.

Guru, G. (2012). Archeology of untouchability. In G. Guru & S. Sarukkai (Eds.), *The cracked mirror: An Indian debate on experience and theory* (pp. 200–222). Oxford University Press.

Hafeez, M., & Jain, B. (2020, February 4). TISS student, 50 others booked in sedition case. *The Times of India*. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/tiss-student-50-others-booked-in-sedition-case/articleshow/73927692.cms

Haghighi, F. (2018). Study. Be silent. Die: Indeterminate architecture and the dispositif of studentification. *Journal for Cultural Research*, *22*(1), 55–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/14797585.2018.1426477

Halberstam. (2005). *In a queer time and place: Transgender bodies, subcultural lives*. New York University Press.

Herek, G. M. (2016). The context of anti-gay violence: Notes on cultural and psychological heterosexism. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *5*(3), 316–333. https://doi.org/10.1177/088626090005003006

Hubbard, P. (2012). *Cities and sexualities*. Routledge.

Jaffe, S. (2018). *Queer time: The alternative to "adulting"*. JSTOR Daily. https://daily.jstor.org/queer-time-the-alternative-to-adulting

Kamols, N., Foth, M., & Guaralda, M. (2021). Beyond engagement theatre: Challenging institutional constraints of participatory planning practice. *Australian Planner*, *57*(1), 23–35.

Kinton, C., Smith, D. P., Harrison, J., & Culora, A. (2018). New frontiers of studentification: The commodification of student housing as a driver of urban change. *The Geographical Journal*, *184*(3), 242–254. https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12263

Lager, D., & van Hoven, B. (2019). Exploring the experienced impact of studentification on ageing-in-place. *Urban Planning*, *4*(2), 96–105. https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v4i2.1947

Lewin, E. (2018). "I've been 'buked": The double consciousness of being LGBT and Black. In E. Lewis (Ed.), *Filled with the spirit* (pp. 27–52). University of Chicago Press.

Listerborn, C. (2007). Who speaks? And who listens? The relationship between planners and women's participation in local planning in a multi-cultural urban environment. *GeoJournal*, *70*(1), 61–74. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-007-9114-8

Mee, K. (2009). A space to care, a space of care: Public housing, belonging, and care in inner Newcastle, Australia. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *41*(4), 842–858. https://doi.org/10.1068/a40197

Mee, K., & Wright, S. (2009). Geographies of belonging. Why belonging? Why geography? *Environment and Planning A: Economy & Space*, *41*(4), 772–779. https://doi.org/10.1068/a41364

Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2020). *National education policy*. Government of India. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority. (2021). *Final regional plan for Mumbai metropolitan region*. https://mmrda.maharashtra.gov.in/documents/10180/21354820/Final+Regional+Plan+for+Mumbai+Metropolitan+Region+Report+%28English%29/74526f41-f767-43b1-94e7-5f5001fed7c8

Natcher, D. C. (2001). Land use research and the duty to consult: A misrepresentation of the Aboriginal landscape. *Land Use Policy*, *18*(2), 113–122.

Oswin, N. (2010). The modern model family at home in Singapore: A queer geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *35*(2), 256–268. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2009.00379.x

Oswin, N. (2012). The queer time of creative urbanism: Family, futurity, and global city Singapore. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *44*(7), 1624–1640. https://doi.org/10.1068/a44282

PinjraTod. [@PinjraTod]. (2021, August 11). *Join us as we campaign to #rejectNEP2020 and resist the dismantling of public education in India!* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/PinjraTod/status/1425462252010819585

Podmore, J., Bain, A. L., & Arun-Pina, C. (2022). LGBTQ+ urban social worlds. In A. L. Bain & L. Peake (Eds.), *Urbanization in a global context* (pp. 293–308). Oxford University Press.

Probyn, E. (1996). *Outside belongings*. Routledge.

Revington, N. (2021). Age segregation, intergenerationality, and class monopoly rent in the student housing submarket. *Antipode*, *53*(4), 1228–1250. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12710

Revington, N., Moos, M., Henry, J., & Haider, R. (2020). The urban dormitory: Planning, studentification, and the construction of an off-campus student housing market. *International Planning Studies*, *25*(2), 189–205. https://doi.org/10.1080/13563475.2018.1552565

Rhodes, S. D., & Kovach, K. W. (2002, November 9–13). *Increasing adolescent involvement in participatory action research: Lessons learned in Central North Carolina* [Paper presentation]. 130th Annual Meeting of APHA, Philadelphia, PA, USA.

Russell, G. M., & Bohan, J. S. (2006). The case of internalized homophobia: Theory and/as practice. *Theory & Psychology*, *16*(3), 343–366. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354306064283

Sandercock, L. (2003). Out of the closet: The importance of stories and storytelling in planning practice. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *4*(1), 11–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/1464935032000057209

Shah, S. P. (2015). Queering critiques of neoliberalism in India: Urbanism and Inequality in the era of transnational "LGBTQ" rights. *Antipode*, *47*(3), 635–651. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12112

Smith, D. P., & Holt, L. (2007). Studentification and "apprentice" gentrifiers within Britain's provincial towns and cities: Extending the meaning of gentrification. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *39*(1), 142–161. https://doi.org/10.1068/a38476

Smith, D. P., & Hubbard, P. (2014). The segregation of educated youth and dynamic geographies of studentification. *Area*, *46*(1), 92–100. https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12054

Stender, M. (2017). Towards an architectural anthropology—What architects can learn from anthropology and vice versa. *Architectural Theory Review*, *21*(1), 27–43. https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2016.1256333

Tata Institute of Social Sciences. (2018). *Handbook for students*. https://tiss.edu/uploads/files/Students_Handbook-2018-2019_upadted_version-25-2-2019-online.pdf

The Glass Closet. (2017). *About.* https://theglassclosetsblog.wordpress.com/about-2

Those booked by police under draconian laws. (2020, May 17). *National Herald*. https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/india/those-booked-by-police-under-draconian-laws-urvashi-chudawala

Vallerand, O. (2019). Where are the lesbian architects? Visibility and its challenges. *The Plan Journal*, *4*(2), 327–343. https://www.doi.org/10.15274/tpj.2019.04.02.2

Vallerand, O. (2020). Beyond design education: Queering pedagogies of space. In J. Berry, T. Moore, N. Kalms, & G. Bawden (Eds.), *Contentious cities: Design and the gendered production of space* (pp. 194–203). Routledge.

Wallace, D. L. (2002). Out in the academy: Heterosexism, invisibility, and double consciousness. *College English*, *65*(1), 53–66.

Wilkinson, E. (2014). Single people's geographies of home: Intimacy and friendship beyond "the family." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *46*(10), 2452–2468. https://doi.org/10.1068/a130069p

Yu, S., Bryant, M., Messmer, E., Tsagronis, S., & Link, S. (2018). "Is there a bubble to burst?"—College students' spatial perception of campus and the city, a case study of Rhodes College in Memphis, TN. *Urban Geography*, *39*(10), 1555–1575. https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2018.1481602

About the Author

Chan Arun-Pina is a PhD candidate in the Department of Geography at York University. They are a professionally trained architect and a visual artist. Crucially transdisciplinary, their research-artwork critically examines the spatial manifestations of the cis-heteronormative domestic script while visualizing the queer and trans potential of spaces, especially at the scale of higher education institutions and of domestic spaces as they intersect in student housing and homes.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 164–176
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6592

Article

Queering Housing Policy: Questioning Urban Planning Assumptions in Namibian Cities

Guillermo Delgado [1,]*, Vanesa Castán Broto [2], and Takudzwa Mukesi [1]

[1] Institute for Land, Livelihoods and Housing, Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia
[2] Urban Institute, University of Sheffield, UK

* Corresponding author (gdelgado@nust.na)

Submitted: 7 December 2022 | Accepted: 22 March 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
Heteronormative models of the home have permeated housing policies for decades, only adding to economic and spatial inequalities in a landscape of housing injustices. Half of the urban population in Namibia lives in precarious housing conditions. Cities like Windhoek and Walvis Bay are among the most unequal in the world. Such inequalities translate into significant gaps in housing quality, security, and service provision. These inequalities are acutely felt by LGBTIQ+ populations that already face other forms of exclusion from economic and social life and fundamental human rights. A new National Housing Policy—emphasizing the right to housing—is about to be adopted in Namibia, but would it address the concerns of queer populations? This article asks what it means to engage with Namibia's new National Housing Policy through the lens of queer decolonial thought. It presents an exploratory study of the questions emerging at the margins of the discussion on the National Housing Policy. The objective was to develop an exploratory research agenda for a queer decolonial perspective on housing in Namibia. In the context of enormous housing shortages, a queer decolonial perspective emphasizes radical inclusion as a principle for housing provision. The exploration of shared queer experiences in accessing housing suggests that the themes of belonging, identity, and safety may support the development of such an agenda. Queer decolonial thought has thus three implications for an agenda of research on housing in Namibia. First, it calls for understanding what community and belonging mean for LGBTIQ+ people. Second, queer decolonial thought poses questions about citizenship, particularly given the shift to a view of the state as creating housing opportunities (through land rights and basic services) and support mechanisms for incremental housing. Queer decolonial thought calls for identifying the multiple ways the state misrecognizes individuals who do not conform to prescribed identities and sexual orientations. Third, queer decolonial thought invites reflection on the constitution of safe spaces in aggressive urban environments and the multiple layers of perceived safety constructed through diverse institutions and public spaces.

Keywords
coloniality; housing; LGBTIQ+; Namibia; queer decolonial thought; queer housing

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Since independence, the housing question has been a salient political issue in the Republic of Namibia (henceforth Namibia; Bogosi, 1992). The National Housing Policy (NHP) adopted in 1991 recognized a diversity of housing needs. In 2009, a revision of the NHP prioritised homeownership and private provision under the assumption that people could access loans. The fundamental assumptions of those regulations excluded most of the population in Namibia. For example, most Namibians do not qualify for mortgages under current regulations and cannot access the conventional housing market (Chiripanhura, 2018). For those LGBTIQ+ collectives

already suffering discrimination in their social and working lives, access to housing is an additional challenge.

A revised NHP has been under negotiation between the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (2022) and its stakeholders. The draft document envisions a new era of housing policy in Namibia. It follows six principles of housing provision: adequate, targeted, incremental, people-focused, learning-focused, and accountable (Table 1). The aim is to facilitate access to housing for the majority of the population on low incomes, especially those living in informal conditions, through a dual strategy of informal settlement upgrading and incremental greenfield development. The objective of the NHP is to deliver housing opportunities for populations on ultra-low (monthly household income under €250 or N$5,000) and low incomes (monthly household income range €250–500), which constitute 62.4% and 25.1% of the population, respectively (Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, 2022). The draft for consultation proposes enshrining the right to adequate housing in the constitution, following a recommendation of the Second Namibian Land Conference (Melber, 2019). The stakeholder consultation of the draft has brought about a sense of opportunity for a possible paradigm shift in housing policy, but some voices call for caution. Neighboring South Africa has already attempted a constitutional approach to the right to housing, creating a state obligation to provide habitation to the poorest people and, in some cases, preventing forced evictions. However, the state has struggled to keep up with demand and rising housing expectations (Turok & Scheba, 2019).

The enormity of the housing crisis in Namibia calls for scalable programs. At the same time, many difficulties in accessing housing stem from the deployment of generalized assumptions about what kind of housing people need and how they can access it, which do not always correspond to the realities of urban living. The supply approach of the previous housing policy in Namibia did not meet the housing demands of almost 90% of the population. While the new policy might improve upon this in terms of reach, the 2022 revision of the NHP may continue to exclude vulnerable groups, such as LGBTIQ+ populations, if specific provisions for their circumstances are not explicitly included in the policy.

Access to housing is a critical component of stability in LGBTIQ+ lives, and it provides the foundation to support livelihoods, provide security, and facilitate access to healthcare (Badgett, 2014). Access to housing is routinely impeded by forms of active and passive discrimination, from deprioritizing families that do not match heteronormative requirements in housing policies to overlooking measures to address the specific requirements of LGBTIQ+ people to access bureaucracies, information, and resources (Lim et al., 2013). Further complicating matters, LGBTIQ+ people may also lack a broader social network of support, for example, when they are estranged from their family because of their sexual or gender orientation (Mills, 2015). Heteronormative assumptions are thus inherently exclusionary. For example, policies to tackle homelessness focused on meeting the needs of families automatically exclude vulnerable (single) individuals who do not meet those requirements (Carr et al., 2022).

The emerging body of literature on housing issues among LGBTIQ+ people shows that even when policy and planning attempt to be deliberately inclusive, they fall short of addressing the needs of queer populations. The queer constitutes a new frontier of exclusion in which affected individuals are constructed as undeserving, deviant, and abject in ways that generate multiple forms of intended and unintended discrimination (Carr et al., 2022). In this context, urban planning and housing policies must take additional steps to welcome queer groups already excluded by default (Doan, 2010). This

Table 1. Core principles in the draft of the revision of the NHP.

Principle	Definition
Adequate	Interventions shall be guided by the principles of the UN-defined Right to Adequate Housing which outlines a broad understanding of housing as an enabler for social and economic empowerment
Targeted	Interventions and public expenditure shall be proportional to locally varying social and income demographics, leaving noone behind
Incremental	The scale and complexity of the urban land and housing challenges require incremental approaches towards obtaining adequate housing for the majority
People-focused	Ensuring broad public ownership requires continuous public engagement, education, and capacitation for inhabitants, stakeholders, and government officials at all levels
Learning-focused	Effective housing solutions will evolve through learning by doing and assessed continuously through monitoring and evaluation
Accountable	The vast policy scope and its financial implications require accountability and consistent monitoring and evaluation to achieve social equity

calls for no less than a shift of perspective on housing justice: a new perspective that not only recognizes queer experiences but also changes with them. Queer utopianism refers to perspectives that demand a profound transformation of societies shaped by heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and imperialism (Esteban Muñoz, 2009). Queer utopianism recognizes the inherent resistive character of queer responses, the challenges they pose to the current structure of the social policy, and the possibilities of concrete practices that build forms of survival and hope (including situated practices of care, mutual aid, and challenges to disempowering practices; England, 2022). Histories of colonial and postcolonial domination have shaped ideas of home with the archetypes of the nuclear family and the housewife. Imperialism extended this heteropatriarchal model, which became a kernel of the forms of coloniality ubiquitous in the postcolonial era (Kapoor, 2015). Heteronormative ideologies in postcolonial contexts hinder equitable access to housing (Nyanzi, 2013). Dominant notions of the home link good citizenship and nationhood to sexual categories (Gairola, 2006). This is a constant in the development of housing policy for queer populations, specifically in rapidly urbanizing areas where providing universal access to housing is an urgent priority. Equitable access to adequate housing calls for new paradigms that recognize the intimate connection between queer discrimination and coloniality (Tudor, 2021) and celebrate the fact that planning for queer populations is planning that works for everyone in the city (Doan, 2015). Planning for queer populations must also be planning that actively decolonizes existing ways of thinking about housing, planning, and public policy.

This article asks what it means to engage with Namibia's new NHP through the lens of queer decolonial thought—a form of queer utopianism that understands queer liberation and decolonization as synonyms. The objective is to develop an exploratory research agenda to develop a queer decolonial perspective on housing in Namibia. The research used a multi-methods strategy, including "drawn interviews" and two workshops with members of LGBTIQ+ communities in the city of Walvis Bay to formulate research questions that can inform a queer decolonial perspective on housing. In the context of enormous housing shortages, a queer decolonial perspective emphasizes radical inclusion as a principle for housing provision, which is sensitive to the forms of exclusion at the margins. The exploration of shared queer experiences in accessing housing suggests that the themes of belonging, identity, and safety may support the development of such an agenda.

2. Queering Housing, Housing Queer Communities

2.1. Queer Decolonial Thought and Housing

Our analysis builds on the intersection of queer and decolonial thought. Tamale's (2020) account of decolonization brings forward the experience of queer lives in Africa, which are often left out of the literature on decoloniality. Tamale's thought differentiates between colonialism and coloniality. While colonization refers to a systematic project of territorial occupation and labor and resource exploitation, coloniality instead emphasizes the long-standing patterns of power resulting from that process, manifested particularly in the dominance of certain processes of knowledge production (Tamale, 2020). Even when and where colonization is over, coloniality continues. This is an argument that decolonial thinkers have explored, compounding various forms of oppression into what they term "coloniality" (Maldonado-Torres, 2008; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Tamale follows Quijano (2000) in highlighting the endurance of eurocentric perspectives in the production of knowledge. Eurocentric ideas become instruments for organizing the social order, including race, gender, and sexuality. These forms of coloniality become naturalized and, beyond a form of political and economic colonization, subsequently colonize processes of thinking and reduce autonomy.

The colonial project thus suppresses heterogeneity, simplifying people's social roles and dissociating them from their experiences (Tamale, 2020). Colonial legacies also shape how certain practices—and hence the people linked to those practices—are deemed as incorrect, unsanitary, or uncivilized, without challenging the infrastructure systems that reproduce those practices (Alda-Vidal & Browne, 2021). The colonial project also shapes the morality of urban life and its relationship with the environment and its artefacts. It also shapes governance processes; even participatory processes are drenched in a colonial stench where deserving communities are singled out from the unruly mass (Mulumba et al., 2021).

The family is a crucial entry point for queer decolonial thought (e.g., Hunt & Holmes, 2015). Tamale (2020) examines family law as a sphere where coloniality can be observed. Tamale explains how the British Protectorate in Uganda established a conceptual separation between state and personal law. This dichotomy shielded the domestic family from state intrusion and introduced the male-headed family as the system's nucleus for heteropatriarchal-capitalist reproduction (Tamale, 2020). This institutionalization of a British understanding of the family established a previously absent hardline distinction between public and private spaces, normalized a fixed conception of the ideal family, and reduced the autonomy of non-dominant family members. In a postcolonial context, it is difficult to overlook the dual character of the home as both a site of material comfort and a locus of symbolic power (Blunt & Varley, 2004). Hayden's (1982) work on the relationship between homemaking and nationhood already emphasized the fundamentally political character of the home alongside a series of prescriptions about how the home must be inhabited and, crucially, with which identities. Colonialism put the home and inhabitation at the centre of the imperial political project.

Colonialism, however, did not unfold over blank slates but built upon the existing political conditions of different locations. In Namibia, ethnographic research suggests that Christianity, rather than coloniality, shaped the structure of Namibian society (McKittrick, 2002). Christian missionaries sought to ban traditional practices by imposing heteropatriarchal family models, effectively eroding alternative ideas of familiar or affective relationships (Murray & Roscoe, 1998). During the colonial occupation, familiar or affective relationships were secondary to economic priorities. For example, entire populations were displaced throughout the territory, separating families along lines of gender and physical ability through the infamous contract labor system (Hishongwa, 1992). Mixed layers of heteropatriarchal norms, deployed when they served Christianization first and colonization later, have endured in the post-independence period.

Urban planning during colonial occupation prioritized public and intimate forms of urban space that actively excluded the non-normative. As a result, the expression of solidarities and affections has been largely excluded from urban space, not only in public spaces but also in shared spaces within the home. In a world where queer people live under constant threat (legal, cultural, institutional), multiple hiding processes are at work, and the possibilities for expressing queerness are contingent upon the goodwill of those witnessing the event. This leads to apparently contradictory forms of spatial organization in which nuclear family homes exist alongside sites where queerness is welcome or where heteronormative spaces are transformed into queer ones in an ad hoc manner. Examples of these transformations are entertainment venues (e.g., bars and clubs) or public open spaces (e.g., malls or waterfront walkways), but also when a café allows for queer expression at specific set times (e.g., the evening) or in sectioned spaces (e.g., a back room). The home itself may be a contingent space for the expression of queer solidarities but, at the same time, queer thought questions the home as a stable category that can be found within the confines of housing.

A queer decolonial perspective on housing thus highlights three elements of analysis: (a) the symbolic functioning of the home as it is linked to specific notions of citizenship and nationhood, which separates deserving and undeserving subjects; (b) heteronormative models of the nuclear family that are reinforced through the incorporation of the home in the urban economy as a unit of reproduction; and (c) how the home operates in contradictory ways as a site of safety in an aggressive environment of rapid urban change.

2.2. Enduring Colonialities of Housing In Namibia

With the recognition of the realities of rapid urbanization and the assertion that 66% of the urban population (short of one million) live in an informal settlement, the revised NHP shifts policy direction radically. Housing policy lies within a complex legal framework, which emphasizes the production of housing in a "formal" way. Under apartheid, urban development planning served the needs of the minority white population, while black people had no right to own urban land, and inhabited sub-serviced, but heavily regulated, townships (Wallace, 2011). After independence from South Africa in 1990, when free movement consolidated as a reality (past laws were lifted in 1978) and urbanization accelerated, meeting the housing needs of the dispossessed populations became a policy priority. The first NHP in 1991 put a strong emphasis on addressing the backlog of housing. The revision of 2009 shifted to an overall understanding of housing as an engine of economic growth enabled by the state. Since 1991, the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development has supported different programs targeted at low-income households, with different legacies and varying degrees of success (see Table 2).

Recent unpublished data by the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia show that about half of the urban population lives in informal conditions without adequate services and tenure security (Scharrenbroich & Shuunyuni, 2022). In the 1990s, the realities of informal settlements were a new and emerging concern (Peyroux & Graefe, 1995). Scholar-activists documented the heterogeneous forms of inhabitation whereby people appropriated the built environment in unexpected ways (Muller, 1993, 1995). When housing was delivered, people adapted built structures in heterodox ways that fit their social norms, daily needs, and a growing interest in new technologies (radio, kitchens). The national approach to the land question has been generally focused on land reform, understood as the redistribution of agricultural land with no consideration of the production of formal land and housing in urban areas, although this changed in the Second National Land Conference of 2018 (Lühl & Delgado, 2018; see also Republic of Namibia, 2018).

The 2009 revision of the NHP introduced a neoliberal ethos in housing policy (Delgado & Lühl, 2013). This further excluded the majority of the population from housing as the assumption that people could access housing finance did not hold for over 90% of the population that in 2018 could not access a mortgage (Chiripanhura, 2018). These policies have pushed the growing urban population in Namibia to overcrowded townships—densified through building backyard structures, housing division, and extensions—and peri-urban neighborhoods, lacking adequate infrastructures, services, and provision of access to livelihood opportunities.

Colonialities are therefore reproduced in urban planning, with aspirations of formalization that deny the urban realities in the country and that assimilate housing needs to heteropatriarchal models. Informal settlements are often reduced to "a type" without specific needs. Some policy efforts have sought to recognize the dynamics of change in informal developments. For example, the National Land Policy of 1998 referred to the potential of incremental development, and the First Housing Policy of 1991 recognized the role of self-help groups in housing

Table 2. Examples of land-servicing- and housing-related programs and projects administered by the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development in Namibia.

Program	Purpose	Status
Mass Urban Land Servicing Program	Reducing the backlog of supply of land to meet the current demand by making land available, a reaction to youth housing activism in the early 2010s	While it mostly involves conventional land servicing, it has also supported the development of a Flexible Land Tenure System
Mass Housing Development Program	Providing housing at a large scale to the lower-income sectors of the population, closely related to the 2009 revision of the NHP	3,726 houses in various categories completed since the inception of the program in 2013–2018
Financial support to community-based housing organizations	Supporting community organizations directly in the delivery of housing for low-income people, this program builds on previous experiences emerging from the 1991 NHP	N$44,7 million grant funding to the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia enabled the construction of some 1,901 affordable houses in 2018
National Housing Enterprise recapitalization	Providing housing finance for households in the low-income range, governed by the National Housing Enterprise Act of 1992, amended in 2000 and the State-Owned Enterprises Governance Act 2 of 2006; the National Housing Enterprise is also a depository of a legacy of pre-independence housing provisions for non-whites	Over 8,000 houses were delivered between 1993 and 2010, but current delivery falls short of annual targets
Decentralised Build Together Program	Establishing Decentralised Build Together Committees for each region to deal with applications for assistance from the Housing Revolving Funds; the Decentralised Build Together Programme was a direct outcome of the 1991 NHP	30,400 housing units have been constructed under this program since its inception (1992–2018)
Public-private partnerships	Boosting the supply of public service provision where the government cannot provide, as regulated by the Public-Private Partnership Act 4 of 2017	This remains an initiative rather than a program but is also boosted in the revised NHP

Source: Authors' work based on Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (2018, 2022; see also Lühl and Delgado, 2016).

provision (Delgado, 2018). Women-led groups have for decades advocated for community-led incremental and co-produced approaches (Chitekwe-Biti, 2018). The scale of the housing challenge, estimated to require 22,000 houses per year (Asino & Christensen, 2018), remains overwhelming. Efforts like those described in Table 2 have had too little impact to make a difference (Chiripanhura, 2018). The revised NHP will recognize the agency of the state to create housing opportunities through land rights and basic services and will reintroduce co-production approaches to housing. However, its impact on LGBTIQ+ people already facing social and institutional discrimination has not been examined in detail.

2.3. Queer Lives and Housing in Namibia

While there are accounts of post-independence action by LGBTIQ+ groups (Lorway, 2014), engagement with historical accounts of queerness is rare, except for colonial accounts of "indigenous sexuality" (Falk, 1926/1998). Oshiwambo, a family of Bantu languages spoken by the largest cultural group in Namibia, has a specific term to denote queer identities (singular, *es(h)enge*; plural, *omas(h)enge*), suggesting open acknowledgement and historical documentation of queer presence (Murray & Roscoe, 1998). However, missionization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries entrenched the idea of heterosexual monogamy as the default form of organization (Miettinen, 2005). This was furthermore racialized, with interracial relations outlawed during apartheid times, a practice that continued after the regulation on the matter was abolished in the late 1970s. The influence of patriarchal, racial, and heteronormative norms is still palpable today. The first administration after independence lasted 15 years and was characterized by hateful, homophobic speech, strongly shaping public views

(see Currier, 2010). The following administration, which lasted 10 years, created *de facto* tolerance by avoiding pronouncements. The current situation is one of increasing social acceptance, with the development of a vibrant queer cultural life, despite continuous displays of homophobia in public life and bureaucratic administration (Brown, 2019).

Activists and civil society organizations have increasingly developed projects to advance LGBTIQ+ rights and sexual health. Gaining visibility became a major challenge for LGBTIQ+ movements (Currier, 2012). For example, the Namibian Rainbow Project was founded in 1996 in response to SWAPO's hate speech. The Namibian Rainbow Project pioneered a multi-layered approach of actions to promote the rights of LGBTIQ+ communities, including advocacy, social services, and health campaigns. However, their work also became mired by contradictions and their dependence on resources and ideas from the West (Lorway, 2014). Recent protests led by youth groups have taken a decolonial and intersectional approach, with the prominent inclusion of LGBTIQ+ issues, partly through the emergence of new decentralized and non-institutionalized organizations like the Namibia Equal Rights Movement (Becker, 2022). In Southern Africa, international efforts often focused on health programs to address the horrors of the HIV/AIDS epidemic but left more fundamental questions about rights unaddressed (Tucker, 2020). Today's situation remains ambiguous. The Namibian constitution is not specific about LGBTIQ+ rights. Some of the law's components are homophobic, sexist, and incompatible with the spirit of inclusion and human rights of independent Namibia. Nevertheless, public views combine a mixture of tolerance (or veiled avoidance) and conservative distance. Most people living in urban areas today are reportedly indifferent to LGBTIQ+ people, as the largest proportion of respondents in urban areas (54.5%) would like or would not mind having a homosexual neighbour (Afrobarometer, 2022). Institutional discrimination in governmental institutions, isolated instances of violence, hatred discourses sometimes disguised as harmful jokes, job discrimination, and isolation are all common in Namibian society.

In Namibia, the housing crisis presents existential challenges for LGBTIQ+ groups. LGBTIQ+ people report feelings of homelessness even when having a place to live, which adds to other stress factors, including the need to conform to gendered stereotypes and the threat of violence, often within one's own family (Solomons, 2020). Historically, housing and urban policies have led to a further entrenchment of inequalities with the simultaneous repression of already colonized, racialized, and queer identities. Namibian housing policy illustrates how forms of coloniality compound LGBTIQ+ discrimination. This is visible, for example, in housing designs, such as the matchbox house model that provided the template for black township housing in Namibia (Nord, 2022a). Housing models were tied to prescriptions for habitation that deserving individuals had to match, particularly concerning the adoption of Western lifestyles (Müller-Friedman, 2008). For example, matchbox houses were developed according to the assumed spatial needs of the (white) nuclear family and separated everyday activities around spaces of sleeping, living, dining, and cooking, with assigned roles for individuals in the family across those spaces; any "adaptations" to respond to black and "colored" residents resulted in lower building standards, lower-quality materials, and reductions in space available (Nord, 2022a). LGBTIQ+ people faced the additional need to conform to the gender and sexual roles prescribed in this form of habitation, seeing them excluded from public spaces and community organizations if they did not conform. The reproduction of LGBTIQ+ discrimination through the performance coloniality of practices—for example, in the activities of architects and urban planners (Nord, 2022a)—highlights that neither can be considered in isolation. Instead, they have to be confronted with an explicitly queer decolonial perspective.

3. Perspectives on Housing From Queer Communities

3.1. Methodology

The objective of this research was to evaluate the NHP's principles through the perspective of queer experience, as understood by those experiencing discrimination because they identify as queer. Walvis Bay is a port city where queerness has found relatively welcoming grounds. A city composed of people from many places around the country, it is animated further with a flow of international workers and tourists and is remarkably mixed. As the only major port along the Namibian coast, the city had been South African territory since before German colonization. It remained a contested space, remaining South African territory until four years after Namibia's independence.

Walvis Bay is one of the few places outside Windhoek with the presence of support organizations for the LGBTIQ+ community. In Walvis Bay, we worked with Mpower Community Trust to develop a common research agenda on housing. Mpower Community Trust is an organization supporting the health of queer communities in informal settlements, which is also developing interests in other aspects of queer life, such as housing.

Exploratory interviews were conducted in July 2022 with four key members of the queer community in Walvis Bay and two planners interested in considering queer perspectives in urban planning. The interviews focused on identifying unique aspects of the queer experience of accessing housing and the significance of different places. Field visits to specific locations followed each interview. The strategy for data capture was "visual harvesting," creating drawings during the interviews and follow-up visits that were also shared with the interviewees for feedback. The images were integrated to

create a thematic representation of the issues, in an effort to construct an initial research agenda (Figure 1). In November 2022, Mpower Community Trust organized two workshops with members of the LGBTIQ+ community in Walvis Bay. The first workshop brought together 16 young adults, all black, living in the township of Kuisebmond, and open about their LGBTIQ+ identity. The second workshop included 16 queer activists representing different LGBTIQ+ groups, from high-income white gay men to black trans activists and sex workers. Visual harvesting inputs were consolidated into a map of salient issues (Figure 1) that informed the first part of the discussion during the workshop, seeking to generate shared research questions. During the second part of the workshop, participants drew and shared representations and understanding of ideal homes. The analysis discusses first, a synthesis of queer perceptions of housing and home in Walvis Bay, and second, an analysis of the spatial aspects of the integration of housing in the urban economy and the contradictions in the creation of safe spaces.

3.2. Queer Perceptions of Housing and Home in Walvis Bay

Figure 1 presents a collective mapping of the constitution of queer relations around housing. The drawings illustrate the salient aspects of the interviews and establish unexpected connections. Stronger connections are highlighted with different colors. The diagram includes keywords that interviewees or workshop participants highlighted, linking to their personal and other participants' accounts. The discussions clustered around four themes: the development of social relations, the availability of safe spaces, the redefinition of spaces of social reproduction, and the material and symbolic constitution of the city as a place of living. These initial themes were then explored in a collective dialogue during the workshops.

Social relations were mediated by both persisting forms of coloniality and the demands to engage in forms of decoloniality that contest them. Coloniality shapes everything from the forms of communication—what languages are spoken and where—to the spatial inequalities in access to housing, affordability, and services. Coloniality also highlights the dependence on commodified engagements with different forms of inhabitation. At the same time, and particularly in relation to housing, there is a sense of the need to speak "a certain language" that provides access to housing to navigate the complex requirements that enable people's access. Many participants requested information about how to access the government's housing programs and shared their struggle to understand the processes involved in accessing them. The difficulties in navigating the bureaucracies of housing programs generate a sense of missed opportunity as if the responsibility for accessing housing rested only on the capacity of individuals to qualify for mortgages. Participants in the second workshop discussed the act of going to the bank, how the background of different people would condition their access to the bank, and how they come across. These technical and bureaucratic languages are therefore related to the question of affordability in a disabling environment that prevents rather than facilitates access to housing.

Coloniality manifests physically in the structuration of space in unequal neighborhoods. Self-construction appears when people do not find housing alternatives, but this is only possible within less regulated spaces within the city, such as, for example, Kuisebmond. Selective segregation practices are reproduced, if not formally, through the combined practices of multiple actors in a disabling environment that excludes large population groups from accessing housing. "The land speaks," said some participants when trying to explain the intersection of social histories in Walvis Bay with the spatial and ecological histories that have co-evolved with them because of the consolidation of patterns of inequality in urban space—from land ownership to the conditions in which land is accessed.

In the context of limited affordability, commodified engagements shape individual relationships with the home and the house. Either the house becomes an object of value to be exchanged or it enables access to other commodities, objects of special significance that create meaning within queer lives (a private space to make some noise, a kitchen to develop one's culinary interests, a storage space to keep clothes or other identity-related objects). These commodified engagements may help develop further social and emotional relationships, for example, when delicious food becomes a shared object and a restaurant becomes a place of encounter. Individuals use forms of consumption to redefine their social relations, making them at home within their neighborhoods.

This led the discussion to the complex aspects of what constitutes a safe space and how it relates to notions of home. Participants highlighted the importance of those physical meeting places, often multipurpose locales for civil society organizations, where different forms of expression are allowed. The Mpower Community Trust is located in such a facility, where the expression of queer identity is supported and encouraged (our workshops included icebreakers and participants and facilitators shared personal stories).

However, reducing the idea of "safe space" to specific locations where queer expression is allowed not only reduces queer experiences but also diminishes the possibility of finding spaces of home in different moments and stages of life. Participants were also interested in considering how "home" can be constituted into a safe space (as it is not always a safe space). Participants emphasized the idea of "home as a person," that is, home is not a physical house but a safe space where relationships with loved ones can be developed. The person in question varies depending on queer experiences. Some individuals found themselves linking home ideas to a person they

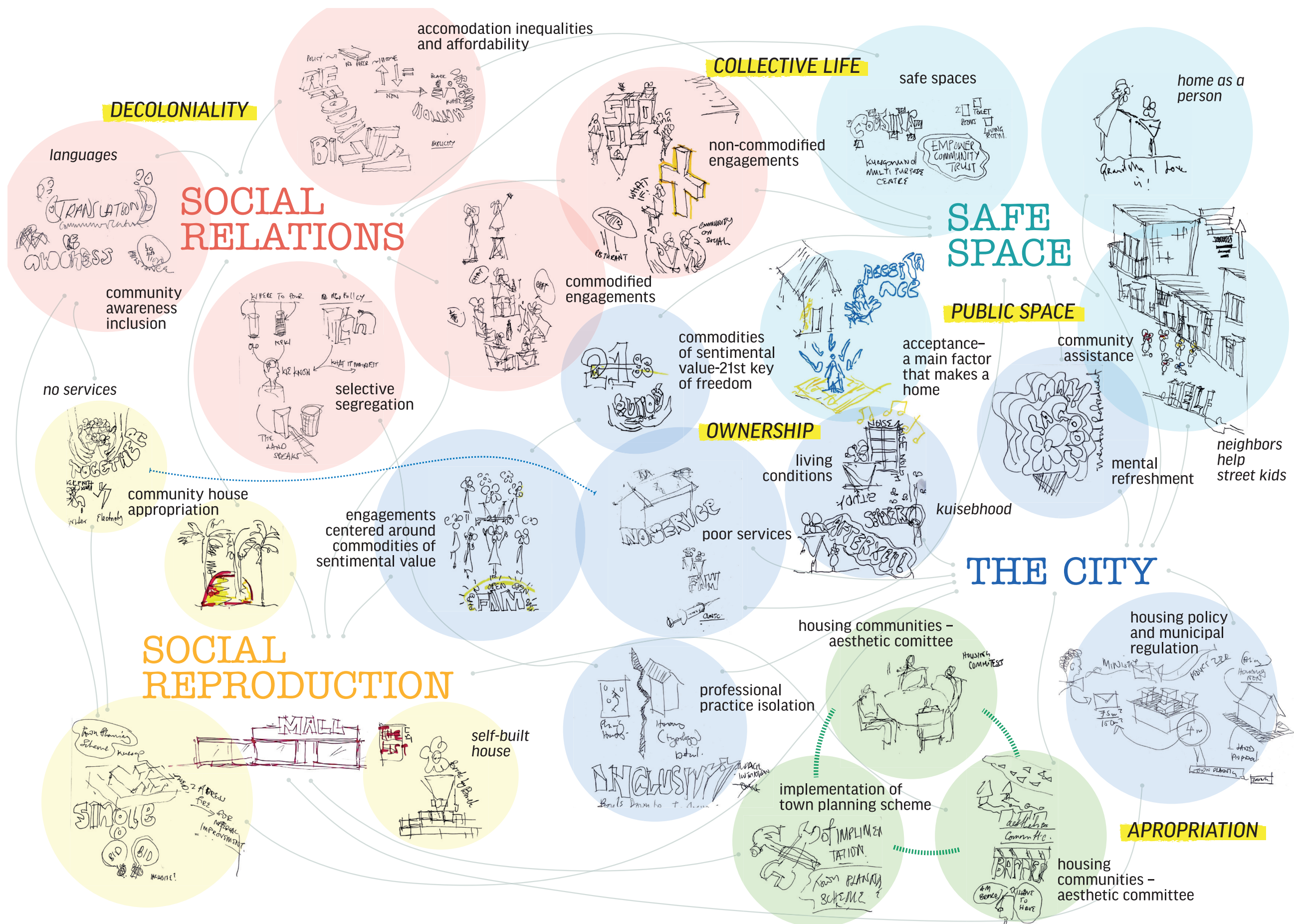


Figure 1. Mapping of housing relations for queer populations. Figure drawn by Erika Conchis, based on designs by Takudzwa Mukesi and collective discussions.

had grown up with, sometimes their parents, other times a person who provided refuge, such as an auntie or a neighbour. Other individuals tied the home to the people they had to provide for, such as their children, siblings, or friends. Whether provided to oneself or others, ideas of care were central to constituting the home as a safe space.

In the workshops, the home as a safe space was presented as a place of acceptance. In a society that still criminalizes non-conforming sexualities—even when the authorities do not enforce the legislation—acceptance represents the recognition of one's existence as valid by those closest to that person. The home is thus a space where anyone can express themselves through music and noise and through loving relationships with those who make the home. Human relationships thus constitute the safe spaces that queer people can inhabit as a home.

Individuals can also feel at home in public spaces. Queer lives in Walvis Bay extend beyond the home. People expressed their need to feel part of a community and to experience acceptance beyond a reduced circle of acquaintances. Moreover, they explained how community support could make a difference to queer people to feel at home in their neighbourhoods. Many shared endearing stories about how neighbours supported street kids and the kinds of support received, for example, through HIV-support groups or sex workers' associations. The need for spaces for "mental refreshment" highlighted that the material constitution of public or collective space is also important. The lagoon, in particular, constituted a common space with which many participants identified.

Safe spaces of homemaking stand side-by-side with the processes that constitute the unequal city as a lived space. The city also has housing policies and municipal regulations, which impose a formalizing language on the urban fabric. Recently, the constitution of aesthetic committees in certain areas and the implementation of town planning reproduce modernist ideas about how Walvis Bay should be inhabited. These formal regulations reproduce housing models that further entrench the historically produced spatial inequalities observable in the city today. Isolation of architectural practices from the actual living conditions in Walvis Bay further entrenches inadequate practices. The housing stock in lower-income areas remains unaffordable, and many houses—none benefitting from architectural design quality—appear empty.

The desire for house and land ownership is not exclusive to queer people. However, our discussions

suggested that, for queer communities, it is strongly linked to a sense of safety and better living conditions, especially in townships such as Kuisebmond. The belief that "owning" a house is a key to safety and well-being rests on the assumption that owning a house is an effective means to securitize space. However, for some workshop participants, home ownership was linked to a desire for sharing and building collectives around a particular space. Several participants emphasized the constitution of their dream home as a collective space of encounter. This is particularly important in the context of "the ghetto," the term people use in Namibia to refer to townships such as Kuisebmond, especially when they lack services and livelihood opportunities. While many ideal home representations were presented as escapism from the ghetto, some participants drew their houses within that space and argued that "you can also live in style in the ghetto." One young activist wrote the slogan "mi casa es su casa" to emphasize that their ideal of a home is a house in the ghetto that provides a home for everyone.

At the same time, the representation of the house as a closed, private space also relates to what counts as family. Several participants highlighted the meaning of objects with sentimental value that brought back the figures of specific people who constituted the home, such as a grandparent or a distant relative. Those material engagements may redefine the figure of the family around an extended, multi-headed, and uniform set of familiar relations within which queer people can find safe spaces and feel at home. The appropriation of housing space through squatting and self-built housing are responses that challenge the dynamic of speculation and help reimagine a more inclusive city.

3.3. Spatialization of Queer Housing Needs

The establishment of the home as a unit of social relations translates into specific forms of individual regulation, from moral prescriptions to behavior expectations. Home is where social relations of family and trust are forged, which most often happens through consumption. For example, individuals explained how they forge relationships through performing chores together or sharing food or drinks. Such accounts, however, imply purchasing power and consumption of goods. We also found non-commodified accounts where queer people reported forging relationships with community members who supported their well-being. For the former, schools, extracurricular activities, and churches were places where individuals felt part of a group even when they knew their sexual orientation would represent a problem for some members. For the latter, the waterfront in the wealthier areas was reportedly a place where one could go for a walk or run without being disturbed or worried about safety issues.

Queer populations change the constitution of space across the city. Higher-income areas are generally considered low-density, comprising larger plots and larger properties. However, some have used planning provisions to build backyard structures for rent, originally envisioned as "granny flats" or service quarters. Another strategy is the establishment of guesthouses, which would, in effect, be medium to long-term rentals. This is due to the pressing need for housing and income pressures, even in traditionally higher-income areas.

At the same time, home is not always a safe space. Several young participants in the first workshop emphasized the importance of privacy and space to be themselves, for example, by playing loud music or being alone. The home and the house are the chief "safe space" in an aggressive urban environment as it enables a certain degree of isolation. At the same time, some shared spaces can constitute a place of safety. Some individuals suggested that a recently built shopping mall was a place of safety and an option for safe recreation. The mall absorbed many businesses that were otherwise distributed within the city's central areas, and queer people felt safe enough to participate.

Interviewees and workshop participants reported places that felt like home but did not match the assumptions about the home and were in no way conforming to normative ideas of the home. Often, home referred to different collectivities and their operation in safeguarding queer lives. For example, one respondent explained how their safety was reinforced by seeing how the neighbours cared for other vulnerable members, such as street kids. According to this account, some families within the neighbourhood, including the grandparents of the interviewee, organize provisions for street kids. As explained above, extended families play a central role in contemporary life in Namibia.

At the same time, the private house plays an essential role in facilitating access to services. For example, Mpower Community Trust shares space within a municipally owned building that provides a haven for queer men. The place has a vibrant life, busy with activities and formal and informal interaction as the Mpower Community Trust facilitates social events for its members to interact. However, some targeted services, such as sexual and mental health support, happen in private homes rather than in a municipal-owned building and are not sponsored but open for voluntary contributions.

The home, and the house, become sites for urban reproduction, where the future is constituted around the mythical ideal of the family. The experience of queer populations, however, redefines the idea of the home (individual and collective, permanent and transitory, safe and unsafe) and the idea of the family. Affective linkages between home and family are also strong among queer individuals. One participant emphasized that his grandfather had built the house where they lived. The grandfather's labor in procuring it conferred the house additional value. Much of the potentialities of queer housing emerge from chaotic structures of housing. For example, a respondent described their house as a collective

housing unit without basic services like water or electricity. The house hosted several individuals identifying as queer, among other non-queer members and children. "Family" included several individuals who regularly were found at the house. However, no one could or wanted to provide an account of who lived there and explained that some forms of inhabitation were sporadic and transitory. The space is fully occupied, and places that appeared to be living rooms or kitchens are now used as bedrooms. Inhabitants believe a prominent professional owns the place in Windhoek, and those living there are, in effect, occupying the space without paying rent outside real estate market dynamics.

Few of these accounts, however, engaged with the racialized character of queer living even though racial segregation is a constant in everyday life. A planner explained that race, rather than income, distributed people around the city, with wealthier black people choosing to live in lower-income Kuisebmond, to avoid everyday friction with white people in higher-income areas.

4. Conclusion

Exploring the question of housing in Namibia from a queer perspective exposes the roots of homophobic heteropatriarchal assumptions informing housing and how they have coevolved with different forms of coloniality that are still reproduced in more or less formalized assumptions about urban planning and housing policy. Queer decolonial thought simultaneously challenges (a) the forms of coloniality that endure in the country and become sedimented in spatial patterns of inequality and (b) the assumptions about affective relations, identity, and personal life associated with such forms of coloniality.

The exploratory study of the perceptions of housing among different LGBTIQ+ groups in Walvis Bay raises questions that help interrogate and develop current housing policy. First, there are questions about the reproduction of forms of racial segregation and how they interact with the forms of exclusion from housing faced by LGBTIQ+ people. If "Namibia's fraught history of segregation remains the phantom that haunts contemporary urban spaces" (Tjirera, 2021, p. 71), this phantom relates closely to the imposition of heteropatriarchal modes of living (Delgado, 2021). What we observe today in the city are strategies of "making space" by different people, including the LGBTIQ+ populations, that assimilate some of those strategies to finding a place in the city. Collective identity offers additional forms of belonging to LGBTIQ+ people who see themselves as sharing a common problem and mobilize mutual support strategies. However, the constitution of safe spaces is not straightforward, as it requires both collective and private sites, in messy arrangements which are not always sanitized. Still today, the uncritical acceptance of modernist planning principles contributes to reproducing formal and informal mechanisms of discrimination (Müller-Friedman, 2008; Nord, 2022a). What is less recognized, however, is that LGBITIQ+ populations face additional layers of exclusion and may not be able to access additional mechanisms to palliate those forms of discrimination (Delgado, 2021).

One salient finding from the workshops is that for members of the LGBTIQ+ community in Walvis Bay—within and beyond Kuisebmond—is that social-affective relations are the most critical component of the making of a safe home. Here two factors play a role. On the one hand, there is a question of what belonging means in different contexts. For example, what constitutes a family and a community? Multi-generational, extended families are now the norm in townships such as Kuisefmond (Nord, 2022b). The home and the house are appropriated as places of social reproduction where new forms of interaction come into being. Forms of coloniality and colonial imposition perdure, but they are reappropriated and incorporated into the specific spaces of queer lives. How do new ways of performing belonging shape LGBTIQ+ possibilities to access housing?

On the other hand, how different queer identities are performed and how they are distributed in space raises questions about what constitutes citizenship in contemporary Namibia. Housing policy must attend to the heterogeneous range of collective and private spaces that enable the expression of affective lives. The distinction between public and private, collective and individual, and shared and commoditized muddles rather than clarifies the multiple overlapping mechanisms whereby LGBTIQ+ groups in Walvis Bay constitute public spaces where private identities can be expressed and private spaces that enable publicly shared lives. Safety is not achieved through isolation but through connections. These include social, affective, and material connections whose nature is often indistinguishable. Housing policy needs to promote rather than dissolve those connections.

Queer decolonial thought has thus three implications for an agenda of research on housing in Namibia. First, it calls for understanding what community and belonging mean for LGBTIQ+ people. As the revised NHP puts forward co-production and community development as critical strategies for housing delivery, it will need to acknowledge how those communities operate and whom they can reach. The NHP must provide opportunities for multiple forms of social organization to unfold in the city, for example, the growing prevalence of extended and multi-generational families. Second, queer decolonial thought poses questions about citizenship, particularly with the shift to a view of the state's role in housing and the need to identify the multiple ways the state misrecognizes individuals who do not conform to prescribed identities and sexual orientations. Third, queer decolonial thought invites reflection on the constitution of safe spaces in aggressive urban environments and the multiple layers of perceived safety constructed through diverse institutions and public spaces. Housing

policy needs to be integrated with broader perspectives considering the nature of shared spaces and their sometimes chaotic and transitory nature.

Queer utopian thought, however, goes beyond housing policy focused on housing provision because it emphasizes the need to secure solidarity spaces within existing possibilities. Home dreams intersect with past histories and imagined futures and connect individuals with wider communities. Changes in people and places depend on how people and things interact. The city constitutes a broader kind of home, as it increasingly hosts places of meaningful interaction that help social bonding and the constitution of safe spaces, including schools, churches, public spaces, shopping malls, bars, and community centers. In practice, informal housing—living spaces without services—become safe spaces with different degrees of performance for those who cannot access formal housing opportunities. The very presence of queer individuals in places primarily catering to cisgendered, heterosexual clientele may already be a subversive act.

Acknowledgments

The team would like to thank the MPower Community Trust for their support in implementing the workshops in Walvis Bay and for their ongoing work. Thanks to Erika Conchis for drawing Figure 1. We also thank Phillip Lühl, Helen John, and two anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments. We thank Alison L. Bain, Julie A. Podmore, and Tiago Cardoso for their patience. The research team received financial support from the Landscape Research Group.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Afrobarometer. (2022). *Summary of results: Afrobarometer round 9 survey in Namibia, 2021*. https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/NAM_R9.Summary-of-Results_19sep22.pdf

Alda-Vidal, C., & Browne, A. L. (2021). Absorbents, practices, and infrastructures: Changing socio-material landscapes of menstrual waste in Lilongwe, Malawi. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *23*(8), 1057–1077. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2021.1901974

Asino, K., & Christensen, Å. (2018). *Assessment of housing needs in Namibia* (ILMI Working Paper No. 8). Integrated Land Management Institute.

Badgett, M. V. (2014). *The economic cost of stigma and the exclusion of LGBT people: A case study of India*. World Bank.

Becker, H. (2022). "Youth speaking truth to power": Intersectional decolonial activism in Namibia. *Dialectical Anthropology*, *47*, 71–84.

Blunt, A., & Varley, A. (2004). Geographies of home. *Cultural Geographies*, *11*(1), 3–6.

Bogosi, R. (1992). *Notes on the housing situation and housing policy in Namibia*. Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit.

Brown, A. (2019). "One Namibia, one (heterosexual) nation": Presidential discourses on homosexuality. *Journal of Namibian Studies*, *26*, 93–105.

Carr, H., Cooper, A., England, E., Matthews, P., Taylor, G., & Tunåker, C. (2022). Queer utopias of housing and homelessness. *Housing Studies*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2022.2146067

Chiripanhura, B. (2018). *Housing in Namibia: The challenges and prospects for adequate future provision* (ILMI Working Paper No. 7). Integrated Land Management Institute.

Chitekwe-Biti, B. (2018). Co-producing Windhoek: The contribution of the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia. *Environment and Urbanization*, *30*(2), 387–406.

Currier, A. (2010). Political homophobia in postcolonial Namibia. *Gender & Society*, *24*(1), 110–129.

Currier, A. (2012). Conclusion: Why visibility matters. In A. Currier (Ed.), *Out in Africa: LGBT organizing in Namibia and South Africa* (pp. 151–160). University of Minnesota Press.

Delgado, G. (2018). *A short socio-spatial history of Namibia* (ILMI Working Paper No. 9). Integrated Land Management Institute.

Delgado, G. (2021). The horizon for a fuller urban life in Namibia is visible: Expanding the notion of the urban housing crisis and changing urban politics. *Namibian Journal of Social Justice*, *1*, 44–70.

Delgado, G., & Lühl, P. (2013). Financialisation and the production of inequality in Namibia: A socio-spatial perspective. *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*, *29*, 46–66.

Doan, P. L. (2010). The tyranny of gendered spaces—Reflections from beyond the gender dichotomy. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *17*(5), 635–654.

Doan, P. L. (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces*. Routledge.

England, E. (2022). "Homelessness is a queer experience": Utopianism and mutual aid as survival strategies for homeless trans people. *Housing Studies*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2022.2108381

Falk, K. (1998). Homosexuality among the natives of Southwest Africa (1925–1926) (B. Rose and B. Roscoe, Trans.). In S. O. Murray & W. Roscoe (Eds.), *Boy-wives and female-husbands: Studies in African homosexualities* (pp. 187–196). State University of New York Press. (Original work published 1926)

Gairola, R. K. (2006, May 5–6). *Capitalist houses, queer homes: Sexuality & South Asian diasporas in Hanif Kureishi's* My Beautiful Launderette [Paper presentation]. Global States Conference, Irvine, CA, United States.

Hayden, D. (1982). *The grand domestic revolution: A history of feminist designs for American homes, neighborhoods, and cities*. The MIT Press.

Hishongwa, N. S. (1992). *The contract labour system and its effects on family and social life in Namibia: A historical perspective*. Gamsberg Macmillan.

Hunt, S., & Holmes, C. (2015). Everyday decolonization: Living a decolonizing queer politics. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, *19*(2), 154–172.

Kapoor, I. (2015). The queer Third World. *Third World Quarterly*, *36*(9), 1611–1628.

Lim, A. M., Jordan, C. M., & Tangente, M. G. C. (2013). *Policy audit: Social protection policies and urban poor LBTs in the Philippines* (Evidence Report No. 21). Institute of Development Studies.

Lorway, R. (2014). *Namibia's rainbow project: Gay rights in an African nation*. Indiana University Press.

Lühl, P., & Delgado, G. (2016). A critical analysis of the Mass Housing Programme. In B. F. Bankie & H. Jauch (Eds.), *The urban housing crisis in Namibia: A youth perspective* (pp. 208–225). National Youth Council.

Lühl, P., & Delgado, G. (2018, October 1–5). *Urban land reform in Namibia: Getting ready for Namibia's urban future* [Paper presentation]. Second National Land Conference, Windhoek, Namibia.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2008). *Against war: Views from the underside of modernity, Latin America otherwise*. Duke University Press.

McKittrick, M. (2002). *To dwell secure: Generation, Christianity, and colonialism in Ovamboland*. Heinemann.

Melber, H. (2019). Colonialism, land, ethnicity, and class: Namibia after the second national land conference. *Africa Spectrum*, *54*(1), 73–86.

Miettinen, K. (2005). *On the way to whiteness: Christianization, conflict and change in colonial Ovamboland, 1910–1965*. Finnish Literature Society.

Mignolo, W. D., & Walsh, C. E. (2018). *On decoloniality: Concepts, analytics, praxis*. Duke University Press.

Mills, E. (2015). *"Leave no one behind": Gender, sexuality and the Sustainable Development Goals*. Institute of Development Studies.

Ministry of Urban and Rural Development. (2018). *Concept paper: Second National Land Conference*.

Ministry of Urban and Rural Development. (2022). *Revised national housing policy—Draft for stakeholder consultation*.

Muller, A. (1993). A case study of domestic space in Namibia. In K. K. Prah (Ed.), *Social science research priorities for Namibia* (pp. 212–229). University of Namibia; Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa.

Muller, A. (1995). *Shared knowledge and the formal housing process in Namibia* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Newcastle upon Tyne]. Newcastle University eTheses. http://theses.ncl.ac.uk/jspui/handle/10443/3151

Müller-Friedman, F. (2008). Toward a (post) apartheid architecture? A view from Namibia. *Planning Perspectives*, *23*(1), 29–48.

Mulumba, M., Ruano, A. L., Perehudoff, K., & Ooms, G. (2021). Decolonizing health governance: A Uganda case study on the influence of political history on community participation. *Health and Human Rights*, *23*(1), 259–271.

Muñoz, J. E. (2009). *Cruising utopia: The here and now of queer futurity*. New York University Press.

Murray, S. O., & Roscoe, W. (1998). *Boy-wives and female-husbands: Studies in African homosexualities*. Palgrave.

Nord, C. (2022a). Post-colonial architecture: Deterritorialisation of apartheid township housing and mass-housing. *The Journal of Architecture*, *27*(1), 71–93.

Nord, C. (2022b). Family houses—Building an intergenerational space in post-apartheid Namibia. *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, *56*(2), 427–451.

Nyanzi, S. (2013). Homosexuality, sex work, and HIV/AIDS in displacement and post-conflict settings: The case of refugees in Uganda. *International Peacekeeping*, *20*(4), 450–468.

Peyroux, E., & Graefe, O. (1995). *Precarious settlements at Windhoek's periphery: Investigation into the emergence of a new urban phenomenon*. Centre for Research and Information; Action for Development in Africa.

Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power, eurocentrism, and Latin America. *Nepantla: Views From South*, *1*(2), 533–580.

Republic of Namibia. (2018). *Consolidated report on regional consultations in preparation for the second National Land Conference*.

Scharrenbroich, A., & Shuunyuni, H. (2022). *Annual report July 2020–June 2021*. Namibia Housing Action Group; Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia. https://www.civic264.org.na/images/pdf/2022/4/NHAG_Annual_Report_2021_Grand_Final_07_compressed.pdf

Solomons, A. (2020). *Somewhere over the rainbow: A situational analysis of sexual and gender minority adolescents and young people in Namibia*. Positive Vibes. https://positivevibes.org/resources/somewhere-over-the-rainbow-2

Tamale, S. (2020). *Decolonization and Afro-feminism*. Daraja Press.

Tjirera, E. (2021). (Re)tracing the history of spatial segregation, urbanisation and housing in Windhoek. *Namibian Journal of Social Justice*, *1*, 71–98.

Tucker, A. (2020). Geographies of sexualities in sub-Saharan Africa: Positioning and critically engaging with international human rights and related ascendant discourses. *Progress in Human Geography*, *44*(4), 683–703.

Tudor, A. (2021). Decolonizing trans/gender studies? Teaching gender, race, and sexuality in times of the rise of the global right. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *8*(2), 238–256.

Turok, I., & Scheba, A. (2019). "Right to the city" and the new urban agenda: Learning from the right to housing. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, *7*(4), 494–510.

Wallace, M. (2011). *A history of Namibia: From the beginning to 1990*. Jacana.

About the Authors

Guillermo Delgado is an architect born in Mexico and based in Namibia, heading the Institute for Land, Livelihoods and Housing at the Namibia University of Science and Technology. His work focuses on coproduction in spatial production and critical socio-spatial practices, through research, outreach, pedagogy, and projects.

Vanesa Castán Broto is a feminist working at the Urban Institute, University of Sheffield, UK. She leads the European Research Council project Low Carbon Action in Ordinary Cities (LOACT) and the UK Global Challenges Research Fund project Community Energy and Sustainable Energy Transitions in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique (CESET).

Takudzwa Mukesi is a Zimbabwean national and a postgraduate student at the Namibia University of Science and Technology. Mr Mukesi is a junior researcher and architectural technologist, representing the university on projects with the UN-Habitat, the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, and the City of Windhoek. He is also a multimedia designer and visual interpreter.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 177–186
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6372

Article

Radical Solidarities in Punk and Queer Refusals of Safety and Inclusion Narratives in Planning

Sarah Gelbard

School of Urban Planning, McGill University, Canada; sarah.gelbard@mail.mcgill.ca

Submitted: 29 October 2022 | Accepted: 8 February 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
Recent call-outs against Ottawa punk venues have fueled public debates about safe space and the inclusivity of local music scenes. The Ottawa Music Strategy released in 2018 translated these debates into cultural development policy that links creative placemaking and safe space discourse. This article examines the civic response to activist call-outs by analyzing how the Ottawa Music Strategy integrates diversity and inclusion strategies into cultural policy, and how cultural policy and safe space policies intersect with cultural revitalization and economic development priorities in the Ottawa Official Plan. Punk counter-narratives developed through grounded ethnographic research in the Ottawa punk scene unsettle normative public safety narratives that frame punk spaces as unsafe. Place-based histories of anti-oppression tactics, logics, and traditions of punk space and activism contextualize alternative responses by local punk venues and promoters. Drawing upon literature in queer planning and queer geography and literature on intersections between radical queer and punk politics, spatialities, and identities, this article discusses punking planning in solidarity with queering planning through alternative community-based responses to issues of safety, inclusion, and participation.

Keywords
creative placemaking; cultural planning; punk; queer planning; spatial justice

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

A public petition to keep the Queers out of Ottawa was not a news story anyone expected in 2016. The twist in this story, however, is that the Queers were a touring punk band. A local collective of gender-diverse artist activists of colour called Babely Shades started the petition to call-out racist and homophobic comments by the lead singer. Following the cancelation of the show, members of Babely Shades and allies turned their activism towards implementing safe space policies, bystander training, and improving diversity of representation in music spaces and festivals.

The incident also fueled public efforts to reform and stabilize public narratives around cultural diversity, inclusion, and safety. During the JUNO Music Awards hosted by the City of Ottawa in 2017, the mayor announced the creation of an Ottawa Music Strategy (OMS). Developed in partnership with key stakeholders in the local music industry, the strategy set a vision to make "Ottawa respected as the most inclusive music city in the world" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9). The strategy mobilizes the concept of Music Cities and cultural policy to create a sense of identity that can contribute to economic development through tourism, branding, and industry growth. Investment in and promotion of a diverse, inclusive, and safe music industry was framed as a critical catalyst for social, economic, and cultural development.

Those in the punk scene, myself included, felt the OMS and public response to safe space mobilized mischaracterizations of punk as unsafe, non-inclusive, and deviant. Without any consideration or engagement with existing politics or histories of local punk spaces, punk venues were being framed as an irredeemable liability to the promotion of an inclusive music city brand.

At the same time, the initial call-out by Babely Shades renewed internal debates about how punk spaces reproduce but also challenge systems of oppression through an anarcho-punk and do-it-yourself (DIY) ethos rooted in politics of anti-oppression, solidarity, difference, and care. With support from queer and racially diverse members of the local punk scene, the Queers show was rebooked as a fundraiser for a local LGBTQ youth group.

In this article, I draw meaningful parallels between punk space and queering planning through non-normative identity formation, community building, and subversive politics of deviance in the production of space. I propose investigating intersections with queer literature without aiming to either erase or reconcile the conflict, differences, and sometimes difficult histories that exist between punk and queer.

Following the literature review, this article examines the translation of activism into progressive cultural policy by considering how the OMS promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in its vision for becoming a music city. A deep reading and policy analysis of the vision, guiding principles, and recommendations of cultural planning and creative placemaking documents outlines municipal priorities and normative planning narratives of creative revitalization and economic development.

Original research and grounded participatory ethnographies of the Ottawa punk scene shift the analysis to counter-narratives that highlight experiences of commodification, displacement, and depoliticization of subcultural spaces. Examples of community-based practices of co-constructing less oppressive spaces offer alternative responses to the regulation, standardization, and enforcement of safe space policies. Intersections between radical queer and punk politics, practices, and theory are explored to argue for radical solidarities in refusing normative planning narratives and pursuing alternative, anti-oppressive approaches to queering and punking planning.

2. Cultural Planning and Creative Revitalization

Over the past 20 years, cultural planning and creative placemaking have had a significant impact on both formal and informal productions of space. These participatory practices are popularly framed as promoting sense of ownership, civic duty, community-building, better representation of diversity, and more democratic spaces. Ideally, cultural planning and creative placemaking contribute to the production of more livable and more inclusive cities.

In their whitepaper, Markusen and Gadwa (2010, p. 6) write that the successes of creative placemaking they observed "suggest that a collaborative policy platform can be developed across agencies, levels of government and public/non-profit/private sector organizations." They also point to growing interest by media and public officials in Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* as further entrenching the economic opportunity of engaging creative skills of the cultural sector to partner with both public and private stakeholders as a strategy for urban revitalization.

Almost a decade after the publication of their whitepaper, Markusen and Gadwa (2019) re-evaluate the optimistic arguments of their initial study and review the debates about placemaking that have emerged since. They note the embrace of placemaking practices and public appreciation for the capacity of the arts to contribute to community stabilization and cultural engagement. However, they also found that the integrity of existing local culture and community bonds have in many examples been negatively affected. Increasingly, creative placemaking projects have prompted intense debate about diversity and displacement, systemic inequities, and the need for more anti-oppressive and intersectional evaluations of outcomes (Burns & Berbary, 2021; Pritchard, 2018; Sarmiento, 2021; Summers, 2019).

Despite invocations of diversity and community, Summers (2019, p. 15) argues that the displacement experienced by Black communities as a result of placemaking, for example, is just as "racially inflected as the racialized geographies of segregated communities, and divested urban cores of the Jim Crow through post-Civil Rights eras." In their study of diversity, equity, and inclusion in municipal and cultural plans Loh et al. (2022, p. 154) found that "often the people who make up those 'diverse' cities are erased from the narrative or are minor players at best." Sarmiento (2021, pp. 1–2) argues that diversity discourse in placemaking facilitates a "liberal and inclusive form of gentrification" as a "spatial strategy meant to manage diversity." Mainstream placemaking and cultural policies promote particular spatial identities and desires that these authors, and others, position within long histories of the racialization of space, systemic oppression, and production of urban inequities.

3. Queering Planning

Queer planning and queer geography literature have significantly contributed to making visible the planning systems and values that have excluded, controlled, and discriminated against non-normative users and uses of public and private space (Bell & Binnie, 2004). Despite decades of LGBT rights activism, improved visibility of queer experiences, and improved support for progressive planning reforms, including those explicitly intended to address safety, diversity, and participation of queer and other marginalized identities, "unjust geographies of queer marginalization" (Goh, 2018, p. 464) persist.

Recurring tensions exist in the literature between celebrating the importance of LGBT spaces in the city, the governance of LGBT residents under neoliberal municipal regimes and politics of respectability, reinforced societal bias of urban queer imaginaries, and the sanitization and commodification of queer spaces (Bell & Binnie, 2004; Lewis, 2013; Podmore & Bain, 2020). Bell and

Binnie (2004), for instance, discuss how global cities and cosmopolitanism participate in reshaping and defining residents and potential residents through consumer citizenship. They note that "matching gay pride to civic pride means that cities have to respond positively to gay culture in order to maintain their competitive edge" (Bell & Binnie, 2004, p. 151). They observe that the commodification of subculture collapses alternative experiences of the city into a desirable and marketable urban lifestyle.

There is increased interest in recognizing gay villages and other queer spaces as playing an important role both in "developing a unique culture by socializing individuals" and in "shaping queer urban social movements and political activism" (Misgav & Hartal, 2019, p. 3). Hartal (2018, p. 3) argues that liberal logics of personal identity and representational politics of inclusion have "established queer subjectivities as fragile, weak subjects, in constant need of protection from unsafe spaces," and calls for further scrutiny of how "queer subjectivities produce/are produced through safe space and its discourse" (p. 6). Hartal (2018) analyzes how diverse understandings of queer spaces inform sometimes contradicting approaches to creating safe(r) spaces by and for LGBT subjects and how internal and systemic power structures inform their different approaches.

In her study of a new generation of LGBT activists and the production of queer spaces, Goh (2018, p. 474) reveals ongoing unjust systemic conditions encountered when opposing normative structures and institutional frameworks, concluding that "making queer safe spaces through spatial-political organizing is not simply about an appeal to queer identity" but also depends upon offering "alternative social-spatial relations and the possibility of continued difference in the city." Broto (2021) similarly argues that despite a "vibrant queer critique of development" and its potential to "shift heteronormative assumptions in development studies" (p. 2), meaningful participation depends on moving beyond inclusion based on representation of diverse identities "to focus instead on broad interest issues that reflect queer problems" (p. 14).

Queer subjectivities, counter-histories, and community-based spatial practices inform queer critiques and alternatives to the normative planning project and the reproduction of oppressive systems. Queer planning literature works to address the heteronormativity of planning by recognizing intersecting identities of gender, sexuality, class, and race, within broader geopolitical systems including settler colonialism, capitalism, and globalization (Oswin, 2008). As such, queering planning can be framed in solidarity with broader spatial justice and anti-oppression movements. This broadened scope actively extends the subject and impact of the literature beyond the study of queer space towards calls for engagement in actively queering and unsettling the practices, systems, and logics of planning (Doan, 2011; Forsyth, 2011).

4. Punk Space and Intersections With Queer Theory

Punk notoriously resists definition. The sparse but intriguing scholarship on punk space, from restaurants (Clark, 2004) to squats (Lohman, 2017), to zines (Pine, 2006), to music venues (Green, 2018), to everyday spaces and the urban underground (Sonnichsen, 2019) often draw on experiences of punk as political resistance, and as practices of mutual aid and community care. In his reflections on subcultural scenes, Straw (2015, p. 477) proposed to think of subcultural scenes as "ethical worlds shaped by the working out and maintenance of behavioural protocols," and as "spaces of mediation which regulate the visibility and invisibility of cultural life."

The grassroots, anarcho-punk, and DIY ethos in punk spaces are frequently presented in punk research as "not just creative practice but a sociopolitical lifeline for women, queers, people of color, and all those that dominant forces attempt to keep disenfranchised, unproductive and off-scene" (Nault, 2018, p. 15). Meanwhile, popular representations of punk white male youth subculture persist in coding punk as non-inclusive and hostile towards women, queer, and BIPOC folk while simultaneously erasing feminist, queer, and anti-racist legacies and struggles within punk (Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011; Gonzales, 2016; Reddington, 2016; Way, 2021).

Speaking from their own experiences at the intersections of punk and queer, a few scholars point to punk as queer space, as queer performance, as queer theory, as queer temporality (Cohen, 1997; Halberstam, 2003; Muñoz, 2006; Nyong'o, 2008). Nyong'o (2008, p. 108) writes that "the affinities between lesbian, feminist, trans, and gay people and the punk subculture was immediate, definitive, and far more enduring." By challenging the mainstream cis hetero male representations of punk from the outside and its presence in punk from the inside, these counter-narratives celebrate ways that women, queer folk, and people of colour have shaped and been shaped by punk.

In her work on youth subculture, McRobbie (1991) challenges the presumed non-participation of girls, for example, by distinguishing between presence and visibility. She argues that visibility, especially the visibility of popular representations, may "reflect the more general social subordination of women in mainstream culture" (McRobbie, 1991, p. 14) rather than the actual experience of their participation and contributions. McRobbie's challenge about presence and visibility leads to key considerations when investigating punk subculture, punk space, and experiences of non-inclusion within those spaces. While acknowledging that conflict, hostility, and discrimination are present in some queer-punk encounters, and that social hierarchies are reproduced in both queer and punk spaces, punk also offers important spaces of mediation, difference, and activism.

As counter-cultural spaces of community building and political resistance, punk can contribute to queering

planning. Punk experiences add to the non-normative voices who make visible the systems of social, spatial, and economic marginalization and who practice alternative community-based response to safety, diversity, and participation. Evaluating the impact on and response by punk music venues and scenes to cultural planning policies and creative revitalization strategies that target cultural spaces as catalysts for social and economic development can offer key critical insights on the sanitization, commodification, and displacement of countercultural spaces.

5. Diversity and Inclusion in the Ottawa Music Strategy

The OMS (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018) is an interesting example of contemporary cultural policy development and creative revitalization planning that directly references participation, safety, and diversity. The role of the OMS is "to develop a roadmap for how Ottawa can build on strengths and address challenges in a way that unleashes the potential of music to bring out the best in our community" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 3). Developed through community partnership and stakeholder consultation with the City, the OMS also serves as an example of the City's approach to strategic partnerships and public engagement.

The OMS sets a vision for Ottawa to become a "music city" by the year 2030. The strategy defines "music city" as having a vibrant music economy that is actively promoted by the city, noting that "music is a formidable social, economic and cultural catalyst" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 3). The first of eleven goals of the vision is that "music is an undeniable part of the Ottawa brand" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9). The strategy concludes with recommendations and implementation plans for both the City and for the music industry. The following close reading will consider how the OMS addresses diversity and inclusion, how it translates them into strategies for cultural development, and how it aligns community-led initiatives with the role of the municipal government and planning tools.

The strategic goal that "Ottawa is respected as the most inclusive music city in the world" anchors the OMS framing of and commitment to diversity and inclusion (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9). The elaborated definition of the goal states that by 2030 "barriers [will] have been removed to ensure equal opportunities for women, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, people with disabilities, Francophones as well as racialized, queer, trans, and other previously marginalized communities" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9).

Celebrating uniqueness and diversity, encouraging participation by breaking down barriers, and fostering collaborations are presented as key mechanisms for the production of a unique music identity for the city that "stands out on the global stage" and capitalizes on "music's value as an economic engine and catalyst for growth" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 10). Together, these guiding principles of the OMS all link the city's multicultural identity with inclusive participation and economic growth.

Whereas diversity and inclusion are promoted as desirable strengths, safety and underrepresentation are presented as the two weaknesses that need to be addressed. The OMS recommends promoting music spaces "that are safe and welcoming for all performers and audiences" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 15). The OMS recommends that the music industry "continue to coordinate initiatives to increase participation among youth and women" and "develop a long-term strategy break down barriers for underrepresented communities" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 21). The implementation plan, however, is limited to addressing these issues through sexual assault training and safe space standards and certification.

The final goal of the OMS vision for 2030 is that "the City helps lead the way," acknowledging the existing role the municipal government plays in the music scene and identifying new ways for the City to be "a global leader in fostering music city growth" and work with the sector to "fully achieve its music resources, fill key gaps, and remove obstacles" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 10). Opportunities for city leadership are included in several recommendations. The OMS recommends promoting a "music-friendly regulatory environment" including improved consultation and collaborations between the City and music industry stakeholders, and "exploring opportunities to support music venues in a planning policy context" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 13).

As a City initiative for strategic partnerships with the creative industries, the OMS connects the development of the music industry "with business, entrepreneurship and the larger creative economy," and as an "important element of the City's economic development agenda" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 6). City supports of the local music scene are framed in terms of strategic investment with their expected returns for the broader economy.

The timing of the OMS in relation to Ottawa city plans mean that it first responded to and was influenced by the Ottawa 20/20 Official Plan (2003), the Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture (RAPAHC) in Ottawa (2013), and updates to the economic development strategy in 2017. When the City began consultations on a new official plan in 2018, the OMS and related music industry partners were well positioned to influence the development of new cultural planning policies. The new Ottawa Official Plan was adopted by City Council in Fall 2021. The following section will examine how these key governing documents also address diversity and inclusion, and cultural development of creative spaces.

6. Creative Revitalization and Economic Development in Municipal Plans and Policies

In 2003, the City of Ottawa introduced the Ottawa 20/20 Growth Management Plans to "provide long-term strategic direction and form a comprehensive blueprint for the future of Ottawa and its communities" (City of Ottawa, 2003, p. 2). The Ottawa 20/20 Plans included the Official Plan, Arts and Heritage Plan, Human Services Plan, Economic Strategy, and Environmental Strategy. Growth management, economic clusters, and creative cities are all prominent concept throughout the plans, likely a reflection of Richard Florida acting as a key consultant in the development of the plans and the influence of the high-tech industry that thrived through the 1990s.

The first two guiding principles of Ottawa 20/20 point to these influences and how they would shape both planning and cultural policy in the city. The first principle is for "a caring and inclusive city" including that "all people feel safe," that "everyone has the opportunity to fully participate," and "the people of Ottawa respect and celebrate cultural and social diversity" (City of Ottawa, 2003, section 1.3). The second principle is to foster "a creative city rich in heritage, unique in identity" where local arts and heritage provide "a path to creativity and innovation, and a sense of who we are" (City of Ottawa, 2003, section 1.3). These two guiding principles offer critical insight for interpreting how diversity and inclusion values intersect with creative revitalization and economic development priorities across an array of planning and cultural policies.

The majority of cultural policies in the Ottawa 20/20 Growth Management Strategy are found in the Human Services Plan and the Arts and Heritage Plan. However, the Official Plan frequently refers to culture, creativity, inclusion, and diversity as contributing to liveability and as key growth strategies (sections 2.5 and 3.6). In particular, the Ottawa 20/20 Official Plan focuses on substantial growth and enhancement of the Central Area as a strategic directions for overall growth management over its 20-year mandate. The Official Plan introduces policies to support the Central Area's role as "the economic and cultural heart of the city and symbolic heart of the nation," to "enhance the diversity and attractiveness," and to "promote a common vision, vitality and development in the downtown" (City of Ottawa, 2003, section 3.6.6).

The RAPAHC that replaced the Ottawa 20/20 Arts and Heritage Plan makes even more explicit reference to creative cities, creative placemaking, and culture as the strategic link between economic growth and improved liveability. In the introduction, the RAPAHC (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 6) states: "The role and place of culture within the creative economy and the liveable city have been well researched and described by leading thinkers, economists and historians. Ottawa is ripe with enormous cultural potential and opportunities."

The RAPAHC recommended strategies and actions direct the City to "celebrate," "develop," "promote," and "invest in" the "unique cultural identity" and "creative places and spaces" (City of Ottawa, 2013, pp. 15–24). The plan offers the rationale that these cultural strategies not only "build access to culture for all," they will generate the economic and social returns that are "key to Ottawa's prosperity" (City of Ottawa, 2013, pp. 15, 23). Placemaking enters the City's cultural policy as a specific approach for linking cultural economic opportunity with place-based development:

> Place-making makes good economic sense, and smart cities develop communities in which people want to live, work and play. Creative talent chooses to live in places that are authentic and creative; businesses locate to places in which their employees have access to a rich menu of cultural opportunity; and tourists seek out unique cultural experiences. (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 17)

Also noting the unique diverse multicultural identity of Ottawa, the RAPAHC highlights the opportunity of recognizing and celebrating Ottawa's cultural assets: "Access to cultural opportunities and cultural participation for the full diversity of Ottawa residents will encourage social cohesion, civic engagement and safer, healthier neighbourhoods" (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 15). In this description, cultural assets include not only diverse cultural spaces but also a diverse creative class: "Young, new, distinct, emerging and re-emerging cultural voices are vital. They balance, challenge and complement established expression, often ushering in rebirth and revival" (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 15). City policies frequently present diversity and inclusion as both cultural asset and strategic opportunity.

With the introduction of a New Official Plan, the City highlights culture as one of five cross cutting issues essential to achieving the overall goal of "becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.1). The New Official Plan makes the case for integrating cultural policy into the land-use and growth management plan by recognizing how "cultural planning and the identification and development of cultural assets offers a way to improve quality of life, liveability and grow and diversify the economy" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.2.6) The plan continues that "cultural related policies in the Plan address the need for new development to consider the role of culture in creating a sense of identity and pursuing equity and inclusion" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.2.6).

With direct reference to the OMS, the New Official Plan sets an explicit cultural policy intent to "promote the arts as an important element of placemaking" and "strengthen the economic impact of the creative and cultural industries" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.2.6). As planning policy, these cultural planning intents will be applied to the development and evaluation of future development proposals, zoning regulations, and city projects for the next 25 years.

The next section introduces the creative revitalization and planned redevelopment at City Centre from a punk perspective of commodification and displacement. A brief personal story prompts alternative readings of who is included in and who is excluded from the inclusive music city vision set by the OMS and reaffirmed in the New OP. Select examples of how punk spaces have responded to the call for safer and more inclusive spaces are presented in contrast to the planning and policy strategies presented above.

7. Counter-Narratives of Difference and Subculture in Punk

> "Jam's over. We're going to the Monkey for a drink. You should come," my friend texts me.

It's late and rainy and cold. Just a little too far to walk, a little too cold to bike.

> "Take a taxi, I'll cover your drinks."

I never take taxis but maybe just this once. I get dressed, walk to the corner, and hail a cab.

> "Hi, I'm going to the Orange Monkey at City Centre," I tell the driver.
>
> "Where's that? What's the street?''
>
> "Well, City Centre is on City Centre Drive."

The Orange Monkey is a dive bar and pool hall at City Centre, a 1960s warehouse building and complex off an old rail line on the edge of the downtown core. It was once voted Ottawa's greatest eyesore. The studio where my band and many of my friends' bands have jam space had recently moved in upstairs and a new underground venue was starting to host shows.

> I give directions to the taxi driver. We pull up outside the Monkey.
>
> "Is this the place?" he says with concern. "I can't let you out here, miss. I don't think it's safe."

I saw what he saw. The expansive poorly lit parking lot with more potholes than cars. The sad crumbling concrete garage bays that look even sketchier in the rain. I know to him this unfamiliar decrepit environment codes this space as "not safe." But I know this space. I've been here many times. I know this bar. I have friends inside. It's ugly but that is part of what codes this space as punk.

Now, about eight years later, the garage bays are inhabited by a popular bakery, microbrewery, food truck turned bricks and mortar, bike shop, crossfit gym, axe throwing space, art gallery, fine dining pop-ups, and other trendy businesses. The new light rail transit station at the end of the street and planned transit-oriented-development that will include two of the tallest towers in Ottawa is, according to the development signage, set to become a "community hub." Many still get lost as they try to find this mystery space just outside common knowledge of the city, but the visibility, accessibility, and attractiveness of a rehabilitated City Centre are rapidly changing in ways that we know won't leave much space for punk.

Punk and punk spaces have long histories of being targeted and used as examples of the kind of unsafe and non-inclusive spaces Babely Shades, Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, and the City are working to change. Through mischaracterization and misunderstanding, punk spaces have become a stand-in for unsafe space and a launching pad for strategic rebranding and targeted for revitalization. My participation in the Ottawa punk scene and experiences in punk spaces in many other cities have challenged and changed my perception of what looks safe, where I am welcomed, and how I am invited to participate.

Despite a vocal few, many in the punk community have been sensitive to the message of the safe space movement, though not necessarily with its approach or its increasingly normative policies and regulatory environments. For many punks, punk venues are important if imperfect "safe spaces," spaces that embody punk anti-normative ethos, with long histories of at least working through present inequities, harm, and trauma towards anti-oppressive futures.

Both excluded from, and not entirely convinced of the increasingly popularized form of the safe space movement, many punk venues and promoters are engaging in alternative responses to the call for safer, more inclusive spaces. These focus on opening dialogue, beginning processes of reparations, and co-constructing ways forward while also recognizing and rooting the foundations of anti-oppressive values in punk history and ethos.

Sitting on the Outside (SOTO) is a local promoter self-described on Facebook as "underground punk, hardcore, rock in Ottawa by punks and weirdo's, for punks and weirdo's [sic]" (SOTO, 2021). SOTO also includes the following statement in the event description of all their event postings on Facebook (SOTO, 2020): "Sitting On The Outside is fundamentally opposed to sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and any forms of oppression. Disrespectful or oppressive behaviour towards the people attending the fest, or towards the venues won't be tolerated."

During its 2019 festival, SOTO organized a community discussion entitled *How to Build a Safer & More Inclusive Punk Community* (SOTO, 2019). Unfortunately, due to travel conflicts for the hosts from Montreal's Not Your Babe Fest, the event was cancelled. The discussion of safe space was organized around three key issues: sexual violence, diversity, and intoxication culture. Based on the event description, SOTO presents an introspective and co-constructed approach to safe space and inclusion:

> This workshop has been built to open a dialogue and question ourselves on the inclusivity of the punk community and toxic behaviours that can directly affect the security of the people in it. Can we really say that we are a safer space? (SOTO, 2019)

While acknowledging the scene is not free of toxic behaviours and social hierarchies, the punk scene remains sceptical of and resistant to externally imposed and enforced safe space strategies based in standardized policies, training, or certifications such as those recommended in the OMS. The event description continues: "This is not a meeting organized by one profiteering individual selling a magic formula for transformative justice, but rather an occasion to talk communally about our experiences, criticisms and how to improve our community together" (SOTO, 2019).

Similarly, local punk venue House of TARG offered a statement on social responsibility, poking fun at mainstream philanthropy, and emphasizing the tradition of mutual aid and benefit shows in the punk scene:

> The heartbeat of TARG is to serve our community and we will always be committed to that. We aren't exactly Bill Gates when it comes to philanthropy, but we strive to do what we can to make our limited resources available to friends, organizations & initiatives we believe in. (House of TARG, 2020)

Within the punk scene, similar community care and anti-oppression statements have adorned venue doorways and posters, zines, and repeated in songs and conversations as quintessential punk utterances since the 1970s.

8. Discussion

Both the OMS and New OP recognize the opportunity of music cities and set out strategic priorities and policies to mobilize culture as part of the social and economic development plans for becoming a more liveable and prosperous city for everyone. The predominant strategy follows the creative class narrative of promoting cultural assets and creative opportunities to attract the creative class and tourists who will in turn contribute to the economic development and revitalization that will attract more growth.

For the creative sector to realize its stated goals and full potential as an economic catalyst, the OMS identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the local music scene. The cultural diversity of local music is highlighted as one of the core assets that needs to be strengthened through cultural policy to address two key weaknesses: the lack of a recognizable brand and barriers to participation for underrepresented communities. The representation of diversity in these municipal policies recognizes the value of cultural branding for translating diversity into a unified city identity.

The curious phrasing of the goal that Ottawa will be "respected as the most inclusive"—rather than the goal to be inclusive—highlights the tension Music Cities place on creating both a sense of belonging and clear branding. City branding emerges around a progressive narrative where everyone feels welcome and safe, and where we celebrate our diversity as part of our identity. The OMS (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 2) asserts that "if Ottawa is to achieve its full creative potential, there must be a thriving music scene, where artists and entrepreneurs flourish, and that's instantly recognizable to people outside Ottawa." The importance placed on the visibility of diversity becomes apparent in strategy and policy statements where local music and the city are not just "recognized," but "respected," "celebrated,'' and "applauded" for their diverse representation and inclusive participation.

As policy directions, these creative placemaking and cultural planning reorient official plans and planning departments beyond strict land-use regulation towards seemingly progressive principles of safety, inclusion, and diversity. Yet, the very nature of diversity presents a challenge to producing a coherent brand identity and vision where "the local music industry is organized and visible" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 10). Many of the recommendations of the OMS translate these principles into recognizable representations of diversity in a shared space. This policy translation fails to reflect or protect the diversity and long histories of practices embedded in the space by existing and often marginalized groups.

As Summers (2019), Sarmiento (2021), Loh et al. (2022), and others argue, the explicit aspirations of placemaking policies towards economic development and the embedded logic of urban growth lead many equity-seeking groups to link cultural planning strategies such as the OMS to their ongoing erasures and displacement. Meanwhile, narratives of diversity and inclusion help to frame placemaking initiatives as progressive while reproducing social hierarchies and catering to privileged interests through the regulation, policing, and commodification of community spaces and practices.

At the same time, it needs to be acknowledged that many equity-seeking groups have mobilized the strategic opportunities of cultural policies and mainstream interest in placemaking to gain greater representation and voice in shaping cultural policies and community development projects. Project SoundCheck and the DIY Audio Workshop for Women+, for example, are community-led initiatives directly named in the OMS that open opportunities to improve the participation and representation of some previously marginalized groups. In Ottawa, new music festivals, existing festivals, and music venues have incorporated safe space training, safe space statements, and promote more diverse representation in booking performers.

Opportunities for broadening participation through procedural, participatory, regulatory, and spatial design

all seek to address inequitable exclusions within the limits of existing social structure and frameworks. Strategies to overcome barriers to achieve better representation and participation for underserved communities and underrepresented groups do not, however, address historic or ongoing systemic exclusions of those communities and groups. Inclusion strategies may improve the representation of diverse groups, but without an evaluation of the power structures and institutional frameworks, as called for by Hartal (2018) and Goh (2018), these strategies risk reproducing social and spatial inequities.

The shift in public perception and use of the City Centre complex and surrounding area over the past decade help to illustrate alternative readings of space and different relationship to its grit and revitalization. The repetition of common gentrification narratives sees the transformation from abandoned industrial space to a first wave of trendy businesses catering to a creative class, followed by municipal reinvestment in surrounding infrastructure and private redevelopment. The short lived use of the warehouse space as an underground music venue, the still grungy rehearsal studios, and the divey pool hall still on site continue to remain outside common public mental geographies of the site.

Punk presence on site in relation to its urban grit could be framed within the gentrification narrative (Woods, 2022). However, renewed public characterisations of punk as deviant, unsafe, and out of step with the desired municipal branding and economic development interests frame punk presence not as part of the revitalization but as part of why revitalization is needed. As a cultural form that does not contribute to a clear cultural identity brand of the city, punk presence in, and use of, the city become represented as unwelcomed and unwelcoming, unsafe, and anti-social. Cultural policy targeted at music industries is not likely to recognize punk as a legitimate cultural expression or as desirable diversity for the music city brand. Punk and punk spaces are coded as non-participant, non-productive, and non-reformable.

From a punk perspective, the narratives of diversity and inclusion promoted in public cultural policy are not about social transformation but are "where all difference is subsumed…and ends up looking a lot like the interests of those who are most powerful" (Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011, p. 7). Progressive framing of diverse representation and inclusive participation in public policy are understood instead as oppressive political projects for maintaining control. Understood in this light, they work to move deviance towards greater social coherence and social order, and to move the city towards a respectable identity and recognizable brand.

The homogenized, marketable, monoculture promoted through creative revitalization and cultural policy as an opportunity for economic growth acts as what Clark (2004, p. 25) critiques for being "a synthetic destroyer of locality and diversity." Clark argues that punk takes an ethical stance against capitalist pursuit of perpetual growth and economic development, observing how culture reduced to profitability undermines group structures of care and security. Growth, from a punk perspective, moves more people and places towards precarity than prosperity, perpetuating urban inequities and issues such as gentrification, displacement, policing, and poverty.

Unlike strategies to reform public policy to make diversity visible and valuable for the public as catalysts for growth, punk refusals of social inclusion challenge the narrative of "some fantasized moment of union and unity," and recognize instead "the conservative stakes in community for all kinds of political projects" (Halberstam, 2003, pp. 315, 318). The punk scene can be a radical space of anti-social belonging that is welcoming to those who remain unwelcomed by the dominant society. These anti-social scenes are exclusive spaces for the excluded, safe(r) from the control of social norms that code non-normative behaviour and being as deviant, undesirable, and undeserving. Punk spaces are important but imperfect spaces of difference and spaces for difference.

The statements by SOTO and the House of TARG both point to ongoing and evolving community care-based practices of navigating and challenging the reproduction of social inequities and hierarchies in community spaces. The antiracist punk ethos recognizes that oppressive social orders cannot be dismantled through universal unity and consensus that centre and concede to power structures and institutional frameworks. By participating in shaping and reshaping "ethical worlds shaped by the working out and maintenance of behavioural protocols" (Straw, 2015, p. 477), in response to callouts against unsafe, racist and misogynist behaviours, the scene first recognizes that these are symptoms of and inseparable from oppressive systems of social, spatial, and economic marginalization of broader society in which they operate.

9. Conclusions

Cultural policy and creative placemaking strategies for reimagining Ottawa as a music city do make space for diversity and inclusion insofar as they contribute to the normative city-building project. Whereas cultural policy frames inclusion, diversity, and safety within the vision to be recognized as the most diverse music city in the world as a catalyst for economic development, queer and punk critiques of cultural planning policies and strategies raise concerns over the sanitization, commodification, and further marginalization of diverse cultural practices, spaces, and communities. The progressive planning goal of becoming recognized as "the most inclusive music city in the world" risks translating diversity into a brand, inclusion into productive participation, and safety into personal feelings.

Queering planning helps to complicate motivations and systems that structure inclusion and participation, to make visible the limitations of formal planning mechanisms, and to centre marginalized and/or alternative voices and practices. In thinking about queering planning

as a call for more than creating or preserving queer spaces, as more than the inclusion and representation of queer folk, this article considers countercultural punk practices and punk spaces as participating in intersecting ethics of anti-oppression and spatial justice.

By holding space for conflicting and imperfect spaces of activism, resistance, and alternative practices, I argue it is possible to build solidarity between punk, queer, queer punk, and other marginalized and/or alternative groups. By turning critical attention to the planning policies and political processes that they are all operating within and against, we leave space for the radical possibilities of diverse social-spatial relations, and to support the continued struggle from multiple and intersecting margins to claim their right to the city.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank the Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies at McGill University, the McGill Queer Research Colloquium, Mary Bunch, and Annmarie Adams for their support in queering the early stages of the research presented here. Thanks also to the anonymous reviewers, the editors of *Urban Planning*, and the editors of this thematic issue, Alison L. Bain and Julie A. Podmore, for their thoughtful comments and suggestions throughout the preparation and revision of this article. Finally, thanks to members of the Urban Geography Lab at Carleton University for their feedback during the final revisions, and to Tracy Dransfield and Tara Landry for proofreading the final text.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Bell, D., & Binnie, J. (2004). Authenticating queer space: Citizenship, urbanism and governance. *Urban Studies*, *41*(9), 1807–1820. https://doi.org/10.1080/0042098042000243165

Broto, V. C. (2021). Queering participatory planning. *Environment and Urbanization*, *33*(2), 310–329. https://doi.org/10.1177/09562478211019377

Burns, R., & Berbary, L. A. (2021). Placemaking as unmaking: Settler colonialism, gentrification, and the myth of "revitalized" urban spaces. *Leisure Sciences*, *43*(6), 644–660. https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2020.1870592

City of Ottawa. (2003). *Ottawa 2020 official plan*.

City of Ottawa. (2013). *A renewed action plan for arts, heritage and culture in Ottawa*. https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/A_Renewed_Action_Plan_2013-2018_EN.pdf

City of Ottawa. (2021). *Ottawa official plan*. https://engage.ottawa.ca/8204/widgets/36458/documents/70507

City of Ottawa, & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition. (2018). *Ottawa music strategy*. https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/music_strategy_2018_en.pdf

Clark, D. (2004). The raw and the rotten: Punk cuisine. *Ethnology*, *43*(1), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.2307/3773853

Cohen, C. (1997). Bulldaggers, punks and welfare queens: The radical potential of queer politics? *GLQ: Gay and Lesbian Quarterly*, *3*(4), 437–485.

Doan, P. L. (2011). Why question planning assumptions and practices about queer space. In P. L. Doan (Ed.), *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice* (pp. 1–18). Ashgate.

Duncombe, S., & Tremblay, M. (2011). *White riot: Punk rock and the politics of race*. Verso.

Forsyth, A. (2011). Queering planning practice: Understanding non-conformist populations. In P. L. Doan (Ed.), *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice* (pp. 21–51). Ashgate.

Goh, K. (2018). Safe cities and queer spaces: The urban politics of radical LGBT activism. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, *108*(2), 463–477. https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2017.1392286

Gonzales, M. C. (2016). *Spitboy rule: Tales of a xicana in a female punk band*. PM Press.

Green, K. V. (2018). Trying to have fun in "no fun city": Legal and illegal strategies for creating punk spaces in Vancouver, British Columbia. *Punk & Post-Punk*, *7*(1), 75–92. https://doi.org/10.1386/punk.7.1.75_1

Halberstam, J. (2003). What's that smell? Queer temporalities and subcultural lives. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, *6*(3), 313–333. https://doi.org/10.1177/13678779030063005

Hartal, G. (2018). Fragile subjectivities: Constructing queer safe spaces. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *19*(8), 1053–1072. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2017.1335877

House of TARG. (2020). *Wizard social responsibility*. https://web.archive.org/web/20200316124029/http://www.houseoftarg.com/community

Lewis, N. M. (2013). Ottawa's Le/The Village: Creating a gaybourhood amidst the "death of the village." *Geoforum*, *49*, 233–242. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2013.01.004

Loh, C. G., Ashley, A. J., Durham, L., & Bubb, K. (2022). Our diversity is our strength: Explaining variation in diversity, equity, and inclusion emphasis in municipal arts and cultural plans. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *88*(2), 192–205. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2021.1936127

Lohman, K. (2017). Punk lives on: Generations of punk and squatting in the Netherlands. In K. Lohman (Ed.), *The connected lives of Dutch punks: Contesting subcultural boundaries* (pp. 61–101). Springer.

Markusen, A., & Gadwa, A. (2010). *Creative placemak-*

ing. National Endowment for the Arts. https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf

Markusen, A., & Gadwa, A. (2019). Creative placemaking: Reflections on a 21st-century American arts policy initiative. In C. Courage & A. McKeown (Eds.), *Creative placemaking: Research, theory and practice* (pp. 11–27). Routledge.

McRobbie, A. (1991). Settling accounts with subculture: A feminist critique. In A. McRobbie (Ed.), *Feminism and youth culture: From "Jackie" to "Just Seventeen"* (pp. 16–34). Palgrave Macmillan.

Misgav, C., & Hartal, G. (2019). Queer urban movements from the margin(s)—Activism, politics, space: An editorial introduction. *Geography Research Forum*, *39*(1), 1–18.

Muñoz, J. E. (2006). Queers, punks and the utopian performative. In D. Soyini Madison & J. Hamera (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of performance studies* (pp. 9–20). SAGE.

Nault, C. (2018). *Queercore: Queer punk media subculture*. Routledge.

Nyong'o, T. (2008). Do you want queer theory (or do you want the truth)? Intersections of punk and queer in the 1970s. *Radical History Review*, *100*, 103–119. https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2007-024

Oswin, N. (2008). Critical geographies and the uses of sexuality: Deconstructing queer space. *Progress in Human Geography*, *32*(1), 89–103. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132507085213

Pine, J. (2006). Cold press: Early punk fanzines in Canada's capital. *Volume!*, *5*(1), 27–46. https://doi.org/10.4000/volume.629

Podmore, J. A., & Bain, A. L. (2020). "No queers out there"? Metronormativity and the queer suburban. *Geography Compass*, *14*(9), Article e12505. https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12505

Pritchard, S. (2018). Place guarding: Activist art against gentrification. In C. Courage & A. McKeown (Eds.), *Creative placemaking: Research, theory and practice* (pp. 140–155). Routledge.

Reddington, H. (2016). *The lost women of rock music: Female musicians of the punk era*. Routledge.

Sarmiento, C. (2021). Not diverse enough? Displacement, diversity discourse, and commercial gentrification in Santa Ana, California, a majority-Mexican city. *Urban Studies*, *59*(9), 1782–1799. https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980211020912

Sitting On The Outside. (2019, June 7). *SOTO III—How to build a safer & more inclusive punk community* [Facebook event]. https://www.facebook.com/events/583368012184834/

Sitting On The Outside. (2020, June 4). *SOTO FEST IV* [Facebook event]. https://www.facebook.com/events/831720813912715

Sitting On The Outside. (2021). *Sitting on the outside* [Facebook profile]. https://www.facebook.com/sotofestottawa

Sonnichsen, T. (2019). *Capitals of punk: DC, Paris, and circulation in the urban underground*. Springer.

Straw, W. (2015). Some things a scene might be: Postface. *Cultural Studies*, *29*(3), 476–485. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2014.937947

Summers, B. T. (2019). *Black in place: The spatial aesthetics of race in a post-chocolate city*. The University of North Carolina Press.

Way, L. (2021). Punk is just a state of mind: Exploring what punk means to older punk women. *The Sociological Review*, *69*(1), 107–122. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026120946666

Woods, M. (2022). DC hardcore, gentrification and punk urbanism. *Punk & Post-Punk*, *11*(2), 159–174. https://doi.org/10.1386/punk_00128_1

About the Author

Sarah Gelbard is a PhD candidate at the School of Urban Planning at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. Her research interests include community planning, spatial justice, and place-based storytelling with a focus on alternative and counter-culture. She is a co-organizer of the Spaces of Struggle Research Group in Radical Planning. Sarah is also the lead singer and bass player in a local Ottawa punk band.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 187–196
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6509

Article

Pinkwashing Policies or Insider Activism? Allyship in the LGBTIQ+ Governance–Activism Nexus

Karine Duplan

Department of Geography and Environment, University of Geneva, Switzerland; karine.duplan@unige.ch

Submitted: 18 November 2022 | Accepted: 17 February 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
While there has been an increase in the rights and visibility of LGBTIQ+ people in (most) European countries, critiques of what is denounced as instrumentalization by public policies of LGBTIQ+ issues have also developed. In this context, one can ask how to qualify the strengthened relationships between governance and activism. In this article, I propose to explore the paradoxical articulation of the multiple sites from where the cause support can be enacted. Drawing on a Geneva-based ethnographic research project, I use the concept of governance–activism nexus to reflect on the liminal position of public officials in charge of implementing equality agendas. Troubling further the insider–outsider binary divide, I argue that they act towards a discrete queering of municipal governance from the inside, through the practice of allyship in solidarity. In so doing, this article offers future research perspectives for the study of urban/regional LGBTIQ+ activism and politics, while allowing us to question our own position as critical or activist researchers in the field of feminist and queer geographies.

Keywords
allyship; equality; Geneva; insider activism; pinkwashing; public policies; queer space

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

LGBTIQ+ urban movements have been extensively studied for their claims for legal and policy changes. Hegemonic representations have traditionally framed them as radical and authentic in contrast to institutional politics. While there has been an increase in the rights and visibility of LGBTIQ+ people in (most) European countries, critiques of what is denounced as instrumentalization by public policies of LGBTIQ+ issues have also developed. In this context, one can ask how to qualify the "interface between LGBT activists and the local state" (Podmore, 2013, p. 265), and whether these strengthened relationships work towards a more inclusive planning, or whether it serves as a site for the implementation of normalising policies. In this article, I propose a nuanced analysis of the fluid forms of coalitions and struggles at stake when it comes to the production of a more liveable city for all. I do so through an ethnographic research that accounts for the voices of public officials in charge of implementing equality agendas. I focus on the entanglement of municipal and cantonal levels of governance in Geneva, Switzerland (the latter referring to the largest administrative subdivision of the Swiss Federal State, responsible for the administration of its own territory in parallel to decisions taken at federal level. In the case of Geneva, the Canton is also referred to as the Republic and State of Geneva). This leads me to question whether or not the engagement of individuals within public institutions that support equality agendas qualifies as a form of activism. I propose to explore the paradoxical articulation of the multiple sites from where the cause support can be enacted. Relying on the concept of the governance–activism nexus, I examine how individual experiences allow for a discrete queering of municipal governance from the inside, through the practice of allyship in solidarity. In so doing, this article contributes to the recent discussions in geographies of sexualities and urban planning that seek to explore the complex relationship between LGBTIQ+ collectives

and public authorities by destabilising an assumed binary divide (see, e.g., Browne & Bakshi, 2013, 2016; Hartal & Sasson-Levy, 2017; Hutta, 2010; Podmore, 2013). It aims hence to extend inquiry beyond the prominent research frame that contrasts pinkwashing policies and authentic radical activism, while allowing us to question our own position as critical or activist researchers in the field of feminist and queer geographies.

I begin this article by locating my research within geographies of sexualities around issues of LGBTIQ+ activism in the social and political context of growing LGBTIQ+ rights. I then present the specificities of the case study, before presenting my methodological approach. Finally, I weave the specificities of the local context together with the voices of the interviewees to account for the liminal position occupied by public officials in charge of equality issues. This allows me to offer future research perspectives for the study of urban/regional LGBTIQ+ activism and politics and queer possibilities at more localised scales.

2. Navigating the Shifting Landscapes of Equality Through Activism

With the increase of LGBTIQ+ rights, most parts of the Western world qualify as "equalities landscapes" (Podmore, 2013). In the European context, LGBTIQ+ rights have been integrated as part of the democratic values of a "rainbow Europe" (Ayoub & Paternotte, 2014). This advance in LGBTIQ+ recognition and visibility is not unambiguous though, as it has strongly affected LGBTIQ+ social movements. LGBTQ+ activisms—as "political actions that seek to contest societal hetero—and cisnormativities, advocate for legal and policy changes, and create spaces for LGBTQ+ people" (Podmore & Bain, 2019, p. 43)—have increased from the late 1960s onwards in the context of sexual liberation and associated identity claims. Their spatial dimension helps tackling power relations by pursuing the transformation of "physical, social, cultural and symbolic space" (Misgav, 2015, p. 1211). As such, the gay neighbourhood, as both an iconic location of freedom for "gender outlaws" (Namaste, 1996) and a place of reterritorialization from the margins, has been considered as a key site of community social formation and political organisation (Blidon, 2011; Brown, 2015). While providing a space of refuge for some, the gay neighbourhood has nevertheless overlooked its exclusionary dynamic towards others. Through their sexual citizenship (Bell & Binnie, 2000; Richardson, 2018), wealthy white (cis-)males subjects are hence raised as a successful model of assimilation—the "new homonormativity" (Duggan, 2002)—referring to a "process of social, legal, and political change" (Brown, 2009, p. 1496) that is associated with neoliberal consumption (Bell & Binnie, 2004) and (heteronormative) family values (Volpp, 2017). This normalising of "(some) homosexual bodies as worthy of protection by nation-states" (Puar, 2013, p. 337) has been criticised for its collusion with homonationalist politics as it reduces reality to a simplistic picture that circumvents power relations (Ritchie, 2015) and further eludes other forms of queerness (Duplan, 2021). Homonationalism, as "dynamic binary processes of inclusion and exclusion" (Misgav & Hartal, 2019, p. 11), ignores the intersectional multiplicity of queer lives and positionalities (Puar, 2007). Moreover, homonationalism resonates pinkwashing (Schulman, 2012), consequently depicting an Other who is deemed to be intolerant, undemocratic, and illiberal (Hartal, 2015). This justifies violent policies towards the Others—be they subjects or countries (Haritaworn, 2010; Hartal & Sasson-Levy, 2018; Manalansan, 2005). Attention should be kept however on the place-based politics of the formation of homonationalism, to avoid universalising and to reserve the frame of analysis for state action only (Schotten, 2016).

Finally, the central locus of the "gayborhood" (Doan, 2015; Misgav & Hartal, 2019) has reduced LGBTIQ+ activism and identities to the urban, a bias which has been criticised as "metronormative" (Halberstam, 2005). The growing equalities landscapes have also resulted to a shift in activism that goes with the institutionalisation and professionalisation within social movements. While the emancipatory potential of queer has been partially domesticated (Warner, 1999), changes implemented in response to legislative transformation in LGBTIQ+ rights have nevertheless led to the emergence of new spatialities, alliances, and forms of activism (D'Emilio, 2006). Contesting the bureaucratically-planned policies of the neoliberal city, radical queer (urban) activism is thus posed as the authentic one that listens to queer needs (Johnston, 2017). This binary opposition is however not always clear. Browne and Bakshi (2013) argue for a "politics of ordinariness" that undoes representations of assimilation and depoliticization to account for LGBT activists' experiences who have been integrated within Brighton's local state institutions. In the case of funded LGBT centres in Israel, Hartal (2015) exposes how homonationalism involves dual politics, which are constantly (re)negotiated in relation to a specific time and space. Misgav (2015) maps the power relations at play in Tel-Aviv Gay-Center that enable discreet forms of queer radicality while channelling them into normative frames. In the case of the Brazilian LGBT movement, Hutta (2010) accounts for the articulation of neoliberal institutions and dissident activism, while Balzer and Hutta (2014), outlining the emergence of TransGender Europe, call for thinking further its dual politics by thinking through transversality.

Adding to these studies that search to complicate this divide, I call hence upon our responsibility, as critical or activist researchers, to further trouble this boundary-making process between homonormative/pinkwashing public policies and authentic radical activism. I propose to explore this tension through the investigation of the governance–activism nexus. The concept of nexus-politics (Flinders & Wood, 2018) accounts for the

connection of alternative forms of political participation with conventional politics. This results in a strategy of nexus politics, as the result of relationships that can either be grounded in antagonism, or seeking resolution and cooperation. Beyond political participation, the concept of nexus allows for the mapping of dilemmas, tensions, and opportunities that stem from the relationship between two spheres that are not otherwise connected. The governance–activism nexus works hence as a conceptual tool to expose the hinges and troubles manifested by the power relations at play over activists and institution relationships. Focusing on the institutional side of the nexus, I consider the existence of insider activists (Browne & Bakshi, 2013) as activists who work for statutory services. Located in a bridging position that goes beyond the state/no-state divide, I argue that they facilitate the connectiveness of the nexus through practice of allyship. While allyship can be broadly defined as the act of combating LGBTIQ+ discriminations and challenging heteronormativity from a straight position, I propose to embrace allyship as an ongoing critical practice (Nixon, 2019) that accounts for the power relations at stake within a supposedly homogeneous microcosm, in this case, the LGBTIQ+ community. This furthermore allows for self-reflection on one's own privilege within the community, as an act of solidarity with those whose voices are not accounted for (McKenzie, 2014). In so doing, I call for a deepening of what activism encompasses, blurring the insider–outsider boundaries and aiming to open up new paths in thinking about everyday engagement as a feminist practice of solidarity.

3. An Ethnographic Approach to Geneva Public Institutions

This article draws on ongoing ethnographic research in Geneva. While Geneva is globally touted as the international capital of peace, the Swiss context regarding LGBTIQ+ rights remains quite conservative. The Swiss gay movement only emerged in the late 1970s to speak out against the still-enforced policies that criminalised homosexuality (Delessert, 2012). In Romandie, the French-speaking area of Switzerland, community collectives tentatively organised from the 1980s, aiming to provide a dedicated space for the community (Roca I Escoda, 2013). Their contribution to public policymaking was then increased by the AIDS crisis, which acted as a trigger for a shift "from acting against the system" to "acting within the system" (Roca I Escoda, 2013, pp. 80–81). Since the late 1990s, European institutions have been adopting a normative framework that advances the visibility of LGBTIQ+ issues by introducing them to the legal framework of member states. This equality climate has definitively gained traction in activism in Switzerland, which has remained intertwined in European activists' networks despite being formally outside the European Union. However, it was not until July 2021, after years of community activism, that same-sex marriage became legal in Switzerland. Furthermore, while the extension of the criminal norm (*Art. 261 bis*) allowed the condemnation of homophobia as an act of incitement to hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation, it ignored the specificity of trans issues, leaving transphobic violence unrecognised (see also Duplan, 2022). As the Swiss system allows the cantons and municipalities specific competencies, Geneva appears at both levels quite progressive. In 2002, long before the federal law on same-sex marriage, the State of Geneva passed a law on same-sex partnership (Roca I Escoda, 2010). The Office for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Violence, which aims to promote equality "regardless of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity" (République et canton de Genève, n.d.), counts a subcommittee dedicated to LGBTIQ+ issues that brings together representatives from various administrative bodies and community collectives several times a year. At the municipal level, a dedicated LGBTIQ+ position has been designated at the request of the community, which is part of an overall radical activist milieu in Geneva (Pattaroni, 2020). The position was founded after a foundational meeting referred to as "les Assises," with the political support of a left-wing elected representative who stood for years for gender and LGBTIQ+ equality. Finally, a dedicated LGBTIQ+ strategy, which is planned to run over the period 2020–2030, has been designed through seven axes. It addresses the need for an intersectional approach to protect those who are framed as vulnerable LGBTIQ+ demographics, such as women, the elderly, disabled, and trans people. In addition to combatting discrimination and violence, and equal access to municipal services, particular attention is given to enhancing visibility and disseminating queer culture and memory. Overall, LGBTIQ+ Geneva politics encompass a wide range of actions in various sectors, including health, culture, youth, and education. Such actions include the funding of one-off events or community collectives, awareness campaigns, and training, e.g., internal training within institutional services, such as the civil registry services or the police.

The data used in this article stem from a research project that focuses on the claiming of space and citizenship for sexual and gender minorities. I analysed data collected during ethnographic fieldwork within the LGBTIQ+ community, along with observations during events organised in public spaces by both community collectives and public action. I also observed open and internal institutional meetings and completed a document analysis of meeting minutes, brochures, reports, and institutional websites. I choose here to draw more specifically on semi-structured interviews with public officials and selected elected representatives from both the City and the State of Geneva, conducted from February to October 2022. While all public officials agreed to be interviewed, I chose to anonymise my data because the Geneva microcosmos is quite small. Interviewees are therefore referred by letters and their gender kept as neutral. Interviewees A, B, and C work at the municipal

level while D and E work as the cantonal level. In this article, I consider the tension that emerges from the strong dynamism of the two parts of the governance–activism nexus along with the critique of LGBTIQ+ policies that are denounced as pinkwashing by (part) of the community collectives. This ignites the question of whether or not the support provided through public action to the community is possibly a flagship of openness and tolerance for the city brand in the context of urban creative neoliberal modes of governance (Duplan, 2021). I examine hence the nature of the engagement of public officials in charge of gender and LGBTIQ+ equality-related issues, along three main roles that emerged from the analysis: the mediator; the advisor, and the lobbyist.

4. From a Community Bricolage to an Institutional Strategy: Public Officials as Mediators

In this section, I reflect on the importance of the institutional positions dedicated to equality working collaboratively with community collectives. The interviewees strongly acknowledge that their positions rely on the "strong support of the community collectives" (C). They emphasise that this history is reflected in a way of working that draws on the community's expertise, through an interactive process that is recognised as "ultra-beneficial" (A). Interviewee C develops:

> This year we are working on bodies, the body….One of the first recommendations that came out of the session was: beware of the objectification of bodies. So there you have it, we are really in this interactive process. I don't know if we can call it "participative," because participation obeys very precise rules, but in any case, there are quite strong exchanges.

In keeping with this collaborative objective, community collectives meet annually with the institutions, during an event described as "a privileged exchange where the associations and the supervisory elected officials really talk about projects that concern the city" (C). This event counts additionally as a space for community collectives both to raise their voices and concerns directly to the institution and to meet and gather with other collectives in a "networking and sharing place" that helps to "keep in touch" (C). While emphasising the importance of enhancing a meeting culture for sharing and knowing, the interviewees strongly underline that this has been developed over years through exploration. Interviewee C refers to this context as "a blank page" or a "greenfield" upon their arrival. They also call for "stop tinkering," referencing the new LGBTIQ+ strategy of implementing the municipal action plan by consistently consolidating what already exists. Other interviewees indicate that it is time to "move forward" and "provide the different departments with the means they need to achieve the ambitions set out in the strategy" (A). Interviewee E speaks of an "empirical way of working that now needs to be more systematised." They say they are tired of this institutional tinkering, having the feeling that their expertise and voice were impeached by institutional structure, and they were kind of wasting their time with no future for the projects and actions they wanted to implement. Interviewee E's situation is particularly interesting here since they later announce that they are considering quitting their position, an intention justified by their need of a more applied role.

The interviewees highlight how their position rely on serving the community. For instance, when talking about the 2022 equality campaign, which includes fat and queer women bodies, interviewee B describes that they, as the service, collectively privileged the needs and views of the collectives involved over the recommendations of the communication agency in charge of the campaign posters. While positioning themselves as spokespersons for the community collectives, they also have to know the community and local organisations from within. All the people I engaged with have a prior activist or associative background, or define themselves as engaged in some capacity. Most of them have a strong associative career path and C even talks about associative background as a "kind of a prerequisite" to work in a service in charge of gender and LGBTIQ+ equality issues. They underline the importance of being grounded in the local realities of the community and talk about trying at the best "not being above the ground" to better assess the ongoing challenges, needs, and difficulties encountered by the community (C). This local connection gives them legitimacy on both side of the nexus: within the community, in which they appear as a troubled insider, and within the institution, in which they can value their field expertise. It also emphasises the importance of both "activist capital" (Matonti & Poupeau, 2004) and "indigenous capital" (Ripoll & Tissot, 2010) when it comes to remaining connected to the field realities and facilitating proposals for inclusive LGBTIQ+ policies. Moreover, all the public officials I met working with gender equality issues identify as female and identify either as feminist or demonstrate a strong engagement in their previous background, and all those working with LGBTIQ+ issues are part of the community and have previously worked as activists or in nongovernmental organizations. This is illustrative of what is being forged as activist careers, which would deserve more scrutiny in terms of valued capitals (Colussi, 2023). Moreover, it is worth noting that if queerness appears as a criterion to work in a LGBTIQ+ dedicated position, my observations testify to a quite buffed queerness that closely matches homonormativity and hence reflects its dual politics.

What is also emphasised in the interviews is the dimension of expertise, which is defined in two ways. Firstly, it is defined as a knowledge that is acquired and maintained through relationships between collectives and public officials. Secondly, it is presented as a monitoring process that requires the ability to navigate the changing landscape and identify emerging voices in the

community, bringing them in contact with the institutional side of the nexus. Interviewee C explains:

> There are also more informal collectives that do not necessarily have access, that are sometimes a little reticent about public administrations, do not always have a good experience of public authorities, either on a personal or collective basis….Can we put ourselves within reach of these people? This also questions our practices a lot…how do we maintain a dialogue with an administration and all its rigidities, so that we are not just in an exchange with associations that have learned to format themselves for administrative dialogue?

Interviewee C smoothly emphasizes that it is important to not only be in dialogue with funded collectives to avoid a possible "sclerosing process." As such, they position themself discreetly as a kind of gatekeeper of what they see as possible over-institutionalisation of some collectives and associated drifts. However, this position as grounded front-runner does not rely only on the will of the actors only. It is also strongly articulated with self-positionality. Interviewee C explains how they reach their own limits when going out in an environment which does not correspond to their personal identification. These reflections show public officials engaged in a grounded work that emphasises contact and proximity with the collectives and the community at large. They embrace their role as mediators between collectives and policymakers, emphasising that they work to amplify silenced voices to institutions to improved inclusivity and treatment of the community. As such, they occupy a liminal position known as in-betweenness (Bhabha, 1994). Their voices also show the way in which they present themselves as experts, in the sense that they have the capacity to navigate within the community and to identify the ongoing issues and transformations. Their positionality may however be a barrier for their legitimacy in certain segments of the community, along with their journey towards the institution, denounced as a renunciation of the authentic values of activism. Wearing multiple "hats" hence does not come without personal costs either, as they "can expect to be challenged and critiqued and held accountable" (Browne & Bakshi, 2013, p. 261). With the implementation of an institutional LGBTIQ+ strategy, one may question whether public officials are offering "authentic" support and truly listening to queer people's and communities' needs (Duplan, 2021). This involves considering whether public officials are aware of pinkwashing and if they are consequently positioned to work adversely to these possible drifts.

5. City Self-Promotion or Authentic LGBTIQ+ Support? Public Officials as Advisors

The new institutional guideline related to the LGBTIQ+ strategy is presented as firmly anchored in the continuity of what previously existed, i.e., "put[ting] the associative expertise at the heart of public policy" (C). At the state level, interviewee E describes the main objective as to discuss the collectives' needs for effective, targeted and relevant public action. Interviewee D adds that the equality bill was the concrete result of consultative work with field actors, and the current project of mapping LGBTIQ+ violence is strongly grounded in the field. Interviewee C even minimises the role of the institution to privilege the one of the community in making a more inclusive queer city, by presenting Geneva as "more welcoming thanks to its rich network of associations than…to the City of Geneva." This is also present when they refer to the need for cultural change within the institution to make public officers understand that political competencies strongly rely on collectives' expertise. The conception, promotion, and implementation of a strategy labelled LGBTIQ+ also raises question about the possible discriminatory effects engendered by keeping apart LGBTIQ+ issues. While some interviewees argue for services and laws specifically dedicated to LGBTIQ+ persons, others stressed the need for a more transversal approach. Interviewee B refers to how important it is "that there is one person in charge of each theme, because this guarantees that the issues specific to each theme can be developed, and that the common issues can be worked on together." Interviewee E clarifies that "the political challenge is to centralise a law at the cantonal level, rather than adding to the various existing laws so that people who feel they are victims are recognised." In contrast, interviewee C mentions that the "LGBT strategy aims at transversal inclusion," meaning that all city services should individually address LGBTIQ+ needs. While divergent, these viewpoints are not in opposition, but rather point out the complementarity of perspectives and the work towards "reassembling of established differences" (Hutta, 2010, p. 157).

The vigilance towards possible political drifts in LGBTIQ+ support is very present in the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Lesbophobia and Transphobia campaign that takes place in the public city space. Interviewee A explains that the campaign is built *with* and *for* a community audience, while also raising the awareness of the general public. For they, the first challenge is that the general public must be addressed by the campaign in a way that does not produce "additional violence for those concerned," e.g., not representing pictures that victimize participants or reproduce harmful tropes. Interviewee A underlines that this fragile balance is difficult to maintain. They also insist that the role of representing LGBTIQ+ people in public space involves normalising models for the younger audience. They add that the campaign works as a claiming of public space for the community, "given that the public space is not neutral and predominantly cis hetero." A's assertion that such campaigns "make eyes that don't usually see these things see them" underlines how this works as a queering of the public space. Interviewee A also asserts how important it is for the city to position itself as a supporter

of LGBTIQ+ cause, while accompanying the campaign with a dedicated programme conceived with community collectives, to prevent pinkwashing. What counts for A is:

> To put forward values and say to the general public: "The city, as a public institution, supports the rights of LGBTIQ+ people. It is against discrimination against these communities…." That's it, to really make [its position] visible. If there is really this work of collaboration, of joint consultation, really this connection with the associations….I think that's what makes it possible to…not fall into simple self-promotion, with a big rainbow flag, you know.

For they, the campaign aims to raise awareness while allowing members of the community to feel represented and supported. The meaning of the term pinkwashing for public officials differs slightly from its academic use. By denying that they are working towards pinkwashing policies, they refer more to policies that would instrumentalise LGBTIQ+ lives to promote the city's gayfriendly image in line with supposed values of openness and tolerance, than to explicitly portraying of an illiberal and undemocratic Other. The case of Switzerland deserves hence a specific attention due to its regional location on the fringes of the European Union which means that it has to be both accepted and distinguished. The main argument put forward to prevent pinkwashing is the objective of inclusiveness: interviewee C emphasizes the need to "welcome the whole population" as "the motto" that guides the city's action and the need for the city "to adapt [its] offer to be inclusive of all specificities." This view, which is grounded in the everyday, relates well to feminist practices and may be a line of inquiry to keep in mind when attempting to assess how public action is performed and produced by public officials on a daily basis. Moreover, it allows for the consideration of whether public action is truly oriented towards everyday people, rather than towards global talents and transnational capital. As Geneva is part of the Rainbow Cities Network, one could oppose that such actions could be used to internationally spread a LGBTIQ+-friendly image of the city. Interviewee C strongly defends themself from this viewpoint:

> This is something we questioned a lot, especially at the beginning of the Rainbow Cities, where there was a fear that this "label," in inverted commas–the membership of the network–would be used as a marketing tool for the city…and that in the end the municipal action would be limited to that, just because we would be marketing to foreigners only, and that the local population would not be helped at all. This is really a concern we have.

Interviewee C also points that the city favours the network as a good-practice exchange network rather than a label of promotion. Finally, while the city is publicly encouraging its support to the cause, it is also capable of more discrete actions, for instance when it comes to the funding of community collectives' project. They explain that while it is supposedly mandatory to include the city logo, the city has allowed its exclusion for some funded events, acknowledging the possible tensions that city funding might engender for some collectives.

Public officials emphasise a bottom-up approach to public action that prioritises the everyday and the local, rather than the international and the external image, which then prevents from being labelled as pinkwashing. They also outline their role on the institutional side of the nexus as an attempt to integrate new ways of thinking, which appears to be crucial when it comes to the implementation of new laws or policies. As mentioned by interviewee D, it is not because a law finally exists that it is applied; while a law is an achievement, it must still be actualised. They explain that "it is also a question of training and raising the awareness of magistrates or lawyers who must apply or refer to this law so that it is really used to its full potential." The dedicated public officials are consequently required to advise the magistrates or boards, at both the municipal and the cantonal levels, to make relevant public policies that support the LGBTIQ+ community, as well as to educate internal public officials. Interviewee C highlights this at the municipal level, explaining that it became quickly apparent that their role went beyond supporting the collectives to include improving the internal functioning of the institution. They explain how the integration of queer issues has switched, over one decade, from fighting against overt discrimination, such as queer assaults, to considering how to implement queer-specific needs to create more inclusive work environments and better public reception. Interviewee B sees that "one of the big challenges is also to go…and work with the services and get them to integrate these issues, to provide them with advice when they are ready to accept the advice, or the…suggestions. And then to build projects with these services which are intended for the population."

This responsibility to raise awareness is presented as a step-by-step process, where they must wait for the people and services to be ready. This discreet position is supported by recent legislative changes inside and outside Switzerland, as "an evolution in society's sensitivity that also goes hand in hand with political and media sensitivity, and which means that these subjects are increasingly discussed" (D). All of this demonstrates the internal work that is done to implement laws and policies and raise awareness across all institutional services for LGBTIQ+ issues. Although it may take time for their expertise to be recognised outside equality-labelled services, public officials in charge of these questions are experts who draw on their grounded knowledge and ongoing contact with the communities. Although they seem unquestionably convinced of their action, the scope of their analysis remains difficult to assess. Deeply embodying their position, they express a flawless

professional performance in the service of an institution that is nevertheless inserted in a rainbow Europe subverted by homonormative neoliberal logics. In this, they bear witness to the dual dynamics of homonationalist policies that normatively orient the axes of governance while continuing to offer contextual possibilities of subversion (Hartal, 2015; Hartal & Sasson-Levy, 2017, 2018).

6. Insider Activists or Agents of New Neoliberal Governance? Public Officials as Undercover Lobbyists

The research participants demonstrate how they cultivate a patient and discrete work from within, with the aim of transforming the institution. Their words emphasise their commitment in a way that articulates with their personal convictions and values. For example, interviewee B evaluates that "it was a wish to be able to converge my personal commitments and…my professional career." Furthermore, the manner in which they speak denotes both their identification to the institution and the collective work that is done within the institution. For example, many of them refer to the structure they work for as their place, using "we" and "at our place" throughout their discussions. This work involves permeating the institution and creating change from within through a kind of uncover mode. Interviewee C talks about "a work of small hands in the shadows" that is done at municipal level. They also underline how they have to remind people working in various institutional services that they rely on the expertise of the community collectives. Interviewee C highlights that there is a crucial need for change in institutional culture, which "is still marked by a top down mentality." Discretely changing the culture of an institution from within is also described by interviewee D, who explains how the service they run succeeded in adding LGBTIQ+ related issues to the conference of equality delegates. This involved bending the initial aim of the conference in the absence of a network and budget that were specifically dedicated to LGBTIQ+ issues. While this illustrates the flexibility that delegates have, it also shows how they use this scope for action without proper institutional direction to align their mission with what they identify as priority issues. Public officials engage hence in a form of internal lobbying. Interviewee B convenes the metaphor of the Trojan horse to describe their work:

> We were doing somewhat invisible work to get them (municipal services) on projects. We often start with awareness-raising projects. We say to them, "Oh, we have this project, don't you want to collaborate?" And then we say, "Oh, well…the results…it would be nice to ask this and that as questions….What if we continue?" And then…[laughs] And then, little by little, we manage to set up programmes, or more structured actions actually. And often it starts with…a little Trojan horse that we…[laughs] that we push forward, like this.

This demonstrates that the research informants are aware of their liminal positions. Furthermore, it shows that they must use many tactics to advance political issues in the face of multiple boundaries. One of the biggest challenges pointed is the possibility of political switches that can occur with legislative changes. The interviewees described that processes of validation, written decisions, and budget guarantees are imperative to achieve long-term institutional transformation and change the institutional culture. Relying on their own commitment to the cause prevents thus public officials from simply being positioned as working agents of the neoliberal governance. When it comes to whether or not they identify as activist, or how they define their way of acting as such, responses vary. Interviewee A exposes how they split their life in two according to geographical area. They continue to be part of the activist milieu in the geographical area they live, which is out of the Geneva State, and stick to their representational role as part of an institution when at work:

> There is always a bit of tension, because when you have a job like that, well, you have the institutional hat, you have…you have to put aside your activist hat….I think maybe that [not living in Geneva] can help because I am perhaps less present directly in…the associative milieu here, or the festive and activist spheres. So here I'm mainly seen, perhaps, as the City of Geneva….And I can perhaps also have this slightly more activist life [laughs] in [the place where they live].

Interviewee B argues for a role that clearly refers to activism, asserting that the term should be avoided when talking within the institution:

> We'll try not to use this term [activist] too much so that it won't be misinterpreted or turned around, but I think there's an activist dimension. There's clearly a desire to transform and….Well, there's an idea of transforming institutions too. It's not just a question of "we'll do a few projects and then we'll have fulfilled our role," but of "how do we get the…the relationships to change?"….Power relationships are also internal, they are external, they are at the individual level, they are at the collective, systemic level, well….I think that this is also a bit of the vocation of this service, eh….Even if perhaps not everyone realises it….[laughs] What we are trying to do under the radar.

Finally, convening another register of action, interviewee C firmly contests the possibility that one can be an activist while working in such a role. At the same time, their positions themself as actor of change in relation to LGBTIQ+ issues, which can correspond to a certain definition of activism:

> On the other hand, my work is really built as…an actor of change. The idea is obviously to make the

> municipal administration progress in these areas, towards better things, towards this inclusion, towards more equality, equity….So….In that sense, it can be seen as activism, but it's not activism, actually. What I'm trying to get across is that it's part of the job. It's part of the roles and responsibilities of municipal governments to deal with these issues. So I voluntarily withdraw from activism actually, saying to myself: "But I'm not activist, I'm trying to think with you and help you to do your job, in fact, and to respond to…your responsibilities." And try to identify them and see the demands for action, and…but in fact it's always from an institutional perspective. It's never….It's never….For the "activism," in quotes.

Interviewee C points to the possible drifts that might be opened when one defines himself as an activist within the institution. He insists that the term activist should be kept away from the institutional sphere, to prevent it from being empty of its political and radical meaning:

> And also because I need activists. I need to have people in front of me or next to me or with me who come and poke the institution and say: "Yes, that's very good, but what are you doing concretely?"…Everyone has their own role. There are things you can't do when you're out, and things you can't do when you're in. But you can do other things. So there you go. That's…really what you have to…balance it all out. So afterwards, I try to push the wheel of change.

This empirical data clearly communicates the personal engagement of public officials in their institutional mission of supporting LGBTIQ+ communities. Beyond the interviews, this is also visible in their desire to take part in the research project, their interest in the research time frame and the future findings, and their availability. The role of a public official may thus be considered as a form of insider activism that allows individuals with strong personal convictions to actively facilitate societal and institutional change from within. However, as they attempt to reflect on their own privileges within the queer community, thanks to their position on the governance side of the nexus, I suggest that they may be described as "critical allies" (Nixon, 2019), who "help clear the noise that gets in the way of coalitional building rather than creating more of it" (Oswin, 2020, p. 14). This heuristic distinction also helps to retain the radical disruptive potential that the term activism carries with it, thereby offering potential future avenues of action for more liveable spaces for all.

7. Embracing the LGBTIQ+ Cause Field Through the Practice of Allyship

In a context where the spectre of pinkwashing is never far away, I have shown that public officials in charge of equality issues in Geneva consider their work by reflecting on their previous activist paths and engaging in grounded collaborative work both with community collectives and within the institution. The main findings illustrate the ongoing dialogue between activist collectives and public officials that join their forces together to increase the visibility of queer lives and concerns, and improve access to public spaces and services for those whose gender or sexual orientation might still be considered as an impediment. They also show the shadow work of those committed persons who infiltrate the institutional sphere with the goal of institutional change. Raising the voice of public officials sheds light on how public action is driven on a daily basis from the perspective of those in charge of its implementation. It also elucidates nuances in the opposition between authentic radical activism, as the exclusive practice of community collectives, and pinkwashing policies, as the assumed strategy of public action and actors.

Reflecting on everyday practices of action from within institutions helps moving beyond the fruitless insider–outsider divide. This prevents the simplistic reduction of those public officials to agents of neoliberal ideology by accounting for the ways homonormative and homonationalist politics are constantly reconfigured for the need of the cause (Hartal & Sasson-Levy, 2018). Moreover, it connects those practices to other existing forms of action that are more easily referred to as activism. It is through everyday practice of engagement within any institution, including academia, that we can collectively support the creation of safer queer spaces for marginalised segments of the community, so that "we might stop wasting time and finally work together to get to where we need to go" (Oswin, 2020, p. 14). I argue hence for accounting for an assemblage of practices that create new constellations. This will help thinking further together both sides of the governance–activism nexus as a shared LGBTIQ+ "cause field" (Bereni, 2021), allowing for a deeper exploration of the fragmented and often conflictual spatialities of collective action. In so doing, we must however be diligent not to fall into a "hermeneutics of faith" (Josselson, 2004) and to continue investigating the power relations at stake within the queer cause field (Colussi, 2023) at all scales of action.

To complement this analysis, more research has to be done with the activist side of the nexus to raise up the community collectives' voices and acknowledge their diversity (Bain & Podmore, 2021). Based on initial insights from the Geneva case, some community members advocate for a plurality of modes of action to enhance dialogue with politicians, while carrying out more radical actions in parallel. This will notably open to further reflections on the professionalisation of certain activist paths at the interface of political. Finally, it would be interesting to research further the city's participation in international networks linked to the international Geneva, such as the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association; Egides; or Rainbow Cities Network. This will help better understand

the entanglement of political issues from a translocal perspective, while reflecting deeper on the "paradoxical possibilities of new worldings" (Hutta, 2010, p. 154) offered by the continuous remaking of power relations in the field.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the various actors I met during the fieldwork. My thanks also go to the two anonymous referees for their very constructive comments on an earlier version of this article. Finally, I would like to thank the Maurice Chalumeau Centre for Sexual Sciences of the University of Geneva, for the funding of this research.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Ayoub, P., & Paternotte, D. (Eds.). (2014). *LGBT activism and the making of Europe: A rainbow Europe?* Palgrave Macmillan.

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2021). Placing LGBTQ+ urban activisms. *Urban Studies*, *58*(7), 1305–1326.

Balzer, C., & Hutta, J. S. (2014). Trans networking in the European vortex: Between advocacy and grassroots politics. In P. Ayoub & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *LGBT activism and the making of Europe: A rainbow Europe?* (pp. 171–192). Palgrave Macmillan.

Bell, D., & Binnie, J. (2000). *The sexual citizen: Queer politics and beyond*. Polity.

Bell, D., & Binnie, J. (2004). Authenticating queer space: Citizenship, urbanism and governance. *Urban Studies*, *41*(9), 1807–1820.

Bereni, L. (2021). The women's cause in a field: Rethinking the architecture of collective protest in the era of movement institutionalization. *Social Movement Studies*, *20*(2), 208–223.

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. Routledge.

Blidon, M. (2011). En quête de reconnaissance. La justice spatiale à l'épreuve de l'hétéronormativité [In search of recognition. Spatial justice in the face of heteronormativity]. *Justice Spatiale/Spatial Justice*, *3*, 1–13.

Brown, G. (2009). Thinking beyond homonormativity: Performative explorations of diverse gay economies. *Environment and Planning A*, *41*(6), 1496–1510.

Brown, G. (2015). Rethinking the origins of homonormativity: The diverse economies of rural gay life in England and Wales in the 1970s and 1980s. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *40*(4), 549–561.

Browne, K., & Bakshi, L. (2013). Insider activists: The fraught possibilities of LGBT activisms from within. *Geoforum*, *49*, 253–262.

Browne, K., & Bakshi, L. (2016). *Ordinary in Brighton? LGBT, activisms and the city*. Routledge.

Colussi, G. (2023). *Faire du militantisme son métier. Carrières militantes, salariat et professionnalisation dans le milieu militant LGBTIQ+ en Suisse romande* [Making activism a profession. Activist careers, employment and professionalisation in the LGBTIQ+ activist milieu in French-speaking Switzerland] [Master's thesis, University of Geneva]. Archive ouverte Unige.

Delessert, T. (2012). Le "milieu" homosexuel suisse durant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale [The Swiss homosexual "milieu" during the Second World War]. *Cahiers d'histoire. Revue D'histoire Critique*, *119*(2012), 65–78.

D'Emilio, J. (2006). The marriage fight is setting us back. *The Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide*, *13*(6), 10–12.

Doan, P. L. (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities*. Taylor & Francis.

Duggan, L. (2002). The new homonormativity: The sexual politics of neoliberalism. In R. Castronovo & D. D. Nelson (Eds.), *Materializing democracy: Toward a revitalized cultural politics* (pp. 175–194). Duke University Press.

Duplan, K. (2021). The sexual politics of nation branding in creative Luxembourg: A queer perspective. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, *20*(3), 272–293.

Duplan, K. (2022). Toward a queering of the right to the city: Insights from the tensions in LGBTIQ+ politics in Geneva, the "capital of peace." In M. Blidon & S. D. Brunn (Eds.), *Mapping LGBTQ spaces and places. A changing world* (pp. 323–340). Springer.

Flinders, M., & Wood, M. (2018). Nexus politics: Conceptualizing everyday political engagement. *Democratic Theory*, *5*(2), 56–81.

Halberstam, J. J. (2005). *In a queer time and place: Transgender bodies, subcultural lives* (Vol. 3). NYU Press.

Haritaworn, J. (2010). Queer injuries: The racial politics of "homophobic hate crime" in Germany. *Social Justice*, *37*(119), 69–89.

Hartal, G. (2015). The gendered politics of absence—Homonationalism and gendered power relations in Tel Aviv's Gay-Centre. In K. Browne & E. Ferreira (Eds.), *Lesbian geographies: Gender, place and power* (pp. 91–112). Ashgate.

Hartal, G., & Sasson-Levy, O. (2017). Being [in] the center: Sexual citizenship and homonationalism at Tel Aviv's Gay-Center. *Sexualities*, *20*(5/6), 738–761.

Hartal, G., & Sasson-Levy, O. (2018). Re-reading homonationalism: An Israeli spatial perspective. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *65*(10), 1391–1414.

Hutta, J. S. (2010). Paradoxical publicness: Becoming-imperceptible with the Brazilian lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement. In N. Mahony, J. Newman, & C. Barnett (Eds.), *Rethinking the public: Innovations in research, theory and politics* (pp. 143–162). Policy Press.

Johnston, L. (2017). Gender and sexuality II: Activism. *Progress in Human Geography*, *41*(5), 648–656.

Josselson, R. (2004). The hermeneutics of faith and the hermeneutics of suspicion. *Narrative Inquiry*, *14*(1), 1–29.

Manalansan, M. F., IV. (2005). Race, violence, and neoliberal spatial politics in the global city. *Social Text*, *23*(3/4), 141–155.

Matonti, F., & Poupeau, F. (2004). Le capital militant. Essai de définition [Activist capital. An attempt for definition]. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, *2004*(5), 4–11.

McKenzie, M. (2014). *Black girl dangerous: On race, queerness, class and gender*. BGD Press.

Misgav, C. (2015). With the current, against the wind: Constructing spatial activism and radical politics in the Tel-Aviv Gay Center. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, *14*(4), 1208–1234.

Misgav, C., & Hartal, G. (2019). Queer urban movements from the margin(s)—Activism, politics, space: An editorial introduction. *Geography Research Forum*, *39*(1), 1–18.

Namaste, K. (1996). Genderbashing: Sexuality, gender, and the regulation of public space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *14*(2), 221–240.

Nixon, S. A. (2019). The coin model of privilege and critical allyship: Implications for health. *BMC Public Health*, *19*(1), 1–13.

Oswin, N. (2020). An other geography. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, *10*(1), 9–18.

Pattaroni, L. (2020). *La contre-culture domestiquée* [The domestication of counter-culture]. Métis Presses.

Podmore, J. A. (2013). Critical commentary: Sexualities landscapes beyond homonormativity. *Geoforum*, *49*, 263–267.

Podmore, J. A., & Bain, A. L. (2019). On the edge of urban "equalities": Framing millennial suburban LGBTQ+ activisms in Canada. *Geography Research Forum*, *39*(1), 43–66.

Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times*. Duke University Press.

Puar, J. K. (2013). Rethinking homonationalism. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *45*(2), 336–339.

République et canton de Genève. (n.d.). *Bureau de promotion de l'égalité et de prévention des violences* [Office for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Violence]. https://www.ge.ch/dossier/promouvoir-egalite/institutions-partenaires/bureau-promotion-egalite-prevention-violences

Richardson, D. (2018). Sexuality and citizenship. *Sexualities*, *21*(8), 1256–1260.

Ripoll, F., & Tissot, S. (2010). La dimension spatiale des ressources sociales [The spatial dimension of social resources]. *Regards sociologiques*, *40*, 5–7.

Ritchie, J. (2015). Pinkwashing, homonationalism, and Israel–Palestine: The conceits of queer theory and the politics of the ordinary. *Antipode*, *47*(3), 616–634.

Roca i Escoda, M. (2010). *La reconnaissance en chemin: L'institutionnalisation des couples homosexuels à Genève* [Recognition on its way: The institutionalisation of same-sex couples in Geneva]. Seismo.

Roca i Escoda, M. (2013). De la dénonciation du droit à la conquête des droits. Le cas des mobilisations homosexuelles [From denouncing the right to conquering rights. The case of homosexual mobilizations]. In B. Frère & M. Jacquemain (Eds.), *Résister au quotidien?* [Resisting in everyday life?] (pp. 55–86). Presses de Science-Po.

Schotten, C. H. (2016). Homonationalism: From critique to diagnosis, or, we are all homonational now. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *18*(3), 351–370.

Schulman, S. (2012). *Israel/Palestine and the queer international*. Duke University Press.

Volpp, L. (2017). Feminist, sexual, and queer citizenship. In A. Shachar, R. Bauböck, I. Bloemraad, & M. Vink (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of citizenship* (pp. 153–177). Oxford university Press.

Warner, M. (1999). *Fear of a queer planet: Queer politics and social theory*. University of Minnesota Press.

About the Author

Karine Duplan is a senior lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environment at the University of Geneva. Her research focuses on the spatial dimension of inequalities and privileges. She draws on feminist and queer theories to unpack the everyday discursive and material production of heteronormativity and its discriminatory effects as well as on the modes of transformation and contestation of heteronormative power.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 197–207
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6321

Article

Planning in the "LGBTQ Capital": Choreographing Transgender In and Out of Policy

Matt C. Smith [1,*], Paul Gilchrist [2], and Jason Lim [2]

[1] School of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Brighton, UK
[2] School of Applied Sciences, University of Brighton, UK

* Corresponding author (mcsmithresearch@gmail.com)

Submitted: 26 October 2022 | Accepted: 11 February 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
Greater consideration of transgender communities within planning has been called for from research highlighting their absence in policy and practice. However, there is little work that outlines how trans is considered within current planning practice. This article presents an empirical case study of how trans becomes articulated into city-level policy and practice in Brighton & Hove, the "LGBTQ capital" of England. A poststructural approach is used to analyse how trans is problematized within planning documents and interviews with planning practitioners. We develop the concept of "choreographing" to reflect the constrained rhythms and selective positioning at work in the articulation of trans in and out of planning policy and practices. By tracing the only consideration of a specific identified need of the transgender population in Brighton & Hove planning policy, we evidence the previous siloing of these concerns that positioned them in relation to other municipal services, but not planning. We show how interpretive practices within a Health and Equalities Impact Assessment process do not allow the specific needs of trans people and communities to be considered, instead positioning trans people as having greater "sensitivity" to generic changes in the built environment. This research concludes that current planning practices can facilitate the consideration of trans communities in planning and policy-making, yet simultaneously constrain and inhibit the ability to enhance trans liveability in the city. This article opens up theorizing into how consideration of trans and LGBTQ communities and knowledge are integrated into planning processes and calls for a creative disruption of current practice.

Keywords
Brighton; choreography; gender; impact assessment; LGBTQ; municipal planning; policy; transgender

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

This article explores how transgender is problematised within the contemporary planning policy and practice of an English municipal authority. It develops the idea of "choreography" to understand how transgender becomes a presence or an absence in policy, and how the usage of impact assessments as a technique for the "embedding" of equalities concerns in local planning policy facilitates the invisibility of LGBTQ communities. The concept of choreography allows an analysis of the complex orchestration of how knowledges, meanings, interpretations, claims, and capacities for action are brought into relation with one another, configured and reconfigured, as well as reworded, omitted and erased in policy documents, discourse, and practice. It attends to the intentionally and unintentionally co-ordinated movement of these knowledges, meanings, and capacities for action onto and off the stage of policy consideration during iterative policy-making processes. Choreography

often operates through established ways of thinking and doing within an applied discipline. A choreographic lens helps to understand how transgender is selectively positioned within the temporal rhythms of the planning process. This approach contributes to a much-needed understanding of how transgender is problematised as "equalities," and how professional and institutional practices articulate transgender to make it intelligible to planning practitioners within the status quo. A twofold case study shows, firstly, how transgender became explicitly articulated into a planning policy document that offers guidance on spatial design, and secondly, how transgender is considered within impact assessments conducted on the Local Plan.

In this article the term LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) is used when referring to sexual and gender minoritized people. In the analysis the category "LGBT" is often used as this is the category used in planning documents. "Trans" is used as an umbrella term for a wide range of sex/gender experiences that are outside of the narrow cisgender binary that assigns sex/gender at birth. In planning documents transgender is referred to but more often is collapsed in with LGBT. The burgeoning literature on LGBTQ communities that seeks to *queery* planning has contributed significantly to understandings on how planning can operate to (re)produce heteronormative and heterosexist assumptions and practices (Berry et al., 2021; Doan, 2011a, 2015; Frisch, 2002). However, how trans specifically is included in the planning process remains under-researched. Similarly, trans geographies attend to the spatial embodied lived experiences of trans people without following up on the implications for planning (see Doan, 2010; March, 2021; Todd, 2021). Therefore, a working knowledge of how trans lives come to feature (or not) in planning is needed in order to be able to disrupt and practice the profession otherwise.

An overview of trans-focused planning research precedes a consideration of the role of LGBT equality in British municipal government and the adoption of techniques such as impact assessments. This section concludes by introducing "choreography" to understand policy and practice dynamics in planning. The methodology outlines the poststructural approach taken to planning policy and practice in Brighton & Hove. Brighton & Hove has been termed the putative "gay capital" of the UK (Browne & Bakshi, 2013; Browne & Lim, 2010). Here we use the term "LGBTQ capital" in recognition of increased visibility and organisation of trans communities in the city—such as the biggest Trans Pride in Europe, held annually since 2013. Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) states it has adopted a "trans-inclusive approach" (BHCC, 2021a) and undertaken initiatives such as a Trans Needs Assessment (TNA; Hill & Condon, 2015). Brighton & Hove resides within England which has been termed a "progressive" LGBTQ legislative context, primarily because of "sexual orientation" and "gender reassignment" being protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (Browne et al., 2021). The findings present choreographed articulations of trans in planning policy and practice that grants trans an intelligibility. This positioning of trans potentially opens space for a disruption of cisheteronormative planning, but simultaneously constrains the possibilities for a radical trans-inclusive planning practice. The impact assessment is a key process in the discursive work of "embedding equalities" and meeting statutory equalities obligations, while concurrently classifying and regulating trans as a "sensitive" population. Current planning practices articulate a liberal political rationality of equality that decouples difference from unequal relations of power and improvements in liveability (see Browne et al., 2021; Butler, 2004). This article contributes to understandings of how social difference, here trans, is problematised, classified and regulated within planning by focusing on the empirical practices of a municipal authority.

2. Trans in Planning Research and English Municipal Equalities Practice

2.1. Trans Inclusion and Exclusion in Planning

The primary consideration of trans in the field of planning is in Petra Doan's work (2001, 2007, 2010, 2011b). Doan introduces the "tyranny of gender" to consider the consequences of the binary gendering of space for gender-variant people. This tyranny of gender refers to an amalgamation of systemic cissexism, transmisogyny, and transphobia that result from the normalisation and privileging of binary cisgender identities (see also Serano, 2007). It produces marginalisation across public institutions and spaces, housing, transportation, and facilities such as toilets (Doan, 2010, 2011b). Doan's (2011b, p. 105) work emphasizes the need for planning policy "that does not exclude or render [trans people] invisible" and can increase public safety (see also Namaste, 1996). One clear way is in the (re)design of sex-segregated spaces such as toilets and changing rooms (Doan, 2011b). Research focused on the UK highlights the need for trans-inclusive design of toilets within the context of the discursive production of these sites aimed at trans-exclusion (Jones & Slater, 2020; Marshall, 2021). Lubitow et al. (2017, 2020) focus upon "transmobilities" and the discrimination and harassment faced by trans transit users. They argue that transportation planners must understand the differential mobilities of trans people and communities and how characteristics of certain modes of travel, such as the confined space of public transit, can reproduce marginalisation. Research on the decline of LGBTQ+ nightlife venues in London, UK, shows that trans people with intersecting oppressions are the most adversely affected by a lack of access to community-specific spaces (Campkin & Marshall, 2017). A few limited planning mechanisms such as Asset of Community Value status (under the Localism Act 2011) have been deployed to protect some venues in recognition of their contribution to a wider cultural

infrastructure (Campkin, 2020; PlanningOut, 2019). This approach aims to protect certain venues but is the recognition in planning of only one need amongst many for LGBTQ people (Catterall & Azzouz, 2021). Lastly, geospatial policies governing sex work have been enacted to exclude and seclude marginalised trans bodies within urban space (Edelman, 2011, 2014; Sabsay, 2013).

Doan's work, alongside others, offers a powerful call for planning practitioners to develop practices that can reduce the inequalities experienced by trans people, and it challenges the tendency within feminist planning to rely on binary gender constructions (cf. de Madariaga & Neuman, 2020). Outside of planning, trans geographical research has contributed to understandings of the spatialities of trans lives and the non-binary experiences of euphoria, recognition, *and* harassment and marginalisation, for example in public spaces, housing, and "queer" spaces (see March, 2021; Todd, 2021). In relation to Brighton & Hove it has been described as both welcoming and accepting for trans people and "as a site of abuse, prejudice and discrimination" (Browne & Lim, 2010, p. 627). While research has begun to explore trans lives in relation to the built environment, there is a need for further research on how the functioning of planning practice and processes opens and forecloses possibilities for how, when, where, and what may be included when trans is considered. This article seeks to begin to address this by providing examples of how trans has become incorporated into current planning policy.

2.2. Municipal Government LGBT Equality Practices

Planning in the UK is primarily a land-use system, highly fiscally centralised within the internal devolved nations—with municipal authorities' decisions structured by national legislation—and has been subject to multiple neoliberalising reforms (Lord & Tewdwr-Jones, 2014). Planning applications are generally decided case-by-case by municipal authorities. Decisions should take place in reference to "local plans"—spatial planning documents drawn up by municipal authorities in consultation with local communities and various stakeholders setting out a vision for future land developments. In the UK, guidance for planners on inclusive design, policy, and practice for LGBTQ communities has emerged (Azzouz & Catterall, 2021; PlanningOut, 2019), demonstrating a shift in awareness, understanding, and attitude of some within planning.

LGBT inclusion in British local government can be seen as having a first generation in the 1980s under and against a Conservative national government, a second generation post-1997 with the era of New Labour (Cooper, 2006), and a third generation occurring post-2010 with the passing of the Equality Act 2010 and Conservative-led national governments. New modes of recognition and practice such as dedicated committees, targeted policy, and inclusion statements were undertaken by supportive municipalities, accompanied by a trend in depoliticization, individualisation, and non-implementation (Browne et al., 2016; Richardson & Monro, 2013). During the second generation, BHCC planning department was highlighted for good practice concerning its inclusion of "lesbians and gay men" among other "hard to reach" groups within the planning process (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005). UK municipal authorities are currently required under the Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010 to demonstrate "due regard" for people's sexual orientation and gender reassignment status—for example, in the development and design of new plans and development projects. The "due regard" of the PSED includes eliminating discrimination *and* advancing equality of opportunity, effectively mainstreaming the need to consider those with protected characteristics (Stephenson, 2016). Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) have become widely used to structure and document this "due regard," with 80% of London local planning authorities conducting EqIAs on Local Plans (Town and Country Planning Association, 2019). The first example of a LGBTQ space being identified for protection within the UK planning system was during the EqIA for Crossrail in 2006 (Campkin, 2020). However, Colomb and Raco (2018) have observed that impact assessments in planning are involved with what Sara Ahmed (2007) terms a "politics of documentation" in which doing the document takes primacy over the substance of what is being done. The application of EqIAs by public authorities in the UK are often seen as a "tick-box exercise" (Harrison, 2011; Town and Country Planning Association, 2019). The UK's Town and Country Planning Association (2019, p. 21) found that, within London, many Local Plan EqIAs provide "very little detail and very limited discussion on the potential negative impacts of policies." There is thus a need to unpack the "black box" of thinking behind EqIAs because the final report produced often gives little insight into how protected characteristics such as sexual orientation and gender reassignment were considered during the process. We need to understand what is being incorporated or mainstreamed into planning (see Eveline & Bacchi, 2010). Moreover, Catterall and Azzouz (2021) have argued for assessments that review the actual effects on community safety after major new schemes or redevelopments have been built.

Outside of planning, impact assessments have been critiqued from a feminist perspective for how they comprehend gender. Bacchi (2010, p. 32), who while having a focus upon binary gender, criticises gender mainstreaming approaches because they emphasise "evening up" differences between women and men rather than on the issues of power and gender relations. Moreover, "deep evaluation" is needed that focuses on the representations of gendered "problems" in policy formulation. In the international context, Götzmann and Bainton (2021) note that approaches to gender in impact assessments are frequently essentialist, binary-gendered, patronising, and instrumentalist. Levac et al.'s (2021) overview

of the Canadian context, highlights that for often invisible communities (including LGBTQ2S+) to have meaningful inclusion, impact assessments should be community-led with adequate resources to enable this.

Despite the PSED informing municipal authorities' practice for over a decade in the UK, there is no research on how trans has been articulated into planners' practice. A specific focus on trans helps to identify if particular needs are being articulated or if trans is being subsumed into the broader LGBTQ category. This article outlines the use of a Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (HEqIA), which is a Health Impact Assessment integrated with an EqIA creating a specific structure for the analysis of policy (which is outlined below). The HEqIA was a desk-based assessment BHCC outsourced to an external consultancy. This use of consultancies is part of a wider shift to entrepreneurial modes of governance and the marketization of local governance finance after over a decade of austerity (Raco, 2018; Savini & Raco, 2019), which raises questions for the priorities, strategic opportunities, and the transparency of how trans is comprehended within planning practices.

2.3. The "Choreography" of Planning Policy Processes

The interplay within planning of professional practice, knowledge, neoliberalised organisational formations, and the imperatives to consider equality groups is conceptualised as a choreography. Choreography has been used as a metaphor in planning theory by Haughton and Allmendinger (2008) to refer to how participation is stage-managed with defined parameters of what is open for debate. They argue that there is superficial engagement with "carefully choreographed processes for participation which minimise the potential for those with conflicting views to be given a meaningful hearing" (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2012, p. 90). They understand choreography as part of the technocratic-managerial shift in planning governance (see Metzger et al., 2015). A key aspect to defining these parameters concerning gender in public policy has been the role of nondecision making to maintain the status quo (Marchbank, 2000). Nondecision making entails the maintenance of bias through overt and covert practices such as the branding of issues to delegitimise them, the modification of issues, and incomplete implementation (Marchbank, 2000). Research attending to the temporal rhythms of LGBTQ2S inclusion across neighbouring municipalities highlights the role of silence and inaction alongside coalitional moments of change to produce forms of social inclusion that are neither linear nor sustained (Bain & Podmore, 2022). The maintenance of bias may be conscious and purposeful but also by what Ghaziani (2014, p. 255) states as "a blissful but non-malicious ignorance about sexual inequality."

We seek to develop choreography as a way to conceptualise how transgender becomes articulated within planning at certain times and absent at others. Choreography is a dynamic process wherein various knowledges, practices, and discourses are (re)enacted by actors that selectively position an understanding of transgender within the rhythms of planning. Planning can address some LGBTQ needs by choregraphing them into and out of practice and policy, creating a temporary intelligible positioning. Nondecision making practices within such choreography are the intentional and unintentional maintenance of disciplinary biases that inhibit an in-depth consideration of transgender within planning. This conceptualisation attends to the porosity of planning as part of fluid local governance assemblages where the structuring of planning practices occurs through the actions of those engaged in it. Conceptually it encapsulates the "politics of movement" between a fixing and unfixing of meaning (Bacchi & Eveline, 2010) and the role of constrained agents who (re)enact normative ways of doing but nevertheless have a capacity to reposition LGBTQ needs.

3. Methodology: Using Poststructural Policy Analysis to Understand LGBTQ Articulations

This article is part of a wider doctoral research project (conducted by the lead author) that employs creative mapping exercises with trans inhabitants alongside a poststructural analysis of Brighton & Hove planning policy and practice. A poststructural policy analysis was conducted utilising the work of Carol Bacchi (2000; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016) who, following Foucauldian analyses, forwards an approach to policy that focuses on problematisations (Bacchi, 2012). The current research focused on planning practices to identify how gender and sexuality are problematised and how these practices are shaped by institutional structures, knowledge practices, legal obligations, and organisational imperatives. Such a theorisation has important consequences for planning as it comes from an understanding of how urban governance, policy, and planning produces subjects rather than considering how to include external subjects into the planning process (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, pp. 49–53). This form of analysis enabled a consideration of how gendered and sexual differences are (re)produced in relation to a dominant liberal discourse of equalities that is enacted via ways of doing within planning practice such as policy formation, consultation, and impact assessment procedures. The article moves beyond the previous cisgender focus of this type of policy analysis to evaluate the discursive problematization process that articulates people who are trans into a planning issue.

The research consisted of a scoping stage of "helicopter" interviews conducted with planning practitioners and desk-based readings of policy documents that were mapped in relation to other documents and practices within the wider national and local context. This stage identified the Health and Equalities Impact Assessments (HEqIAs) conducted on the city-wide Local Plan; and the development of the Urban Design

Framework Supplementary Planning Document (UDF SPD; BHCC, 2021b). These two case studies were chosen because they entail the most explicit articulation of transgender within planning policy at the municipal level. Three HEqIA reports (completed in 2010, 2012, and 2018) were analysed and corresponded to the three iterations of the local plan—the Core Strategy which was submitted for examination in 2010, City Plan Part 1 which was adopted in 2016, and City Plan Part 2 which was adopted in 2022. The Core Strategy of 2010 was submitted by BHCC for examination by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and then withdrawn due, in part, to the introduction of new national legislation—the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act 2011 introduced multiple reforms including abolishing the super-local tier of regional planning and introducing the sub-local tier of Neighbourhood planning. The Core Strategy was reformulated into City Plan Part 1 which sets out the long-term vision, strategic objectives, and a strategic planning policy framework to guide new development in the city up to 2030. City Plan Part 2 supports the implementation and delivery of Part 1 through the identification and allocation of additional sites and a more detailed policy framework for case-by-case planning application decisions. LGBT is considered in the HEqIAs conducted because of their recognition locally as a "sensitive community or group" prior to 2010 and then as a "protected characteristic" following the implementation of the Equality Act 2010.

The UDF is an SPD and so can be developed and adopted within a shorter timeframe than a local plan. SPDs contain more detailed guidance on local plan policies. An SPD should not introduce new planning policies, but the guidance outlined are termed "material considerations" meaning they should be considered when deciding a planning application. The UDF is one of 18 SPDs currently adopted by BHCC and "signposts priorities the council would like applicants to consider when preparing design proposals" (BHCC, 2021b, p. 3). Within our analysis, supporting texts such as consultation statements, and the council-led trans research reports were used to support these case studies. In-person and online interviews (conducted between 2020–2021) with planning practitioners (local authority planning staff: a high-level manager, policy team staff, and a private-sector consultant responsible for the HEqIAs) and BHCC equalities staff were audio-recorded and transcribed. NVivo software was used to manage a coding process that focused on understanding the practices involved and the role of knowledge that informed a conception of gender and sexual orientation.

4. Brighton & Hove: Choreographing Trans Into Planning

In Brighton & Hove planning policy, transgender only features with specificity in the UDF SPD that is discussed below. The municipal plan (City Plan Part 1) that sets out strategic policy does mention in the community profile: "Whilst the trans population is thought to be small, trans people face particularly acute issues." (BHCC, 2016, p. 12). More generally, LGBT people are mentioned in Strategic Objective 20, which states that the Local Plan should "contribute towards reducing inequalities experienced by different groups" (BHCC, 2016, p. 24), and in a supporting text for SA6 Sustainable Neighbourhoods policy as part of a listing of "diverse groups" (BHCC, 2016, p. 127). In their interview, the high-level manager stated that while there were no overt LGBTQ policies, there is a thread of equalities running through the plan. This thread of equalities is the dual effect of engagement with "equality groups" and the use of the HEqIA. The use of EqIAs, at the project-specific level, and HEqIAs, at the municipal plan level, are therefore mechanisms for the consideration of trans (along with other protected characteristics) in the planning process. The HEqIA was referred to as a "prescribed procedure" which is trusted to account for "local distinctiveness" and to identify equalities related issues (High-level Manager, online interview, August 3rd 2021). The other means by which trans may become a consideration is the consultation process—a legal obligation for all planning documents. Two targeted LGBT consultation meetings were held that underpin the current City Plan Part 1 (adopted 2016) and City Plan Part 2 (adopted 2022). Both were held in 2006 (for the then Core Strategy that was reconfigured into City Plan Part 1) meaning that LGBT-specific consultations underpinned Local Plans adopted a decade and sixteen years later respectively. The change in language in these documents from the earlier "lesbians and gay men" to "LGBT" reflects the language used by the two groups involved in the consultations: the City Council LGBT Workers Forum and Spectrum LGBT Community Forum. However, this terminology subsumes trans within LGBT, and neither consultation produced any trans-specific discussion points or feedback.

4.1. Siloed Absence to Strategic Repositioning: Trans in Planning Guidance

The UDF SPD advises that "wherever possible, provide public, accessible, gender neutral toilets in shops and restaurants near the entrance to the building from the open space" (BHCC, 2021b, p. 23). The second trans-related articulation occurs in the final section on how applicants to the planning service can communicate their design ideas; a recommended way of achieving this is through the "day in the life" scenarios of users. It states:

> [T]his assessment is an opportunity to ensure that building and landscape functionality is…also as fair and inclusive as possible by considering the daily experiences of a number of minority groups such as a single mother, a disabled cyclist, a transgender person and/or a resident living in affordable housing accommodation. (BHCC, 2021b, p. 75)

To understand how these specific mentions came about we need to understand wider trans equality policy work that has been done in Brighton & Hove. In 2012, BHCC set up a Trans Equality Scrutiny Panel (TESP) of 3 councillors and 2 representatives of trans organisations. The panel produced a report in 2013 with 37 recommendations. Recommendation 22 specifically stated "There should be provision for accessible and gender neutral toilets in all areas" (BHCC, 2013, p. 10). In an appendix to the TESP report produced at a later date (ca. 2013–2014), BHCC details responses of relevant departments to each of the 37 recommendations. In relation to recommendation 22, two departments' responses are detailed: Property & Design, which has remit for council public buildings, and Cityclean, who have responsibility for public toilets. Apart from Cityclean stating they work with large tourist developments, there is seemingly no implications of non-council owned facilities. Notably, there is no response from the Planning Service. Whilst the TESP articulates an expressed need from the trans people consulted concerning the provision of gender-neutral toilets in all areas, this becomes rearticulated into a consideration for two departments, but not a consideration for the Planning Service.

The TESP led to the completion of the TNA in 2014 with the final report produced in 2015. It states that "there is no similar needs assessment in the UK" and so broke new ground in terms of a local authority engaging with trans residents (Hill & Condon, 2015, p. 6). Under the community safety section, it stated in recommendation 43 "that city organisations such as BHCC…should promote the introduction of gender-neutral facilities (including toilets and changing rooms) in new and refurbished buildings." (Hill & Condon, 2015, p. 18). In a TNA progress report, annual updates against each recommendation are given for 2015–2017; again, there is no response from—or implications for—the Planning Service. Thus, a trans-specific need is repositioned into having certain parameters of consequence: it is choreographed out of planning and positioned in relation to other services. This absence can be conceptualised as "siloing" where the implications are choreographed into certain organisations or services, and not others such as the municipal planning authority. Such siloing is a form of nondecision making brought about by no-one articulating this identified need as a planning issue. In interviews with a BHCC staff member who led on trans equality initiatives around this time, they stated that it did not occur to them to engage with planning in part because the council has over 700 services, so their work responds primarily to project-led requests (BHCC Equalities staff, online interview, October 22nd 2020). There was therefore a lack of proactive engagement on the issue from both the equalities staff and the planning service. In an interview with the consultant when asked why this issue is absent from planning, it was indicated that because the issue is one of signage it is more of an "equality team issue" than a planning issue (Consultant, in-person interview, January 21st 2020). This last quote, while not being evidence for why in this specific circumstance the issue was siloed, demonstrates a rearticulation of the issue as primarily concerning signage and evidences the maintenance of disciplinary biases that inhibit the articulation of an identified need.

In October–December 2020 the draft consultation on the UDF SPD is conducted and I (lead author) respond to the consultation. The draft document does not mention toilets, and I make the case that this SPD can offer guidance to developers on the need to provide gender-neutral toilet facilities in the city and use recommendation 22 (from the TESP) and 43 (from the TNA) to evidence this need, and that the "day in the life" scenario should consider sexual and gender minorities otherwise would be likely to reproduce heteronormative expectations of users. The UDF is then revised and adopted at a BHCC committee meeting on June 17th 2021. In the revised version, the above-mentioned text is included. This is the first and only specific mention of "gender-neutral toilets" and "transgender" in BHCC planning policy. The choreographing process involved me (lead author) articulating a specific need (amongst many) from previous trans-focused research, at a certain time (the consultation window), in a form that gave the already known needs an intelligibility for the planning policy team member who consolidated the feedback and revised the draft document, rearticulating my representation into planning guidance. The council committee were the next agents who took no issue with the SPD and approved it, meaning it is now a guiding document for all developments in Brighton & Hove. The reliance on "individual champions" to push the consideration of LGBTQ issues has been a longstanding feature of UK municipal governance (Cooper & Monro, 2003; Richardson & Monro, 2013), and the introduction of the PSED has not altered this in this circumstance. This occurred at a time in the UK which can be viewed as a "climate of transgender moral panic" (Hines, 2020, p. 699) and wherein toilets have become "symbolic and contested sites, saturated in cisheteronormative ideals about gender, sexuality, and bodily form and function" (Marshall, 2021, p. 218). In part, the articulation of gender-neutral toilets into planning policy relied upon an absence of media coverage and widespread public attention that could have facilitated reactionary opposition to such inclusion (this absence of media coverage and public attention being the norm for such SPDs). For this inclusion to make any beneficial changes to the lives of transgender residents the guidelines must now be implemented which is the next potential point for nondecision making practices to take place and remains unknown at this point.

4.2. Trans as Articulated by Health and Equalities Impact Assessments

HEqIAs occur on policy and proposals contained in the Local Plan with the primary process for conducting them

in Brighton & Hove outsourced to a private consultancy. The timing within the policy development process varied. For the Core Strategy and City Plan Part 1, it was conducted iteratively with the final report completed at a late-stage post public consultation on the draft versions of the Local Plans; and for City Plan Part 2, it was conducted after the draft policy options stage but prior to the Local Plan going out to the main public consultation. The HEqIAs were an iterative process with consultancy staff in dialogue with municipal planning policy staff over 3–4 months before producing a final report. If any policy changes are made after the original HEqIA report, an "in-house'' (by the municipal authority staff) HEqIA process is conducted on changes that are likely to have a health or equality impact resulting in an addendum report.

In the HEqIA reports from 2012 and 2018, the consultancy states "the opinions and interpretations presented in this report represent our reasonable technical interpretation of the data made available to us." This reasonable technical interpretation relies heavily on the tacit knowledges of the professional consultant in how they understand and articulate "data." The process for the HEqIA involves the development of a community profile using national and local demographic data in relation to health and population groupings. The scoping stage sets the justification for what to assess and who to consider. The assessment stage itself considers each planning policy or proposed project against the determinants of health, utilising the Dahlgren-Whitehead socioeconomic model of health (see Dahlgren & Whitehead, 1991). Each determinant is assessed in relation to each policy and the "Health Pathway" is considered. This requires considering the "Source-Pathway-Receptor" model to identify "risks/hazards" as well as "opportunities" during the construction and operation of policies and developments. The impacts on any particularly sensitive communities or groups are considered after the more general population consideration. The matrix for the assessment reports has a dedicated column to indicate if there are any expected consequences for identified sensitive groups. In the most recent HEqIA from 2018, the term "Protected Characteristics" is used instead of the previous "sensitive communities" reflecting an adoption of the language used in the Equality Act 2010.

The HEqIA reports from 2010 and 2012 mention sexual orientation, LGBT, and trans in the community profile. The City Plan Part 2 HEqIA from 2018 has a much smaller community profile section which only mentions sexual orientation, and trans does not feature. There is one mention of LGBT in the assessment section of the report as an affected sensitive community. This is in relation to an area-specific development policy "DA2 Brighton Marina, Gas Works and Black Rock" where in relation to crime and safety, gay, lesbian, and transgender individuals are mentioned as a group experiencing higher discrimination. The recommendation is that project-level consultation processes should address this by engaging local communities. The Addendum report states that the LGBT community were identified along with students as a group to potentially benefit from "healthy urban design" as advocated by the policy CP18: Healthy City.

Trans is primarily considered as part of the interpretive process of the assessment that is not evidenced in the reports. The interview with the consultant unpacks the black box of these interpretive practices and gives insight into how trans was considered in the HEqIA process:

> We developed an evidence base to look at how environmental, socio-economic, and cultural aspects of the plan would potentially influence or modify how they might respond, and for the bulk of it, there isn't any difference in how I would respond to how the trans individual might respond. For environmental conditions, for example, anything that improves air quality is beneficial to all,…anything that improves housing and housing equality is beneficial to all. But it does have a disproportionate benefit for those who have an equality need…trans individuals are actually more sensitive to housing and employment, but also crime, they can go either way, if you worsen housing availability, they're actually more susceptible to being displaced and the impacts from it than say myself, so that's the underlying evidence base to it. And there is evidence…that transgender individuals in particular are subject to that high violence, so it's making sure that you design urban environments, or you test policies so that they don't compound crime or perceptions of crime. (Consultant, online interview, October 20th 2020)

The quote demonstrates that while trans may be absent in the written report, trans is considered in the HEqIA process as having greater sensitivity to changes in the built environment. The structure of the assessment and the interpretive framing brought by the consultant combine so that local planning policies are understood to have generic effects that affect everyone. However, within this framing, the sensitivity of trans is understood to mean that trans people experience these generic effects to a greater magnitude than other groups within the local population. This interpretive framing and the approach to structuring the HEqIA do not readily allow for an examination of effects experienced *specifically* by trans people. Similarly, the interpretive framing and the approach to the HEqIA readily tend toward generic measures (that work for everyone) to address effects of planning policies—even when trans people have been identified as specifically sensitive to those policies. This can be seen by the consultant's appeal to urban design approaches that often seek to design-out crime through the incorporation of passive surveillance to spaces in response to identifying trans people as subject to higher rates of violent crime in public spaces. The TNA identified neighbours as a source of abuse or harassment for trans

people, and so passive surveillance that relies on being observed by neighbours cannot be relied upon to underpin trans people's safety (see Angeles & Roberton, 2020). Passive surveillance assumes the benevolent good of the general inhabitant over the threat of another (the opportunistic criminal) and does not queery the possibility that this surveillance could further some forms of harassment.

This construction of trans as sensitive works to classify and regulate trans to demonstrate due regard has been given to observing public-sector equalities duties. This construction as sensitive, however, articulates trans with local planning policies that do not take the specificity of trans needs and experiences into account, and with an undifferentiated understanding of standardised effects and mitigations. The construction of trans as sensitive is produced through an interpretive understanding brought by the consultant, but also by the absence of planning policies articulating the specificities of trans people's needs and experiences. The HEqIA thus choreographs transgender into the planning process because of its role in the demonstration of due regard for a range of communities, while the subsequent positioning as sensitive individuals creates constraints for the consideration of collective needs.

5. Conclusions

The article outlines how trans is incorporated into planning in one municipality through two different policy processes and situates this within understandings of efforts to address trans exclusion and marginalisation. The UK has been seen as a progressive context for municipal authorities because of the public sector equalities obligations. Yet, a closer look at a "trans-inclusive" municipality suggests that the discourses, institutional practices, underlying assumptions, and formal procedures underpinning such equalities requirements enable a choreographing of trans out of consideration when it most matters. The "evidence-base" available on Brighton & Hove's trans population is better than most municipalities, but planning practitioners need a specialist understanding, twinned with a creative reimagining, to make substantive changes to policy. By unpacking the black box of HEqIAs (Eveline & Bacchi, 2010), we have shown that the space for this more transformative articulation of social difference into planning is not within the scope of the current impact assessment practice. There is currently opportunity for consideration of disadvantaged and marginalised groups that may not occur elsewhere in the planning policy process, but such processes also regulate this consideration to assessing the impact of policy as it stands. The use of consultations and especially of HEqIAs to embed equalities functions as an audit on policy for equalities implications for protected groups. However, this is not the same as proactively devising Local Plan policies to create a more equal city for these groups. This would require the expenditure of political capital at a time of moral panic, a fraught but necessary task for civic leaders if they wish to go beyond a performance of progressiveness (Bain & Podmore, 2022).

Choreographic analysis developed in this article attends to policy dynamics and shows how trans is articulated as a form of constrained movement within the structured rhythms of the planning process. This analysis furthers research on policy problematization by providing an example of trans becoming articulated within municipal planning's institutional structures, knowledge and interpretive practices as a generic but "sensitive" subject. The analysis also extends policy research that highlights the non-linear and non-sustained manner of LGBTQ inclusion through nondecision making practices that maintain disciplinary biases and produce constraints to reimagining planning. In the city of Brighton & Hove, the choreography acted to allow existing framings of policy to continue, rather than enable a transformative approach that considers the specificity of needs of marginalised communities to become legible in policy. Municipal planners need to be proactive, attentive, and reflexive in developing an understanding of how planning practice does or does not articulate trans inhabitants' needs.

This research opens up theorizing into how consideration of trans and LGBTQ communities and knowledges are integrated into planning processes by queerying its limitations (see also Catterall & Azzouz, 2021). The two case studies from the UK's "LGBTQ Capital" underscore the need for further work from varied geographies that explore the potentialities for how trans can be considered in planning. Our research suggests that in "progressive" contexts, meeting equalities obligations in planning does not necessarily or even proactively attend to the specificities of trans needs. Doing so would involve a disruption of planning's choreographies and its selective positioning of trans communities. Moreover, we suggest that meeting trans needs calls for an expanded definition of infrastructure (see Brochu-Ingram, 2015; Campkin, 2020)—one which explores how the provision of housing, healthcare, community, and mobilities infrastructures, amongst others, intersect with forms of marginalisation—to be able to produce liveable environments for trans people. For planning to become reconfigured around producing and facilitating liveable infrastructures, there needs to be a queering of planning policy that pushes at the very boundaries of what is considered planning. In envisioning planning for a more equitable future, we are posing the challenge of how we can dismantle the present.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the planning and equalities practitioners who gave up their time to be interviewed. Thank you to the two anonymous peer reviewers and thematic issue editors for their thoughtful and constructive feedback on earlier versions. The research was

funded by the ESRC through the South Coast DTP, award no. ES/P000673/1.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Ahmed, S. (2007). "You end up doing the document rather than doing the doing": Diversity, race equality and the politics of documentation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *30*(4), 590–609.

Allmendinger, P., & Haughton, G. (2012). Post-political spatial planning in England: A crisis of consensus? *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *37*(1), 89–103.

Angeles, L. C., & Roberton, J. (2020). Empathy and inclusive public safety in the city: Examining LGBTQ2+ voices and experiences of intersectional discrimination. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *78*, Article 102313.

Azzouz, A., & Catterall, P. (2021). *Queering public space: Exploring the relationship between queer communities and public spaces*. University of Westminster; ARUP. https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/queering-public-space

Bacchi, C. (2000). Policy as discourse: What does it mean? Where does it get us? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *21*(1), 45–57.

Bacchi, C. (2010). Gender/ing impact assessment: Can it be made to work? In C. Bacchi & J. Eveline (Eds.), *Mainstreaming politics: Gendering practices and feminist theory* (pp. 17–38). University of Adelaide Press.

Bacchi, C. (2012). Why study problematizations? Making politics visible. *Open Journal of Political Science*, *2*(1), 1–8.

Bacchi, C., & Eveline, J. (2010). Conclusion: A politics of movement. In C. Bacchi & J. Eveline (Eds.), *Mainstreaming politics: Gendering practices and feminist theory* (pp. 335–344). University of Adelaide Press.

Bacchi, C., & Goodwin, S. (2016). *Poststructural policy analysis: A guide to practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2022). The scalar arrhythmia of LGBTQ2S social inclusion policies: An analysis of the peripheral municipalities of a "progressive" city-region. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *46*(5), 784–806.

Berry, J., Moore, T., Kalms, N., & Bawden, G. (Eds.). (2021). *Contentious cities: Design and the gendered production of space*. Routledge.

Brighton & Hove City Council. (2013). *Trans equality scrutiny panel*. https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/article/inline/downloads/democracy/Trans_Equality_Report_final_pdf.pdf

Brighton & Hove City Council. (2016). *Brighton & Hove city plan part 1*. https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/planning-policy/city-plan-part-one

Brighton & Hove City Council. (2021a). *Marking transgender day of remembrance 2021*. https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2021/marking-transgender-day-remembrance-2021

Brighton & Hove City Council. (2021b). *SPD17 urban design framework supplementary planning document*. https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/spd17-urban-design-framework-supplementary-planning-document-udf-spd

Brochu-Ingram, G. B. (2015). Building queer infrastructure: Trajectories of activism and organizational development in decolonizing Vancouver. In M. Tremblay (Ed.), *Queer mobilizations: Social movement activism and Canadian public policy* (pp. 227–249). University of British Columbia Press.

Browne, K., & Bakshi, L. (2013). *Ordinary in Brighton? LGBT, activisms and the city*. Routledge.

Browne, K., Banarjea, N., McGlynn, N., Bakshi, L., Beethi, S., & Biswas, R. (2021). The limits of legislative change: Moving beyond inclusion/exclusion to create "a life worth living." *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *39*(1), 30–52.

Browne, K., & Lim, J. (2010). Trans lives in the "gay capital of the UK." *Gender, Place & Culture*, *17*(5), 615–633.

Browne, K., McGlynn, N., Bakshi, L., & Banerjea, N. (2016). *Acting on equalities: Are local authorities in England meeting the duties of the Equality Act 2010 and addressing sexual orientation & gender identity?* University of Brighton. https://www.brighton.ac.uk/_pdf/research/sec/ll-uk-equalities-report-final.pdf

Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing gender*. Psychology Press.

Campkin, B. (2020). Queer infrastructures: LGBTQ+ networks and urban governance in global London. In R. Ramos & S. Mowlabocus (Eds.), *Queer sites in global contexts: Technologies, spaces, and otherness* (pp. 82–101). Routledge.

Campkin, B., & Marshall, L. (2017). *LGBTQ+ cultural infrastructure in London: Night venues, 2006–present*. UCL Urban Laboratory. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/urban-lab/sites/urban-lab/files/LGBTQ_cultural_infrastructure_in_London_nightlife_venues_2006_to_the_present.pdf

Catterall, P., & Azzouz, A. (2021). Queerying planning policy. *Town and Country Planning*, *90*(10), 298–302.

Colomb, C., & Raco, M. (2018). Planning for diversity in an era of social change. In J. Ferm & J. Tomaney (Eds.), *Planning practice: Critical perspectives from the UK* (pp. 174–188). Routledge.

Cooper, D. (2006). Active citizenship and the governmentality of local lesbian and gay politics. *Political Geography*, *25*, 921–943.

Cooper, D., & Monro, S. (2003). Governing from the margins: Queering the state of local government? *Contemporary Politics*, *9*(3), 229–255.

Dahlgren, G., & Whitehead, M. (1991). *Policies and*

strategies to promote social equity in health. Institute for Futures Studies.

de Madariaga, I. S., & Neuman, M. (Eds.). (2020). *Engendering cities: Designing sustainable urban spaces for all*. Routledge.

Doan, P. L. (2001, March 19). *Are the transgendered the mine shaft canaries of urban areas?* Planners Network. http://www.plannersnetwork.org/2001/03/are-the-transgendered-the-mine-shaft-canaries-of-urban-areas

Doan, P. L. (2007). Queers in the American city: Transgendered perceptions of urban space. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *14*(1), 57–74.

Doan, P. L. (2010). The tyranny of gendered spaces—Reflections from beyond the gender dichotomy. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *17*(5), 635–654.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2011a). *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice.* Ashgate.

Doan, P. L. (2011b). Queerying identity: Planning and the tyranny of gender. In P. L. Doan (Ed.), *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice* (pp. 89–106). Ashgate.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces*. Routledge.

Edelman, E. A. (2011). "This area has been declared a prostitution free zone": Discursive formations of space, the state, and trans "sex worker" bodies. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *58*(6/7), 848–864.

Edelman, E. A. (2014). "Walking while transgender": Necropolitical regulations of trans feminine bodies of colour in the nation's capital. In J. Haritaworn, A. Kuntsman, & S. Posocco (Eds.), *Queer necropolitics* (pp. 172–190). Routledge.

Eveline, J., & Bacchi, C. (2010). What are we mainstreaming when we mainstream gender? In C. Bacchi & J. Eveline (Eds.), *Mainstreaming politics: Gendering practices and feminist theory* (pp. 87–109). University of Adelaide Press.

Frisch, M. (2002). Planning as a heterosexist project. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *21*, 254–266.

Ghaziani, A. (2014). *There goes the gaybourhood*. Princeton University Press.

Götzmann, N., & Bainton, N. (2021). Embedding gender-responsive approaches in impact assessment and management. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, *39*(3), 171–182.

Harrison, J. (2011). Human rights measurement: Reflections on the current practice and future potential of human rights impact assessment. *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, *3*(2), 162–187.

Haughton, G., & Allmendinger, P. (2008). The soft spaces of local economic development. *Local Economy*, *23*(2), 138–148.

Hill, A., & Condon, R. (2015). *Brighton & Hove trans needs assessment 2015*. Brighton & Hove City Council. https://www.bhconnected.org.uk/sites/bhconnected/files/Brighton%20%26%20Hove%20Trans%20Needs%20Assessment%202015.pdf

Hines, S. (2020). Sex wars and (trans) gender panics: Identity and body politics in contemporary UK feminism. *The Sociological Review*, *68*(4), 699–717.

Jones, C., & Slater, J. (2020). The toilet debate: Stalling trans possibilities and defending "women's protected spaces." *The Sociological Review*, *68*(4), 834–851.

Levac, L., Stinson, J., Manning, S. M., & Stienstra, D. (2021). Expanding evidence and expertise in impact assessment: Informing Canadian public policy with the knowledges of invisible communities. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, *39*(3), 218–228.

Lord, A., & Tewdwr-Jones, M. (2014). Is planning "under attack"? Chronicling the deregulation of urban and environmental planning in England. *European Planning Studies*, *22*(2), 345–361.

Lubitow, A., Abelson, M. J., & Carpenter, E. (2020). Transforming mobility justice: Gendered harassment and violence on transit. *Journal of Transport Geography*, *82*, Article 102601.

Lubitow, A., Carathers, J., Kelly, M., & Abelson, M. (2017). Transmobilities: Mobility, harassment, and violence experienced by transgender and gender nonconforming public transit riders in Portland, Oregon. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *24*(10), 1398–1418.

March, L. (2021). Queer and trans* geographies of liminality: A literature review. *Progress in Human Geography*, *45*(3), 455–471.

Marchbank, J. (2000). *Women, power and policy: Comparative studies of childcare*. Routledge.

Marshall, L. (2021). Negotiating gender-diverse realities built on binary expectations: Public toilets in Britain. In J. Berry, T. Moore, N. Kalms, & G. Bawden (Eds.), *Contentious cities: Design and the gendered production of space* (pp. 216–233). Routledge.

Metzger, J., Allmendinger, P., & Oosterlynck, S. (Eds.). (2015). *Planning against the political: Democratic deficits in European territorial governance*. Routledge.

Namaste, K. (1996). Genderbashing: Sexuality, gender, and the regulation of public space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *14*(2), 221–240.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. (2005). *Diversity and equality in planning: A good practice guide*.

PlanningOut. (2019). *LGBT+ placemaking toolkit*. https://res.cloudinary.com/fieldfisher/image/upload/v1574347193/PDF-Files/PDFs%20from%20old%20website/planning-out-placemaking-toolkit-2019_vxjryp.pdf

Raco, M. (2018). Private consultants, planning reform and the marketisation of local government finance. In J. Ferm & J. Tomaney (Eds.), *Planning practice: Critical perspectives from the UK* (pp. 123–137). Routledge.

Richardson, D., & Monro, S. (2013). Public duty and private prejudice: Sexualities equalities and local government. *The Sociological Review*, *61*, 131–152.

Sabsay, L. (2013). Citizenship in the twilight zone? Sex work, the regulation of belonging and sexual democratization in Argentina. In S. Roseneil (Ed.), *Beyond citizenship? Feminism and the transformation of belonging* (pp. 160–183). Palgrave.

Savini, F., & Raco, M. (2019). The rise of a new urban technocracy. In M. Raco & F. Savini (Eds.), *Planning and knowledge: How new forms of technocracy are shaping contemporary cities* (pp. 3–18). Policy Press.

Serano, J. (2007). *Whipping girl: A transsexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*. Seal Press.

Stephenson, M. A. (2016). *Mainstreaming equality in an age of austerity: What impact has the public sector equality duty had on work to promote gender equality by English local authorities?* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Warwick.

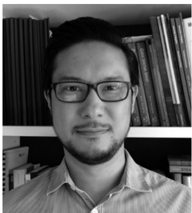
Todd, J. D. (2021). Exploring trans people's lives in Britain, trans studies, geography and beyond: A review of research progress. *Geography Compass*, *15*(4), Article e12556.

Town and Country Planning Association. (2019). *London—Planning for a just city? Exploring how local planning authorities are embedding equality and inclusion in planning policy*.

About the Authors

Matt C. Smith is a PhD candidate at the University of Brighton. Their interdisciplinary research combines a focus on the lived and embodied experiences of gender and sexual minorities in cities, with an analysis of policy and practice. This method informs their critical approach to contemporary urban governance and the role of town planning in reducing inequalities. They are particularly interested in prefigurative praxis that addresses the material needs in the present and enables a more equitable future.

Paul Gilchrist is a principal lecturer in human geography at the University of Brighton, UK. His research interests are in the geographies of leisure, sport, and popular culture. He has published widely in this area and has contributed to community needs and evolving policy agendas on the use and enjoyment of public space. He is a joint series editor of *Advances in Leisure Studies* (Taylor & Francis).



Jason Lim is a senior lecturer in human geography at the University of Brighton, UK. His research has addressed the role of affect, materiality, embodiment, and memory in the politics of race, gender, and sexuality. He was one of the co-founders of Space, Sexualities and Queer Research Group (SSQRG) of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), and has twice served as Secretary for this research group.

cogitatio

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 208–222
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6294

Article

Redistributing More Than the LGBTQ2S Acronym? Planning Beyond Recognition and Rainbows on Vancouver's Periphery

Julie A. Podmore [1,2,*] and Alison L. Bain [3]

[1] Department of Geosciences, John Abbott College, Canada
[2] Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment, Concordia University, Canada
[3] Department of Human Geography and Spatial Planning, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

* Corresponding author (jpodmore@johnabbott.qc.ca)

Submitted: 19 October 2022 | Accepted: 15 February 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract

Just urban planning recognizes sociocultural differences and addresses inequality by implementing redistributive mechanisms that move beyond urban neoliberal practices of aestheticization and festivalization. Such planning practices are only beginning to address sexual and gender minority recognition in central urban areas while metronormative assumptions about their geographies absolve suburban municipalities of accountability for LGBTQ+ inclusions. In suburban municipalities, therefore, an LGBTQ+ politics of recognition rarely synchronizes with a politics of redistribution to foster sustained and transformative responses across the professional and managerial boundaries between planning and other local government functions. Consequently, a reparative civic "rainbowization" stands in for transformative urban planning, producing only partial and commodifiable inclusions in the landscape that become absolution for inaction on more evidence-based goals and measurable targets. Drawing on a database of public-facing communication records referencing LGBTQ2S themes for three adjacent peripheral municipalities in the Vancouver city-region (Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey), this article analyses the tension between contemporary planning's civic actions of LGBTQ+ recognition and outcomes of redistribution. In suburban municipalities, a rainbow-washing politics of recognition sidelines transformative planning and policy resulting in little more than the distribution of the LGBTQ2S acronym across municipal documents.

Keywords

LGBTQ2S; rainbowization; social inclusion; suburbs; transformative redistribution; Vancouver

Issue

This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Urban planning scholars have foregrounded justice as a political ideal in dialogue with questions of democracy, equity, and diversity in central cities (see Fainstein, 2010; Marcuse, 2009; Soja, 2010). "The just city" requires that urban planners critically examine the "distributional inequalities" of spatial injustice (Soja, 2010), policymaking processes that bring about equitable outcomes (Fainstein, 2010), and "commons planning" that addresses the power relations inhibiting its attainment (Marcuse, 2009). Focused primarily on American inner-city areas, however, "the just city" literature neglects the classed, gendered, and racialized exclusions that stretch across city-regions often leaving hetero- and cis-normativity intact. This central-city bias coincides with a general neglect of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) planning issues and a limited understanding of the communities encompassed by this acronym (Doan, 2015). As a result, the just city's LGBTQ+ subjects—who "hold prestigious positions but face discrimination in many aspects of their lives" (Marcuse, 2009, p. 253)—are described in homo- and metronormative terms, belying the intersectional spatial injustices

facing LGBTQ+ populations across metropolitan areas. "The just city" literature, therefore, has yet to address suburban LGBTQ+ constituencies and the tensions arising from their demands for municipal recognition and redistribution through planning practice.

While just planning practice seeks to rectify injustice through a politics of redistribution and recognition, it often results in "maldistribution and misrecognition" because the alleviation of one form of injustice merely exacerbates another (Rankin, 2010). Described by Fraser (2008) as the "despised sexuality," LGBTQ+ communities are caught in this conceptual dichotomy, commonly receiving partial recognition of difference rather than the redistribution of necessary municipal resources within city-regions (Misgav, 2019, p. 541). This dichotomy is intensified in suburban contexts where development agendas are often prioritized over social planning and scalar frameworks situate LGBTQ+ equalities in national legislation, exonerating municipalities of materializing recognition and redistribution beyond "rainbowization" (Bitterman, 2021). The rainbow motif—an internationally recognized rallying symbol of safety and community for LGBTQ+ people—is a ubiquitous planning response to legislation that demands LGBTQ+ recognition that simultaneously permits the neglect of a more just municipal politics of redistribution. As a global, yet non-specific, place-brand of welcome, inclusion, and safety, this motif becomes "rainbow-washing" when co-opted by municipalities to "perform progressiveness" in the absence of substantive urban planning frameworks (Ghaziani, 2014).

This article argues that limited municipal governance commitment to LGBTQ+ communities, combined with a metronormative assumption of queer absence in suburbs (Podmore & Bain, 2021), results in suburban planning practices that focus on municipal rainbowization. Peripheral municipalities privilege a symbolic politics of LGBTQ+ recognition and avoid synchronizing it with transformative redistribution across professional and managerial boundaries resulting in a performance of progressiveness that provides absolution for inaction on more evidence-based goals and measurable targets. Drawing on three adjacent case studies (Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey) from the Vancouver city-region (Figure 1), the article details how Canadian suburbs address LGBTQ2S (the acronym used to signal the long-standing presence of two-spirit communities within the Vancouver city-region) inclusion through urban planning practices. It begins by reviewing the social inclusion planning literature and describing the research methodology. A database of public-facing records informs the empirical analysis which distinguishes between civic actions of LGBTQ2S recognition and civic outcomes of LGBTQ2S redistribution. The conclusion addresses how

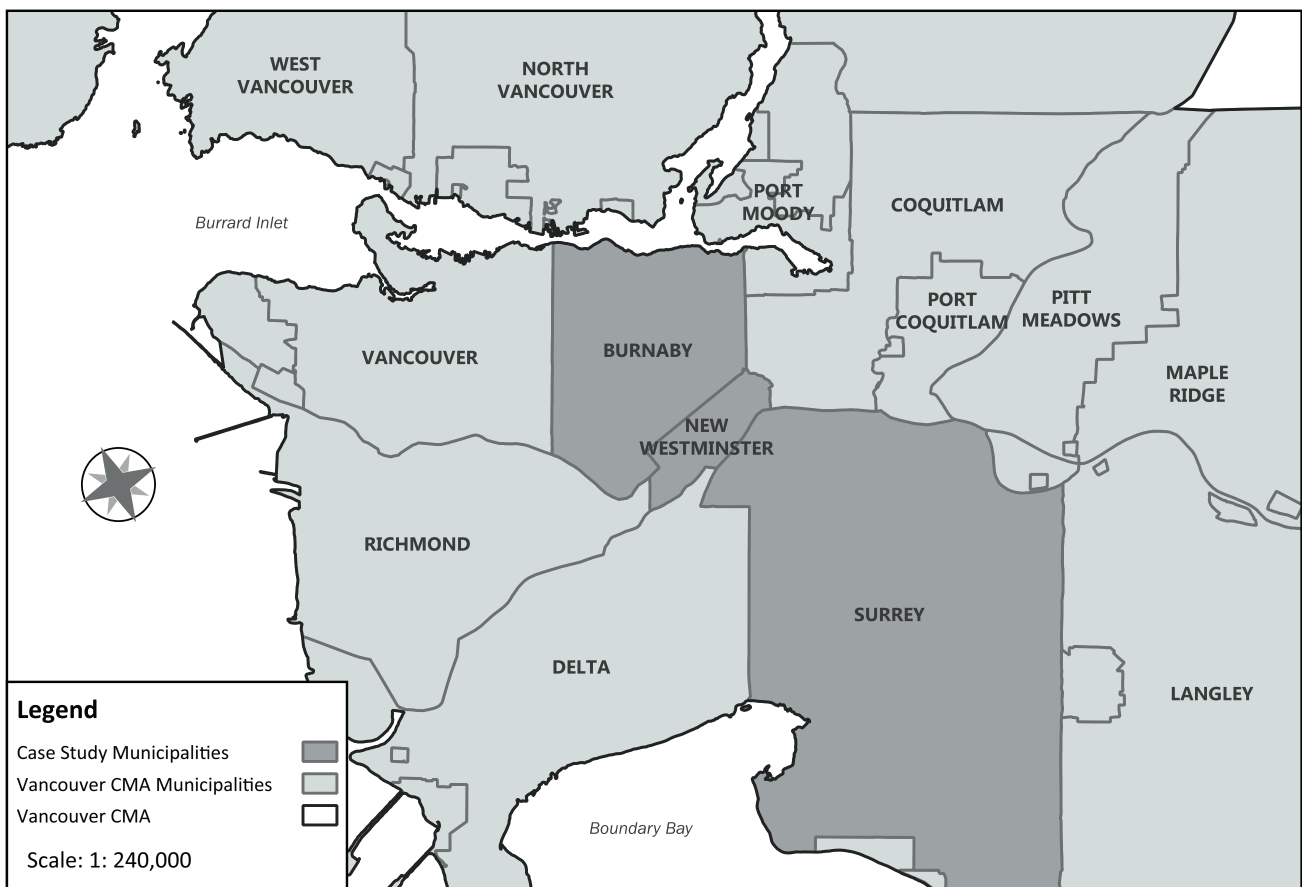


Figure 1. Map of Vancouver city-region case-study peripheral municipalities.

suburban planning's rainbow-washing practices perpetuate a municipal sidelining of LGBTQ+ inclusion that stymies redistribution outcomes.

2. Planning for LGBTQ+ Social Inclusion Across City-Regions

In an era of neoliberal urbanism, urban planning has become complicit in forwarding development models premised on entrepreneurial subjectivities whilst leveraging diversity paradigms to celebrate "difference" and stress "inclusion" (Rankin, 2010). Social inclusion planning practices seek to symbolically expand governance boundaries using "substantive civility" to extend the rights and responsibilities of political membership to marginalized groups (Bannister & Kearns, 2013, p. 2706). While inclusion policies strive to "show respect to…less valued and less visible social groups" and enhance their social engagement (Bannister & Kearns, 2013, p. 2714), social groups must achieve a legitimate presence as a political constituency to be considered for inclusion. Achieving such legitimacy is contingent upon "a political and policy reaction against social exclusion" (Jackson, 2014, p. 49), a multi-dimensional process of disaffiliation for individuals or social groups from the societies they live within (Gerometta et al., 2005). While "exclusion" featured prominently in late-20th-century European and British policy discourses, urban neoliberalism's prioritization of market rule, the commodification of diversity, and private-wealth accumulation later made it unpalatable (Brenner et al., 2010). By addressing barriers to inclusion, social exclusion confers legitimacy on minority constituencies, but it rarely gains policy traction in neo-liberal policies because it highlights the "problems and deficits of those labelled excluded" (Cameron, 2007, p. 397) and lacks the semantic flexibility of social inclusion (evincing participation, encounter, visibility, and wellbeing; Bain & Podmore, 2021).

Debates between philosophers Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young foregrounded the political tension between social inclusion as recognition and social exclusion as maldistribution. Fraser (2000, p. 107) questioned the displacement of social movement "claims for egalitarian redistribution" by a reification of "the idiom of recognition"; instead, she proposed a focus on "misrecognition" that goes beyond identity depreciation to also counter economic maldistribution as injustice. For Young (2000), Fraser's (2000) recognition/misrecognition binary was too simplistic because just redistribution still requires the process of recognition to bring minority group particularities into public dialogues about the redistribution of the common good. With specific reference to LGBTQ+ recognition, Hines (2013) draws attention to the role of governance systems in setting the terms for recognition/misrecognition by creating the language categories that bring minoritized groups into civic being and requiring the adoption of terms that are external to the group's frame of reference. Employing "buzzwords that have different meanings for different stakeholders" (Jackson, 2014, p. 50), urban planning practice is part of the governance systems that shape municipal recognition/misrecognition, determining which socio-cultural groups can be defined within its parameters.

To work through tensions of municipal recognition/misrecognition, progressive planning practice has promoted community consultation, participation, and empowerment (Sandercock, 2000). Such practices of recognition often leave intact maldistribution because they narrow the definition of socio-cultural groups and do not address misrecognition. Community consultation is unsuccessful if it does not redress exclusions that internally limit community participation (James, 2013). Participatory planning practices that "showcase" the most mainstream representatives of marginalized groups are limited tools for addressing maldistribution because planners simply stage "institutional listening" (Fenster & Misgav, 2020, p. 199) by choosing "who they want to listen to and select the reasons why they should be included" (Listerborn, 2007 p. 69). With respect to sexual and gender minorities, such staging merely promotes recognition for "an essentialist, mainstream national(ist) and consumer(ist) LGBTQ identity, to the exclusion of other sectors of the community and the safe spaces that serve them" (Fenster & Misgav, 2020, p. 199), but it cannot absolve planners of the more substantive policy changes necessary for redistribution. Planning for redistribution requires spatial arrangements that enhance citizen access to collective resources without inadvertently excluding users who may lack consumer power (Fincher & Iveson, 2008). "Transformative redistribution" demands the enhancement of solidarity through situated knowledge networks that rework governance procedures and frameworks in ways that can support social change (Rankin, 2010, p. 195). It "resocializes" the economy and restructures underlying frameworks to create alternative modes of surplus appropriation that can correct "inequitable outcomes" (Rankin, 2010, pp. 192–193). Such substantive restructuring is onerous and political; it cannot be the responsibility of urban planners alone because it necessitates "collaboration across seemingly intractable differences" in support of "critical activism" (Rankin, 2010, pp. 195, 227).

Combatting LGBTQ+ misrecognition and maldistribution in the planning process means confronting the metronormative conflation of a liveable LGBTQ+ life with central-city neighbourhoods (Halberstam, 2005). Suburban redistribution is unlikely if planners in peripheral municipalities do not recognize LGBTQ+ populations as suburban constituencies. Such a spatial mismatch may be compounded by planner unfamiliarity or prejudice (Listerborn, 2007). As Fraser (2008) specifies, misrecognition stems from cultural devaluation leading to maldistribution. For suburban LGBTQ+ constituencies, therefore, a politics of recognition is only the first step which should be followed by a politics of redistribution to

ensure the provision of public resources and their distribution across the intersections of the LGBTQ+ acronym (McQueen, 2015). For the urban planning scholars Fincher and Iveson (2008), redistribution involves spatial arrangements that enhance citizen access to, and allocation of, collective resources, infrastructures, and services without inadvertently excluding some users who may lack consumer power. Never independent from recognition, "transformative redistribution" cannot be "formulated at a distance within planning institutions" because it demands the enhancement of solidarity through situated knowledge networks that rework governance procedures and frameworks in ways that can support social change (Rankin, 2010, p. 195).

While equalities legislation has legalized LGBTQ+ recognition and redistribution frameworks in many nations, municipalities continue to grapple with its local materialization (Doan, 2015). Suburban municipal misrecognition may be further exacerbated by a metronormative trope that LGBTQ+ communities are localized in central-city areas, homonormative assumptions about LGBTQ+ subjects, planner unfamiliarity and prejudice, and local morality politics (Bain & Podmore, 2021). For planners, LGBTQ+ populations are "non-conforming" because they challenge the hetero-cisnormative ordering of space through their housing arrangements and community practices (Forsyth, 2001). Municipalities have nevertheless used an array of practical strategies to foster LGBTQ+ recognition and build social inclusion. Common strategies include anti-discrimination ordinances (Cravens, 2015), municipal advisory boards (Murray, 2015), neighborhood preservation (Doan & Higgins, 2011), community memorialization (Zebracki, 2018), housing initiatives (Forsyth, 2001), community centers (Misgav, 2019), and safe spaces (Goh, 2018). Gorman-Murray (2011, p. 141) lists the following social inclusion practices adopted by queer-friendly municipalities in Australia: queer competency training; LGBTQ+ organization liaising; funding LGBTQ+ community groups, programs, and events; and integrating LGBTQ+ constituencies into the community. These initiatives strive to enhance the recognition of LGBTQ+ populations, but they rarely lead to transformative redistribution.

For municipalities, the rainbow motif—often a rainbowized crosswalk in a symbolic location—can be a simple solution to a lack of municipal LGBTQ+ recognition (Muller Myrdahl, 2021). A non-specific place-brand, "rainbowization" can be used to symbolically code a municipality as "queer-friendly" using flags, banners, crosswalks, and stickers to foster a sense of welcome, inclusion, and safety (Bitterman, 2021), but it also accelerates "queer regeneration" and QTBIPOC necropolitics (Haritaworn, 2019). Furthermore, when the rainbow's symbolic and aesthetic politics of recognition are not "accompanied by significant commitments that stretch across the silos of municipal government," rainbowization "is not enough" because hetero-cisnormative forms of maldistribution in urban planning remain unchallenged (Muller Myrdahl, 2021, p. 52). The "queer-friendly" hypervisibility of municipal rainbowization can moreover become "rainbow-washing" because it sanctions municipalities to "perform progressiveness" (Ghaziani, 2014) while simultaneously sidestepping fundamental questions about LGBTQ+ redistribution and potentially concealing homonegative civic strategies of inaction, avoidance, and apathy (Brodyn & Ghaziani, 2018). In suburbs, where planners focus on managing "desirable landscapes full of prized real-estate commodities" (Grant, 2009, p. 14) at the expense of social planning ideals, rainbowization provides municipalities with visible evidence of LGBTQ+ recognition but reinstates suburban hetero-cisnormativity by suppressing questions of LGBTQ+ maldistribution.

3. Methods

This article reads public-facing municipal records for civic planning actions of LGBTQ2S recognition and outcomes of LGBTQ2S redistribution. It treats peripheral municipalities as the formal institutional "upper ground" of procedural and interpretive authority (Fischer, 2003). It identifies municipal actions and strategies that discursively articulate LGBTQ2S public understandings of civic recognition and signal potential opportunities for redistribution. Fragmentary elements of the municipal record referring to LGBTQ2S themes provide evidence of civic actions and outcomes for analysis. Actions of civic recognition surface LGBTQ2S differences in public dialogues and create the language categories that bring them into being. Outcomes of LGBTQ2S redistribution are actions that guide urban planners—in concert with policymakers, politicians, and activists—to create connections across municipal agendas (Cohendet et al., 2010; Rankin, 2010). These outcomes can gradually concretize and stabilize frameworks for LGBTQ2S social inclusion and potentially be integrated across multiple municipal departments and committees thus offering avenues for more substantive transformation of bureaucratic structures.

This article emerges from a large, multi-year project on queering suburbs in Canada's largest cities, focusing on pre-selected case studies for the Vancouver city-region. In contrast with other suburbs, Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey have the highest densities of suburban same-sex households in the 2016 national census, the most frequent references in the print media, and evidence of LGBTQ2S activism. Its data includes informational interviews, census-data analysis, discourse analysis of print media and municipal public-facing communications records and focus groups, and photo-elicitation interviews with LGBTQ2S suburbanites. The article focuses on the data compiled for the project's LGBTQ2S-supportive social inclusion policy database (1995–2020; see Bain & Podmore, 2021). This database was developed from public-facing communication records (e.g., council and committee minutes and

departmental reports, plans, policies, and strategies) collected using LGBTQ2S keyword searches on the case-study municipalities' websites. All references to LGBTQ2S subjects and themes were extracted, organized by municipality, and temporally sequenced (Table 1). The data was further coded to identify the governance actors (politicians, municipal representatives, service providers, para-public agents, community groups, and activists), actions (awards, delegations, funding requests, other requests, presentations, proclamations, and reports), and outcomes (adopted, denied, funded, recommended, and referred) of each case-study municipality. Additional coding distinguishes municipal strategies and policy initiatives from the actions of LGBTQ2S community service providers and activists while also identifying LGBTQ2S events to communicate who is doing the governance work of recognition and redistribution.

Interpreting municipally specific actions and outcomes, the analysis identifies where and how municipalities support (or not) LGBTQ2S recognition and redistribution within their governance bureaucracy. Focusing on the role of urban planners in facilitating LGBTQ2S inclusion through plans, policies, and practices, the analysis also identifies key stakeholders, municipal department

Table 1. The movement of LGBTQ2-inclusive actions and outcomes through City Hall (documented in council and committee minutes, departmental reports, municipal policies, strategies, and plans) in Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, 2003–2020.

Year	Burnaby	New Westminster	Surrey
2003	—	—	*National AIDS Awareness Week* (SM: p)
2004	—	—	**Anti-Bullying By-Law** (CS → PC: r)
2005	—	—	**Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) **Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**)
2006	—	—	**Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) Surrey Urban Youth Project (FTD → SCC: fr, r, **c**) **Workplace Human Rights Policy** (HRD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**)
2007	—	—	**Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) Diversity of Celebrations (TDD → MAC: pr)
2008	—	—	*Surrey HIV-AIDS Awareness Week* (SM: p) **Human Rights Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy** (CS & HRD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**)
2009	—	—	—
2010	—	*NW Pride Day* (NWCC & NWM: d, p)	2010 Calendar of Events (HRD → MAC: pr) **Safe Harbour Program Project** (MAC: d, pr)
2011	**School Board SOGI Policy** (SB41 → SIC → BCC: pr, **a**, **c**)	**Century House Inclusion Enhancement** (DSD & PRC → NWCC: fr, r, **a**, **c**)	*Annual Pride Festival* (FTD → FC → SCC: d, fr, pr, rq, **c**, **f**) *Surrey Pride Weekend* (SM: p)
2012	*Our City of Colours* (SIC → PBD → BCC: d, pr, r, **a**, **c**, **rf**) **Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination Membership** (PBD→ SIC→ BCC: r, **a**, **c**)	*NW Pride Festival* (NWCC: fr, r, **f**) **Safe Harbour Implementation Program** (PBDD → MAC → NWCC: pr, **a**, **c**, **rf**)	*Surrey Pride Weekend* (SM: p) *Spirit Day* (SM: p)

Table 1. (Cont.) The movement of LGBTQ2-inclusive actions and outcomes through City Hall (documented in council and committee minutes, departmental reports, municipal policies, strategies, and plans) in Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, 2003–2020.

Year	Burnaby	New Westminster	Surrey
2013	**Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy** (BCC → CPC: r) Youth Citizenship Awards (BYVC → BM: aw)	**Century House Inclusion Enhancement** (PBDD → CSIC: pr) **Safe Harbour Implementation Plan** (PBDD → CSIC: pr) **Safe Harbour Implementation Plan** (DSD → NWCC: r, pr, **a**, **c**, **rf**) *NW Pride Festival* (PCRD → NWCC: d, pr, r)	**Masterplan for Housing the Homeless** (PDD → SCC: r) *Anti-Bullying Film Contest* (DAC: pr) *Annual Pride Festival* (FTD → FC → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) *International Day of the Pink* (SM: p) *Surrey Pride Festival* (SM: p) **Surrey Official Community Plan** (PDD → SCC: r) Information from the 2011 Census (PDD → SCC: r)
2014	—	*NW Pride Festival* (DNW-BIA → NWCC: r, rq, **c**, **rf**) *NW Pride Festival* (ESD → DNW-PC: r) *NW Pride Festival* (FITD → NWCC: fr, r, **f**)	**Young Women and Civic Engagement** (HRD & PRCD → SCC: r) *Pride Festival* (SCC → FTD → FC → SCC: d, fr, r, **c**, **dn**, **rf**) Pride Flag Raising (SCC → CMD → CC → SCC: d, rq, **dn**, **rf**) *GLBTQ History Exhibition* (SCC: d, rq, **a**)
2015	—	*NW Pride Festival* (NWCC: d, pr)	**Surrey Steps Up** (FTD & PRCD → SCC: fr, r, **c**) Surrey Pride Society (SCC: d, rq, **a**) *LGBTQ History Exhibit* (SCC: d, pr, rq, **a**) *Surrey Pride Day* (SM: p) *Tucked and Plucked* (PA → CDAC: r) **Provincial Blue-Ribbon Panel on Crime Reduction** (CMD → PSC → SCC: r)
2016	*International Day of the Pink* (BM: p)	**New West Pride Accessibility Initiative** (AAAC → NWCC: d, pr, r) Gender-Free Washroom Signs (YAC: r) Gender Neutral Washrooms (CSIC → NWCC: r, **c**)	**Sustainability Charter 2.0** (CM → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) *Pride Festival* (FTD & PRCD → SCC: fr, r, **c**, **rf**) **Surrey Local Immigrant Integration Strategy** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) *Orlando Commemoration* (SM: p) *Surrey Pride Day* (SM: p) **Homelessness and Addictions in the City Centre** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) 2017 Staff Inclusion Calendar (HRD & PRCD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**)

Table 1. (Cont.) The movement of LGBTQ2-inclusive actions and outcomes through City Hall (documented in council and committee minutes, departmental reports, municipal policies, strategies, and plans) in Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, 2003–2020.

Year	Burnaby	New Westminster	Surrey
2017	—	*May Day Celebrations* (MDTF→ YAC: d, r)	**We Are Surrey** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) Metro Vancouver Homeless Count (PDD → SPAC: pr) **Human Rights Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy** (CM & HRD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) Sher Vancouver (FTD → SCC: fr, r, **c**, **f**, **rf**) *LGBTQ+ Newcomers Day* (SM: p) *Surrey Pride Day* (SM: p) **Surrey Local Immigration Partnership** (PDD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**)
2018	*International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia* (BM: p) *Burnaby Pride Day* (BM: p) *Pride Festival* (BCC: d, fr, **f**) *Pride Flag Raising* (BCC: d, rq, **a**) Permanent Rainbow Crosswalks (SCAC → ED → BCC: r, rq, **rf**)	**School Board SOGI policy** (SD40 → YAC: r) Gender Neutral Washrooms (CSIS: d, pr, **c**) New Aquatic and Community Centre (PCRD → AAAC: r) Canada Games Pool (PCRD → CSIS: pr) Proposed Modular Housing Project (PBDD → CSIC: d, pr, **c**) **Respectful Workplace and Human Rights Policy** (HR → NWCC: **a**)	Sher Vancouver (FTD → SCC: fr, r, **c, f**) *Pride Weekend* (SM: p)
2019	Youth Citizenship Awards (BYVC → BM: aw) *International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia* (BM: p) Rainbow Crosswalks (ED → BCC: r, **a**, **c**, **f**) *Burnaby Pride* (FB → EC: fr, r, **c**, **f**) *My Artist's Corner* (FB → EC: fr, **f**) *Burnaby Pride* (ED → BCC: r, **a**, **c**) Additional Rainbow Crosswalk (ED → BCC: r, **a**, **c**) *Burnaby Pride Week* (BM: p)	**Compassionate City Charter** (PBDD → CSIC: d, pr, **c**) New Westminster Aquatic Centre (PCRD → CSIC: pr) **Seniors Care for LGBTQ2s+ Persons** (SAC: r)	Cultural Grants Program (FTD & PRCD → SCC: fr, **f**) **Social Equity and Diversity Committee** (CSD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**) *LGBTQ+ Pride Week* (SM: p) Surrey White Rock Integrated Youth Collaborative (SCC: d, pr)
2020	*City Involvement in Burnaby Pride* (PBD & PRCSD → EC → BCC: r, **a**, **c**, **rf**) **Comprehensive and Inclusive Signage Program** (BCC → PRCC: r) Aquatic and Arena Project (PBD, PRCSD, & ED → FMC: r, **c**) *Festival of Learning* (FAC → PRCSD → PRCC: fr, r, **a**, **f**)		Cultural Grants Program (PRCD → SCC: fr, **c**, **f**, **rf**) **Social Equity and Diversity Committee** (PDD & CSD → SCC: r, **c**, **rf**)

Table 1. (Cont.) The movement of LGBTQ2-inclusive actions and outcomes through City Hall (documented in council and committee minutes, departmental reports, municipal policies, strategies, and plans) in Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, 2003–2020.

	Burnaby	New Westminster	Surrey
ABBREVIATIONS	BYVC: Burnaby Youth Voice Committee BCC: Burnaby City Council BM: Burnaby Mayor CPC: Community Policing Committee EC: Executive Committee ED: Engineering Department FAC: Festival Advisory Committee FB: Festivals Burnaby FMC: Financial Management Committee PBD: Planning and Building Department PRCC: Parks, Recreation, and Culture Commission PRCSD: Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department SB41: School Board District 41 SCAC: Sustainable City Advisory Committee SIC: Social Issues Committee	AAAC: Access Ability Advisory Committee CSIC: Community and Social Issues Committee DNW-BIA: Downtown New West Business Improvement Association DNW-PC: Downtown New Westminster Parking Commission DSD: Development Services Department ESD: Engineering Services Department FITD: Finance and Information Technology Department HRD: Human Resources Department MAC: Multicultural Advisory Committee MDTF: May Day Task Force NWCC: New Westminster City Council NWM: Mayor PCRD: Parks, Culture, and Recreation Department PBDD: Planning, Building, and Development Department PRC: Parks and Recreation Committee SD40: School Board District 40 SAC: Seniors Advisory Committee YAC: Youth Advisory Committee	CC: City Clerk CDAC: Culture Development Advisory Committee CMD: City Manager Department CS: City Solicitor CSD: Corporate Services Department DAC: Diversity Advisory Committee FC: Finance Committee FTD: Finance and Technology Department HRD: Human Resources Department MAC: Multicultural Committee PA: Performing Arts PC: Police Committee PDD: Planning and Development Department PRCD: Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department PSC: Public Safety Committee SCC: Surrey City Council SM: Mayor SPAC: Social Policy Advisory Committee TDD: Training and Development Department

Notes: "→" indicates movement of actions and outcomes between council, committees, and departments; recognition actions: aw = award, d = delegation, fr = funding request, pr = presentation, p = proclamation, r = report, rq = other request (non-funding); redistributive outcomes: **a** = adopted, **c** = recommended, **dn** = denied, **f** = funded, **rf** = referred; LGBTQ2S-related planning: **municipal policies, strategies, and plans**, *events*, other.

and committees, the types of issues raised and addressed, and instances of LGBTQ2S community representation. Recognition actions and redistributive outcomes were coded and counted (Figures 2 and 3) with all but negative reactions and refusals representing recognition. Practices that specifically name LGBTQ2S populations were considered acts of "recognition" while those that directed resources or led to policy changes were considered "redistributive." Analytical attention was also directed toward rainbowization to appreciate its performative limits and its curtailment of social transformation.

4. Civic Actions of LGBTQ2S Recognition

Across municipalities, reports were the most common action of recognition (Figure 2). As civic documents, reports describe the responses of municipal departments and committees to legislative inclusions, non-governmental organization presentations, or localized LGBTQ2S activism in the form of community requests. They are discursive records of changing bureaucratic understandings of local LGBTQ2S communities and civic issues of resource and service provision. Urban planners, most especially a smaller subset of social planners (who seldom have as much influence within municipal administrations as their land-use-trained counterparts), play a role in generating reports on community planning that provide the broader context of inclusion, access, and support; but these only occasionally reference LGBTQ2S people as members of minoritized populations. Indeed, there were no municipal reports focused on planning for sexual and gender minorities.

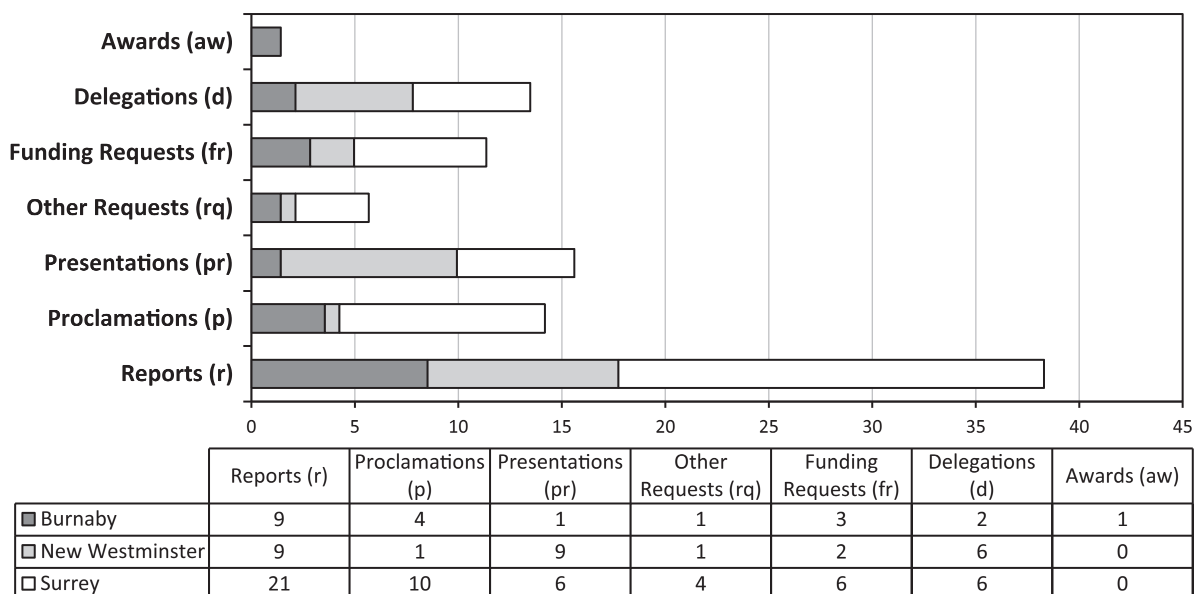
The second most frequent action is presentations, a standard means of sharing information in civic fora. Presentations by internal civic actors detail the possibilities of making redistributive changes such as

rainbowizing infrastructure or funding LGBTQ2S-specific events. When developing municipal social inclusion programs, presentations from urban planners at council (often, social planners who are trained to view problems from multiple perspectives, find negotiation-based solutions and build dialogue with marginalized communities; Sandercock, 2000), to departments, or in committees circulate technical knowledge and evidence (statistical, cartographic, or qualitative). Presentations by LGBTQ2S community activists and competency advisors in such fora also raise awareness and offer opportunities to have their own claims "recognized." In both Burnaby and New Westminster, social planners played key roles in drawing LGBTQ2S activists into community-wide consultations on more redistributive concerns (e.g., public safety, housing, homelessness, seniors' care, youth programming, and recreation opportunities).

The third predominant action is mayoral proclamations issued on behalf of their municipality as a way "to promote good relations, particularly across ethnic and cultural cleavages" (Cooper, 2018, p. 121). As the honorary figurehead of a municipal regime, a mayor can issue decrees much like the monarchs or emperors of the past. For neo-liberalizing city governments, Pride proclamations are municipal opportunities to demonstrate adherence to nationalized equalities legislation, while performing LGBTQ2S inclusion "as if the belief was its own" (Cooper, 2018, p. 123). Mayoral proclamations are performances that can be local (for municipal Pride days or weeks), or more national or international in scale (e.g., International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, or International Day of the Pink). While struggles over activist requests for mayoral Pride proclamations were initially contentious in both Surrey and Burnaby, by the late 2010s, such symbolic acts were normalized. Pride proclamations are now part of the rainbowization process, with local LGBTQ2S activists requesting such micro-symbolic performances that only briefly confer them recognition because they are offered few other avenues. Proclamations are, however, an inconsequential inclusion tool for municipalities because mayors can perform and minute them as part of a list of community groups briefly receiving recognition at a council meeting or even take them outside of city hall for pride events or flag raisings.

The fourth most common recognition action was the reception of delegations by the city council and through the civic backrooms of social inclusion committees. For city officials, hosting LGBTQ2S delegations creates the political opportunity to introduce specialized vocabularies to city hall and showcase civic rainbowization by listening to select representatives articulate community needs (cf. Fenster & Misgav, 2020). Delegations enter civic fora by invitations to the most publicly visible and active LGBTQ2S community leaders who have fostered relational linkages with civic allies as their "champion" (Cooper & Monro, 2003). Such delegations may give presentations, make proposals, and/or provide supporting evidence that foregrounds the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQ2S constituencies, granting them "due recognition" by practically acknowledging their needs and "expertise" (Young, 2000). In council chambers and committee meetings, LGBTQ2S delegations appear occasionally as "bearers of political claims," embodying queer issues and giving them brief appearances as matters of "public importance" (Ruez, 2016).

The fifth most common action of recognition is the reception of funding requests from LGBTQ2S community groups or non-profit organizations that include LGBTQ2S participants. Under neoliberal urbanism, the non-profit industrial complex is the most common site of LGBTQ2S service provision (Beam, 2018), a sector heavily reliant



	Reports (r)	Proclamations (p)	Presentations (pr)	Other Requests (rq)	Funding Requests (fr)	Delegations (d)	Awards (aw)
Burnaby	9	4	1	1	3	2	1
New Westminster	9	1	9	1	2	6	0
Surrey	21	10	6	4	6	6	0

Figure 2. Percentage of total recognition actions by case-study municipality with counts.

upon voluntary labor and the small financial inputs of municipalities through competitive community granting processes (Mananzala & Spade, 2008). As Beam (2018) cautions, non-profitization reproduces a bifurcated affective economy that pinkwashes the performance of inclusion for funders while burning out staff and perpetuating the oppressions and continued marginalization of community work as charity. Within civic governance, funding allocation is usually the purview of finance committees and departments, but urban planners may validate and justify requests that dovetail with strategic priorities for (super)diversity or reconciliation (e.g., rainbowized festivals, events, and commemorative opportunities). Such practices may also involve civic investments in rainbow infrastructure (e.g., flag poles, crosswalks) and/or necessitate the technocratic issuing of permits, insurance, parking, and road closure for events.

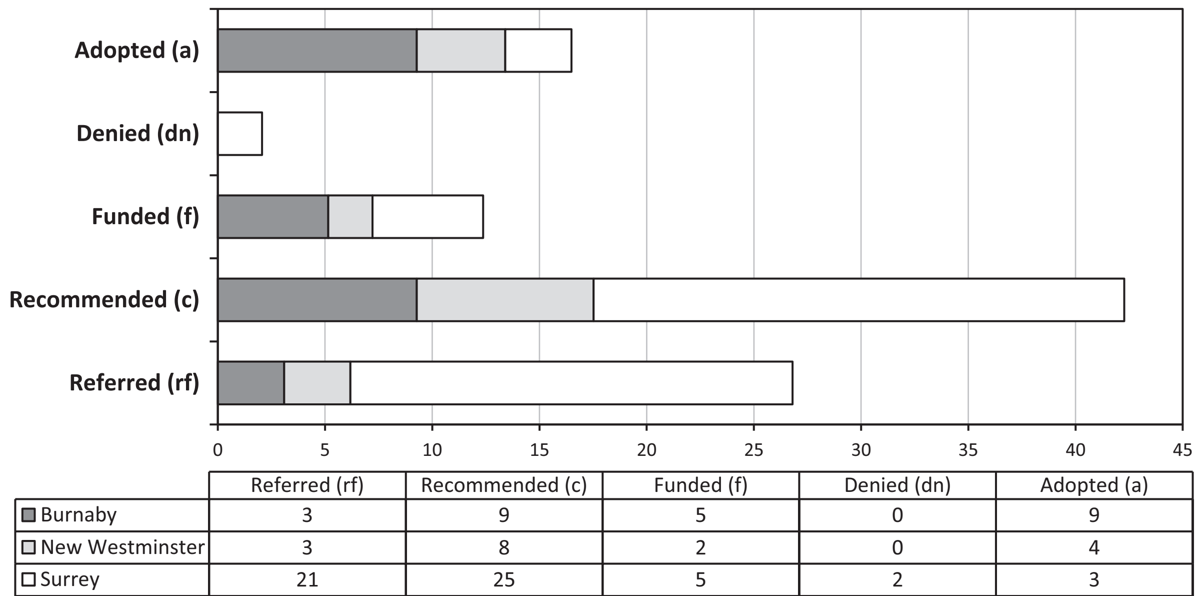
The sixth and seventh most common recognition actions are requests from community groups (other than funding) and the announcement of civic awards. The imagination of community requests is often limited to rainbowization in the use of city hall for exhibits, the installation of rainbow infrastructures (flags or crosswalks), or municipal Pride sponsorship. These requests, often made in writing, provide documentation that attests to the existence, mandates, and accomplishments of LGBTQ2S activists and community organizations. In their mediating role between city hall and the community, urban planners may provide civic support for such non-funding requests while, behind the scenes, they may also investigate their realization through the technocratic procedural mechanisms of departments and the legitimizing plans and policies that determine their viability. Civic awards provide opportunities to rainbowize civic leadership by singling out individual LGBTQ2S people, most commonly youth and seniors. Like proclamations, they are part of the competition for recognition among diverse publics but are more individualized. The process of nomination deliberation raises the profile of LGBTQ2S activists and their organizations as reports and information circulate through different committees.

In the case-study municipalities, Burnaby and Surrey's recognition actions were overwhelmingly reports and proclamations while presentations and delegations were exceptionally high in New Westminster. For years, Burnaby did almost nothing to recognize its LGBTQ2S populations, relying solely on the same mayoral proclamation—that the mayor never read aloud and went directly into the minutes—every year. This rhythm changed following the 2018 election, after which the social planner could begin to champion municipal LGBTQ2S recognition. In Surrey, the homonegative politics arising after a 1999 schoolboard ban of same-sex books (Bain et al., 2020) raised the issue much earlier and was followed by HIV-status activism that challenged the municipality to recognize the local LGBTQ2S community. Surrey's religious constituencies (fundamentalist Christian and South Asian Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh communities) have reigned in progressive mayoral reforms such that LGBTQ2S inclusion is not on the agenda of its planners and recognition is limited to mention of the LGBTQ2S acronym in reports, recycled proclamations, applications for small pools of funding, and largely unsuccessful requests for rainbowization (e.g., for flag raisings and use of the city hall plaza). Recognition actions extend beyond rainbowization in New Westminster, a former working-class city and city-regional leader in compassionate social inclusion (Bain & Podmore, 2021). Its reports, presentations and reception of delegations demonstrate the synergistic alignment of civic leader-LGBTQ2S community activist networks with urban economic redevelopment initiatives and the power of its social planner's inclusion enhancement projects to extend the redistributive concerns of LGBTQ2S activists about access to housing, municipal facilities, and seniors' care facilities across departmental silos. Urban planners, therefore, played a key role in facilitating (or not) LGBTQ2S recognition actions, but mayoral leadership and municipal social inclusion priorities were also determinants in the municipal scaling up of LGBTQ2S recognition from activists, local community organizations and para-public institutions, and dispersal throughout governance departments.

5. Civic Outcomes of LGBTQ2S Redistribution

Five types of LGBTQ2S redistributive outcomes were identified (Figure 3). Referrals (of applications and proposals to departments for technocratic and bureaucratic investigation before the final decision-making process) were the most common followed by recommendations (regarding proposals and plans from council to specialized committees). The adoption of resolutions that enhance the city's diversity profile (implementing social plans, changing infrastructure, and granting permission to temporarily use civic spaces) were third, followed by the funding of LGBTQ2S groups and targeted projects. Although rare, there were two instances in Surrey when community requests were denied by council, an outcome of maldistribution that is explored in greater detail elsewhere (Bain & Podmore, 2022).

When city councils and committees make recommendations acknowledging LGBTQ2S constituencies, they demonstrate a commitment to the redistributive process. Requests and proposals promoting LGBTQ2S redistribution often enter the governance process through the backdoor of specialized socio-cultural advisory committees—the social consciousness of municipalities—whose recommendations can indicate which groups are most deserving of redistributive resources (Cooper & Monro, 2003). In Burnaby, it was the Social Issues Committee, following a presentation from the social planner in 2012, that recommended City Council join Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination forcing the adoption of a non-discrimination clause regarding LGBTQ2S



	Referred (rf)	Recommended (c)	Funded (f)	Denied (dn)	Adopted (a)
Burnaby	3	9	5	0	9
New Westminster	3	8	2	0	4
Surrey	21	25	5	2	3

Figure 3. Percent total redistribution outcomes by case-study municipality with counts.

populations. Burnaby's social planner, working closely with non-profits and the City's Parks and Recreation Department, also did the groundwork to support a motion that the City's Executive Committee permanently fund Burnaby Pride in 2020. In New Westminster, the social planner led the 2012–2013 Century House Social Inclusion Enhancement project (the municipality's first redistributive initiative to include LGBTQ2S residents) with the recommendation of the Community and Social Issues Committee and the support of Development Services and the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Committee. In Surrey, neither the Multicultural Committee nor the Diversity Advisory Committee ever recommended any targeted policies addressing LGBTQ2S constituencies to council. No urban planners ever initiated plans for LGBTQ2S inclusion. References to LGBTQ2S constituencies mostly appear in lists of minoritized groups in documents addressing inclusion (e.g., social wellbeing, youth engagement, social sustainability, anti-racism and immigrant integration, homelessness and addictions, and Indigenous relations).

Referrals demonstrate the integrative role played by urban planners in bringing LGBTQ2S social inclusion measures to fruition and illustrate the synergies between departments and committees. In Burnaby, a delegation from Our City of Colours proposed a poster campaign to raise awareness of LGBTQ2S ethno-cultural diversity to the Social Issues Committee in 2012 which was referred to the planning department (Bain & Podmore, 2022). The planners then enlisted the assistance of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department to prepare a City Council report. Initiated by a citizen request to the Sustainable City Advisory Committee, Burnaby's 2018 rainbow crosswalks were also the result of such interdepartmental referrals. Before recommending the proposal for six rainbow crosswalks to City Council, the Committee referred the proposal to the Engineering and Finance Departments to determine materials, placement, and funding. In New Westminster, the social planner presented a 2012–2013 proposal to participate in the Safe Harbour program (a provincial anti-racism safety training program that includes LGBTQ2S) to the Multicultural Advisory Committee and the Community and Social Issues Committee which referred the proposal to Development Services for clarification before requesting council adoption. Surrey's most notable referrals have been employed to block LGBTQ2S rainbowization requests for flag raisings and Pride sponsorship. In 2014, for example, a request to raise the rainbow flag on the municipal pole was referred by council to the city manager for clarification of flag protocol and then denied (Bain & Podmore, 2022).

Adoptions by City Councils represent public governance commitments emerging from dialogues with multiple publics. Municipal adoptions in support of LGBTQ2S redistribution are often positively correlated with the size of the city, the availability of "interest group resources," and the presence of "strong networks of advocates" (Cravens, 2015, p. 22). In Burnaby, there were only two adoptions before the mayoral regime change of 2018 and only one—the Our City of Colours poster campaign—was LGBTQ2S-specific. With a new mayor championing redistribution for LGBTQ2S citizens through rainbowized Pride festivities and crosswalks after 2018, strong networks of non-profit advocates aligned with city representatives to initiate multiple adoptions and with them, rapid municipal change. A long-standing municipal leader in LGBTQ2S inclusions, New Westminster, ironically, has few official adoptions (4% of all outcomes) due to the independence of its Pride organization and its annual dedicated civic funding which makes it unnecessary to seek regular approval from city council. Despite

its size, Surrey has few LGBTQ2S-specific adoptions (3% of all outcomes) other than the sanctioning of two queer history exhibitions in the foyer of City Hall in 2014 and 2015. Since the largest municipality has the fewest adoptions, size was not a determining factor in municipal LGBTQ2S redistributive adoptions. Instead, adoptions were determined by the availability of LGBTQ2S resources and the strength of LGBTQ2S advocacy networks, especially those of civic champions such as progressive mayors and senior social planners.

Since mayors have the political power to prioritize LGBTQ2S inclusion, mayoral leadership determines LGBTQ2S redistribution outcomes with urban planners providing the technical expertise to justify municipal infrastructural adaptations and funding. In Burnaby, mayoral regime change made it possible for the social planner to lead the organization of the city's first Pride event in 2018, chairing a committee that brought together local non-profits and municipal departments to rapidly realize funding for the first event and crosswalk. This planner then leveraged Pride to change the municipality's institutional culture by dispersing LGBTQ2S knowledge to the engineering, maintenance, transportation, and finance departments and securing permanent funding for this event in 2020 (Bain & Podmore, 2022). In New Westminster, early mayoral support for a Pride event in 2010 led to the rapid incorporation of LGBTQ2S constituency concerns and the formation of New West Pride as a stand-alone community organization with dedicated municipal funding since 2015. Such strong mayoral support has meant that its social planner can focus on integrating LGBTQ2S populations into social inclusion projects and participatory planning fora while also redistributing access by providing gender-neutral restrooms and changing rooms in municipal facilities and studying exclusions in seniors' care facilities. In Surrey, limited mayoral support and a planning department commitment to land use and other social groups has meant that LGBTQ2S activists must directly confront politicians during council meetings to make their demands for transformative redistribution. With no "champion" planner nor dedicated funding, they must work with the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department for annual grants to fund Surrey Pride and support local LGBTQ2S community groups. These three configurations therefore demonstrate that mayoral commitment opens the municipal opportunity structure to LGBTQ2S recognition, paving the way for social planners to facilitate transformative redistribution. Thus, transformative redistribution for LGBTQ2S constituencies in peripheral municipalities requires investment in the practice of social planning and the extension and integration of the social inclusion portfolio across municipal departments.

6. Conclusion

This article has argued that urban planning in the suburbs of the Vancouver city-region rarely aligns an LGBTQ+ politics of recognition with transformative redistribution in ways that can be sustained across professional and managerial boundaries. It suggests that the specificity of recognition for suburban LGBTQ2S residents does not lead to integration into fundamental municipal governance arenas such as housing provision, poverty reduction, public security, public transit infrastructure, or service provision. In many respects it appears as if nothing is being redistributed within local governments other than variations of the LGBTQ2S acronym. Within Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, LGBTQ2S issues occasionally appear in more substantive reports and documentation, but only with passing reference and in response to national and provincial legislative equalities provocations. While over time, variations of the LGBTQ2S acronym were increasingly incorporated into municipal public-facing records, none of these municipalities had plans or policies specific to the LGBTQ2S population. Suburban LGBTQ2S populations were never an urban planning or policy priority; instead, they are "rare events" and after-thoughts, often listed amongst marginalized "others" who lack representation, are disadvantaged, and are assumed to live elsewhere (read central city; Cravens, 2015).

In the three case study municipalities, LGBTQ2S recognition actions (awards, delegations, funding requests, other requests, presentations, proclamations, and reports) were more prevalent than any redistributive outcomes (adopted, denied, funded, recommended, and referred). The increasingly concentrated and persistent civic use of the rainbow was frequently deployed to stand in for a more substantive integration of LGBTQ2S concerns. Burnaby became especially reliant upon the rainbow as a marker of inclusion in the suburban landscape and as compensation for years of civic neglect. This practice of surplus visibility contrasts with Surrey, where there is limited municipal rainbowization and outright rejection of social inclusion rituals that promote LGBTQ2S recognition. As the bridging municipality between Burnaby and Surrey, New Westminster's rainbowization is readily apparent, but behind public displays, participatory mechanisms facilitate the incorporation of LGBTQ2S concerns into departmental initiatives. However, the lack of commonality regarding governance and urban planning practices across the three municipalities also indicates the ongoing peripheralization of LGBTQ2S interests by local suburban governments. As the fragmentary character of the database suggests, none of the municipalities had a coherent program for LGBTQ2S municipal recognition in planning or governance.

Given the rarity of such outcomes, the current analysis points to the potential role that urban planners, especially social planners, could play in augmenting the number of tangible deliverables to integrate LGBTQ2S populations into municipal redistributive mechanisms. Numerically outnumbered by land use, transportation and economic development planners, a few, active social planners on the progressive edge of their practice do the

bulk of LGBTQ2S social inclusion work. Any realization of a just city also necessitates that urban planners move beyond the relative comfort of a colourful visibility politics and understand the limits of rainbowization as recognition. As Cooper (2018) cautions, citifying the rainbow and its symbolic economy as publicly held city property (e.g., through festivals, crosswalks, stickers, posters, and banners) risks reducing LGBTQ+ equality gains to "festivalized" versions of diversity. While such performative progressiveness permits the navigation of complex suburban morality politics, it is readily co-optable by other agendas, notably neoliberal suburban redevelopment strategies that emphasize commercial revitalization and festivalization (Ghaziani, 2014). To resist such rainbow co-option, planners require inclusion commitments from municipal leadership and the opportunity to extend them across municipal departments (Muller Myrdahl, 2021). If such commitments are to support transformative redistribution they further require "internally-diverse advisory committees, LGBTQ2S community-led engagement, and the collection of LGBTQ2S-sensitive disaggregated data" (Muller Myrdahl, 2021, p. 52).

Transformative redistribution is a means to resocialize the economy and restructure the underlying frameworks that produce inequalities. Necessarily political, it cannot be the responsibility of urban planners alone. Within municipal governance frameworks, planners have the responsibility to collect, track, and communicate relevant demographic data that informs the evidence-based goals and measurable targets of municipal social inclusion plans and policy frameworks. The national census is the primary source of same-sex household data, but its portraits of LGBTQ+ residents are necessarily troubled and incomplete, resulting in erasures and marginalization (Frisch, 2021). These administrative data discontinuities make evidence-based inclusion goals and measurable social planning targets for LGBTQ+ residents difficult to formulate. Until it is possible to benchmark the resource and service needs of heterogeneous suburban LGBTQ2S populations that are markedly divided by income, ethnicity, religion, family status, household structure, and politics, they will remain "a marginalized group" despite their concerns not being marginal to planning (Forsyth, 2001, p. 354). As Doan (2015, p. 258) reminds, planners play a critical role in empowering "diverse LGBTQ interests to work together and plan for the future of the whole community" by creating spaces to gather, socialize, and organize outside of gay villages. It is imperative, therefore, to build upon LGBTQ2S recognition and its playful performances of rainbowization as municipal progress, by feeding transformative LGBTQ2S redistribution through all municipal departments and committees.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Leanne Letourneau for the research assistance that contributed to the formation of the project's public-facing communication records database. We are also grateful to the social planners and local LGBTQ2S activists of each of the case-study municipalities. Without their participation and the funding of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (435–2016–1142), this article would not have been possible.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2021). Linguistic ambivalence amidst suburban diversity: LGBTQ2S municipal "social inclusions" on Vancouver's periphery. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *39*(7), 1644–1672.

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2022). The scalar arrhythmia of LGBTQ2S social inclusion policies: An analysis of the peripheral municipalities of a "progressive" city-region. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *46*(5), 784–806.

Bain, A. L., Podmore, J. A., & Rosenberg, R. (2020). "Straightening" space and time? Peripheral moral panics in print media representations of Canadian LGBTQ2S suburbanites, 1985–2005. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *21*(6), 839–861.

Bannister, J., & Kearns, A. (2013). The function and foundations of urban tolerance: Encountering and engaging with difference in the city. *Urban Studies*, *50*(13), 2700–2717.

Beam, M. (2018). *Gay, Inc.: The nonprofitization of queer politics*. University of Minnesota Press.

Bitterman, A. (2021). The rainbow connection: A time-series study of rainbow flag display across nine Toronto neighborhoods. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 117–140). Springer.

Brenner, N., Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2010). Variegated neoliberalization: Geographies, modalities, pathways. *Global Networks*, *10*(2), 182–222.

Brodyn, A., & Ghaziani, A. (2018). Performative progressiveness: Accounting for new forms of inequality in the gayborhood. *City & Community*, *17*(2), 307–329.

Cameron, A. (2007). Geographies of welfare and exclusion: Reconstituting the "public." *Progress in Human Geography*, *31*(4), 519–526.

Cohendet, P., Grandadam, D., & Laurent, S. (2010). The anatomy of the creative city. *Industry and Innovation*, *17*(1), 91–111.

Cooper, D. (2018). Possessive attachments: Identity beliefs, equality law and the politics of state play. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *35*(2), 115–135.

Cooper, D., & Monro, S. (2003). Governing from the margins: Queering the state of local government? *Contemporary Politics*, *9*(3), 229–255.

Cravens, R. G., III. (2015). Morality politics and municipal LGBT policy adoption: A rare-event analysis. *State and Local Government Review*, *47*(1), 15–25.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer space*. Routledge.

Doan, P. L., & Higgins, H. (2011). The demise of queer space? Resurgent gentrification and the assimilation of LGBT neighborhoods. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *31*(1), 6–25.

Fainstein, S. S. (2010). *The just city*. Cornell University Press.

Fenster, T., & Misgav, C. (2020). Gender and sexuality in participatory planning in Israel: A journey between discourses. In A. Datta, P. Hopkins, L. Johnston, E. Olson, & J. M. Silva (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of gender and feminist geographies* (pp. 194–201). Routledge.

Fincher, R., & Iveson, K. (2008). *Planning and diversity in the city: Redistribution, recognition and encounter*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Fischer, F. (2003). *Reframing public policy: Discursive politics and deliberative practices*. Oxford University Press.

Forsyth, A. (2001). Nonconformist populations and planning sexuality and space: Nonconformist populations and planning practice. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *15*(3), 339–358.

Fraser, N. (2000). Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review*, *3*, 107–120.

Fraser, N. (2008). Abnormal justice. *Critical Inquiry*, *34*(3), 393–422.

Frisch, M. (2021). A queer reading of the United States census. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 117–140). Springer.

Gerometta, J., Hausermann, H., & Longo, G. (2005). Social innovation and civil society in urban governance: Strategies for an inclusive city. *Urban Studies*, *42*(11), 2007–2021.

Ghaziani, A. (2014). *There goes the gayborhood*. Princeton University Press.

Goh, K. (2018). Safe cities and queer spaces: The urban politics of radical LGBT activism. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, *108*(2), 463–477.

Gorman-Murray, A. (2011). Queerying planning in Australia: The problems and possibilities of multiscalar governance for LGBT sexual minorities. In P. L. Doan (Ed.), *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice* (pp. 129–143). Ashgate.

Grant, J. L. (2009). Theory and practice in planning the suburbs: Challenges to implementing new urbanism, smart growth, and sustainability principles. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *10*(1), 11–33.

Halberstam, J. (2005). *In a queer time and place: Transgender bodies, subcultural lives*. New York University Press.

Haritaworn, J. (2019). On these bones: The queer regenerations of the Toronto gay village serial killings. *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies*, *40*(1), 15–41.

Hines, S. (2013). *Gender diversity, recognition and citizenship: Towards a politics of difference*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Jackson, J. T. (2014). Planning for social inclusion? What planners from Glasgow, Melbourne, and Toronto say. *International Planning Studies*, *19*(1), 45–76.

James, S. W. (2013). Rights to the diverse city: Challenges to Indigenous participation in urban planning and heritage preservation in Sydney, Australia. *Space and Culture*, *16*(3), 274–287.

Listerborn, C. (2007). Who speaks? And who listens? The relationship between planners and women's participation in local planning in a multi-cultural urban environment. *GeoJournal*, *70*(1), 61–74.

Mananzala, R., & Spade, D. (2008). The nonprofit industrial complex and trans resistance. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, *5*, 53–71. https://doi.org/10.1525/srsp.2008.5.1.53

Marcuse, P. (2009). From justice planning to commons planning. In P. Marcuse, J. Connolly, J. James, J. Novy, I Olivo, C. Potter, & J. Steil (Eds.), *Searching for the just city: Debates in urban theory and practice* (pp. 91–102). Routledge.

McQueen, P. (2015). *Subjectivity, gender and the struggle for recognition*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Misgav, C. (2019). Planning, justice and LGBT urban politics in Tel-Aviv: A queer dilemma. *Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica*, *65*(3), 541–562.

Muller Myrdahl, T. (2021). We've painted a rainbow crosswalk, now what? *Plan Canada*, *61*(1), 50–52.

Murray, C. (2015). Queering Vancouver: The work of the LGBTQ Civic Advisory Committee, 2009–14. *BC Studies*, *188*, 55–80.

Podmore, J. A., & Bain, A. L. (2021). Whither queer suburbanisms? Beyond heterosuburbia and queer metronormativities. *Progress in Human Geography*, *45*(5), 1254–1277.

Rankin, K. N. (2010). Reflexivity and post-colonial critique: Toward an ethics of accountability in planning praxis. *Planning Theory*, *9*(3), 181–199.

Ruez, D. (2016). Working to appear: The plural and uneven geographies of race, sexuality, and the local state in Sydney, Australia. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *34*(2), 282–300.

Sandercock, L. (2000). When strangers become neighbours: Managing cities of difference. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *1*(1), 13–30.

Soja, E. W. (2010). *Seeking spatial justice*. University of Minnesota Press.

Young, I. M. (2000). *Inclusion and democracy*. Oxford University Press.

Zebracki, M. (2018). Urban preservation and the queerying space(s) of unremembering: Memorial landscapes of the Miami Beach art deco historic district. *Urban Studies*, *55*(10), 2261–2285.

About the Authors

Julie A. Podmore is a professor in the Department of Geosciences at John Abbott College and an affiliate assistant professor in the Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment at Concordia University in Montreal. Her earlier research focused on the historical geographies of Montreal's lesbian communities. Recent projects examine LGBTQ+ neighbourhood formation, suburbanisms, activisms, municipal governance, and planning and policy inclusions in Canadian cities and suburbs. She is co-editor of *Lesbian Feminisms: Essays Opposing Global Heteropatriarchies* and *The Cultural Infrastructure of Cities*.

Alison L. Bain is a professor of the Geographies of Inclusive Cities in the Department of Geography and Spatial Planning at Utrecht University. Her research examines the spatial, infrastructural, and creative affordances of cities and their peripheries for cultural workers and LGBTQ+ populations. She is a North American managing editor for the *Urban Studies Journal*, the author of *Creative Margins: Cultural Production in Canadian Suburbs*, and co-editor of *Urbanization in a Global Context* and *The Cultural Infrastructure of Cities*.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 223–234
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6461

Article

At the Intersection of Equity and Innovation: Trans Inclusion in the City of Vancouver

Tiffany Muller Myrdahl [1,2]

[1] Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Simon Fraser University, Canada; tmullerm@sfu.ca
[2] Urban Studies Program, Simon Fraser University, Canada

Submitted: 6 November 2022 | Accepted: 10 March 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
In 2016, the Vancouver City Council passed the Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver policy, a motion that prompted the development of a strategy aimed at ensuring the safety and accessibility of municipal programs, services, and physical spaces for Two-Spirit, trans, and gender-diverse (TGD2S) users, including residents, City staff, and visitors. Binary gender is a taken-for-granted assumption of most urban forms and functions: It is encoded in all municipal data collection forms, building codes, signage, and communication strategies. At its root, then, addressing trans inclusion requires the municipal government to attend to and redesign the gendered models of service, programs, and space upon which the city is built. This article tells the story of the Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver policy and is driven by two goals. First, I document this policy as a contribution to the urban policy and planning literature, where attention to gender diversity is due. Second, using the trans inclusion strategy, I show how a municipal equity policy aimed at addressing the safety and inclusion of TGD2S people can have significant impacts beyond its immediate scope. To develop this idea, I consider how equity-driven innovation can substantially reshape institutional practices.

Keywords
equity; gender diversity; inclusive cities; innovatory urban governance; LGBTQ; municipal policy; transgender

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

In 2016, the Vancouver City Council passed the Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver motion (also referred to here as the Supporting Trans* Equality policy or TGD2S strategy), a strategy that aims to make the City of Vancouver a safer place for Two-Spirit, trans, and gender-diverse (TGD2S) people who seek services and work. For a group of people whose encounters with city services are often shaped by exclusion, harassment, and discrimination (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014, p. 8), this strategy was a remarkable achievement. Its purpose—to ensure that municipal programs, services, and physical spaces are safe and accessible to TGD2S users (whether residents, visitors, or City staff)—stands in stark contrast to the myriad anti-trans laws and policies that have proliferated in North America and beyond during the same period. For the City of Vancouver, the Supporting Trans* Equality policy demonstrated the City's local and global leadership in working toward creating meaningful pathways to inclusion (City of Vancouver, 2016, p. 9).

TGD2S people are often grouped with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer communities under the LGBTQ2S+ acronym; however, these groups share overlapping but distinct concerns and needs. While municipalities have acknowledged the "LGBQ" part of the acronym, or sexual diversity, in an uneven fashion (Bain & Podmore, 2021), the acknowledgment of gender diversity is even more scarce (a gap that is replicated in the literature). The Supporting Trans* Equality policy is unique in its intervention for gender-diverse communities: Trans, which refers to people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex; gender

diverse (including non-binary), which includes people whose gender expressions and identities do not conform to a male/female gender binary; and Two-Spirit, who are Indigenous and whose gender identity is both male/female, masculine/feminine (Hunt, 2016). TGD2S people face persistent discrimination when trying to access even the most basic municipal services. Consider the following scenarios: Trying to participate in recreational programming with a preferred name and being refused because this name does not align with legal identification; or, wanting to use a change room that aligns with one's gender identity and facing hostility from both staff and other recreation centre users when that effort fails. In these scenarios, each of these "sites" of City services—programming, spaces, signage, forms, and staff training—contain potential barriers that, shaped by binary gender norms, work to exclude residents, staff, and visitors.

At the same time, TGD2S voices have been historically absent from the planning table and there have been few avenues through which TGD2S people have been invited to participate in shaping urban futures. While appreciating TGD2S lives through a strengths-based lens is vital to resisting damage-centred narratives (Nash, 2010; Todd, 2021; Tuck, 2009), it is also necessary to understand the everyday impacts of anti-trans hostility. As Kline et al. (2023) write, trans people experience a wide range of physical and mental health disparities compared to a cisgender population. These disparities, they note, "exist in a social context of stigma and social exclusion" (Kline et al., 2023, p. 2) alongside a sharp increase in anti-trans legislation, particularly in the US and the UK (Kinney et al., 2022).

In British Columbia, gender identity and expression are protected grounds under the provincial human rights code. This amendment, made in 2016, was characterized as necessary for clarity of interpretation about the types of discrimination TGD2S people face, and to be consistent with human rights legislation across Canada ("B.C. Human Rights Code," 2016). As human rights lawyer Laura Track writes for the BC Human Rights Clinic: "The inclusion of gender identity and expression in the Code means that employers, landlords, and service providers must act to prevent and respond to discrimination against trans people" (Track, 2020, para. 5) For municipalities, as employers, service providers and occasionally landlords, enacting policy to support trans inclusion aligns with a broader policy landscape. Moreover, policy that directly confronts discrimination and aims "to protect and expand resources and opportunities" works alongside legal human rights protections to change social norms (Kinney et al., 2022, p. 493). Yet, few municipalities have addressed trans inclusion explicitly.

This article explores the origin and policy-related impacts of one such intervention in the City of Vancouver. I tell the story of the Supporting Trans* Equality policy driven by two questions: What was the policy development process of the TGD2S strategy? And what, if any, policy-related impacts have the TGD2S strategy had? The aim of this article is twofold. The first goal is to document this policy as a contribution to the urban policy and planning literature, where attention to gender diversity is due. Second, using the TGD2S strategy, I show how a municipal equity policy aimed at addressing the safety and inclusion of TGD2S people can have significant impacts beyond its immediate scope. To develop this idea, I consider how equity policy can serve as an innovation tool: I link literature on equity and urban innovation in municipal governance to illustrate how one inclusion strategy can substantially reshape institutional practices.

The path of the article is as follows. An explanation of methods is followed by a snapshot of the Supporting Trans* Equality policy, which is couched in a discussion of how I understand and approach trans inclusion in the context of municipal policy and planning. Then, I explore two sets of literature—equity and urban innovation at the municipal scale—as a conceptual framework to support a subsequent, more thorough discussion of the TGD2S strategy: Its origins, its adoption, and the outcomes that have emerged from the ways this policy has become embedded into the broader organizational mandate of the City. Using this conceptual lens, I consider how an equity strategy can function as innovation by substantially reshaping institutional practices for the benefit of everyone, including its intended target.

2. Methods

This analysis was developed through an examination of open-source documents available through the City of Vancouver's website. I used four search functions available through the City's website: A general search feature; a "find Council documents" function; an "information from in-camera meetings" search feature; and the archived web contents available on the Archive-It site. These tools allowed me to create a database of more than 30 relevant policy and strategy documents from the years 2013–2022: These include seven administrative reports, nine memoranda and correspondence documents, multiple sets of meeting minutes from the Park Board and Council that focus on TGD2S and related strategies, four municipal budget and five-year service plans, advisory committee terms of reference, annual reports, working plans, and web pages (for a partial list of documents used in this analysis see Table 1). All of these documents were publicly available, and no retrieval assistance from City staff or advisory members was sought. Supporting supplementary materials, such as media coverage of outcomes that emerged from the TGD2S strategy, were also added to the database. These documents were reviewed and coded using an inductive coding process (Saldaña, 2013).

Since the focus of this article is to tell a story about the trajectory of a policy and its policy-related effects, I present the story of trans inclusion from one angle that sticks closely to the data presented in staff reports and

Table 1. Select database contents from the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Park Board.

Document title	Document no. (if applicable)	Date	Document type
Park Board Committee Meeting Minutes	—	13 May 2013	Meeting minutes
Trans and Gender Variant Experience of and Ideas for Vancouver Survey*	—	2013	Community survey
General Manager's Recommendation	—	17 April 2014	Recommendation to the Park Board from the general manager of Parks and Recreation
Building a Path to Parks & Recreation for All: Reducing Barriers for Trans & Gender Variant Community Members*	—	April 2014	Report
Park Board Committee Meeting Minutes	—	28 April 2014	Meeting minutes
Annual Report LGBTQ Advisory Committee	—	December 2014	Summary presentation
Trans* and Gender Variant Inclusion Steering Committee TOR	—	2015	Committee terms of reference
Supporting Trans Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver	—	July 2015	Motion on notice
Chief Human Resources Officer Recommendation	RTS no. 11065, VanRIMS no. 08–2000–20	8 June 2016	Administrative report
Trans, Gender Variant, and Two-Spirit Inclusion at the City of Vancouver*	—	July 2016	Report
TGVI Annual Report & Corporate Sponsorship Fund Request	—	October 2016	Presentation to the Park Board
Annual Report to Council—Advisory Committees	—	23 December 2016	Memorandum
2017–2018 Work Plan of the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee	—	—	Work plan of the committee and sub-committees
Annual Progress Update on Work Related to the Staff Report on Supporting Trans Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver*	RTS no. 11582, VanRIMS no. 08–2000–20	2 June 2017	Administrative report
Annual Report to Council—Advisory Committees	—	26 January 2018	Memorandum
Annual Progress Update on Work Related to the Staff Report on Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver	RTS. no. 12526	6 July 2018	Memorandum
Interim Report to the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services	RTS no. 12960, VanRIMS no. 08–2000–20	9 April 2019	Administrative report

Table 1. (Cont.) Select database contents from the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Park Board.

Document title	Document no. (if applicable)	Date	Document type
2020 Budget and Five-Year Financial Plan	—	December 2019	Public-facing budget document
Memo: Updates on Women's Equity Strategy and Trans Gender Diverse and Two Spirit Inclusion Strategy	RTS no. 1334	12 November 2020	City Manager's correspondence
Updates on Women's Equity Strategy and Trans Gender Diverse and Two Spirit Inclusion Strategy	RTS no. 1334	13 May 2021	Memorandum
Recommendation From the General Manager of Arts Culture and Community Services and the Chief Equity Officer	RTS no. 14507, VanRIMS no. 08–2000–20	22 June 2021	Memorandum introducing the report
Equity Framework	—	22 June 2021	Report
Vancouver Budget 2022 Service Plans	—	No date	Public-facing budget document
Update on Women's Equity Strategy	—	7 March 2022	Memorandum

public-facing policy documents. This is neither an exhaustive approach, nor is it without limitations. Notably, this story does not give voice to TGD2S staff or residents about their perspective of policy implementation and impact. TGD2S voices included here are those who were documented during the process of policy development. Likewise, there is no attention paid here to the relationship between trans-inclusion policy development and the role of the Vancouver Police Department as a stakeholder in the city process. While the Vancouver Police Department did not play a central role in the TGD2S strategy, they participated in limited consultations through their role as an affiliate institution. Many TGD2S people, especially racialized TGD2S communities, have a learned distrust of police as a result of persistent negative encounters (Lee & Santiago, 2023). Given these relations, it is likely that some TGD2S people would not feel welcome to participate in a policy development process where the Vancouver Police Department may be present. This question is worth exploring but it is outside the scope of this article.

3. Trans Inclusion and the TGD2S Strategy

The origin story of the TGD2S strategy began with policies and actions undertaken for trans inclusion in 2014 by the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (also referred to as Park Board) and the Vancouver Board of Education (also referred to as School Board), two organizations whose jurisdictions and operations have financial attachments to the City but operate independently in their decision-making. Both pursued a path to make their organizations more welcoming and inclusive. In the case of the School Board, this path was contentious: During the consultation to update their anti-discrimination policy, angry opposition resulted from efforts to protect LGBTQ students, staff, and families and address trans and gender-diverse members of the school community (Leung, 2017). For the Park Board, the story was different. In 2013, the Park Board voted unanimously to strike a working group "to provide a report to the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation detailing how Vancouver can be the world's most inclusive jurisdiction for trans and gender-variant communities" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2013, p. 3). The content of the report returned to the Park Board in 2014 is detailed further on; it became the basis for the TGD2S strategy, which sought to scale up the work begun by the Park and School Boards. Accepted by the Council in June 2016, the actions contained in the strategy require the municipal government to attend to and redesign implicitly gendered models of service, programs, and spaces.

Indeed, the assumption of binary gender is part of the municipal fabric: It is encoded in municipal data collection forms, building codes, signage, and communication strategies. For a staff person, resident, or visitor whose gender identity or presentation does not align or is not read by others as conforming with dominant modes of masculinity and femininity, trying to access programs, services, and spaces can be alienating or worse. A common sentiment from TGD2S respondents who were surveyed about their park usage was avoidance.

One respondent stated: "I frequently avoid going to the gym or going swimming if I don't have a friend with me, due to fears of being confronted/harassed in the change rooms" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014, p. 15). Many who are welcomed under an LGBTQ umbrella may face similar issues, but the challenges posed by binary gender illustrate the specific needs of TGD2S communities that "are all too often erased from supposedly 'LGBTQ' struggles" (Browne et al., 2021, p. 4).

What does TGD2S inclusion mean? Conceptually, I approach TGD2S inclusion from the perspective of gender and sexual citizenship, which refers to the embodied experiences, discourses, and material practices of inclusion and exclusion for certain bodies on the basis of adhering to or rejecting gender and sexual norms. Exclusion can thus take the shape of policies and practices (for instance, forms with limited categories) or be experienced as a repetition of the message "you don't belong here." In other words, the state is not the only entity with the power to enforce inclusion and exclusion. Importantly, this captures the everyday experience of discrimination faced by trans and gender-diverse people. When engaged about access to park board spaces, one respondent stated: "I am constantly being told that the washroom I am in is a women's washroom. I am a gay, young, androgynous female. These changes are necessary….We all go into any toilet to do the same thing" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014, p. 29).

Inclusion often implies a rights-based framework; indeed, exclusion on the basis of gender identity and expression contravenes a person's human rights in British Columbia and Canada. A rights-based framework is complicated for several reasons, however. First, the rationale for assigning rights is often tied to claims for social justice and recognition as a "class" deserving of rights. Yet, recognition necessarily requires inclusion and exclusion criteria (Bain & Podmore, 2021, p. 1647). In a system predicated on a gender binary, the emphasis has been on drawing boundaries around who fits within a deserving class (women, for example). The upshot is that "gender fluidity becomes further silenced through legal and social policies around trans* that reproduce traditional frameworks that foreground authentic binary gender" (Hines & Santos, 2018, p. 39). This has negative consequences for trans people, whose "authenticity" may be called into question. It also has negative consequences for gender-diverse, non-binary, and Two-Spirit people who simply do not fit into this framework.

Despite these complexities, the focus on rights is an important strategy. Hostility toward TGD2S people has been on the rise (Kinney et al., 2022; Kline et al., 2023). Nash and Browne (2021, p. 87), for instance, document what they term hetero-activist resistances in schools in Canada and the UK: They show that inclusion of, and support for, sexual orientation and gender identity learning resources "is actively contested." In British Columbia, this takes the form of parents and candidates for school boards organizing around the idea that sexual orientation and gender identity content is a trend of the day (MacDonald & Little, 2022) rather than a human rights issue. At the same time, rights have a significant impact on people's everyday lives. Earle et al. (2021, p. 864) show from a survey of 77 countries that "living in an environment that legally supports LGBT communities is associated with more personal LGBT rights support," even when people have no personal connection to members of queer or gender diverse communities.

At the City of Vancouver, the TGD2S strategy is understood as an equity-related Council directive, one of many that emerged prior to—and paved the way for—the adoption of the city-wide *Equity Framework* in 2021. The *Equity Framework* (City of Vancouver, 2021a, p. 8) also understands rights to be salient: Compliance with the law on human rights and safe workplaces is one of three "imperatives for action towards equity." However, across the internally-facing staff memos and externally-facing reports to Council, supporting trans inclusion is also framed as setting the City in a leadership role and laying a path "that will be of great benefit" not only to TGD2S communities but to organizations, community agencies, and electeds at all levels of government (City of Vancouver, 2016, p. 3). This framing is suggestive of the broader policy impact the TGD2S strategy has had.

In the next section, I develop a theoretical framework using literature on equity and urban innovation in municipal governance to explore the question of whether or how an equity intervention can also serve as an innovation tool. Ultimately, I place this scholarship into conversation with a more in-depth look at the origins and outcomes of the TGD2S strategy to consider the significance of this strategy on policy within and beyond the scope of the City of Vancouver.

4. Equity and/as Innovation

As Loh and Kim (2021) write, the issue of equity is central to the practice of planning. Although equity suffers from a lack of consistent definition (Cairney et al., 2022), it is typically understood as access in two directions: Access resulting from equitable distribution of resources and services on the one hand, and, on the other, procedural access that transforms the who and the how of decision-making. Joy and Vogel (2021) further describe these two directions of equity with an intersectional lens, underlining the multidimensional experience of social difference and oppression:

> Equity ensures that human beings in all their intersecting personal, familial, sociopolitical, and geographic differences have access to the opportunities, resources, and supports they need to survive and thrive. Simultaneously, equity requires that we understand and address the ideational systems and socio-political practices that block access for particular groups. (Joy & Vogel, 2021, p. 1376)

Notably, equity is defined in relation to—and distinct from—equality. Whereas equality is recognized as sameness (all people have access to the same opportunities, for instance), equity is recognized as addressing systemic barriers that impede access to opportunities. The move from equality to equity in Canadian municipal frameworks is a trend that has occurred in the past twenty years; as such, strategies dating from the early 2000s often used the term equality (most often in relation to gender). It is important to note that equity frameworks (unlike equality, when used in law) are not legally binding.

Given that the distribution of public assets is a central feature of planning, attention to who has access to resources and services is critical, as are efforts to expand opportunities for those who have less access because of historical and contemporary forms of exclusion (Loh & Kim, 2021, p. 182). However, there is tension between equity, diversity, and democracy in both theory and practice, as Fainstein (2010) reminds us. To cite one example, creating opportunities for participatory governance does not by definition translate into greater participation for historically excluded communities (Fainstein, 2010; Flyvbjerg, 1998). This is demonstrably shown in the case studies co-created for Black urban placemaker Jay Pitter's graduate course: She and her co-authors reveal the myriad barriers that prevent Black and other historically marginalized communities from fully engaging in civic participation, despite any increase in the number of participation opportunities (see Pitter, 2021). Even as it is complicated to implement equity in planning practice (Brand, 2015; Loh et al., 2022), recent commitments to examining equity within and outside the planning profession in Canada (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2021; Federation of Canadian Municipalities [FCM], n.d.) demonstrate that there is ever more attention to the role that equity plays in planning.

As such, addressing equity has become part of a municipality's work in the Canadian context. In British Columbia, local governments are responsible, in part or in full, for providing land use decisions and other core services. However, all local governments in Canada operate under provincial legislation; in practice, this means that their decision-making power and capacity to raise money are constrained. Regardless, many municipal governments have taken leadership positions on files—like equity—that are not historically part of their core services mandate. Given that cities are the scale at which the disproportionate impacts of housing insecurity, violence, and employment precarity become most visible (Klodawsky et al., 2017, p. 4), local governments are increasingly asked to address a broader range of issues (Mévellec et al., 2020). In their exploration of innovation and inclusion within Canadian municipal governance, Bradford and Bramwell (2014) show that some cities have rejected the idea that provincial governments dictate their capacity to shape their own futures. In these cases, cities have taken on what they understand to be an "enhanced policy role" whose process is "centred in, and responsive to, the local community" (Tindal & Tindal, 2009, p. 392, as cited in Bradford & Bramwell, 2014, p. 320).

Equity should thus be recognized as an essential feature of municipal responsiveness. The *Equity Framework* identifies three reasons for the timeliness of this intervention (City of Vancouver, 2021b): Justice (addressing historical and systematic oppression), compliance (conforming to provincial and federal human rights codes), and effectiveness (recognizing the workplace benefits of hiring, retaining, and promoting diverse staff). However, the question of the shape or implementation of equity and inclusion is discussed in the scholarly literature in critical terms. Scholars note the discrepancy between aspirational commitments and operationalized enactments of equity. Sustainability and resilience planning illustrates this problem; according to Loh and Kim (2021, p. 138), critiques of this field have shown how equity is mentioned but is not incorporated into actionable policy and planning. Andrew and Doloreux (2014, p. 138) also identify that social development initiatives like inclusion suffer when municipalities function with limited horizontal coordination across departments. This is echoed in Bain and Podmore's (2021) examination of the inclusion of sexuality and gender diversity in municipal governance. They argue: "Social issues are often siloed within the mandates of specific committees with limited intersectional crossover" (Bain & Podmore, 2021, p. 1660). Finally, the scholarship notes that where equity and inclusion are understood as exclusively social development initiatives, there is little integration between these strategies and other areas of city business, like economic development (Andrew & Doloreux, 2014), except when equity can be framed in terms of advancing economic goals (Loh & Kim, 2021).

Where equity goals *have* been advanced in local government, scholars identify divergent reasons for this outcome. Davis and Edge (2022, pp. 14–15) write that well-defined goals are key but the conjoined efforts of strategically-minded local activists and politicians are even more central. By contrast, Liao et al. (2019) find that equity is dependent on interdepartmental collaboration and an emphasis on procedural justice, like resident participation. Whitzman et al.'s (2014, p. 444) argument that "four legs for a good table" is essential for delivering improvements to women's safety brings these two views together in some ways: They argue that the four legs, or the combination of electeds, public servants, community group advocates, and (academic) researchers, is needed to create change that promotes equity and inclusion.

Could such advancements be considered innovative? Certainly, equity interventions developed through a process of co-design meet several criteria laid out by scholarship about innovation in the public sector. Defining innovation as an "intentional and proactive process that involves the generation and practical adoption and spread of new and creative ideas, which aim to produce

a qualitative change in a specific context," Sørensen and Torfing (2011, p. 849) argue that networked collaboration with multiple stakeholders can enhance public innovation. These authors emphasize that innovation is not "business as usual" but with more efficiencies. Rather, innovation is second- or third-order change that upends routines or transforms the ways problems or policies are understood (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, p. 850). Innovatory urban governance as framed by McGuirk et al. (2022, p. 1392) is similarly interested in imagining a different set of practices, motivated by responsiveness and experimentation, and emphasizing "multi-sectoral co-design and collaboration." Although there is not a consistent set of features associated with innovatory urban governance, what is common across its multiple forms is a defiance of the rigid, hierarchical structure and anti-risk behaviour for which bureaucratic tradition is known (Criado et al., 2021) and an urge for collectively driven transformation (McGuirk et al., 2022, p. 1396).

Taking up the idea of collaboration in innovation, particularly in terms of policy co-design, Blomkamp (2018, p. 66) notes that problem definition—and solutions ideation—will be improved from the participation of a greater diversity of participants throughout the policymaking process. Here, improvement implies that a greater diversity of needs is met. This is an important consideration for valuing innovation: As Shearmur and Poirier (2017) argue, it is not just economic logic or market competition that drives innovation for local governments. Rather, municipalities support innovative ideas when they address goals like "solving practical problems associated with material aspects of municipal responsibility" (Shearmur & Poirier, 2017, p. 741). In this sense, collaboration on issues like equity initiatives could be understood as an innovative response to an emergent challenge.

Notably, participatory governance has already played an important role in guiding equity initiatives in Canadian municipalities. Ottawa's City for All Women Initiative (CAWI), for instance, has worked since the early 2000s both inside and outside municipal government to shape the development and adoption of equity tools for municipal practitioners (Andrew & Doloreux, 2014; Siltanen et al., 2015). What is unique to CAWI is the way they conducted this work both within and outside City Hall: Their ability to maintain a link (an office or staff liaison) in City Hall while also retaining their community profile has meant that they have been able to draw in a far more diverse set of community members than those who would normally participate in community engagement exercises (Siltanen et al., 2015). Seen through the framework of innovation, this model of collaboration is hugely important. Without attracting diverse voices, collaboration will lead to stasis instead of innovation, particularly when collaborations occur "in closed and stable networks" and in forums where power dynamics are left unattended (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, p. 853).

Sørensen and Torfing (2011, p. 853) go on to note that, with careful management, collaboration can be fundamental to innovation. Considerations for such management include recognition of community knowledge and expertise where, as an avenue for procedural democracy, community members are invited to redefine existing terms of engagement (Corburn, 2003). Co-design of equity interventions presents a significant opportunity for innovation, then, if those who have been historically excluded from planning and decision-making are invited into a meaningful collaborative process.

As Bain and Podmore (2021) show, the application of diversity and inclusion policies to LGBTQ2S communities is uneven in many Canadian municipalities. Their study reveals civic ambivalence toward including sexual and gender diversity in suburban municipal social inclusion efforts; this agrees with my own findings about a welcoming and inclusive city policy in a small city context (Muller Myrdahl, 2017). Yet, the current equity landscape seems to be shifting in several important ways, at least in British Columbia. For one, it is supported at multiple scales, so municipal policies are in conversation with the provincial and federal expectation to apply GBA+ (gender-based analysis plus) to all aspects of governance. Second, the current focus on equity is arguably more politically engaged than earlier iterations of either gender equality strategies or diversity and inclusion initiatives, which were heavily influenced by a mandate for multicultural (immigrant) recognition and integration. The language used in current iterations of equity is more overtly political, acknowledging, for example, the way structural inequality is foundational to North American urban development.

The fact that municipal equity efforts are no longer limited to a few select cities also sets current equity efforts apart, as does the fact that equity made it onto the 2022 agenda of municipal priorities set by the FCM, the organization that works at the federal scale on behalf of local governments. The 2022 agenda acknowledged inclusion as a long-held priority that was reaffirmed through the adoption of its anti-racism and equity commitment statement (FCM, 2022, n.d.). This statement commits the organization to rectify inequities by "grounding our culture, systems, policies and practices in an intersectional, anti-racism and equity lens" (FCM, n.d.). How this will become actionable remains to be seen, but it finally responds to a long-standing call by historically marginalized communities to take seriously the inequities built into urban form and process (Pitter, 2020).

Taken together, the scholarly and applied considerations of equity in Canadian municipalities, read alongside approaches to innovation in urban governance, provide a framework to analyze the TGD2S strategy. In the next section, I draw from the database of the Park Board and City documents to tell the story of its origins and give an overview of its outcomes. Then, I read the TGD2S strategy through this lens of equity and/as innovation to interpret the role and policy-related impacts of this intervention.

5. Origins and Outcomes of the TGD2S Strategy

Formal inclusion of TGD2S people in the governance of the City of Vancouver began with the introduction of the City's (then-titled) LGBTQ Advisory Committee in 2009 (Murray, 2015). As a volunteer-driven city advisory, the committee provides staff and council with input on issues relevant to City business. Under their terms of reference, advisory committees must develop an annual work plan with specific priorities, supported through the work of subcommittees. In the 2013 LGBTQ Advisory, the Trans and Gender Variant Inclusion Working Group (TGVIWG) was initiated (Murray, 2015, p. 60) to work with the Park Board on priority one of its newly-developed strategic framework: To create parks and recreation for all. In May 2013, the TGVIWG was constituted as a working group of the Park Board (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2013).

Tasked with reporting back on barriers to access and recommended changes, the TGVIWG conducted an extensive, nearly year-long consultation process that included town hall meetings, surveys, focus groups, and other activities in two phases. First, they sought broad community engagement with TGD2S community members and allies, community centre frontline and aquatic staff, City Project Managers, recreation centre users, and community partners. Second, they refined their findings in a community review phase, seeking feedback from TGD2S community members and allies, frontline staff, and other City advisory groups (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014). Each phase involved contact with more than 200 people, many of whom shared intimate stories of challenges they, or their friends and loved ones, faced when using Park Board services and facilities. One story exemplifies the experiences collected: In it, a parent recounted how their gender creative child felt unwelcome and out of place at park programs. The parent wrote:

> She chooses day camps, like any kid does, based on where she feels safe and welcome….If staff and children respect Kate's right to her gender expression and are interested in her as a multifaceted young person, it's a thumbs up. Unfortunately, a series of bad experiences have made her extremely wary of all-day camps. Today she is very clear she does not feel safe at community centre day camps. (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014, p. 27)

Kate's experiences sum up inaccessibility: At a city-run community centre, where programming should be comparatively low cost and available to all, some kids feel unsafe and that they don't belong. These encounters set the bar for what young people (and their parents) come to expect of municipal-led services.

The outcome of this participatory process was a sixty-four-page report presented to the Park Board in April 2014 (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014). The report (abbreviated here to *Building a Path*) outlined seventy-seven recommendations aiming to improve access for TGD2S residents "to green spaces, active living, and community provided by the Park Board" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014, p. 1). The recommendations were organized into six areas, each designated under one of the three directions of the Park Board's strategic framework. The six areas were: Public space and signage; programming; financial accessibility; community partnerships; forms and literature; and human resources and training. Recommendations included increasing the number of single-user change areas, piloting recreational programs specific to TGD2S residents, adjusting the gender category options on Park Board forms, and developing and implementing training materials and programs for staff at all levels.

This report was the foundation for a host of changes made through the Park Board, with City support: In other words, the City was implicated in making the necessary facilities modifications. While Council had already made Vancouver the first Canadian municipality to pass a municipal building code provision for gender-neutral washrooms in public buildings (in September 2013), the *Building a Path* report set the stage for an implementation strategy of signage, education, and services to make Vancouver parks and community centres more welcoming to TGD2S users. The most eye-catching part of this strategy, launched in March 2015, was an awareness campaign in the form of highly visible posters (approximately four feet tall) on display at community centres featuring pictures of, and statements by, TGD2S people (and in one case, a youth with their parents; Hallett, 2015; The Georgia Straight, 2015; "Vancouver Park Board launches," 2015). By September 2016, the TGVIWG had established a steering committee with Park Board staff, completed signage guidelines (using text and functional icons rather than gendered symbols for washrooms), revised pilot programming (moving to trans swim instead of trans inclusive public swim), and identified a list of priority next steps (including training and policies).

With the Park Board implementation in progress, Council passed the Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver motion in 2015 and tasked staff with assessing how the TGVIWG recommendations could be brought into the scope of City services, facilities, and operations (TransFocus Consulting & Equity Labs in City of Vancouver, 2016, p. 3, Appendix A). The consultants who won the bid to develop the proposal had been involved in the TGVIWG and were thus intimately familiar with the existing asks and possible directions. Submitted to Council in July 2016, the TGD2S strategy laid out fourteen recommendations with thirty-one sub-recommendations, almost all of which built upon the existing work in the Park Board (and updates undertaken by the School Board). Like *Building a Path*, the TGD2S strategy was organized into thematic pillars: Public space, facilities + signage; programs + services; human resources; communications + data; and

community consultation + public partnerships. In addition to recommendations under each pillar, five quick starts—action items that could be completed within six to eighteen months—were identified, with attention to high impact and feasibility for financial and operational implementation (TransFocus Consulting & Equity Labs in City of Vancouver, 2016, p. 16, Appendix A). The subsequent changes were as substantive as the *Building a Path* implementation, but with a wider reach. Several of these changes and their policy impacts are discussed below.

6. Discussion

Through the review of documents, two elements are immediately noticeable. The first is the scope of change across the municipal government. The TGD2S strategy is neither siloed nor is it limited to social policy and programming. Rather, the strategy has been taken up across the organization. The most obvious example is washrooms. Starting from the focus on Park Board washrooms in the *Building a Path* recommendations, the TGD2S strategy fostered a complete overhaul of both signage and washroom access in City-owned or City-leased buildings. As of the 2019 update, this includes signage at twenty-seven community centres, nearly eighty fieldhouse washrooms (in parks), and at least five civic administration buildings or City-leased properties where City staff work (City of Vancouver, 2019b, p. A-1).

Two other examples provide a clear sense of scope. Part of the human resources pillar, a staff and management training initiative identified that "over 1000 Engineering Services employees received training in 2018" (City of Vancouver, 2019b, p. 7). While the report's emphasis was on the number of staff trained, it is equally remarkable to reflect on the content of the training: City-wide, staff are being educated about TGD2S lives and gender diversity, which historically is not typical of municipal staff training. A second illustration is data collection and reporting. The communications + data pillar included the recommendation to create and use data collection methods that include TGD2S people across all City departments, with sub-recommendations stipulating the need for (a) consistent policy and protocol for collecting gender data and (b) clear standards for conducting TGD2S-inclusive analysis and reporting. As both an internal and external practice that underpins a wide variety of City work, revising data collection practices is a significant undertaking that has important consequences for TGD2S visibility and inclusion (Doan, 2016). By 2019, the Park Board program registration system was updated to remove gender as a required category (City of Vancouver, 2019b, p. 8), and by 2020, considerable changes had been made to internal and external data-gathering practices. Specifically, following the creation of an inventory of internal forms that collect binary gender data, all City departments were engaged in an exercise to identify when and how data related to gender would be collected (City of Vancouver, 2020, p. 10).

As a bottom-up initiative that achieved this scope of change, I read this strategy as an equity-driven innovation: All of the outcomes represent operational transformation, where TGD2S communities have been explicitly incorporated across City structures. Compared to a model of ad hoc inclusion, where responsibility for the strategy lies with a staff champion (Bain & Podmore, 2020), by 2019, the strategy had been embedded into the work of affordable housing, engineering, and many other units because "departmental goals to achieve [TGD2S] inclusion [had] been identified for implementation" every year since the strategy's adoption (City of Vancouver, 2019b, p. 5). Moreover, the successful scope of the intervention stems in part from the deliberate approach taken early on: The TGVIWG developed the *Building a Path* report in such a way that its findings and recommendations were clearly aligned with the directions of the Park Board's strategic framework. This made for a clear business case in conjunction with the work the Park Board already sought to undertake.

The second element illuminated by this review is that the City-wide policy implications were accomplished through a volunteer-driven strategy that relied on the knowledge and expertise of TGD2S people. Starting with the TGVIWG report, TGD2S inclusion began from a volunteer TGVIWG-led consultation, which was a shift in procedural process at the City: In effect, the City supported the bottom-up initiative by providing meeting space and funding but enabled the TGVIWG to take the lead. This power-sharing move also meant a shift in the working interpretation of expertise. For the data collection process to be considered valid, the embodied expertise of TGVIWG and community members had to be assigned value. This approach to participatory governance is characteristic of an innovatory model that is based upon pluralized and dispersed authority (McGuirk et al., 2022).

Moreover, the path leading from the TGVIWG to the TGD2S strategy was, in practice, a process of co-design. Blomkamp (2018, p. 63, emphasis in original) notes that co-design requires that "people who are affected by the issue are *active participants* in the design process," from the outset rather than simply involved in a consultation at a mid-way or endpoint. The relational exchange between the TGVIWG, the Park Board, and the City can be characterized this way, particularly once the organization elected to act on the expertise shared by community members. Once at the stage of strategy development, the consultants, who had been at the centre of the volunteer working group, also undertook a process of stakeholder consultation, but this time looking internally. The team met with fifty-seven participants across thirteen City departments plus City-affiliated organizations, as well as select advisory committees and external service providers who are familiar with the needs of the most vulnerable TGD2S community members. Bringing internal feedback to bear on expertise shared and lessons gleaned in the Park Board work, the

consultants extended the co-design practice into a strategy adopted by the council.

These three features in particular—its participatory-driven co-design, its wide-reaching policy-related impact, and the fact that its outcomes originated through a form of pluralized and dispersed authority—indicate that the TGD2S strategy can be interpreted as an equity-driven innovation. Yet, it is important to note that this interpretation does not align perfectly with theorizations of innovatory urban governance. According to McGuirk et al. (2022, p. 1403), "innovatory practices explicitly seek less state-centred enactments of governance." In the TGD2S case, the intention was not to extend authority beyond the confines of local government, even as authority was distributed through the practices of co-production. Indeed, the intention was to make government the locus of the equity work: The process was conceptualized within the context of municipal government, funded and supported by the municipal government, and the changes enacted are to government structures, whether physical infrastructure or data collection forms. Arguably, retaining a state-centred enactment of innovatory governance is optimal because TGD2S human rights are at stake. For changes that involve bringing equity to the forefront, direction from an agreed-upon authority like the municipal government is important.

7. Conclusion: Equity as Innovation?

The TGD2S strategy levelled up equity and access for TGD2S community members, including City staff and resident/visitor users of programs and services. Several years following its approval by the council, it remains a visible component of the City of Vancouver's equity profile. TGD2S-specific needs are apparent across various actions, like efforts to increase specialized homeless shelter capacity (City of Vancouver, 2019a). There is also a recognition that gender diversity is only one layer of a person's identity, which is necessarily informed by their race, ability, and other identity categories. This is evident in the way that TGD2S needs are embedded across strategies: For instance, TGD2S people and experience are informing the safety priority of the Women's Equity Strategy (City of Vancouver, 2022) and select Indigenous reconciliation efforts (City of Vancouver, 2020). Funding is being sought from the 2023 operating budget to update the 2016 strategy.

As this story also suggests, the impacts of the TGD2S strategy have been felt well beyond TGD2S communities. One example is the addition of universal washrooms in the City's Building By-Law, which affects City-owned facilities as well as buildings not owned or operated by the City (City of Vancouver, 2019b). The 2019 By-Law updates require gender-neutral washrooms in all types of occupancies, from residential to industrial (City of Vancouver, 2019b, p. A-1). In 2013, when the By-Law was modified to require gender-neutral washrooms in public buildings, supporters noted the wider benefits of this change, especially for users who need assistance or care provision in the washroom. This was emphasized in the 2014 *Building a Path* report, which indicated that many recreation centres rely on universal spaces like the accessible single-stall or family washroom. In turn, the high demand for these few spaces "pits the needs of diverse users against one another" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2014, p. 17). With a change in By-Law and, as recommended by the TGD2S strategy, the sharing of these best practices with architects' and engineers' associations (City of Vancouver, 2019b), greater access to universal washrooms will be available more broadly. This is another form of equity as innovation: It is an example of how addressing the needs of the most marginalized improves services not just for one population in need, but for everyone.

The TGD2S strategy demonstrates that equity interventions can indeed drive innovation in municipal government. The need for similar interventions and innovations is widespread, especially for approaches that centre the expertise of those who feel less entitled to a seat at the planning table. The TGD2S strategy provides a useful starting point to offer lessons about the impact that pluralized authority and co-design can have. These processes can make visible communities that had been previously invisible to the City and ultimately reshape the City's knowledge and practices. At the same time, they work to make cities safer and more inclusive for those whose voices and needs have never been factored into municipal planning.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the editors and four reviewers who took the time to comment on this article.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Andrew, C., & Doloreux, D. (2014). Linking innovation and inclusion. In N. Bradford & A. Bramwell (Eds.), *Governing urban economies* (pp. 137–160). University of Toronto Press.

Bain, A., & Podmore, J. (2020). Scavenging for LGBTQ2S public library visibility on Vancouver's periphery. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, *111*(4), 601–615. https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12396

Bain, A., & Podmore, J. (2021). Linguistic ambivalence amidst suburban diversity. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *39*(7), 1644–1672. https://doi.org/10.1177/23996544211036470

B.C. Human Rights Code to include explicit protection for gender identity, expression. (2016, July 25). *BC Gov. News*. https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016JAG0025-001352

Blomkamp, E. (2018). The promise of co-design for public policy. In M. Howlett & I. Mukherjee (Eds.), *Routledge*

handbook of policy design (pp. 59–73). Routledge.

Bradford, N., & Bramwell, A. (Eds.). (2014). *Governing urban economies*. University of Toronto Press.

Brand, A. L. (2015). The politics of defining and building equity in the twenty-first century. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *35*(3), 249–264.

Browne, K., Lim, J., Hall, J., & McGlynn, N. (2021). Sexual(ities that) progress. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *39*(1), 3–10. https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654420954213

Cairney, P., St. Denny, E., & Kippin, S. (2022). Lessons from policy theories for the pursuit of equity in health, education and gender policy. *Policy & Politics*, *50*(3), 362–383.

Canadian Institute of Planners. (2021). *Equity, diversity and inclusion insight survey*. https://www.cip-icu.ca/Files/EDI-Insight-Survey/20211019_Equity-Diversity-Inclusion-Insight-Survey.aspx

City of Vancouver. (2016). *Supporting trans* equality and an inclusive Vancouver* (No. 11065). https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/trans-gender-variant-and-two-spirit-inclusion-at-the-city-of-vancouver.pdf

City of Vancouver. (2019a). *Nominal lease of city-owned capital asset to WISH for women's homelessness shelter* (No. 12930). https://council.vancouver.ca/20190312/documents/RTS12930-Incamerarelease-ACCS-AdministrativeReport_Redacted.pdf

City of Vancouver. (2019b). *Interim report: Women's equity and trans, gender variant and two-spirit inclusion* (No. 12960). https://council.vancouver.ca/20190529/documents/cfsc1.pdf

City of Vancouver. (2020). *Reconciliation update work* (No. 13695).

City of Vancouver. (2021a). *Recommendation from general manager of arts culture and community services and the chief equity officer* (No. 14507). https://council.vancouver.ca/20210720/documents/p1.pdf

City of Vancouver. (2021b). *Equity framework*. https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/equity-framework.pdf

City of Vancouver. (2022). *Update on women's equity strategy*. https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2022-03-08-update-on-womens-equity-strategy.pdf

Corburn, J. (2003). Bringing local knowledge into environmental decision making. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *22*(4), 420–433. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X03022004008

Criado, J. I., Dias, T. F., Sano, H., Rojas-Martín, F., Silvan, A., & Filho, A. I. (2021). Public innovation and living labs in action. *International Journal of Public Administration*, *44*(6), 451–464. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2020.1729181

Davis, C., & Edge, S. (2022). Strengthening equity and inclusion in urban greenspace. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *19*(23). https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192315505

Doan, P. (2016). To count or not to count. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 44(3/4), 89–110. https://doi.org/10.1353/wsq.2016.0037

Earle, M., Hoffarth, M. R., Prusacyzk, E., MacInnis, C., & Hodson, G. (2021). A multilevel analysis of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) rights support across 77 countries. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *60*, 851–869. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12436

Fainstein, S. F. (2010). *The just city*. Cornell University Press.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (n.d.). *FCM anti-racism and equity commitment statement*. https://data.fcm.ca/documents/corporate-resources/fcm-anti-racism-equity-commitment.pdf

Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (2022, September 16). *FCM Board of Directors set municipal priorities ahead of parliamentary fall sitting* [Press Release]. https://fcm.ca/en/news-media/news-release/fcm-board-directors-set-municipal-priorities-ahead-parliamentary-fall-sitting

Flyvbjerg, B. (1998). Empowering civil society. In M. Douglass & J. Friedmann (Eds.), *Cities for citizens: Planning and the rise of civil society in a global age* (pp. 185–213). Wiley.

Hallett, S. (2015, April 2). Every city needs a trans awareness campaign like this one. *Ms. Magazine*. https://msmagazine.com/2015/04/02/every-city-needs-a-trans-awareness-campaign-like-this-one

Hines, S., & Santos, A. C. (2018). Trans* policy, politics and research: The UK and Portugal. *Critical Social Policy*, *38*(1), 35–56. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018317732880

Hunt, S. (2016). *An introduction to the health of Two-Spirit people*. National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. https://nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/156/2016-05-10-RPT-HealthTwoSpirit-Hunt-EN-Web.pdf

Joy, M., & Vogel, R. K. (2021). Beyond neoliberalism. *Urban Affairs Review*, *57*(5), 1372–1409.

Kinney, M. K., Pearson, T. E., & Aoki, J. R. (2022). Improving "life chances": Surveying the anti-transgender backlash, and offering a transgender equity impact assessment tool for policy analysis. *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, *50*(3), 489–508. https://doi.org/10.1017/jme.2022.89

Kline, N., Webb, N., Johnson, K., Yording, H., Griner, S., & Brunell, D. (2023). Mapping transgender policies in the US 2017–2021. *Health & Place*, *80*, Article 102985. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2023.102985

Klodawsky, F., Siltanen, J., & Andrew, C. (2017). Introduction. In F. Klodawsky, J. Siltanen, & C. Andrew (Eds.), *Toward equity and inclusion in Canadian cities* (pp. 3–24). McGill-Queens University Press.

Lee, Y.-J., & Santiago, L. (2023). Race, class, and gender identity: Implications for transgender people's police help seeking. *Police Practice and Research*, *24*(1), 17–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/15614263.2022.2085102

Leung, H. (2017). Our city of colours. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, *18*(4), 482–497. https://doi.org/10.1080/

14649373.2017.1387091

Liao, L., Warner, M. E., & Homsy, G. C. (2019). Sustainability's forgotten third E: What influences local government actions on social equity? *Local Environment*, *24*(12), 1197–1208. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2019.1683725

Loh, C., & Kim, R. (2021). Are we planning for equity? Equity goals and recommendations in local comprehensive plans. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *87*(2), 181–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2020.1829498

Loh, C., Ashley, A., Durham, L., & Bubb, K. (2022). Our diversity is our strength. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *88*(2), 192–205.

MacDonald, S., & Little, S. (2022, October 7). New party targeting B.C. school boards raises eyebrows. *Global News*. https://globalnews.ca/news/9185095/parentsvoice-bc-school-board-elections

McGuirk, P., Baker, T., Sisson, A., Dowling, R., & Maalsen, S. (2022). Innovating urban governance: A research agenda. *Progress in Human Geography*, *46*(6), 1391–1412. https://doi.org/10.1177/03091325221127298

Mévellec, A., Donatien, V., & Chiasson, G. (2020). Municipal/local politics. In M. Tremblay & J. Everitt (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of gender, sexuality, and Canadian politics* (pp. 249–271). Palgrave.

Muller Myrdahl, T. (2017). Theatre Outré and lessons from a welcoming and inclusive community. In F. Klodawsky, J. Siltanen, & C. Andrew (Eds.), *Toward equity and inclusion in Canadian cities* (pp. 256–280). McGill-Queens University Press.

Murray, C. (2015). Queering Vancouver: Where LGBTQism meets Vancouverism in the creative city. *BC Studies*, *188*, 55–80. https://doi.org/10.14288/bcs.v0i188.186058

Nash, C. (2010). Trans geographies, embodiment and experience. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *17*(5), 579–595. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2010.503112

Nash, C., & Browne, K. (2021). Resisting the mainstreaming of LGBT equalities in Canadian and British Schools: Sex education and trans school friends. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *39*(1), 74–93. https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654419887970

Pitter, J. (2020). *A call to courage* [Open Letter]. https://canurb.org/wp-content/uploads/OpenLetter-ACallToCourage-Final-June2020.pdf

Pitter, J. (2021). *Engaging Black people and power*. York University Press. https://euc.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EBPP_2021-03-25_FINAL.pdf

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Shearmur, R., & Poirier, V. (2017). Conceptualizing nonmarket municipal entrepreneurship: Everyday municipal innovation and the roles of metropolitan context, internal resources, and learning. *Urban Affairs Review*, *53*(4), 718–751. https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087416636482

Siltanen, J., Klodawsky, F., & Andrew, C. (2015). "This is how I want to live my life": An experiment in prefigurative feminist organizing for a more equitable and inclusive city. *Antipode*, *47*(1), 260–279. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12092

Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2011). Enhancing collaborative innovation in the public sector. *Administration & Society*, *43*(8), 842–868. https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399711418768

The Georgia Straight. (2015, March 26). *Vancouver Park Board unveils powerful transgender awareness campaign* [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFplAAPcS4U

Todd, J. D. (2021). Exploring trans people's lives in Britain, trans studies, geography and beyond. *Geography Compass*, *15*(4). https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12556

Track, L. (2020). *Trans rights are human rights*. CLAS BC Human Rights Clinic. https://bchrc.net/trans-rights-are-human-rights

Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage. *Harvard Educational Review*, *79*(3), 409–427.

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. (2013). Park Board Committee meeting minutes. https://wayback.archive-it.org/8849/20170420203130/http://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2013/130527/Minutes05132013.pdf

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. (2014). *Building a path to parks & recreation for all: Reducing barriers for trans* & gender variant community members*. https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2014/140428/documents/REPORT-TGVIWorkingGroupReport-2014-04-28.pdf

Vancouver Park Board launches new trans, gender variant awareness campaign. (2015, March 26). *CBC*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-park-board-launches-new-trans-gender-variant-awareness-campaign-1.3011525

Whitzman, C., Andrew, C., & Viswanath, K. (2014). Partnerships for women's safety in the city. *Environment & Urbanization*, *26*(2), 443–456. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247814537580

About the Author

Tiffany Muller Myrdahl is a senior lecturer in the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies and the Urban Studies Program at Simon Fraser University on unceded Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw, Tsleil-Waututh (səl̓ilwətaʔɬ), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm territory, Vancouver, Canada. She completed a master's in public policy and a doctorate in geography, with a certificate in feminist studies, at the University of Minnesota. Her research interests include urban inequalities, equity and inclusion strategies, especially targeting women and 2SLGBTQ communities, and critical participatory approaches to research.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 235–248
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6404

Article

Community Support Organizations in Gay Neighborhoods: Assessing Engagement During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Daniel Baldwin Hess [1,]* and Alex Bitterman [2]

[1] Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University at Buffalo, USA
[2] Department of Architecture & Design, Alfred State College, USA

* Corresponding author (dbhess@buffalo.edu)

Submitted: 31 October 2022 | Accepted: 9 March 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract

Volunteerism, grassroots activism, and mutual aid have been critical to the advancement of rights and opportunities for LGBTQ+ people. These activities are institutionally anchored within supportive organizations embedded in LGBTQ+ communities. But these supportive organizations can be stressed by external crises, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, limiting the capacity for providing routine services. This article provides a typology of community support organizations—including healthcare providers, business improvement districts, neighborhood planning organizations, and social groups and clubs—to better understand how non-governmental organizations and non-profit entities provide services not traditionally provided by government agencies for LGBTQ+ people. We characterize how community support organizations continued to provide critical services to the LGBTQ+ community—consistent with the missions and aims of these organizations—while also providing services and information related to health and safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. The article concludes with takeaway messages that synthesize the functions and services of community support organizations and explain how various types of supportive organizations in gay neighborhoods responded to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords

community; gay neighborhood; human services; LGBTQ+; non-profit organizations

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance” edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Volunteerism, grassroots activism, and mutual aid have been critical to the advancement of rights and opportunities for LGBTQ+ people. These activities are institutionally anchored within supportive organizations embedded in LGBTQ+ communities both large and small. Various types of organizations support the LGBTQ+ community by promoting the rights of individuals who identify as sexual minorities; these organizations also support the LGBTQ+ community by providing health and educational services and other support networks (Gato et al., 2020) at multiple scales from hyper-local neighborhood networks to larger national and international networks.

Community support and service organizations (CSOs) serving the LGBTQ+ community reflect a decades-long history of engaging with LGBTQ-identifying people. These organizations provide critical health- and community-related services which have often been delivered under the challenging circumstances of prejudice and discrimination against sexual minorities. For example, LGBTQ+ community organizations can support access to housing and services, redress economic instability, reinforce access to medical care, and aid LGBTQ+ community members in coping with fear and isolation. CSOs take various forms of organization: some are small and informal and operate on a shoestring budget, others span international borders and are well-funded and highly organized, while others fall somewhere in

between these two extremes. All aim to serve the LGBTQ+ population and cause. The commonality is that CSOs, regardless of size, tend to render services to the underserved LGBTQ+ population, offering uniquely focused connections that are relevant to LGBTQ+ individuals. These unique services tend to be different from the typical responsibilities of non-governmental organizations and government-led ministries. Notably, CSOs stepped in to provide services when government failed to do so, and this was inarguably the case when the HIV/AIDS pandemic ravaged the LGBTQ+ community in the 1980s and 1990s and government inaction was addressed—of necessity—by community organizing and grassroots activism. LGBTQ-focused CSOs forged new methods to deliver necessary but at times controversial services to underserved populations of LGBTQ+ individuals. New types of services were required by LGBTQ+ CSOs as the people identifying as sexual minorities lived "out" un-closeted lives and the LGBTQ+ community slowly gained greater acceptance (Seidman, 2004) and presented unique needs that were not being met by other sectors of mainstream society.

In this article, we explore the various types of LGBTQ+ organizations that exist—along with the missions and aims of these organizations—to better understand how the organizations serve the communities they intend to support. To do so we construct a typology of LGBTQ+ community organizations and clarify the goals and functions of various types of organizations. We explore public policy support for community organizations, and we characterize the potential funding opportunities and the future viability of the organizations. We identify best and noteworthy practices among organizations with similar functions, and we also identify innovative and unusual approaches that may become best practices in the future.

2. Background and Context

Previous research has explored potential community approaches—at the local level—to address both individual and community needs for LGBTQ-identifying people (Kay & Musgrove, 2020). The needs of LGBTQ+ people are rooted in disadvantage due to persecution, stigmatization, and discrimination. These needs cut across economic class, race, and gender identity, but are evident throughout the LGBTQ+ community. For example, access to equal and affordable housing in the LGBTQ+ community is notably different from mainstream housing trends, especially for subgroups such as older gay and lesbian adults. This access is critical (Hillier & Bunten, 2020) though gay and lesbian homeowners are often at a disadvantage in securing financing related to housing (Mostaghim, 2021). CSOs can help to connect LGBTQ+ to housing resources, provide legal support related to fair housing, and connect potential lenders with homeowners.

Similarly, CSOs provide critical support for health-care and mental health support for the typically underserved and marginalized LGBTQ+ community. People in the LGBTQ+ community experience greater exposure to stressors than the general population (Snapp et al., 2015; Weinke et al., 2021). Certain subpopulations in the LGBTQ+ community—especially youth (Fish et al., 2020)—experience an even higher level of stress. Certain LGBTQ+ subpopulations struggle—especially elderly individuals—with ease of access to services that are more readily available to non-LGBTQ+ people (Bitterman & Hess, 2016). Rejection from families compounds risk factors associated with the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth (Snapp et al., 2015). Youth with substance abuse or mental health concerns are more likely to participate in LGBTQ+ community-based organizations (Fish et al., 2019). For LGBTQ+ youth, the presence of community support is a strong predictor of positive outcomes, especially in life situations and self-esteem (Snapp et al., 2015). At the risk of poorer health outcomes and mental health outcomes, LGBTQ+ youth engage with LGBTQ+ youth organizations and events for support (Eisenberg et al., 2017). The community aspects of participating are particularly valuable. LGBTQ+ youth also benefit from media presence of the LGBTQ+ community and the visibility of LGBTQ+ adults (Eisenberg et al., 2017). Fish et al. (2019) conclude that LGBTQ+ community organizations are an underutilized resource for promoting health in the LGBTQ+ youth population. In response, CSOs help to connect at-risk LGBTQ+ youth with critical services and care.

At the other end of the generational spectrum, older adults who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community also demand special services (Bitterman & Hess, 2016). The share of older adults (age 65 or more) continues to increase with an aging population in the US, and the number of older adults identifying with the LGBTQ+ community continues to grow and is projected to reach 20 million in the next 40 years (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2019). Nonetheless, older adults in the LGBTQ+ community are largely absent in specialized services and policies for aging (Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2016; Turesky, 2021). Barriers encountered by LGBTQ+ couples in adopting children prohibited the formation of multi-generation LGBTQ+ family units, negatively impacting older adults and their long-term care in the LGBTQ+ community. CSOs have begun to step in to address these entrenched inequalities.

Other LGBTQ+ sub-populations struggle with invisible prejudices and inequality in access to care and services. For example, in the heteronormative world, male/female spousal access rights in healthcare situations are rarely questioned, however, the rights of same-sex couples are often scrutinized. CSOs have led the fight for equality and recognition for LGBTQ+ couples and individuals.

Participating in the organization of pride parades and pride events gives LGBTQ+ community members a chance to build connections—both internally and externally—with LGBTQ+ organizations (Bruce, 2016; Joseph, 2010). Participation in LGBTQ+ events (such as

gay pride parades) can increase individuals' sense of belonging and lead to positive life outcomes (Hahm et al., 2017). Participation brings about a greater connection for individuals to the LGBTQ+ community (Montagno & Garrett-Walker, 2021) and the non-LGBTQ+ community. LGBTQ+ individuals who engage in community activism help to reduce mental health risks related to discrimination (Montagno & Garrett-Walker, 2021). Participation in activism among the LGBTQ+ community can result in less internalized heterosexism (Montagno & Garrett-Walker, 2021). These issues are important since with the changing generations there are different perspectives about what it means to identify with the LGBTQ+ community (Bitterman & Hess, 2021b). The efforts of CSOs to bring pride events into the mainstream over the past three decades suggest the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and the quest to advocate for equality and acceptance.

All of these important (and often unsung) efforts by CSOs provide vital services that underpin the health and well-being but also the vitality of gay neighborhoods. In previous research, we explain that:

> LGBTQ+ people migrate to new districts when they find safe, inclusive, and convenient access to everyday services and amenities—especially LGBTQ-friendly businesses and services—and now, perhaps now more so than before 1990, the presence of services that support LGBTQ+ families including schools, libraries, childcare centers, and family healthcare facilities. (Hess & Bitterman, 2021, p. 34)

3. CSOs Shift as a Result of the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic produced shock shifts across communities. Although the Covid-19 pandemic is a global event, individual community response is paramount (Kay & Musgrove, 2020); the worldwide pandemic has been referred to as a " 'glocal' phenomenon, one with transnational as well as local expressions and implications" (Miles et al., 2021, p. 396). For LGBTQ+ communities and organizations within gay neighborhoods, the Covid-19 pandemic is reminiscent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, during which the LGBTQ+ community proved itself to be well-equipped to respond with grassroots activism, particularly in the face of government inaction or apathy:

> For many LGBTQ+ people, the current situation is reminiscent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; even those too young to have experienced it first hand still grew up in its cultural shadows. This prior experience is productive—the gayborhood is uniquely equipped to respond with grassroots activism, particularly in the face of government inaction or apathy—but it is also potentially problematic, as it may trigger negative memories of trauma, encourage individualistic withdrawal from human contact, or provide historical models that delimit reimagining what LGBTQ+ geographies could become. (Miles et al., 2021, p. 396)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the mandate to quarantine had negative effects on the general population, but it affected LGBTQ+ individuals even more (Gato et al., 2020; Miles et al., 2021). Lockdowns forced people to stay at home, and financial strain and job loss forced some LGBTQ+ people to move in with relatives. Consequently, the community support offered by human service organizations (HSOs) was a critical need, particularly among those who sheltered at home during the pandemic with families of origin (Drabble & Eliason, 2021; Miles et al., 2021).

For LGBTQ-identifying people, pre-Covid-19 mental health disparities resulted in poorer outcomes during the pandemic (Drabble & Eliason, 2021). Certain subpopulations of the LGBTQ+ community were more significantly impacted. For example, the daily negative effects of the pandemic were associated with higher levels of depression and anxiety for LGBTQ+ youth (Gato et al., 2020). For some LGBTQ-identifying women, substance abuse was a means to cope with fear, stress, loneliness, and boredom (Drabble & Eliason, 2021).

In this article, we focus on the special position of gayborhoods—or urban spaces with high shares of same-sex couples or LGBTQ-identifying people and/or established acceptance for sexual minorities—as the home base for LGBTQ+ community organizations. That is, gay neighborhoods and their gay-identifying and straight-identifying communities both create demand for and provide a myriad of services to support community wellbeing. Researchers have argued for the need for greater inclusion in queer space (Doan, 2015). Yet gay neighborhoods have undergone significant shifts in recent years, as demographic and cultural change has made the neighborhoods "less gay" as more non-LGBTQ-identifying inhabit and use the neighborhoods (Bitterman, 2020; Bitterman & Hess, 2021a; Hess, 2019; Podmore, 2021). Same-sex couples have dispersed from gay neighborhoods (as the residential mix includes more non-LGBTQ-identifying people) and settled in other places across metropolitan space (Spring, 2021) as new gay neighborhoods form in other places (Bitterman, 2021).

Scholarly researchers and advocacy groups are beginning to examine the importance and relevance of community and social service organization (CSO) support to LGBTQ+ communities. The Movement Advancement Project (MAP) conducted longitudinal research on LGBTQ+ CSOs and in a 2018 report noted that in a typical week, LGBTQ+ CSOs serve 40,550 people "and refer nearly 5,550 individuals each week to other agencies for services and assistance" (MAP, 2018). Of the 113 CSOs that reported revenue data to MAP (2018) the CSOs have "combined revenue of $226.7 million" and nearly half (47%) rely, at least in part on local, state, or federal government grants of more than $10,000 to continue operations. The CSOs tracked by MAP (2018) employ "2,000 paid staff and engage with more than 14,000 volunteers for nearly half a million volunteer hours" each year. According to the MAP (2018) study, "more than

three-quarters of centers (78%) that engage in policy-related activities work to advance policy at the local level, 67% at the state level, and 31% at the national level."

The body of scholarship reported here—combined with national data from MAP (2021) about LGBTQ+ CSOs—emphasizes the existence of a number of community-based organizations providing a wide array of services in gay neighborhoods to the LGBTQ+ community and the non-LGBTQ+ community. In this way, gay neighborhoods are composed of much more than bars, nightclubs, and underwear stores (Bitterman & Hess, 2021a; Hess & Bitterman, 2021). CSOs, in the function of providing community services, can anchor neighborhoods. Consequently, CSOs must be understood so that their capacities as key neighborhood supports can be bolstered by the community at large. Therefore, with this research we fill a gap in scholarship concerning the various types of CSOs that support gay neighborhoods, the functions and missions of the CSOs, and how the roles of the CSOs have evolved from the HIV/AIDS pandemic to the covid-19 pandemic.

4. Method

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many CSOs shifted to bolster their online presence and programming. This provided a unique opportunity to review changes to CSOs websites and associated programming. To meet our aim of better understanding the functions of CSOs and their roles in gay neighborhoods, we performed a survey of websites of the top LGBTQ+ CSOs based on repeated internet searches using the DuckDuckGo search engine. Using the terms "gay," "LGBT," "community," "neighborhood," and "organization" the search survey universe included 227 CSOs in North America (213 in the US and 14 in Canada). We further retrieved information about organizational leadership through a search of LGBTQ+ community directories for cities and metropolitan areas. For each CSO, we additionally noted its location, primary and secondary services and functions, target audience(s), and mission statement. Our data collection occurred between May and July 2021, approximately one year after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Data were collected at a single point in time, and we therefore acknowledge a limitation of this study: we cannot address changing functions over time, especially given the dynamic stressors of the Covid-19 pandemic. We also noted operational changes for each CSOs in response to Covid-19 and specific resources offered relating to the pandemic. Naturally, this digital survey is not comprehensive, however, it is intended to suggest a cross-sectional snapshot of CSOs' engagement with the Covid-19 pandemic.

We recognize the grassroots and self-organized "doers" in gay neighborhoods, like the men who founded Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York City or the founders of Indy Bag Ladies in Indianapolis (Guervitz, 2016), and the founding leaders in comparable organization in other cities. These often unsung heroes took action—when governments and other organizations could not or would not—to ensure the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ neighbors. These efforts bolstered gay neighborhoods and underscored the many positive benefits of gay neighborhoods. By providing "Cinderella services" (Hess & Bitterman, 2021), these courageous trailblazers formed an alternative network of assistance and support for the LGBTQ+ community and helped to propel gay neighborhoods as safe and convenient places to live, work, and play. Over time, this effort was repaid through economic development, recognition, and desirability.

Despite the importance of LGBTQ+ CSOs, most are lumped together and broadly identified as "gay" organizations that exist to serve the LGBTQ+ community. However, most LGBTQ+ CSOs we examined serve a broader population. The need to better identify, categorize, and recognize the efforts of these organizations requires a careful study first but also provides an opportunity to develop a basic taxonomy to understand these organizations and benchmark and compare their growth and change—and indeed their wider impact on gay neighborhoods.

5. Macro Trends in LGBTQ+ CSOs During Covid-19 as Compared to HIV/AIDS

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many CSOs moved services online. For other organizations, this was not possible and some CSOs at times stepped in to fill critical needs where local, state, and regional governments could not. During the pandemic, because most people were isolated at home, LGBTQ+ service organizations stepped in with innovative online programming to provide continuity of their vital work and outreach to the community of sexual minorities, many organizations also added additional service offerings such as online pride events, online social events, and dissemination of information about Covid-19 testing. Additionally, some LGBTQ+ service organizations in the health services sphere also began—as they had during the early days of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the 1980s—to work with the state and local governments to offer health-related services to marginalized populations, not only LGBTQ+ individuals. This strong vote of confidence from state and local governments during a time of unprecedented crisis underscores the commitment with which LGBTQ+ organizations operate and the value of the services they offer.

The LGBTQ+ community experiences significant health inequities related to poverty, lack of access to healthcare, and homelessness. LGBTQ+ persons may experience discrimination from healthcare workers and the general public. This discrimination has the potential to negatively impact healthcare outcomes, including mental health and the vitality of their relationship with their providers. According to the National Association of County and City Health Officials (2021), the LGBTQ+

community is at a disproportionately increased risk for infectious diseases, including sexually transmitted infections and tuberculosis. This is in part due to the effects of systemic and structural discrimination, such as lack of access to health care, discrimination within the health care system, and poverty or homelessness.

The social determinants of health and poverty are inextricably linked. Access to healthcare is a social determinant of health. LGBTQ+ persons experience a higher risk of poverty, making them more vulnerable to illness. The Health Indicators Warehouse, produced by the United Health Foundation, found that the SSOs in the LGBTQ+ community focus on individualized support, education, and personal growth.

During crises, CSOs respond with acute intervention to the challenges and hardships created by the disparate impact of discrimination and prejudice. This includes mental health functioning and individuals' self-actualization and self-acceptance related to identifying as a sexual minority in a heterosexual-dominant society (Hess & Bitterman, 2021). The challenges this dynamic presents can manifest in depression, alcohol and drug addiction, loneliness, domestic violence, post-traumatic stress, and other barriers to LGBTQ+ holistic wellness that may not be routinely considered in a hetero-dominant society. Importantly, as the public perception of LGBTQ+ changes and society becomes increasingly more accepting and inclusive, the mission of LGBTQ+ CSOs shifts. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many CSOs began to fulfill a double duty, serving a wider range of clients from outside the organizations' target populations. LGBTQ+ health services organizations at the forefront of the Covid-19 pandemic stood at the crux of cutting-edge public healthcare, while also faithfully serving as community centers, for example. This was a significant departure for some small CSOs, but ultimately increased awareness and opened accessibility to a broader range of LGBTQ+ clientele.

5.1. Establishing a New Taxonomy

Frequently, LGBTQ+ organizations are consolidated into a generic description that fails to recognize the diversity of mission and the diversity of individuals served among these important entities. Examining LGBTQ+ organizations provides the means to reveal the nuances of the vast diversity encompassed by the LGBTQ+ community and specifically of gay neighborhoods which serve as the physical place or "home" for community services for sexual minority-identifying people. While differences are evident in the mission and target population served by individual LGBTQ+ organizations, the end goal of each one is common: to support LGBTQ+ individuals. For example, a LGBTQ-focused health clinic primarily serving gay men with a focus on health and wellness. This is a different mission that encompasses vastly different day-to-day operating objectives than a LGBTQ+ youth services organization. These organizations serve different target populations and accordingly have different missions. However, common to both is the focus on serving LGBTQ+ individuals. Such variance is evident in the mission of LGBTQ+ CSOs. The mission of some LGBTQ+ CSOs is to offer a broad range of supports including social services, legal advocacy, health services, and community supports, while other CSOs specialize in offering services for a specific demographic group like LGBTQ+ youth, LGBTQ+ older adults or retired individuals, LGBTQ+ people of color, gay men, or trans+ individuals. Still, other organizations focus on service offerings rather than demographic groups, providing career services, training, and placement for all LGBTQ+ individuals.

While the heteronormative world may conveniently amalgamate LGBTQ+ CSOs into a composite, we urge researchers engaged in LGBTQ+ scholarship to unravel this concentrated entanglement to better understand the nuances and individual organizations and the specific values they may provide. We consequently examine LGBTQ+ organizations by type in an effort to uncover similar service organizations principally in terms of mission and services offered. During the Covid-19 pandemic, LGBTQ+ service organizations adjusted services offered and modes of service delivery and in many cases substantially amplified the types of services offered and the clientele served. For this reason, LGBTQ+ CSOs are perhaps more impactful in the heteronormative realm than before. As LGBTQ+ CSOs have proven their importance to the LGBTQ+ community, these same organizations increasingly provide value to the non-LGBTQ+ community. For example, learning how LGBTQ+ CSOs function helps us understand how these organizations anchor the development of gay neighborhoods and the urban space in which they ground their activities. As demographics change, and whether social acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals increases or decreases, it is vital to identify the types of LGBTQ-focused CSOs—including the missions and visions of these important organizations—to better understand LGBTQ+ cultural advancement.

6. The Hess-Bitterman Taxonomy of LGBTQ+ Social Service Organizations

The Hess-Bitterman Taxonomy of LGBTQ+ CSOs categorizes CSOs into six non-exclusive broad categories based on the functional service area of CSOs: (a) health service; (b) legal, lobbying, and advocacy; (c) business, professional networking, and boosterism; (d) social, religious, and recreational; (e) cultural and research; and (f) social service (including age-specific organizations). These categories correspond to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). For example, health and well-being organizations (HWO) ensure the physiological well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals, while HSOs help to ensure the need for human safety and shelter. The taxonomy is elaborated in Table 1, while the interaction between Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the Hess-Bitterman taxonomy is depicted in Figure 1.

Table 1. Hess-Bitterman taxonomy of LGBTQ+ community service organizations.

CSO Type	Abbreviation	General Mission	Example Organizations
Health & Well-Being	HWO	To improve access to health care and health information for LGBTQ+ individuals	• GMHC • ACT UP • Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality (GLMA) • North Carolina AIDS Action Network • Evergreen Health
Legal, Lobbying, & Advocacy	LLO	To improve access to legal representation and represent LGBTQ+ individuals in civil rights and discrimination matters in the pursuit of justice	• Lambda Legal • Equality California • Human Rights Campaign • Out Miami Foundation • interact • GLAAD • Equality Federation • LPAC • National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) • National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) • National LGBTQ Task Force
Business, Professional, Networking, & Boosterism	BNO	To recognize and support LGBTQ+ owned and LGBTQ+ friendly businesses and LGBTQ+ friendly destinations	• LA! Pride Christopher Street West Association • West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce • Philly Pride • Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce • Modern Military Association of America • National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA – The Association of LGBTQ Journalists) • StartOut • Trikone
Social, Religious, & Recreational	SRO	To build supportive community among LGBTQ+ people and allies that promotes acceptance and betterment	• Campus Pride • Gay Men's Chorus of Charlotte • One Voice Chorus • House of Mercy • Affirmation LGBTQ Mormons • The Loft • GSA Network
Cultural & Research	CRO	To commemorate, investigate, and document LGBTQ+ history and to advocate in the intellectual sphere for equality, recognition while maintaining an expansive historical record	• GLBT Historical Society • Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals • Lesbian Herstory Archives • The American LGBTQ Museum • LGBT+ Archives Project of Louisiana
Human Service (Including Age-Specific Organizations)	HSO	To ensure access to food, clothing, shelter, and necessary human services for LGBTQ+ individuals of all ages and income groups	• The Montrose Center • Services & Advocacy for LGBT Elders (SAGE) • Time Out Youth • Los Angeles LGBT Center • Ali Forney Center

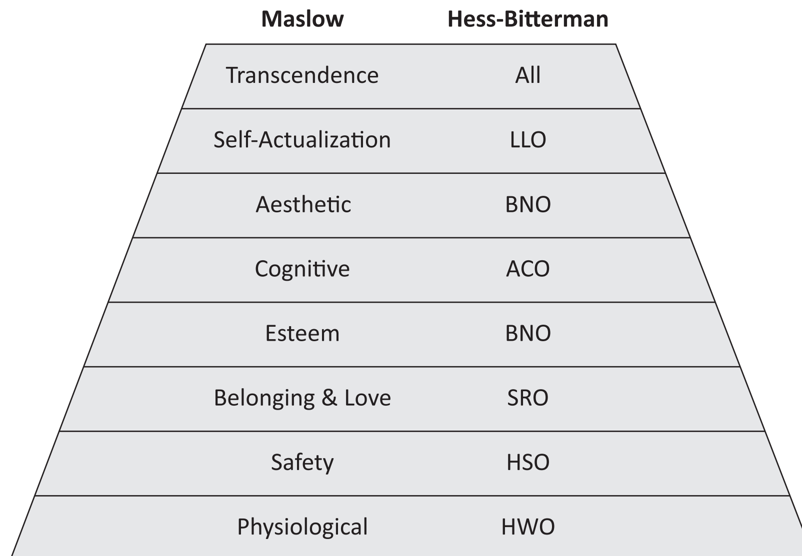


Figure 1. Relationship between Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Hess-Bitterman distribution of community service organizations.

A relationship between the Hess-Bitterman taxonomy and Maslow's hierarchy of needs is nearly direct: each group or "type" of CSO relates to a functional level of Maslow's hierarchy. For example, Maslow discusses physiological needs as fundamental to human existence, and health-wellness CSOs provide health and psychological support to LGBTQ+ communities. Similarly, the sense of belonging and love discussed by Maslow, we argue, is largely fulfilled by social, religious, and recreation (SRO) CSOs, and so on. Like Maslow's hierarchy, basic requirements need to be satisfied before others can be achieved, therefore demonstrating that a broad range of CSOs are necessary to support LGBTQ+ individuals and the actualization of gay neighborhoods, civil rights, and equality.

We acknowledge that the manner by which CSOs offerings are made to individual demographic groups or mission-focused areas will likely continue to evolve over time. Consequently, CSOs may shift from these proposed categories over time, and other categories may emerge as the needs and social placement of LGBTQ+ individuals continues to unfold. In the same way, this proposed taxonomy may also evolve as conditions and circumstances change. Certainly, no CSO can be perfectly categorized into only one area, and indeed, many CSOs fulfill multiple missions that straddle a variety of divergent agendas, but all are in the service of advocating for or supporting LGBTQ+ individuals.

6.1. Health and Well-Being

HWOs support access to healthcare and health information for LGBTQ+ individuals. Some of the very first HWOs were established in the 1980s and 1990s borne of the necessity of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Initially, HWOs helped to fight the AIDS pandemic by focusing chiefly on HIV treatment and prevention and STD awareness but later began to provide other health-related services (Wolcott et al., 1986). At the advent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, governments withheld funding and heteronormative healthcare organizations shunned those with HIV/AIDS, magnifying a brutal social stigma that became associated with HIV infection. In contrast, HSOs aimed to provide health services to LGBTQ+ individuals in a dignified, non-judgmental, and non-stigmatized manner. Some organizations like GMHC even pursued legal action to force the government into action (*see Gay Men's Health Crisis v. Sullivan*, 1989). Eventually and on multiple fronts, HSOs succeeded and forged a new model of community-centered healthcare in the US.

Over time, HWOs began to serve other disenfranchised groups, fostering care for a broad range of at-risk individuals. Today, HWOs endeavor to ensure equal access to healthcare for LGBTQ+ individuals and increasingly offer a complete complement of healthcare services for LGBTQ+ individuals and families as well as those who do not identify with the dominant group.

While HSOs were an outgrowth of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, HWOs possessed a strategic advantage during the Covid-19 pandemic: these organizations had the institutional know-how to handle the public health challenges of a pandemic, and many did so with aplomb. While the rest of the world was isolating and in quarantine, Evergreen Health in Buffalo, New York did not shut its doors. Instead, girded by the fearless courage that is the hallmark of the organization that was firmly established in 1983 as AIDS Community Services, Evergreen Health partnered with New York State in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic to offer coronavirus testing and to provide critical health care needs when other medical offices and clinics were closed. This lifeline for the LGBTQ+ community suddenly found itself in the spotlight, providing critical healthcare not just for LGBTQ-identifying people but for the community at large.

Years before the Covid-19 pandemic, the names of many HWOs changed from monikers like Gay Men's Health Crisis (New York City) and AIDS Community Services (Buffalo) to more generic-sounding names that underscored the growth of the mission and reach of these critical organizations. For example, AIDS is increasingly expunged from the name of these HWOs. In Buffalo, AIDS Community Services became "Evergreen Health." Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York City formally became "GMHC Health Services." These new names do not suggest the specific population (LGBTQ+, HIV+, or otherwise) that may have been a part of the foundational mission for these CSOs, but the commitment to inclusive LGBTQ-focused care remains, and in most cases grows to include a broader population of clientele at-risk and marginalized by government or mainstream organizations.

HWOs support the physical and psychological health of residents of gay neighborhoods, but also invest critical resources in "anchor" projects such as walk-in clinics and care facilities, and they also support the vitality of adjacent businesses and services, such as specialized pharmacies and group mental health counseling. These critical health services serve to ensure the well-being of residents of gay neighborhoods.

6.2. Legal, Lobbying, and Advocacy

Legal, lobbying, and advocacy organizations (LLO) assist LGBTQ+ individuals in the ongoing fight for civil rights by improving access to legal representation and representing LGBTQ+ individuals in civil rights and discrimination matters in the pursuit of equal rights and justice. LLOs sometimes support the LGBTQ+ community with housing equality and affordable access, marriage equality, adoption, and workplace discrimination, and help to provide pro bono services to those with financial constraints. LLOs also assist LGBTQ+ individuals in navigating complex bureaucracies or the pursuit of justice. LLOs may also work at a broader level by influencing policy and legislation to support LGBTQ+ individuals. For example, LLOs may lobby to persuade lawmakers and politicians to support LGBTQ+ civil rights and equality, keeping these matters at the forefront of public awareness. This important work ensures that hard-fought equalities for LGBTQ+ individuals remain for generations to come.

Borne out of the need for advocacy, the National Black Justice Coalition, Lambda Legal, Equality California, GLAAD, Equality Federation, and LPAC, all operate in the LLO sphere. In the days of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, organizations like Lambda Legal supported legal action in federal and state courts that advocated for the rights of people with HIV to have access to adequate healthcare, health resources, and spousal and family rights.

Similarly, during the Covid-19 pandemic, organizations like Lambda Legal did not slow in their ongoing fight to support civil rights and equality. Most recently, Lambda Legal advocated for Sander Saba, a nonbinary transgender New York resident who sought to obtain a New York driver's license that accurately reflects their nonbinary gender identity by using the gender marker "X" (*see Saba v. Cuomo*, 2021). Lambda Legal also filed an amicus brief to the US Supreme Court in opposition to the actions of Lorrie Smith and her company, 303 Creative LLC, who sought to discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals by claiming religious belief as a means to deny a same-sex couple of services (*see 303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic "exposed fault lines of inequality, leaving some more vulnerable than others regarding infection, prognosis, and economic impact—including within LGBT communities" (Reid, 2021), though LLOs did not slow down during this critical and unprecedented time.

LLOs serve gay neighborhoods in a variety of ways. They do so directly, by ensuring that residents of gay neighborhoods have access to robust legal recourse in issues of housing discrimination and business development opportunities, but also indirectly by advocating and fighting for policy changes that ensure civil rights for residents of all gay neighborhoods.

6.3. Business, Professional, Networking, and Boosterism

Business support, professional networking, and boosterism organizations (BNO) endeavor to recognize and support LGBTQ-owned and LGBTQ-friendly businesses and promote LGBTQ-friendly cities and vacation destinations. BNO include LGBTQ+ business professionals who collaborate and support LGBTQ-owned and operated businesses and provide professional growth opportunities for LGBTQ+ people to share expertise through mentoring and professional development alongside shared promotion and marketing for independent shops and businesses, grants for business development, and tax abatement programs. Examples of BNO include the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, the San Jose Community District, the Miami-Dade Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, and the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

During the HIV/AIDS pandemic, BNOs supported the growth, development, and vitality of gay neighborhoods, which in turn provided a vital macroeconomy that helped to support a critical mass for HSOs and ensured that neighborhoods were able to deliver the business services and support needed to endure the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Many of these BNOs were immensely successful. Fueled by an entrepreneurial spirit and grassroots efforts, BNOs were often the driving factor behind gay neighborhood development and sustainability.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, BNOs worked as conduits for LGBTQ+ business owners to access federal support programs such as the Pandemic Paycheck Protection Program, which helped small businesses to make payroll during a time of unprecedented shutdown. However, BNOs worked in innovative ways during the Covid-19 pandemic, creating opportunities for online shopping and experiences, again demonstrating the resilience and ingenuity of BNOs.

The efforts of BNOs are critical and became more so during the Covid-19 pandemic. A 2022 study by the Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research and MAP (2022) examined federally available data to find that while LGBTQ+ businesses applied for loans and financing at about the same rate as non-LGBTQ+ businesses, LGBTQ+ businesses were far less likely to receive loans or financing. LGBTQ-owned businesses were denied funding 11% more than non-LGBTQ-owned businesses. Astonishingly, LGBTQ-owned businesses "were more likely than non-LGBTQ+ businesses to explain their denial was due to lenders not approving financing for 'businesses like theirs' " (Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research & MAP, 2022). The report findings also parallel the results of our own longitudinal research study that examined a sharp disparity in the dispersal of federal funds to LGBTQ+ organizations (Miller & Bitterman, 2021). The Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research and MAP (2022) showed that though LGBTQ+ businesses were more likely to apply for pandemic relief during the Covid-19 pandemic they were less likely to receive it. The study notes that while a majority of LGBTQ-owned businesses applied for financial relief in 2021 through the Paycheck Protection Program, 17% of LGBTQ+ businesses did not receive pandemic-related subsidies while 10% of non-LGBTQ+ businesses did not receive pandemic-related subsidies. This finding suggests that LGBTQ+ businesses were denied federal pandemic-related support at nearly double the rate of non-LGBTQ+ businesses (Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research & MAP, 2022).

BNOs are especially critical to the development and livelihood of gay neighborhoods, but also for the economy at large. According to research conducted by the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, LGBTQ-owned businesses account for $1.7 trillion of the American economy which, if compared with national economies around the globe, makes LGBTQ-owned businesses, collectively, in terms of economics, 10th in the world (Hoyos & Moll-Ramirez, 2020; National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, 2018).

6.4. Social, Religious, and Recreational

SROs focus on providing opportunities for recreation and cultural enhancement that help to build a supportive community among LGBTQ+ people and allies, thus promoting acceptance. Social organizations include gay social groups and drag bingo events and are often affinity-group specific. Religious-affiliated organizations typically provide some degree of outreach or services to the LGBTQ+ community through a faith-based organization (LGBTQ Mormons is one example). Recreational groups, such as Pride Events, Dykes on Bikes, and various metropolitan gay choruses, provide creative outlets situated within affirming and inclusive environments.

At the onset of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, energy was funneled into survival and the ongoing fight for civil rights in the LGBTQ+ community. Little time was left to rejuvenate or recreate in an organized manner. Largely, this need was filled by gay bars, which provided sheltered enclaves to which LGBTQ+ individuals could escape. However, over time, as LGBTQ+ individuals became increasingly accepted by the heteronormative mainstream, the emergence of LGBTQ-focused recreational and social groups emerged that promote social activities, engagement, and fellowship among LGBTQ+ individuals.

LGBTQ-affiliated faith groups followed a somewhat different trajectory. While some religious organizations worked diligently to deny LGBTQ+ individuals of basic civil rights, other faith-based groups stepped in to assist HSO and HWO to minister to those with HIV/AIDS. That compassionate and caring work continues today. Pope Francis has, for example, had a "moderating influence with regard to discrimination based on sexual orientation—both through his 'who am I to judge?' stance and his refocus on critical issues of our time such as poverty, inequality and climate catastrophe over traditional sexual moral issues" (Reid, 2021).

These sorts of overtures open the door for more faith-based LGBTQ+ support.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, large in-person group activities were curtailed significantly. The pervasive social isolation that became a hallmark of the Covid-19 pandemic impacted LGBTQ+ individuals more significantly than non-LGBTQ+ individuals. Those within the LGBTQ+ community suffered greater from the loss of social networks. Approximately 44% of LGBTQ+ households reported serious problems coping with social and physical isolation during the pandemic, compared to 23% of non-LGBTQ+ households (Pezenick, 2020). This prompted SROs to become more ingenious in moving pride and LGBTQ-focused events online. Moving SRO offerings online did help to expand availability to audiences who might not otherwise have convenient access to such events or services.

As the number of gay and lesbian bars continues to decrease (Eeckhout et al., 2021), SROs step in to deliver many of the functions that were once the exclusive domain of gay and lesbian bars. As informal social centers of gay neighborhoods, gay bars provided the means for LGBTQ+ individuals to network, communicate, identify common threats, celebrate, organize, retreat, and recreate. Now, as the number of bars rapidly diminishes, informal socialization has moved, at least in part, to online homes and platforms. However, the power and energy of face-to-face interaction should not be underestimated. A strong social fabric underpins each gay neighborhood and SROs play a significant role in the vitality and well-being of nearly every gay neighborhood.

6.5. Cultural and Research

Cultural and research organizations (CROs) endeavor to commemorate, investigate, and document LGBTQ+ history and to advocate in the intellectual sphere for

equality and recognition (Poynter & Washington, 2005) while maintaining an expansive historical record of LGBTQ+ history and achievements. In general, CROs include LGBTQ+ cultural groups, LGBTQ+ libraries and archives, LGBTQ+ history organizations, museums, as well as student—and university-focused groups. Examples include LGBT Historical Society, Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals, LGBT+ Archives Project of Louisiana, and the American LGBTQ Museum.

At the onset of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, CROs helped to memorialize the stories of generations of people that were being lost to a terrifying and deadly disease, along with the progression of the disease, and how others came to offer help.

Social historian Robert W. Fieseler meticulously recounted the horrific arson on June 24, 1973 at the Upstairs Lounge in New Orleans (Fieseler, 2018). His book is a snapshot of not only the largest mass murder of LGBTQ+ individuals in the US until the Pulse Nightclub shooting in 2016, but also a snapshot of how LGBTQ+ people were marginalized and shunned in the early 1970s. Fieseler's work would not have been possible without the meticulous records kept at New Orleans' LGBT+ Archives Project of Louisiana. These histories and events long faded into the collective LGBTQ+ experience, are important to remember and commemorate.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, CROs helped to document the Covid-19 pandemic and also offered innovative online programming, lectures, presentations, and discussions via Zoom and other digital platforms, bringing new awareness to the important and unsung work CROs do every day. The reach and impact of the archives, culture, and scholarship are pervasive and are becoming increasingly less place-based, serving a wide and international audience of LGBTQ+ scholars, researchers, and curious minds.

CROs chronicle the genesis and evolution of gay neighborhoods. This critical function helps researchers to discern the driving factors that help gay neighborhoods form and dissolve and how gay neighborhoods change over time.

6.6. Human Service (Including Age-Specific Organizations)

HSOs are, along with BNOs, perhaps the most closely related to the livelihood of gay neighborhoods. HSOs ensure access to food, clothing, shelter, and necessary human services for LGBTQ+ individuals of all ages and income groups and in so doing ensure the dignity and sustenance of LGBTQ+ individuals that live in those neighborhoods.

HSOs ensure access to critical services—food, clothing, and shelter—to members of the LGBTQ+ community, alongside acting as a single point of contact for important referrals to other CSOs. LGBTQ+ individuals experience greater exposure to stressors than the general population (Snapp et al., 2015; Weinke et al., 2021), and some subpopulations in the LGBTQ+ community—especially youth (Fish et al., 2020)—experience an even higher level of stressors including rejection from families (Snapp et al., 2015) and isolation among social peers. In this way, CSOs often fill the need for LGBTQ+ individuals that heteronormative families might otherwise provide for straight individuals. Similarly, as LGBTQ+ individuals age, many are childless and rely on CSOs to help provide care for aging.

While CSOs indeed serve all members of the LGBTQ+ population, CSOs especially serve younger, older, and at-risk members of the LGBTQ+ community, including those with addictions and those in financial distress.

Throughout the early days of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, CSOs helped to organize medical care and treatment, housing, and food delivery for people with AIDS. CSOs stepped in when government and mainstream SSOs would not. Similarly, during the Covid-19 pandemic, CSOs moved many programs and offerings online to ensure housing security and food justice for members of the LGBTQ+ community impacted by Covid-19.

Through careful and considered ministry to LGBTQ+ individuals, CSOs help to make gay neighborhoods both stable and inclusive by ensuring that everyone—regardless of financial background—has the opportunity to integrate into an inclusive and welcoming community.

7. Conclusions: Takeaway Messages

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, each type of LGBTQ+ CSO played an important role in meeting the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals and in many cases the broader public. At the time, with an unprecedented number of unknowns related to Covid-19 and an overall lack of planning and preparedness, government institutions scrambled to focus on acute crisis management. In the absence of pandemic management plans in place, governmental organizations were overburdened or unable to adequately deliver services. During the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone—including businesses, human services, and health organizations—had to cope with sudden closures and lockdowns. This was not experienced during the HIV/AIDS pandemic. But it was necessary to maintain services delivered to the LGBTQ+ community—including social services, acute and routine health services, etc.—during the Covid-19 pandemic, similar to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Miles et al., 2021).

Many LGBTQ+ community organizations, however, had experienced during the HIV/AIDS pandemic dealing with the upheaval caused by sickness, disease transmission, and public health crises. Consequently, LGBTQ+ organizations were well-positioned to maintain continuity of operations and services to some of the most vulnerable populations—and not only LGBTQ+ populations but the population in general—when public policy and government efforts failed or could not keep pace with the swift current of demand and necessity. Some LGBTQ+ HWOs played a vital role in accessible Covid-19 testing

and test processing, for example. This may have helped to stem the spread of the pandemic.

The low-rifle actions of the LGBTQ+ CSOs demonstrated that LGBTQ+ organizations were not only efficient and capable but also resilient. This resilience is a hallmark of LGBTQ+ CSOs. Just as with the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the 1980s, during the more recent Covid-19 pandemic, LGBTQ+ CSOs overwhelmingly accepted the unprecedented challenge as a call to action. Nearly all CSOs studied did not shut down, kept offering services, and in many cases were pressed into special service or took on additional responsibilities with little or no additional resources. LGBTQ+ CSOs were unflappable at a time when the world shut down. Undoubtedly this fearless ability stems from the resilience of having done this before.

Many currently working in LGBTQ+ CSOs were not yet born or were very young in the days of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. However, a "can do" spirit and attitude of many LGBTQ+ CSOs underscore an enduring legacy that stems from the grassroots actions of the early activists and advocates decades ago. Even if the new generation did not work in community service during the AIDS crisis, the legacy of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is so strong that it acted as a beacon during Covid-19 in supporting local, regional, and state governments in battling the Covid-19 pandemic, emanating from the LGBTQ+ community and gay neighborhoods. We offer, in this context, the following six takeaway messages:

1. LGBTQ+-focused CSOs provide an anchor for gay neighborhoods:

> The MAP data (MAP, 2021) on LGBTQ+ CSOs introduced earlier in this article, coupled with our exploration of CSOs in gayborhoods, combine to create a vivid picture of the value of community supports on the livelihood and well-being of gay neighborhoods.

2. LGBTQ+ CSOs provide important and valuable services for all communities, not only LGBTQ-focused populations:

> CSOs dramatically expanded their reach and efforts throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. We noted the efforts of Evergreen to support needle exchange for all residents (not just LGBTQ+ individuals), since the beginning of the pandemic. Most CSOs broadened service offerings from LGBTQ-focused to inclusive services, helping everyone. This demonstrates, in part, that the LGBTQ+ community reflects a remarkable level of diversity and inclusion and is fearless in its support of marginalized groups.

3. LGBTQ+ CSOs of all sorts stepped up to the plate:

> For the LGBTQ+ population, Covid-19 was not the first pandemic, and learning from AIDS/HIV gave LGBTQ+ organizations time to hone their systems and operations in order to quickly and adeptly respond in an unflappable and uninterrupted manner. When the rest of the world shut down during the Covid-19 pandemic, LGBTQ+ organizations kept soldiering through. The LGBTQ+ community is a community of leadership (Miles et al., 2021). It is also a community that is not afraid to confront challenges and helps itself when no other organizations will (and it has done so for decades).

4. CSOs continue to take responsibility for supplying communities with "Cinderella services," or the functions that no other organization undertakes:

> Many services for LGBTQ+ people are not provided by other organizations. Our research and the MAP data (MAP, 2021) both find that there are underappreciated organizations—working from a grassroots model—engaged in "Cinderella" services for LGBTQ+ people that governments fail to provide due to a lack of interest, a lack of capacity, or possibly discrimination. Despite a structural inability or unwillingness on part of the government, LGBTQ+ CSOs provide these services and continued to do so throughout both the HIV/AIDS and Covid-19 pandemics.

5. There was a growing need for the digital service capabilities of LGBTQ+ CSOs during the Covid-19 pandemic:

> Although there is a perception that gay neighborhoods are declining, we find demand for community services (for both the LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ community), and in LGBTQ+ neighborhoods, those demands can be met by CSOs (Hess & Bitterman, 2021). Service adaptations by CSOs during the Covid-19 pandemic suggest that people were able to satisfy their need for community by reaching out to neighborhood-embedded LGBTQ+ CSOs. This is evidenced in modifications to LGBTQ+ events (such as gay pride events becoming virtual during the pandemic) and modifications to services of LGBTQ+ CSOs (Miles et al., 2021). People turned to LGBTQ+ organizations for connection in a community in the early months of the pandemic, and for the most part, LGBTQ+ organizations delivered and provided comfort and continuity.

6. LGBTQ+ digital communities received a boost from Covid-19:

> In the past, density and physical proximity equaled community. Now, as people become more familiar with digital connection, greater opportunities exist for LGBTQ+ individuals to form supportive organizations and communities that are not necessarily place-based (Knee & Anderson, 2021; Miles et al., 2021). For example, digital pride events replaced in-person parades

and became wholly inclusive and provided otherwise excluded or marginalized LGBTQ+ individuals to participate and celebrate. This changed the paradigm of how we communicate and connect. Digital events may represent a change with lasting value in which LGBTQ+ people in non-metropolitan or remote locations could readily connect to other supportive community members and organizations from a distance. These digital communities are an overlay for physical communities and can "fill in" among communities that have no significant LGBTQ+ place-based presence (i.e., rural areas), or in areas in which the LGBTQ+ community is more difficult to consolidate because of distance or isolation. Policy changes including community wi-fi and rural high-speed internet are important to supporting LGBTQ+ individuals in this effort.

Acknowledgments

The authors acknowledge helpful insights from Justin Azzarella and Don Hinrichs and capable research assistance from Mark Saba.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

303 Creative LLC v. Elenis, 6 F. 4th 1160 (2021).

Bitterman, A. (2020). Rainbow diaspora: The emerging renaissance of gay neighbourhoods. *Town Planning Review*, *91*(2), 99–108.

Bitterman, A. (2021). The rainbow connection: A time-series study of rainbow flag display across nine Toronto neighborhoods. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 117–140). Springer.

Bitterman, A., & Hess, D. B. (2016). Gay ghettoes growing gray: Transformation of gay urban districts across North America reflects generational change. *Journal of American Culture*, *39*(1), 55–63.

Bitterman, A., & Hess, D. B. (2021a). *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence*. Springer.

Bitterman, A., & Hess, D. B. (2021b). Understanding generation gaps in LGBTQ+ communities: Perspectives about gay neighborhoods among heteronormative and homonormative generational cohorts. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 309–340). Springer.

Bruce, K. (2016). *Pride parades: How a parade changed the world*. New York University Press.

Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research, & Movement Advancement Project. (2022). *New analysis finds nearly half of LGBTQ-owned small businesses that applied for loans were denied financing*. https://www.lgbtmap.org/news/2022-release-LGBTQ-owned-small-businesses-report

Doan, P. (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces*. Routledge.

Drabble, L. A., & Eliason, M. J. (2021). Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on LGBTQ+ health and well-being. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *68*(4), 545–559.

Eeckhout, B., Herreman, R., & Dhoest, A. (2021). A gay neighborhood or merely a temporary cluster of "strange" bars? Gay bar culture in Antwerp. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 221–238). Springer.

Eisenberg, M. E., Mehus, C. J., Saewyc, E. M., Corliss, H. L., Gower, A. L., Sullivan, R., & Porta, C. M. (2017). Helping young people stay afloat: A qualitative study of community resources and supports for LGBTQ adolescents in the United States and Canada. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *65*(8), 969–989.

Fieseler, R. W. (2018). *Tinderbox: The untold story of the Up Stairs Lounge fire and the rise of gay liberation*. Liveright Publishing.

Fish, J. N., McInroy, L. B., Paceley, M. S., Williams, N. D., Henderson, S., Levine, D. S., & Edsall, R. N. (2020). "I'm kinda stuck at home with unsupportive parents right now": LGBTQ youths' experiences with Covid-19 and the importance of online support. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *67*(3), 450–452.

Fish, J. N., Moody, R. L., Grossman, A. H., & Russell, S. T. (2019). LGBTQ youth-serving community-based organizations: Who participates and what difference does it make? *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *48*(12), 2418–2431.

Fredriksen-Goldsen, K. I. (2016). The future of LGBT+ aging: A blueprint for action in services, policies, and research. *Generations*, *40*(2), 6–15.

Fredriksen-Goldsen, K. I., Kim, H. J., Jung, H., & Goldsen, J. (2019). The evolution of aging with pride—National health, aging, and sexuality/gender study: Illuminating the iridescent life course of LGBTQ adults aged 80 years and older in the United States. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *88*(4), 380–404.

Gato, J., Leal, D., & Seabra, D. (2020). When home is not a safe haven: Effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on sexual and gender minorities in Portugal. *Psicologia*, *34*(2), 89–100.

Gay Men's Health Crisis v. Sullivan, 733 F. Supp. 619 (1989).

Guervitz, M. (2016). *Indy pride bag ladies materials, CA. 1977–2015.* Indiana History. https://indianahistory.org/wp-content/uploads/indy-pride-bag-ladies-materials.pdf

Hahm, J. J., Ro, H., & Olson, E. D. (2017). Sense of belonging to a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender event: The examination of affective bond and collective self-esteem. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *35*(2), 244–256.

Hess, D. B. (2019). Effects of gentrification and real-estate market escalation on gay neighbourhoods. *Town Planning Review*, *90*(3), 229–237.

Hess, D. B., & Bitterman, A. (2021). Who are the people in your gayborhood? Understanding population change and cultural shifts in LGBTQ+ neighborhoods. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 3–39). Springer.

Hillier, A., & Bunten, D. M. (2020). A queer and intersectional approach to fair housing. In V. J. Reina, W. E. Pritchett, & S. M. Wachter (Eds.), *Perspectives on fair housing* (pp. 154–186). University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hoyos, J., & Moll-Ramirez, V. (2020, June 28). Even in pride month, LGBTQ businesses struggle to survive amid Covid. *ABC News.* https://abcnews.go.com/Business/pride-month-lgbtq-businesses-struggle-survive-amid-covid/story?id=71460913

Joseph, L. (2010). *The production of pride: Institutionalization and LGBT pride organizations*. State University of New York.

Kay, E. S., & Musgrove, K. (2020). From HIV to coronavirus: AIDS service organizations adaptative responses to Covid-19, Birmingham, Alabama. *AIDS and Behavior*, *24*(9), 2461–2462.

Knee, E., & Anderson, A. R. (2021). Queer politics, the gay bar, and hapless victimhood during Covid-19: A brief response to Burns (2021) queerness as/and political attunement. *Leisure Sciences*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2021.1919254

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, *50*, 370–396.

Miles, S., Coffin, J., Ghaziani, A., Hess, D. B., & Bitterman, A. (2021). After/lives: Insights from the Covid-19 pandemic for gay neighborhoods. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 393–418). Springer.

Miller, C., & Bitterman, A. (2021). Commemorating historically significant gay places across the United States. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 339–370). Springer.

Montagno, M. J., & Garrett-Walker, J. J. (2021). LGBTQ+ engagement in activism: An examination of internalized heterosexism and LGBTQ+ community connectedness. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *69*(5), 911–924.

Mostaghim, C. (2021). Constructing the yellow brick road: Preventing discrimination in financial services against the LGBTQ+ community. *Michigan Business & Entrepreneurial Law Review*, *11*(1), 63–115.

Movement Advancement Project. (2018). *Around the country, LGBT community centers serve more than 40,000 people each week*. https://www.lgbtmap.org/news/lgbt-community-centers-serve-more-than-40000-people-each-week

Movement Advancement Project. (2021). *LGBTQ-owned small businesses in 2021*. https://www.lgbtmap.org/2021-lgbtq-small-businesses

National Association of County and City Health Officials. (2021). *Statement of policy: LGBT health*. https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/00-10-LGBT-Health.pdf

National LGBT Chamber of Commerce. (2018). *NGLCC statement on return of SBA LGBT resources page*. https://nglcc.org/news/nglcc-statement-on-return-of-sba-lgbt-resources-page

Pezenick, S. (2020, December 23). LGBTQ community sees severe impact from Covid-19 pandemic, study finds. *ABC News*. https://abcnews.go.com/Health/lgbtq-community-sees-severe-impact-covid-19-pandemic/story?id=74787096

Podmore, J. (2021). Far beyond the gay village: LGBTQ urbanism and generation in Montréal's mile end. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 291–308). Springer.

Poynter, K. J., & Washington, J. (2005). Multiple identities: Creating community on campus for LGBT students. *New Directions for Student Services*, *2005*(111), 41–47. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.172

Reid, G. (2021). *Global trends in LGBT rights during the Covid-19 pandemic*. Human Rights Watch. https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/24/global-trends-lgbt-rights-during-covid-19-pandemic

Saba v. Cuomo, 535 F. Supp. 3d 282 (2021).

Seidman, S. (2004). *Beyond the closet: The transformation of gay and lesbian life*. Psychology Press.

Snapp, S. D., Watson, R. J., Russell, S. T., Diaz, R. M., & Ryan, C. (2015). Social support networks for LGBT young adults: Low cost strategies for positive adjustment. *Family Relations*, *64*(3), 420–430.

Spring, A. (2021). Breaking down segregation: Shifting geographies of male same-sex households within desegregating cities. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 43–59). Springer.

Turesky, M. (2021). Aging back into the closet: Community planning for older LGBTQ+ adults. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *37*(1), 67–82.

Weinke, C., Whaley, R. B., & Braatz, R. (2021). Are "gay" and "queer-friendly" neighbourhoods healthy? Assessing how areas with high densities of same-sex couples impact the mental health of sexual minority and majority young adults. In A. Bitterman & D. B. Hess (Eds.), *The life and afterlife of gay neighborhoods: Renaissance and resurgence* (pp. 183–202). Springer.

Wolcott, D. L., Fawzy, I., Landsverk, J., & McCombs, M. (1986). AIDS patients' needs for psychosocial services and their use of community service organizations. *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*, *4*(1/2), 135–146.

About the Authors

Daniel Baldwin Hess is a professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. His research addresses interactions between housing, transport, and land use through new pathways for understanding the complex socio-economic and ethnic landscape of cities and spatial inequalities. Hess is co-editor of the journal *Town Planning Review* and the book *The Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighborhoods: Renaissance and Resurgence* (Springer, 2021). He is a Fulbright Scholar and winner of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence.

Alex Bitterman is a professor in the Department of Architecture and Design at Alfred State College, State University of New York. His research investigates the complexities of urban space and how different people engage in neighborhoods and spaces. He is co-editor of the book *The Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighborhoods: Renaissance and Resurgence* (Springer, 2021).

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 249–261
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6425

Article

Territorial Inequality Driven by Tourism: A Queer Mapping of Urban Space in Acapulco, Mexico

William J. Payne

Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, York University, Canada; wpayne1@yorku.ca

Submitted: 1 November 2022 | Accepted: 1 March 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract

Drawing on the life stories of nine LGBTTTIQ-identified people who have lived in Acapulco (Guerrero, Mexico), this article provides a queer mapping of this city, peripherally situated in the Global South yet with longstanding entangled transnational connections. The frame for this analysis is the concept of "territorial inequality," a term coined by urbanism scholar Óscar Torres Arroyo, whose seminal work examined the emergence of this southern Mexican city as an urban space formed through a process of socioeconomic segregation driven by tourism. This article also responds to the call of queer urban scholars to look beyond the metropole for spaces of the political theorized on their own terms. In Acapulco, class, race, and nationality intersect with sexuality in ways that have made it a destination for some queers while also dangerous and unpredictable for others, a segregated sociopolitical space where norms of masculinity have collided with multiversal expressions of sexuality imbued with patterns of exploitation. A key destination during the 20th-century rise of international tourism and a place now securitized as "violent," this urban space is also the site of evolving LGBTTTIQ movements, communities, and shifting patterns of queer life and queer tourism. This article reconsiders proposals made by queer theorists such as Lionel Cantú and Jasbir Puar regarding the complicated role of tourism in shaping sexualities, urbanization patterns, and state practices structured through colonial, neoliberal, and liberational processes, to theorize queer dimensions of the development of this city.

Keywords

LGBTTTIQ; Mexico; organized crime; queer tourism; segregation; territorial inequality; urban space; violence

Issue

This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

For 500 years, Acapulco has been shaped by colonialism, globalization, and socioeconomic disparity. A significant node in the Spanish colonial empire, a key destination during the 20th-century rise of international tourism, and a place now securitized as "violent," in recent decades this urban space is also the site of evolving LGBTTTIQ movements and shifting patterns of queer tourism. This article theorizes the place of sexual and gender minorities in this southern Mexican city, a place structured through various forms of violence, including that of tourism, and a city where urban planning processes are driven by tourism and map into the lives and bodies of queers in complicated ways. Drawing on the life stories of nine people who identify as LGBTTTIQ and live—or have lived—in Acapulco, this article provides a queer mapping of this city of socioeconomic contrasts, peripherally situated in the Global South yet with longstanding entangled transnational connections. For consistency, I have adopted the acronym LGBTTTIQ used by Mexico's National Centre for Human Rights (Donoso Jiménez et al, 2018, p. 23), which refers to "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, *travesti*, intersex, queer." *Travesti* (transvestite) is a term adopted by some people who were assigned male at birth but develop a feminine or transfeminine gender identity.

The frame for this analysis is the concept of "territorial inequality," a term coined by urbanism scholar Óscar Torres Arroyo, whose seminal work examined

the emergence of this southern Mexican city as an urban space formed through an anarchic process of haphazardly planned socioeconomic segregation driven by tourism, itself shaped by market-forces and corporate goals (Torres Arroyo, 2017, 2019). This article also reconsiders proposals made by queer theorists Lionel Cantú and Jasbir Puar regarding the complicated role of tourism in shaping sexualities, urbanization patterns, and state practices structured through colonial, neoliberal, and liberational processes, to theorize queer dimensions of the development of this city (Cantú, 2002; Puar, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c).

Once the international sun city destination of Hollywood stars and international tourists, Acapulco has transformed into a place now known for violence (see Figure 1). While a steady flow of tourists going from Mexico City for weekend jaunts is carefully protected, internationals are advised to stay clear because of the homicide rate, at least 110 per 100,000 (Statista, 2023). Between 2007 and 2021, Acapulco was consistently ranked among the top ten Mexican cities in terms of homicide rates (Calderón et al., 2021). I seek to examine the place of sexual and gender minorities within contemporary Acapulco, and its unfolding from a small port town to one of Mexico's most popular tourist locations, even amidst high rates of homicide.

Following this introduction, Section 2 provides a re-examination of scholarly literature about queer tourism in relation to the study at hand. In Section 3, I summarize Torres Arroyo's analysis of the unfolding of Acapulco from a small port town to one of Mexico's most popular tourist locations, even amidst high rates of homicide. Section 4 provides a selection of reflections drawn from a set of interviews concerning the dynamics of sexual and gender minorities in historic and contemporary Acapulco, contemplating the high level of violence and impunity that impacts sexual and gender minorities. These complicated stories of exploitation, violation, and at times liberation combined with those of emergent dominance of organized criminality, illustrate the effect of socioeconomic segregation on the intersectional lives of members of the LGBTTTIQ community (cf. Irazábal & Huerta, 2016). These interviews, a subset of a larger set of conversations that are part of a project examining violence against queer and trans persons in the state of Guerrero, help illustrate the relationship between tourism, queerness, and the socioeconomic segregation that Torres Arroyo (2017, 2019) describes.

Figure 1. Scenes from the tourist zone of Acapulco in the present day.

In the analysis (Section 5), I consider how the nexus between queerness and tourism results in troubling outcomes at the interface between the interpersonal and the urban (Cantú, 2002; Puar, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c). I pay attention to the sharp increase in physical violence related to the international drug trade and organized crime, exploring how the social inequality created by tourism has provided the context in which organized crime has encountered fertile soil in which to flourish, where the most marginalized members of the LGBTTTIQ community are further exposed to harm. This article exposes specific examples of these processes, grounded in material experiences and a particular place, and thus tries to provide another response to the longstanding scholarly question posed by Cantú, Puar, and others, one that also considers other transnational processes well beyond tourism: Which queers benefit from tourism?

My conclusion offers some preliminary thoughts regarding the implications of this study's results for urban planning in Acapulco and beyond.

2. Towards a Queer Theory of Tourism's Impact on Urban Spaces

In 2002, Jasbir Puar published the article "A Transnational Feminist Critique of Queer Tourism," in which she lamented the "celebratory tone of queer visibility politics" that ran through many of the submissions to a special issue on queer tourism that this scholar had then recently initiated (Puar, 2002a, p. 935). Puar (2002a, p. 935) was concerned that considerations of gay and lesbian tourism generally failed to recognize their neocolonial context and that the focus on the celebration of "liberatory disruptions of heterosexual space" failed to consider simultaneous "racial, class, and gender displacements." In this foundational piece, Puar (2002a, p. 936) called on scholars to do two things: to recognize that claims of space, even "queer space," are always also processes that are "informed by histories of colonization," and to "think about queer tourism and space through some kind of theory about intersectionality."

In places formed through transnational tourism and other colonial processes, sexuality itself is a tool of power that maps differently onto the bodies of individuals who are included under a rather fictitious umbrella called LGBTTTIQ (or other variations) in ways that reinforce other exclusions such as race, class, nationality, and gender. Puar (2002b, p. 1) says that there has been a certain resistance to scholarly considerations of queer tourism because it "intrudes on many of our personal and professional desires for mobility and travel." Puar proposes that scholars need to take seriously the relationship between queer tourism and processes of neocolonialism through which sexual identities are both shaped by and in turn shape economic and cultural patterns. Puar also laments that "less has been written about the impact of such tourism on the sites visited…[and how] local homo/sexual cultures are affected by queer tourism" (Puar, 2002c, p. 104). In this call for greater consideration of those who are "touristed upon," Puar (2002c, p. 126) also points out that in the present context of increased border vigilance for some, "gay tourism functions as an ironic marker of a cosmopolitan mobility available to a very few bodies."

Scholars have also considered the roles of sex tourism and sex work in contexts marked by same-sex sexual activity in tourist destinations, noting the fluidity between the two constructs. They have paid attention to how sex tourism is integrated into economies of the sale of sexual services, and to how sex work encompasses a range of relationships, among them ones framed as romance and friendship (at least by one party). Cantú (2002, p. 140) offers a look at the development of gay and lesbian tourism in Mexico and its effect on Mexican sexualities, observing that "dimensions of both sexual colonization and liberation are at work." Cantú proposed that tourism is itself a form of migration that shapes the political economy of sexuality in Mexico in a context in which identity and practice are often delinked. Mendoza (2013) points out that characterizations of the motivation for tourists to engage in sexual activity with locals are too often focused on the (often international) tourist and thus decenter the experiences, motivations, and identities of the non-tourist or to some extent the domestic tourist. In their consideration of Acapulco, Vargas Rojas and Alcalá Escamilla (2013) conclude that, in the context of tourism, sex work by male-identified persons has become part and parcel of the life of the gay community in that city such that it becomes an employment possibility for a range of people seeking greater income. These authors also uncover a range of forms of violence to which those who take on the role of a sex worker are often exposed, including physical violence, robbery, illness, sexually transmitted disease, and extortion by public officials. In this article, I take this one step further by exploring some of the troubling ways in which tourism is part of the processes of subalternity related to sexuality and gender diversity in Acapulco in the context of organized crime.

In an innovative consideration of the political economy of sexuality in Mexico, Cantú (2002, p. 141) argues that Mexican sexual identities should be "understood as multiply constituted and intimately linked to the structural and ideological dimensions of modernization and development," and more specifically that Mexico's so-called "homosexual subculture" has been transformed through queer tourism. Writing at the beginning of the 21st century, Cantú (2002, p. 159) observes that, "while anthropologists working in Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s asserted that 'gay' identities did not exist as they are understood in an American [i.e., US] context, this is no longer so." He argues that queer tourism has expanded the space related to commodification, leading to the creation of simultaneously liberating and exploitative sites. Cantú (2002, p. 161) links this change to the Mexican government's late 20th-century

tourism development project to redirect urban migration from its largest cities to other parts of the country "although the rise of gay and lesbian tourism in Mexico was not a planned outcome of the nation's tourist development project, it has caused important sociopolitical reverberations." This author argues that this action contributed to Acapulco's popularity as a queer vacation destination in the 1980s and early 1990s, though this city was later supplanted by Puerto Vallarta.

Recent scholarly literature regarding the linkage between queerness, tourism, and territoriality provides further insight into the implications for non-tourists: so-called "locals" in Mexican tourist destinations (Bailey, 2022; Monterrubio, 2021). In a study based on field research in Acapulco, Monterrubio (2021) draws attention to the significance of gay spaces in tourism destinations for "locals," those who call the destination "home." This author outlines how gay tourism spaces provide locals with opportunities for escape, building identities, socializing, cruising, and learning: While the spaces often exist because of tourism, in many cases the key interactions for local queers are with other locals. In a recent study of international gay tourism in Puerto Vallarta, Bailey (2022, p. 478) also asks: "How does gay tourism affect the destination site itself?" This author pushes us to go beyond the purported acceptance and inclusion asserted by marketing campaigns and tourists and to also consider "larger systems of inequality such as class, gender, and race" (Bailey, 2022, p. 480). The study at hand builds on this scholarship by considering additional spatial, temporal, and institutional dimensions of these questions.

3. The Genealogy of a Segregated City

For nearly eight decades, the principal promoter of tourism in Acapulco has been the federal government, though over time the state and local governments have also played increasingly important roles (Sackett, 2022; Torres Arroyo, 2017). Starting in the mid-twentieth century, this led to what Sackett (2022, p. 443) calls "the partition of Acapulco into tourist resort and Mexican city…[because] the public funds that poured into Acapulco promoted displacement and heightened inequality." Torres Arroyo (2017) outlines how tourism has left its imprint on this city's infrastructure through the creation of a service-based local economy that prioritizes tourism establishments at the expense of working-class neighborhoods and has resulted in the deterioration of the natural environment due to ill-planning. Figure 2 provides a map tailored to the data included in this article. The reader is encouraged to consult the map regularly to better conceptualize the spatial and territorial dimensions of this study.

Over time Acapulco's population has grown rapidly, substantially through the arrival of so many impoverished people in search of work in the tourist economy. As such, Acapulco's urbanization is intimately tied to the

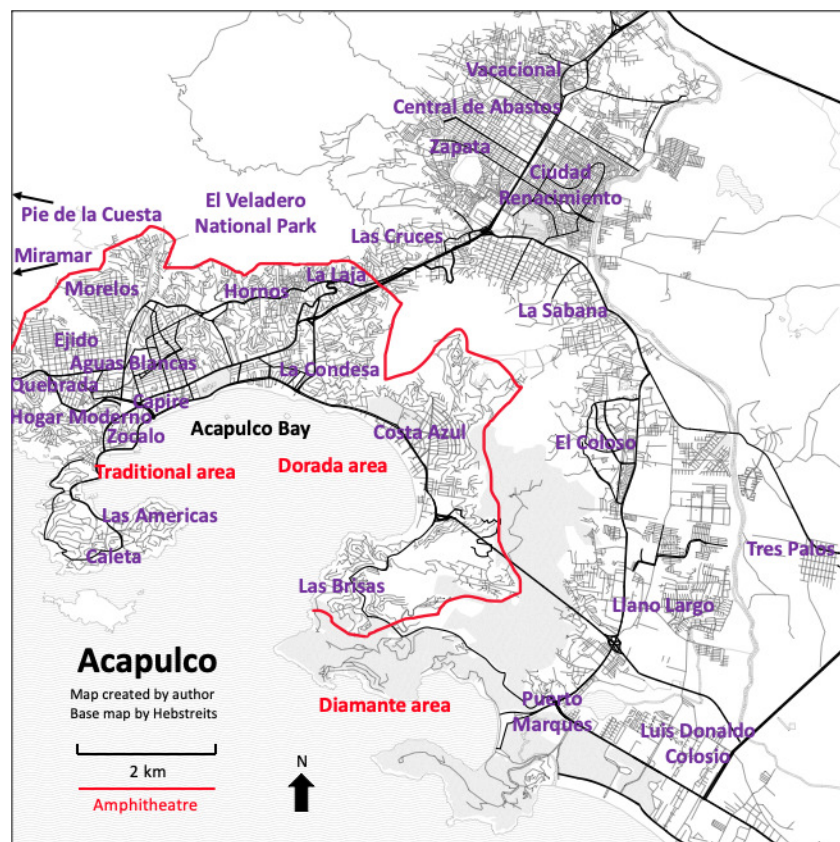


Figure 2. Places in Acapulco referenced in this study.

story of its working-class neighborhoods, many of which have been established through large-scale squatting supported by social organizations, sometimes in complicity with government officials (Sackett, 2022; Torres Arroyo, 2017). The largest and most successful “land invasion” was established in the La Laja neighborhood in 1958 (Sackett, 2022). However, processes of segregation continued to reinforce the partition of Acapulco, such that now more than half of the residents live in poverty, face a precarious labor market, and live in substandard housing in peripheral neighborhoods that lack basic infrastructure and services (Torres Arroyo, 2019).

Experiences of social exclusion are shaped through the intersection or blending of discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality, and class (Irazábal & Huerta, 2016). These socially and economically disadvantaged sectors in Acapulco are made up of various social groups including women, youth, people living with HIV, people living with disabilities, the elderly, and others, who become the target of practices of systematic discrimination (Torres Arroyo, 2009). The initial disadvantaged and precarious conditions for these people are subsequently reproduced as a sort of inheritance throughout their lives (Torres Arroyo, 2009, p. 14). Thus, the study of socioeconomic segregation and discriminatory practices in the city of Acapulco is key to understanding the precarious exercise of rights of particular social groups (Bailey, 2022; Torres Arroyo, 2009, 2019).

Segregation needs to be understood not only as the unequal distribution of social groups in space but also as a temporal process (Rodríguez Vignoli, 2001). Torres Arroyo (2009, 2017, 2019) outlines that the segregation of Acapulco, itself a sociospatial manifestation of inequality, is also constantly transformed because of segmented citizen action. As such, this author sees territory as a material and symbolic resource inherent to social reproduction whose appropriation reflects existing inequalities related to resources, opportunities, and rights. Therefore, an analysis of the spatial dimensions of the life stories of members of the LGBTTTIQ community associated with Acapulco can provide further insight into how tourism matters to queers.

While Acapulco’s history goes back many centuries, as late as the 1920s it was still a small population center where less than 10,000 people lived in what is now called the “old town,” the area adjacent to the city’s main square, the “Zocalo” (Sackett, 2022; Torres Arroyo, 2019). Until then, distinct socioeconomic sectors of society lived interspersed with one another. However, as geopolitical events led to restrictions on international tourism in Europe in the 1930s, US companies started building tourist facilities in Acapulco. This set off changes led by the federal government that included a large tourism campaign, the promotion of infrastructure and service development, waves of migration from other parts of Guerrero, and the establishment of the first subdivisions, residential zones, and working-class neighborhoods (Torres Arroyo, 2019). From the beginning, public authorities at all three levels of government set a precedent of privileging private sector development, starting with the expropriation of nearby *ejidal* (communally owned) lands for tourism development, justified based on “public interest” (Torres Arroyo, 2019). This established a pattern of private concentration of landownership and price speculation that continues to the present day.

Tourist development then shifted to coastal areas further away from the traditional port area, though the constant tension between these forces led to haphazard urban development. The 1940s were characterized by tourism dominated by international hotel chains and uncontrolled development up the slopes of the hills that surround Acapulco Bay (referred to as the amphitheater), without regard to the environmental impacts (Torres Arroyo, 2019). Already, the physical distancing of different socioeconomic sectors paralleled unequal access to public services. This city’s tourist boom took off in 1950 and continued into the early 1970s, a period characterized by “jet set” national and international tourism (Sackett, 2022). However, the rapid expansion of the city was shaped by anarchic market-led development countered by popular mobilizations rather than by any organized development plan. Many peasant and popular groups were successful in gaining practical access to land and services in this period, though often without formal recognition of tenure or guarantees.

The tourist zone expanded to encompass the entire Acapulco Bay, including the Traditional area and the Dorada (golden) area, while land invasions established many irregular neighborhoods and settlements inland from the coast. This urban expansion was marked by large-scale public and private investment in tourism, though the Mexican state played a lead role in financing and administering this expansion (Sackett, 2022; Torres Arroyo, 2019). Specifically, the state fulfilled the tourism industry’s demand for consistent utilities and services, to the detriment of the local community and the natural environment (Torres Arroyo, 2019). This pattern continued to produce greater territorial inequality, environmental contamination, and a deficit of urban infrastructure and services, issues that especially impacted those living in the squatted neighborhoods on the periphery. At the same time, the availability of employment did not keep up with the increase in demand due to new arrivals from the countryside.

Starting in 1972 and shaped by the deterioration of the natural environment, a period of stagnation set in, marked by a reduction in both national and international tourists (Torres Arroyo, 2019). The state tried to reassert control: In 1980, the national government established El Veladero National Park adjacent to Acapulco and then compelled about 120,000 people to move from their informal communities to the then newly established (and ironically named) Ciudad Renacimiento (Renaissance City), located on the leeward side of the amphitheater, far from the tourist zone. Five decades

later, this peripheral part of Acapulco, infamous for social exclusion and violence, also continues to be characterized by a paucity of services and infrastructure (Sánchez Huerta, 2018). Neoliberal relaxation of development regulation in the 1990s in the context of the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement, including the dismantling of legal protections afforded to communally held lands such as the former *ejido* of El Llano Largo, also led to the haphazard profit-motivated development of both the Diamante luxury resort area as well as low-income private sector housing further inland in areas especially vulnerable to weather events. By 1990, Acapulco's population had passed the half-million mark and informal settlements covered more than 70% of the urban area (Torres Arroyo, 2019). To facilitate the further expansion of the tourist zone, aggressive government action sought to regularize landownership by continuing to move those living on squatted lands to more peripheral areas.

According to Mexico's National Commission for Human Rights, nearly 70% of Acapulco's residents now live in poverty in a city that is among the most dangerous in the world, thus producing an unprecedented level of vulnerability to both structural violence (poverty and inequality) and physical violence (Donoso Jiménez et al., 2018). This government body accuses the state of creating a divide between first-class and second-class citizens in what is otherwise a very wealthy city. Lower-income residents are trapped in tiny, poor-quality housing isolated from the rest of the city and with poor access to urban infrastructure and services. Poor public transit and deterioration of roads have added to the isolation of lower-income residents who have no other option than to live far from the city center in neighborhoods lacking cultural and recreational facilities and with significant limits to access to public education and healthcare. In contrast, Acapulco's municipal government has created many regulations related to urban planning that prioritize municipal services for exclusive zones catering to national and international tourists to the detriment of working-class and middle-class areas. Since 2007, this segregated landscape has been further compromised by the infiltration of organized crime at all levels of society, a circumstance that creates unacceptable levels of vulnerability for most people outside of the tourist zone, and in particular ways for sexual and gender minorities.

4. Queers in Space: Ethnographic Data as Points on a Map

This section relies on the grounded analysis gained through interviews with nine individuals with knowledge of the dynamics of the LGBTTTIQ sector in Acapulco (six identified as gay men, two identified as trans women, and one identified as lesbian), as well as participant observation in Acapulco during six research trips that ranged from two days to two weeks in length. These interviews form part of a larger project that looks at violence experienced by sexual and gender minorities across the state of Guerrero. When taken together, the story these selected interviews tell is not a singular narrative of gay liberation but is rather a demonstration of the layered ways in which many of those whose sexuality and gender marks them as marginal to mainstream society are also formed by other dynamics including class, race, and citizenship. These ethnographic sketches are meant to provide points on the queer map of a segregated Acapulco. Continue to use the map provided to locate the places in these stories (see Figure 2). To protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the informants who agreed to participate in this study, names and other identifying markers that could be linked to them have been changed.

Scholars have documented public homoerotic activity in Acapulco as far back as the colonial period when the port was the site of encounters among military men, sailors, and prisoners from across the globe (Vargas Rojas & Alcalá Escamilla, 2013). However, while Acapulco has been a globally renowned tourist destination since the early 20th century and even had an internationally known gay scene before Mexico City, the territorialization of space by queers has always been weak. Following Cantú (2002), contemporary Acapulco can be understood as the nexus of a range of migration patterns, including Mexican and international tourists who come for a few days or months at a time and stay in a vast array of hotels and vacation homes targeted to a spectrum of budgets, as well as tens of thousands of Mexicans who have emigrated from other parts of the state or of the country in search of employment. Of course, sexual and gender minorities are found amidst all these groups and thus are fully part of the social and geographic diversity that marks the city of Acapulco. For example, while there is a recognized "gay zone" in the coastal neighborhood of Condesa where a few gay bars are located (several kilometers east of the "old town" historical center), these venues and this neighborhood do not constitute the only or even the primary geography relevant to sexual and gender minorities. One informant estimated there are at least fifty establishments across the city where men connect with other men to arrange sexual encounters, though most of these venues are not explicitly gay.

I met with Arturo in his spartan fifth-floor walk-up apartment, near the city's Zocalo. Our interview took place on his balcony, with its expansive view of Acapulco Bay. Arturo was a charming Mexican middle-class proudly gay man in his late seventies who, after five decades living and working elsewhere in the country and the US, retired to the historic district of Acapulco. Neighbors called him "grandpa." When he was five years old, his father was appointed chief of Acapulco's customs office, and the family moved from Mexico City to this same neighborhood. He recalled that at the time—the 1940s—the coastal highway was a dirt path, and the beach came right up to the Zocalo of what was then little more than a fishing village. Arturo has known he was gay since his first sexual experience with a male cousin as a

nine-year-old, something he said was later confirmed by a love affair with another student in his teen years. After attending university in the US, he returned to Mexico City where he had a career as a bureaucrat before retirement.

As a young man in the 1950s, Arturo developed a strong platonic friendship with an older man who allowed him the use of part of his home in an affluent area of Acapulco called Costa Azul as a *pied-à-terre* when Arturo could get away from work. Arturo fondly remembered the Acapulco of those days as "a city of the big American movie stars, the place where the Kennedys honeymooned and where jet setters and politicians rubbed shoulders." He said that there was little violence: "There was no organized crime in that time period, those sorts of things didn't happen here, and you could bring whoever you wanted to your house [for a sexual encounter]." Arturo also recalled that there were regular drag shows at a venue just outside the historic center in the Aguas Blancas neighborhood, attended by international and national tourists alike. By 2021, this corner of Acapulco once known for its bordellos and cabarets had become a ghost town and a no-go zone due to upwards of 30 homicides per month in what is roughly a ten-block area (Castro, 2021).

Svend was a US citizen in his early seventies from California who first lived in Acapulco in the late 1960s and was revisiting old haunts in Acapulco at the time of this research project. When he first came, many of the big hotels that now line the coast were not yet built, and the coastal highway was a single-lane road alongside an open beach. He commented that Acapulco has had a long tradition of young men becoming sexually involved with foreigners at least as far back as the 1930s, a phenomenon he said coexisted with a high level of machismo and homophobia. He recalled bringing his "first 'boy' " (his terminology) back to his hotel in the historic center (near the Zocalo) for a sexual encounter during his first visit to the city in 1969. Several other informants also told me that until a few years ago, La Placita restaurant (see Figure 3) on the main plaza had been a key hangout for teenage sex workers, including minors.

At the time, Svend said the historic center "wasn't so rough" but in the mid-eighties it started to deteriorate, a phenomenon he linked to the increasing numbers of Mexican national tourists: "We had villas and we had servants. It sounds very colonial but it's true." His blatant celebration of inequality is noteworthy. Svend said that he began living full-time in Acapulco in the early eighties because his sexuality had made his life "unmanageable" in the US. He described a high-risk lifestyle that he found invigorating, including constant brushes with danger at a time when a public gay life oriented towards international tourists existed in the interstices of the law: "There were always raids and police pay-offs with all the bars. I mean constantly." Svend said that soon after first visiting Acapulco he bought a home near the historic center of town in the upscale Quebrada neighborhood, and later lived in the high-end Las Brisas neighborhood on the east side of Acapulco Bay. He lived there for many years before moving to Southeast Asia in 2000 (certainly, to escape the increased policing of the sexual exploitation of minors in Acapulco at the time).

In her fifties, Pati identified as both trans and gay, though added that she used to identify as a woman but no longer wanted to bother with the effort involved in dressing the part. At the time of our interview, Pati managed a brothel in the nearby state capital Chilpancingo, though had lived in Acapulco for several years in her youth. Originally from a small town north of Acapulco, at age 15 she fled to Mexico City to escape her "macho"

Figure 3. Decrepit sign above La Placita restaurant adjacent to Acapulco's Zocalo.

father. While working as a dishwasher in a restaurant there she met a young man who offered to take her to Acapulco by airplane. Jumping at the opportunity, she quickly abandoned her patron and soon moved in with her older gay brother who had moved to Acapulco many years earlier. Her brother worked as a quartermaster in the Acapulco port area (east of the Zocalo), and she lived with him for several years, on and off.

During her brief stay in Mexico City, Pati began a career as a *travesti* sex worker, something that she continued in Acapulco and Chilpancingo: "I worked the street for about ten years." She recalled finding clients in the bathrooms of the Rios cinema and other movie houses in the downtown Capire neighborhood of Acapulco where she and her brother also lived. She recalled that *travesti* sex workers warned each other about dangerous clients: "They call them faggot-killers [*mataputos*]" She remembered the same police raids as Svend, which also led to her decision to leave Acapulco. At one point in the interview Pati mixed up the terms "raid" and "operation," the latter a reference to violence committed by organized criminal elements in the present day, though then noted that the distinction is largely insignificant since so many of those now involved in organized crime previously worked as police officers. Pati also recalled that drag shows were a much more elaborate experience in the 1980s in Acapulco and other tourist destinations, so she joined up with a group of other *travestis* to create a drag show that they took on the road for several years.

Bobby was a Canadian in his sixties, whose connection to Acapulco began in the 1970s, and who permanently relocated to this city in the late 2000s. He lived in the Americas neighborhood until his death—he was murdered two months after being interviewed for this project (Payne, 2019). While Bobby had only lived in Acapulco permanently for a few years, he said that he had been visiting Acapulco regularly since the early 1990s. He lived in what he described as a villa in a wealthy-class enclave at the end of the Playas peninsula that extends south from the historic center. Bobby characterized the young men involved in sex work as "obviously gay," disregarding the impact of dynamics of socioeconomic class. He said that until the mid-2000s, older foreign gay men came to Acapulco in pursuit of sexual activity with adolescents as young as fifteen years of age: "It used to be in the Zocalo at night there would be dozens and dozens of guys trying to get you to go with them for money." Bobby said these youth, many of them minors, came from elsewhere in Mexico, in search of these connections. Bobby dismissed arguments he had heard that the foreigners were compelling naive young men into a way of life that was not of their choosing: "These guys…at fifteen…are wiser sexually than a Canadian at twenty-one," thus buying into an age-old colonial trope. Bobby said that this pattern of street-based sex work involving Mexican adolescents and older tourists ended after a series of high-profile arrests of foreign tourists, accused of exploiting minors. This brief look into Bobby's segregated life illustrates the colonial dynamics of queer tourism in this city.

In his mid-thirties, Ignacio owned a small stand on Condesa Beach where he sold clothing and refreshments, though he lived in Las Cruces, a more affordable neighborhood located about an hour from the tourist section of the city. He was born and raised in another peripheral neighborhood far from the tourist zone. For several years, Ignacio moved back and forth between Acapulco and California, staying in the US for a year or more each time, though because he did not have a visa it cost him as much as $3000 United States dollars to cross the border using the services of a "coyote" (smuggler). Ignacio discussed the street-based sex trade that had operated in the Zocalo area a few years earlier. He said that at its height about fifty Mexican male youths from across the country had worked in that neighborhood, paying $200 pesos per week (about $15 United States dollars at the time) to the organized crime group that controlled that area, though this number had dwindled to two or three youth.

Ignacio told me about his deceased lover Brandon, a 17-year-old who had been involved in drug trafficking and had been killed a year and a half earlier, by the organized crime group that he had worked for, because of a bad debt. Ignacio said that Brandon's short life had been marked by deprivation. As a small child, Brandon had also lived in the Las Cruces area with his parents, though they separated, his mother moved to another city, and for a while, Brandon lived with his grandmother in the La Sabana area, known for flooding, poor infrastructure, and homicides. After that, he was in the care of the government agency responsible for child welfare in the Renacimiento neighborhood and then in a privately run youth shelter located near Acapulco's Zocalo.

While Brandon lived with Ignacio in Las Cruces, Ignacio encouraged him to enter a residential addiction treatment program located near Ejido, a process that initially seemed to show some signs of success. But Brandon felt unable to resist the draw of the traditional area of Acapulco. Ignacio said that Brandon's lifeless body was found in a hilly area above the Miramar neighborhood. With help from friends, Ignacio organized a funeral service and burial for Brandon, though none of Brandon's family members were present. Ignacio also commented that at least four other young men Brandon knew from his time in the group home had died under similar violent circumstances.

Eva, a transgender woman in her late thirties, worked as a male stripper and sex worker in her youth in Acapulco before living in several cities elsewhere in Mexico and the US for many years. She described herself as a restless and hyperactive person who does not like to stay in the same place for too long: "I have lived in many different places, Mexico City, Zihuatanejo, Ciudad Obregon, Puerto Vallarta, the US, and of course Acapulco where I am from." For financial reasons she has not yet

gone through gender-affirming surgery but said that if she had the money she would do so.

Eva grew up in Hogar Moderno ("modern household" in English), a working-class neighborhood in central Acapulco not far from the historic zone. "When I was fifteen, I told my parents that I was gay," she said. She talked about being bullied in school and about violence at home: "When I came out to my parents…my father hit me a lot." A short time later, she left school (she had completed grade 10) and found employment working in several poorly paid service positions: "When I was 18 years old, I worked as a [male] stripper in a bar, dancing. That was where I first got to know the gay world." Eva said that her clients were tourists, mostly Mexican though there were some American clients as well. She said she started dating a man who worked in the same bar: "He was the love of my life, my first boyfriend, he loved me, and he also made me suffer….I was very young and innocent, and I didn't know anything about life yet."

At age 21, Eva moved out of her parent's home and into a guesthouse in Condesa that catered to foreign gay men, exchanging her labor for tips and housing. She accepted an invitation from an older gay couple to join them in the US and stayed in California for about four years, where she worked doing drag shows. She returned to Mexico because her parents were both ill and because things had worsened for undocumented immigrants in the US after 9/11. For about a year, she worked as the head waiter of a restaurant in Acapulco's tourist zone. Then she moved to Puerto Vallarta for several years, doing drag shows and occasional sex work. At the time of our interview, she had again returned to Acapulco to be closer to her recently widowed mother.

At the time of the interview, Eva worked as an assistant in a hair salon and performed in drag shows. She did weekly performances in a pozoleria-style family restaurant in the Zapata neighborhood, far from the tourist zone (see Figure 4 of a similar performance by another artist in the Renacimiento neighborhood). Pozolerias, named for the famous Mexican soup that they usually (but not always) serve, commonly employ drag performers on Thursdays to draw customers. Eva said that she still traveled by public transit due to the cost of taxis, "even though people say that it is dangerous." At the same time, she noted that she drinks very little and has become a homebody apart from the shows, evidence of her prioritization of personal safety. Eva is HIV positive and thinks she was likely infected by an American client as an adolescent when she was first involved in sex work, at the aforementioned Condesa guesthouse.

Nanci was a psychologist who grew up in Morelos, a working-class neighborhood adjacent to the traditional area of the city. While she held several professional positions, she also encountered significant employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. As a university student, she came out as lesbian and initially experienced familial rejection, though she noted that this reaction was soon dampened because she has taken on the role of economic provider for her divorced mother.

She recalled being cautioned as a child by her father to avoid the Zocalo area because of child exploitation by "gringo and Canadian tourists." Nanci identified two places where trans and male sex workers now operate, including in the Condesa neighborhood around the bars, as well as along the coastal road that runs alongside the downtown beaches (including Condesa beach). She referred to the trans sex workers using the derogatory term *vestida*, using the term interchangeably with *travesti*. Nanci also distinguished between *chichifos* and *mayates*. She explained that both are

Figure 4. Drag performance in a pozoleria-style restaurant in the Renacimiento area of Acapulco.

straight-identified males but that *chichifos* (often minors) usually restrict their services to receiving oral sex, while *mayates* enter long-term economic relationships with trans women who have some degree of economic stability through steady employment such as hairdressing. While the clients of the three categories of sex workers she described are largely local Mexican men, she explained that these subjectivities are a product of the societal inequality produced in the context of tourism and that these identities would likely not persist in a society marked by greater equality and opportunities for these people.

While in university, Nanci became close with another woman. After a rocky relationship, they eventually went their separate ways. Sadly, this friend's own economic and familial circumstances were especially unstable, something that led her to drug addiction and to being forced into prostitution by an intimate partner who pimped her to whoever was willing to pay. A few months after they had drifted apart, Nanci learned that her friend had been brutally murdered in a hotel room, a crime that has not been solved. Nanci insisted that her friend died because of her vulnerability as a woman, as a lesbian, and as someone without economic resources. She also explained that organized crime impacts the LGBTTTIQ community precisely because of the elevated levels of vulnerability that members of this community experience in Acapulco. Nanci is working with others to establish a community organization that will provide support to sexual and gender minorities who find themselves in difficult straits.

At age 15, Juan's father reacted violently to the news that Juan identified as gay, and so this young person left home. The place he fled was a working-class neighborhood in Pie de la Cuesta, several kilometers west of Acapulco, a town where his grandparents and extended family also lived. He counts himself fortunate to have had a friend in nearby Acapulco who was able to take him in. Prior to leaving home, Juan had already started performing as a drag artist, and so was soon able to rent a room for himself. After about a year, the relationship with his parents significantly improved because they reconsidered their attitudes towards Juan's sexual identity, and so he returned to the family home. These experiences led Juan to engage with LGBTTTIQ activism and he has been involved with local and state campaigns against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. He has also worked as a housekeeper in several different tourist hotels including the Twin Towers in the Condesa neighborhood. He completed junior high school as an adult.

Juan lamented the many cases he knows about in which gay men and *travestis* have been subjected to extreme violence, sometimes fatal. He outlined three emblematic examples that illustrate the sort of violence that sexual and gender minorities in Acapulco need to worry about. One case involved a 40-year-old gay man brutally beaten to death in the El Coloso neighborhood. Another involved the murder of a *travesti* found dead in the La Laja neighborhood. She was involved in street-level drug trafficking and so the assumption is that she was killed concerning that connection. The third involved the disappearance of a gay man in Luis Donaldo Colosio's neighborhood, someone who was known to sell cocaine and marijuana in the area. Neighbors saw armed subjects enter his home and take him away. Juan explained that people who identify as *travesti*, transgender, transsexual, or lesbian in Acapulco have reduced employment opportunities, even more restricted than gay men, and that the result is that they are more likely to become embroiled in organized crime as petty actors, a circumstance that too often leads to danger, violence, and death. He lamented that LGBTTTIQ activists are especially wary of becoming involved with cases that involve organized crime precisely because of the added risk and uncertainty. Juan identified Zapata, Renacimiento, Vacacional, and Central de Abastos—all located in the northern part of the city far away from the tourist zone and widely known to be captured territory of organized crime—as the most dangerous for the LGBTTTIQ community.

Gustavo, a gay man from a middle-class Acapulco family, also found himself involved in LGBTTTIQ activism from a young age. He explained that in the late 1990s, a group of 10 government workers began to meet because they were concerned with the municipal government's regular arrests of *travesti*, transsexual, and transgender persons. They sought out meetings with various municipal leaders, including the Secretary of Public Security as well as the city's mayor. Gustavo recounted how this led to the development of LGBTTTIQ activist spaces that contributed to the establishment of annual pride marches and other political and educational campaigns against discrimination (see Figure 5). In 2014, in face of discriminatory action against the public display of the Pride flag by students in the Faculty of Tourism of the Autonomous University of Guerrero, located in Acapulco's Hornos neighborhood, activists were able to provide organized support for the students.

5. Analysis of a Contradiction

According to research conducted by Mexico's National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2021), 7.4% of Guerrerans identify as LGBTTTIQ, a higher percentage than all but three of Mexico's 31 states, much higher than the national capital, and well above the national average of 5.1%. This is a striking result that does not obviously correspond with other socioeconomic markers that are usually associated with these identities and thus suggests the need for further research. This relatively high level of LGBTTTIQ identity in Guerrero is likely related to a combination of longstanding cultural patterns of toleration of so-called non-normative expressions of gender and sexual identities in this state, coupled with the migratory and identity-related processes related to tourism.

Figure 5. Acapulco's annual Pride march.

At the same time, Guerrero is cited as having more killings of sexual and gender minorities than any other political entity in Mexico except Veracruz and Mexico City, which both have populations nearly triple the size. The complicated stories told by the research subjects of this study and indicated by other experiences suggest three frames that together help us understand the set of dynamics that matter for members of the LGBTTTIQ community in Guerrero: liberation, exploitation, and violation.

Queer tourism has led to liberation experiences for many LGBTTTIQ-identified persons, such as Svend and Bobby who sought to escape the constraints of social exclusion in the US and Canada. This seeking of liberation through opportunities for identity formation has contributed to the constant flow of international tourists to destinations such as Puerto Vallarta and Acapulco (Bailey, 2022). At the same time, tourism has also led to experiences of liberation for many queer Mexicans through the mechanisms identified by Monterrubio (2021). The range of spaces and businesses that provide LGBTTTIQ persons with places where minority identities are welcomed has been augmented by over seven decades of tourism in Acapulco attracting millions of visitors from other parts of Mexico and beyond. The Mexican informants who contributed to this study showed that their identities have been built through the possibilities afforded to them by a city created by tourism. Locals have opportunities to socialize and seek sexual encounters that would likely be less available elsewhere, and this context certainly contributes to the notable level of LGBTTTIQ activism in Acapulco and in the state of Guerrero (Payne, 2020). Monterrubio (2021, p. 50) concluded that LGBTTTIQ tourism spaces are key to providing locals with opportunities to "be gay at home," and this study reinforces this assertion. As well, some LGBTTTIQ individuals, including Nanci and Juan among so many others, have advanced in educational attainment and employment in ways that are tied to the tourist economy.

Bailey (2022, p. 489) underlines that queer tourism contributes to the availability of acceptance and inclusion, but that this is restricted to those who can afford it, and that the related forms of consumption "create stratification within the LGBTQ+ community." In Acapulco, tourism has long been and continues to be the occasion of a range of experiences of exploitation that impacts people in different ways, something made evident through the experiences of those interviewed for this study. The extreme economic inequality produced through this often unplanned urban space marked by segregation and exclusion allowed many tourists and locals opportunities to sexually exploit young people who lack adequate economic resources or social support. The circumstances of spatial segregation have contributed to the vulnerability of many LGBTTTIQ-identified persons, including Eva, Ignacio, and so many others.

However, what stands out in this examination of the experiences of LGBTTTIQ persons in Acapulco is that the rapid expansion of the power and territory of organized crime here and across the state of Guerrero has aggravated and accentuated pre-existing conditions that already led to adverse outcomes for some sexual and gender minorities due to segregation and the related production of vulnerability. It is important to recognize that the shift of organized crime towards Acapulco has been part of a continental realignment of drug trafficking provoked by transnational shifts such as 9/11, the 2007 financial crisis, the "war on drugs," the opioid crisis, and border dynamics. So many of the informants told sad but very common stories of lethal outcomes. While the successive waves of organized violence have certainly impacted all sectors of Acapulco's population, LGBTTTIQ-identified persons are more likely to be exposed to the violence fomented by organized criminal entities that seek to maintain their expansive economic and political power. The mapping of the stories included in this article shows us that queerness is not in itself a corrective for other forms of marginalization. Instead, we are left to notice the multiple ways in which the nexus between queerness and tourism results in troubling outcomes at the interface between the interpersonal and the urban, including the sexual exploitation of minors, the amplification of the harmdoing of international borders, and at least in the case of Acapulco, links between a tourist economy and violent death.

6. Conclusion

Which queers benefit from tourism? In different ways, this is the central question that both Puar (2002c) and

Cantú (2002) ask us to consider. Puar (2002c, p. 113) observed that “the specter of the native, the other, the ‘third world’…encourages a continuity of colonial constructions of tourism as a travel adventure into uncharted territory laden with the possibility of taboo sexual encounters, illicit seductions, and dangerous liaisons,” something sadly reflected in the lives of the people interviewed for this project. Cantú (2002, p. 147) showed that Mexico has been marketed as a place that is both “just like home” and at the same time “exotic,” that tourists have been sold a sort of homoeroticism that is in equal measures a raw or pure form of sexuality but also dangerous. The stories included here demonstrate that this view has been purchased, and that tourism tends to reproduce and amplify existing inequalities between queers. Torres Arroyo (2019, p. 317) insists that poverty and social exclusion are the manifestations of a century of tourist policy and related urban planning in Acapulco and that the territorial inequality produced inhibits the full exercise of the social rights of those impacted in spatially evident ways. The infiltration of an already distorted social fabric by organized crime has further aggravated the harm experienced by some sexual and gender minorities.

What are the implications of this study for urban planning? To start, there is no evidence that planning and tourist development decisions have taken into serious consideration queerness or its related subjectivities in Acapulco. Unlike in Puerto Vallarta, there has been no significant promotion of LGBTTTIQ tourism, something that several informants identified as a missed opportunity given the cultural patrimony of this city as a place that represents sexual liberation. It is interesting to note that Acapulco was the site of the International Lesbian and Gay Association’s 1991 Annual Conference (Brito, 1991), though none of the informants of this study indicated knowledge of that event. In 2022, the municipal tourism office did sponsor a Pride fest, though it seems to have been designed as a decidedly apolitical cultural event that competed with the annual Pride march organized by activists the following week.

Elsewhere, scholars and activists have called on planners to “consider an intersectional analysis of oppressed populations with multiple markers of alterity to increase its understanding and recognition” of marginalized members of the LGBTTTIQ community “to be better positioned to plan spaces and services with and for them” (Irazábal & Huerta, 2016). Nowhere is this more important than in Acapulco, where a queering of the urban planning of this city built on tourism and corrupted by cartel violence could take into consideration how the city’s planning and development to date have facilitated the violation of so many sexual and gender minorities.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Bailey, E. G. (2022). Is gay tourism more than tourism? A case study of Puerto Vallarta, MX. *Humanity & Society*, *43*(3), 478–494.

Brito, A. (1991). Breve tratado de intolerancia (de las dificultades para realizar un congreso gay) [A short treatise on intolerance (regarding the difficulties of holding a gay congress)]. *Debate Feminista*, *4*, 323–340.

Calderón, L. Y., Heinle, K., Kuckertz, R. E., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A. (Eds.). (2021). *Organized crime and violence in Mexico: 2021 special report*. Justice in Mexico. https://justiceinmexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/OCVM-21.pdf

Cantú, L. (2002). De ambiente: Queer tourism and the shifting boundaries of Mexican male sexualities. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *8*(1/2), 139–166.

Castro, C. (2021, August 19). La zona roja, de Edén de los pláceres a zona fantasmal [The red zone, from an Eden of pleasures to a ghost town]. *El Sol de Acapulco*. https://www.elsoldeacapulco.com.mx/local/de-eden-de-los-placeres-a-zona-fantasmal-acapulco-prostitucion-zona-tolerancia-bares-centros-nocturnos-7066004.html

Donoso Jiménez, J., Jasso López, L. C., del Carmen Gallardo, R., & Barrera Cortés, R. A. (2018). *Derechos humanos y discriminación en grupos vulnerables de la zona urbana de Acapulco: Una aproximación de la población LGBTTTIQ* [Human rights and discrimination in vulnerable groups in the urban area of Acapulco: A consideration of the LGBTTTIQ population]. Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos de México. https://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r38355.pdf

INEGI. (2021). *Conociendo a la población LGBTI+ en México* [Getting to know the LGBTI+ population in Mexico]. https://www.inegi.org.mx/tablerosestadisticos/lgbti

Irazábal, C., & Huerta, C. (2016). Intersectionality and planning at the margins: LGBTQ youth of color in New York. *Gender, Place and Culture*, *23*(5), 714–732.

Mendoza, C. (2013). Beyond sex tourism: Gay tourists and male sex workers in Puerto Vallarta (Western Mexico). *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *15*, 122–137.

Monterrubio, C. (2021). The significance of gay tourism spaces for local gay men: Empirical evidence from Mexico. In O. Vorobjovas-Pinta (Ed.), *Gay tourism: New perspectives* (pp. 34–51). Channel View Publications.

Payne, W. (2019). The researcher-witness of violence against queers: One scholar-activist’s pathway through lament. In K. Gillespie & P. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Vulnerable witnesses: The politics of grief in the field* (pp. 128–138). University of California Press.

Payne, W. (2020). Queer urban activism under state impunity: Encountering an LGBTTTI pride archive in Chilpancingo, Mexico. *Urban Studies*, *58*(7), 1327–1345.

Puar, J. (2002a). A transnational feminist critique of queer tourism. *Antipode*, *34*, 935–946.

Puar, J. (2002b). Introduction to special issue entitled "Queer tourism: Geographies of globalization." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *8*(1/2), 1–6.

Puar, J. (2002c). Circuits of queer mobility: Tourism, travel and globalization. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *8*(1/2), 101–137.

Rodríguez Vignoli, J. (2001). *Segregación residencial socioeconómica: ¿Qué es? ¿cómo se mide? ¿qué está pasando? ¿importa?* [Socioeconomic residential segregation: What is it? How is it measured? What is happening? Does it matter?]. CEPAL.

Sackett, A. (2022). The two faces of Acapulco during the golden age. In G. M. Joseph & T. J. Henderson (Eds.), *The Mexico reader: History, culture, politics* (pp. 440–447). Duke University Press.

Sánchez Huerta, M. A. (2018). *Construcción y evolución urbana de la colonia ciudad Renacimiento de Acapulco, Guerrero* [The building of and urban evolution of Ciudad Renacimiento neighborhood of Acapulco, Mexico] [Unpublished Master's thesis, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana]. https://martinchecaartasu.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TESISCONCLUIDAMASANCHEZHUERTA2018.pdf

Statista. (2023). *Ranking of the most dangerous cities in the world in 2022, by murder rate per 100,000 inhabitants*. https://www.statista.com/statistics/243797/ranking-of-the-most-dangerous-cities-in-the-world-by-murder-rate-per-capita

Torres Arroyo, Ó. (2009). La discriminación social e institucional en la entidad de Guerrero, México [Social and institutional discrimination in the entity of Guerrero, Mexico] [Master's thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México]. UNAM Repository.

Torres Arroyo, Ó. (2017). La vivienda en la ciudad de Acapulco frente a la política habitacional en México [Housing in the city of Acapulco given housing policy in Mexico]. In A. Ziccardi & D. Cravacuore (Eds.), *Los gobiernos locales y las políticas de vivienda en México y América Latina* [Local governments and the politics of housing in Mexico and Latin America] (pp. 91–104). Pensamiento Crítico.

Torres Arroyo, Ó. (2019). Territorio desigual y ciudadanía en Acapulco: Una mirada analítica frente a la segregación socioeconómica [Unequal territory and citizenship in Acapulco: An analytical look at socioeconomic segregation]. In F. Carrión & J. Erazo (Eds.), *El derecho a la ciudad en América Latina* [Right to the city in Latin America] (pp. 315–332). CLACSO.

Vargas Rojas, S. Y., & Alcalá Escamilla, B. (2013). Aspectos territoriales de la prostitución masculine vinculada al turismo sexual en Acapulco [Territorial aspects of masculine prostitution connected to sexual tourism in Acapulco]. In A. López López & A. M. Van Broeck (Eds.), *Turismo y sexo en México. Cuerpos masculinos en venta y experiencias homoeróticas. Una perspectiva multidisciplinaria* [Tourism and sex in Mexico. Male bodies for sale and homoerotic experiences. A multidisciplinary perspective] (pp. 227–260). UNAM.

About the Author

William J. Payne teaches in the Community Worker Program at George Brown College. William is also a PhD candidate in critical human geography at York University. Their scholarly research examines human rights violations of sexual/gender minorities in Latin American contexts marked by organized violence and impunity produced through hemispheric political and economic processes. William has worked as a human rights advocate in Canada, Mexico, Colombia, and Palestine.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 262–276
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.6373

Article

50 Years of Pride: Queer Spatial Joy as Radical Planning Praxis

Marisa Turesky [1,*] and Jonathan Jae-an Crisman [2]

[1] Urban Planning & Development, University of Southern California, USA
[2] Public & Applied Humanities, University of Arizona, USA

* Corresponding author (turesky@usc.edu)

Submitted: 30 October 2022 | Accepted: 17 February 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
Planning has historically been used as a tool to regulate queer people in urban space and parades have long been a vibrant, yet overlooked, practice for resisting such municipal regulation—although parades themselves require spatial planning practices. We analyze the 50-year history of the Los Angeles Pride parade through archival materials, asking to what extent and how the historical planning of LA Pride demonstrates a radical planning praxis, especially in relation to policing. We find that LA Pride was initially (a) a ritual of remembrance and (b) a political organizing device. In contrast to heteronormative readings of Pride as an opportunity to "come out" and transform the "straight state," we argue that the early years of Pride demonstrated intersectional and insurgent planning wherein heterogeneous queer people claimed agency through collectively expressing joy as an act of resistance to municipal governance. Based on theories of Black joy and the feminist killjoy, we conceptualize this experience as a "spatialized queer joy." This concept is particularly germane given ongoing debates regarding the relationship between queer and BIPOC urban life and policing. We suggest that spatialized queer joy complicates conventional readings of Pride and queer urban space, offering instead powerful tools for radical queer planning praxis.

Keywords
Black joy; policing; Pride parades; queer joy; queer planning; queer space; radical planning; regulation; spatial justice

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

How did Pride celebrations, forged as a radical protest against unjust policing some 50 years ago, turn into corporate-sponsored parties in which police took part? In 2020, Los Angeles (LA) celebrated the 50th anniversary of Pride though its narrative had shifted dramatically from its earliest years. In 1971, the first year of the parade was organized as a one-year memorial event for queer people who were harmed by police violence during the Stonewall Uprising in New York City (NYC). Fifty years later, however, the event had evolved from a struggle for queer recognition and freedom from police violence to a space of commodified celebration, with corporate sponsors eager to brand the event with their names. Given the 2020 uprisings following the death of George Floyd, LA Pride leadership attempted to organize a Pride march in solidarity with Black Lives Matter (BLM) LA. This partnership, on its face, makes perfect sense: much like the origins of Pride 50 years earlier, BLM came out of a protest led by queer Black women against state violence. The implementation, however, was fraught from the start: an event producer from the LA Pride organizing body, Christopher Street West (CSW, named after the street that the Stonewall Inn is situated on in NYC), sent a letter to the LA Police Department that highlighted "a strong and unified partnership with law enforcement" (Consoletti, 2020). When this action was revealed, it threw the event planning into chaos. CSW withdrew from co-organizing and a board of queer Black leaders took over, re-branding the protest as "All Black Lives Matter."

Similar issues have arisen in Pride events elsewhere, highlighting the tension between Pride's origins as a Black-led protest against state violence and its recent manifestation as a largely state-supported endeavor. For example, BLM Toronto was given a symbolic role as Pride marshals in 2016 which they leveraged to highlight the problem of incorporating police into Pride and ultimately managed to bar police from appearing in uniform. Even so, as Atluri and Rodríguez (2018, p. 160) describe, this action was met with derision by the largely white gay men who dominated Pride planning at the time:

> BLM-TO's successful campaigns to demilitarize Pride and remove visible symbols of racist state power from queer spaces led to many deeply racist comments online and publicly. The occupation of white queer space and white queer archives by Black transgender and queer activists is met with constant hostility, revealing the un-homely racism that shapes a white-supremacist society.

Beyond the policing of Pride, numerous white queer and queer of color scholars have pointed toward the myriad ways in which policing has harmed queer and BIPOC communities, as well as the limitations of inclusion models for social change that might reduce harm (Hwang, 2019; Spade, 2020). We add to this discourse by considering the role of planning, itself, as a manifestation of the state monopoly on violence, which emerges through zoning, land use, and other forms of planning enforcement rather than through the actions of conventionally understood police departments (Burke, 2002; Weber, 2015).

Despite repeated failures with Pride, parades more generally have long been a vibrant yet overlooked practice for racial, gender, ethnic, and class minorities to consolidate and express grassroots power in public space (S. Davis, 1986; Hayden, 1997). They have been a primary tactic for contesting municipal governance exclusions by making community solidarity visible in public space. The early years of LA Pride were revealing of structural power dynamics, such as interactions between grassroots activity from queer actors and the governmentality represented by the LA Police Department, which held the power to grant or deny parade permits. These power structures can affect individual actions, expressions, and senses of belonging. As radical planning theorists propose, for those without social power to liberate themselves, they can use collective action as a contested terrain for collective identity building to realize their counter-hegemonic power (Friedmann, 1987; Miraftab, 2009). In this article, we analyze if and how the planning of LA Pride might be recuperated as a radical spatial practice that resists a long history of state power over queer life.

Throughout this article, we refer to queer organizing as the collective action and mobilization tactics used by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. We use *queer* as an umbrella term for anyone who does not fall inside of normative heterosexual, cisgender identities. This includes but is not limited to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, pansexual, genderqueer, agender, or intersex people. We also use *radical planning* to describe planning practices which emanate from grassroots mobilization to effect systemic change (Beard, 2003; Friedmann, 1987). Radical planning owes much to Black feminist thought, incorporating community participation, dialogue, and epistemologies of lived experience toward intersectional activism against oppressive state structures (Jacobs, 2019). We draw inspiration from Ella Baker's definition of radical as "getting down to and understanding the root cause" (Ransby, 2003, p. 1). Radical planning thus borrows from insurgency, centering grassroots movements against systems that do not meet human needs, and strategies to change such systems (Miraftab, 2009). In her theory of insurgent planning, Miraftab (2009) critiques "inclusion" as neoliberal "tokenism," especially through participation, that distracts from systemic change. Miraftab thus prescribes insurgent tactics as necessary for disrupting relationships sterilized through inclusion models. In this sense, radical planning stems from a long history of the failures of rational planning models, offering an alternative for planning just and equitable futures through oppositional practices like C. Cohen's (1997) queer politics rather than the formalistic, participatory inclusion espoused by neoliberal regimes. C. Cohen's (1997, p. 438) proposal for a *queer politics* beyond sexual orientation destabilizes queerness based on singular identity categories and, instead, recognizes manifestations of power across and within intersecting systems of oppression to "create a space in opposition to dominant norms, a space where transformational political work can begin."

To better understand the complex history of LA Pride and the insights it provides on how we plan for queer people and spaces, we ask: *To what extent and how does the historical planning of LA Pride demonstrate a radical planning praxis, especially in relation to policing?* To answer this question, we examine historical artifacts from the CSW collection in the ONE Archives. Despite LA's long history of Pride, and its radical origins contesting police violence, its recent iterations have emphasized corporate advertising and consumer culture over political protest. Pride began as an invented space, but it became an invited space as historically marginalized queer subgroups needed to assert oppositional practices as a way of creating their own terms for engagement and joy. We argue that the historical struggle to develop Pride parades has been a key arena for radical planning, intervening in the urban imaginary to create spaces for queer bodies to flourish in the city. Furthermore, we draw from theories of the feminist killjoy (Ahmed, 2016) and Black joy (Bonilla-Silva, 2019; Lu & Steele, 2019) to see Pride marches as a reflection of a spatialized *queer* joy. In this kind of joy, queer people have agency to express joy in LA public spaces that demonstrates ritual and resistance.

We begin with a historical overview of urban planning's relationship to queer people, highlighting the importance of studying LA queer space. We then demonstrate how early LA Pride artifacts indicate a spatialized queer joy through (a) ritual opposition to police and (b) political organizing toward justice in the city. Our discussion of joy as radical queer planning builds on queer of color interventions into urban justice (Cullors, 2018; Haritaworn et al., 2019) to chart how LA Pride has turned toward a neoliberal inclusion model that fits into existing municipal governance structures. We conclude with reflections on the how LA Pride's radical organizing model offers new insights for radical planners.

2. Methods

Through archival materials from the CSW collection in the ONE Archives, we foster collective remembrance of missing stories that can reshape dominant narratives (Burns, 2019). The artifacts offer an opportunity to compare past planning practices with those of today. Though the artifacts we have analyzed might not be generalizable, our findings reflect how engagement with the past is a key element of queer space (Reed, 1996) and queer theory's focus on partial, locally-situated knowledges (Bailey, 1999; Browne & Nash, 2010). Given how white, gay male narratives have often dominated queer histories, we focus on unearthing and analyzing materials that center people of color, women, and transgender people as an act of archival justice (Rawson, 2015). These narratives point toward the contours of a radical, queer planning praxis as one which can create spaces for people who have historically been excluded from urban planning.

This is also true in the geographic dimension of our work. Though patrons of a gay bar in LA, the Black Cat, resisted against police violence two years prior to Stonewall, the organizing body of LA Pride sought to make explicit their solidarity with Stonewall by naming their organizing body "Christopher Street West" (CSW). CSW became the "West Coast" group organized in commemoration of the Stonewall Inn's location in NYC on Christopher Street. The origins of LA Pride were symbolically connected to the Stonewall actions in New York, and subsequent national organizing, despite local grassroots efforts around the world that happened independently of New York's primacy in recorded histories (e.g., S. Cohen, 2005; White, 2008). We also see the social networks, community, and activism unfolding in LA during this period as reflective of LA's own role as a locus for queer activism within these lesser recorded histories. In this sense, our examination of the CSW collection in the ONE Archive, also located in LA, is both an act of archival as well as spatial justice, reorienting queer histories away from a linear narrative of progress centered on an origin point in New York and toward their messier, diverse, and even joyfully unexpected realities.

For our analysis, we surveyed the CSW Collection in the ONE Archives located in LA. The Collection contained, per the ONE Archives records, "Agendas, minutes, clippings, correspondence, fliers, parade, and permit applications, press releases, souvenir programs, photographs and slides of the CSW Association parade and festival. The collection documents the pride parade and festivals held in LA and later West Hollywood, California, 1970–2009." The Collection included nine linear feet of materials, including two archival boxes, four archival cartons, three binder boxes, and one flat box. Each item in the collection was reviewed, including hundreds of photos, negative sheets, slides, notes and letters, legal documents around permitting and lawsuits, publicity materials, organizational flyers and materials, and other ephemera. These items were then coded and organized into themes, starting with materials that focused on planning-related activities and materials centering people of color, women, and transgender people in Pride planning activities. After a second round of coding and organization, we noticed additional themes emerge from the materials, including many items that related to police and policing, religion and ritual, and acceptance of queer individuals within broader societal norms. From these themes, we used close reading and content analysis to analyze these groups of materials. We noted changes over time as archival materials were organized by year, pointing toward shifts in the topics and tones seen in materials from Pride's earliest planning to today.

3. Los Angeles and Queer Planning History

The planning profession has historically played a major role in developing and enforcing regulations and policies that police bodies. Municipal planning heavily depends on policing to shape urban built environments, land-use regulations, and budgets that "establish a spatial and social order" (Simpson et al., 2020, p. 133). Although the norms that planning generated have evolved over time, telling the same planning histories through everyday repetition can give a mask of permanence to them (Foucault, 1971, pp. 145–172).

Feminist and queer planning scholars have critiqued planning as a colonial project rooted in heterosexist norms to control what is believed to be disorder, including immoral sexuality (Bain & Podmore, 2021; Doan, 2015; Frisch, 2002; Greed, 1994; Hayden, 1981; Winkler, 2017). Gail Dubrow (2012) demonstrates the importance of preserving queer history in the built environment through the recognition of places of homophobia (e.g., military bases) and places of gay liberation (e.g., Compton's Cafeteria). Recognition through historic preservation can prevent misrepresentation and erasure as an act of archival justice (Rawson, 2015). However, Agyeman and Erickson (2012) propose that recognition, alone, is not sufficient in planning for social justice: To pursue just futures means not only recognizing but also understanding and engaging with difference, as well as redistributing power and resources toward historically underserved groups. We thus see the need for

queer planning as one that is inextricably linked to the development of a radical planning approach that creates space, as C. Cohen (1997) argues, for opposition and transformation.

LA's history as one of the first locations for Pride (along with NYC, Chicago, and San Francisco), a celebration that has since been adopted in cities around the world, is justification for needing greater examination of LA's queer history. As Moira Kenney (2001) explores in *Mapping Gay LA*, queer people's experiences in LA are representative of many non-urban landscapes across the United States. Unlike the enclave cultures of gay neighborhoods in San Francisco and NYC, LA's size and sprawl generates a decentralized queer community and thus a greater fight for visibility. LA is at once a confederation of neighborhoods in search of a queer center, even as it is home to the incorporated City of West Hollywood, one of the few political bodies in the US borne out of a fight for queer representation and belonging. Conversely, we note that the history of West Hollywood as an incorporated city within Greater LA is tied to its queer residents' desire for the right to the city, and the sense of belonging that comes with having a clearly defined place in the city.

4. Pride as a Ritual of Remembrance

In the early years of LA Pride, the organizers framed the event as one of remembrance for and solidarity with the Stonewall Uprising of 1969 by targeting both police and religious institutions. The march centered a commemoration of the June 28th event when a group of queer people resisted the NYPD's routine raid of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar located on Christopher Street. Queer theorist Jose Esteban Muñoz (2009, p. 322) described the Stonewall Uprising as "a manifestation of pent-up energies that erupted on the streets of Greenwich Village." This eruption is often cited as the symbolic starting point of the modern gay and lesbian movement, as well as the "formalizing and formatting" of queer identities (Muñoz, 2009, p. 323).

The initial CSW planning materials for LA Pride describe the "purpose" of the event as "a statement of gay solidarity with our homosexual brothers and sisters of Christopher Street, New York, who on June 27, 28, and 29, 1969, fought back in rage, resentment, and frustration in their powerlessness" (CSW, 1970). Organizers used religious imagery to create a march that became a memorial, a living ritual, to remember and reflect on the Stonewall rebellion as a revolutionary demonstration against police brutality. In doing so, people could protest both police violence as well as religious persecution and exclusion, which was another major issue during the time. Like the Stonewall Uprising itself, Pride as a ritual of remembrance involved the performance of queer bodies in public space, marching down streets, highlighting the collective power and voice of queer communities in solidarity with one another. The shared and embodied repetition of queer people moving through public space constituted a key element of Pride as a ritual of remembrance.

Public ritual to develop a collective identity and purpose coexisted with associated activities to stage alternative visions for gay liberation in the streets of LA, including organizing meetings, private parties, and resource sharing. Like many communities that marched for revolution, these public displays of solidarity suggest an attempt to assert a queer public interest. Religious institutions and healing through ritual were central to planners, according to documentation from the early years of LA Pride. Additionally, religious imagery and faith-based congregations were often found in Pride parade floats and at stands (Figures 1 and 2).

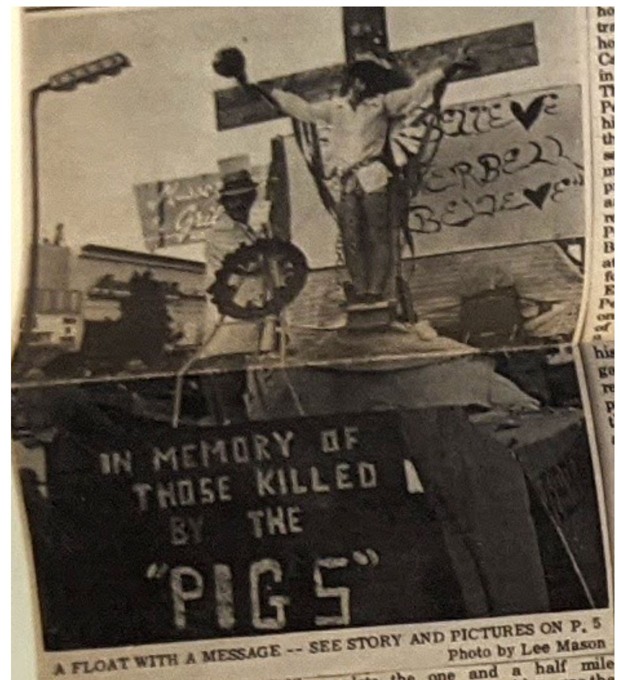


Figure 1. Parade float connecting Christ's crucifixion to police violence suffered by queer individuals at Stonewall. Source: Mason (1970).

We use the notion of "ritual" to highlight the importance of faith-based and religious practices to emotionally, mentally, and physically process the emerging collective queer identity of the time, and the trauma and oppression felt by queer communities (Ben-Lulu, 2021; Drinkwater, 2019). The term also suggests the important role that familiar symbols play as they are appropriated and utilized to confer legitimacy, pleasure, and belonging—much in the same way that Payne (2021) has identified in his analysis of Pride rituals in Mexico. The ritual aspect of Pride suggests the importance of public grieving as a form of resistance (Sandercock, 1998; Schweitzer, 2016). Figure 1 shows crucifixion imagery that contested queer people's experiences of violence and exclusion from both the Church and police. The centrality of ritual in Pride demonstrates its importance as well as the deep grief that queer people experience from

Figure 2. Stand at Pride showing the presence of a Jewish congregation. Source: Photograph of Beth Chayim Chadashim [ca. 1975].

being excluded from such faith-based spaces. In contrast, Figure 2 depicts congregants from Beth Chayim Chadashim reaching out to LGBTQ+ people at an early Pride march. Metropolitan Community Church, founded in 1968, and Beth Chayim Chadashim, founded in 1972, were some of the world's first congregations established explicitly for the queer community. Both groups began in LA and served as important organizing grounds for efforts such as LA Pride.

Religious institutions seemed to play a foundational role in fostering connection and social cohesion in early Pride planning. Eboo Patel (2016), a sociologist and the founder of the Interfaith Youth Core, notes the role of interfaith leadership in strengthening social cohesion, reducing the chances for identity-based conflict, bridging social capital, and creating binding narratives for diverse societies. Drawing on Bakhtin's (1984) concept of the *carnivalesque*, which decodes underlying, transformative purposes of the festival, Santino (2011) develops the notion of the *ritualesque* as a central element of Pride. Though there are festival elements in early Pride, he argues that Pride differentiates itself from other large gatherings in public spaces through the centrality of formal rituals. Such rituals disrupt the status quo, unite people, and ultimately affect social change using performative symbology, such as images and movement (Santino, 2011). In the carnivalesque fashion, marchers display a joyous festiveness in their public ritual. We see Pride's early formation, through ritual practice linked to faith-based organizing of the time, as a public and collective experience for processing trauma and building solidarity.

In the early years of Pride, the march was a healing ritual to process the contested relationship between the queer community and police. Policing has long been a tool for exclusion and regulation of queer people in the US (Chauncey, 1994; C. Cohen, 1997; Delany, 1999; Hanhardt, 2013; Martinez, 2015; Turesky, 2021; Warner, 2002) and LA, specifically (Ellison, 2019; Faderman & Timmons, 2006; Hwang, 2019; Quin, 2019). In Jeanne Córdova's (2011) memoir, she explains that CSW leaders, such as Morris Kight, spent months begging for a permit but ultimately were denied and, instead, got "qualified permission" to stay on sidewalks and with "one misstep the cops would be all over us" (Córdova, 2011, p. 46). LAPD Chief, Edward Davis, wrote at the time to Councilman Art Snyder "it's one thing to be a leper; it's another thing to be spreading disease" and "giving a permit to homosexuals would be like giving one to robbers and rapists" (Córdova, 2011, p. 46). According to Córdova, the organizers chose to march on Hollywood Boulevard's especially wide sidewalks as a tactic in response to the police mandate that participants stay on sidewalks. LAPD mandated how queer bodies could exist in public space by refusing to grant permits and regulating the physical parameters of where marchers could exist. Hollywood Boulevard remains a key part of the LA Pride route today.

This antagonizing relationship between the LA queer community and the LAPD was one factor in why the first Gay Rights Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union was established in LA, led by Dick Caudillo. The initial Pride parade permit was at first denied, then provided with the qualification that organizers acquire an amount of insurance that was not required for any other group and was so onerous as to all but deny granting of the permit. Ultimately, it was only after the ACLU filed a

lawsuit that the permit was granted with reduced insurance requirements. When CSW filled out applications during subsequent years, they even noted in a space for additional information, "We hope we don't have to challenge the Police Commission in the courts as we did last year" (CSW, 1971). Douglas made this struggle visible and central in their flyer by adding the celebratory line "Parade permit granted!" (Douglas, 1970).

LAPD was not the only institution seeking to limit the LA queer community's rights. In 1970, the LA chapter of the Gay Liberation Front led one of the first acts of resistance against the medical establishment's classification of homosexuality as a mental illness. This classification was widely used by governments to justify discriminatory policies and by medical institutions to legitimize the practice of sexual conversion therapies. In 1970, Gay Liberation Front leaders stormed the International Conference on Behavioral Modification, located at the Downtown LA Biltmore Hotel. By 1973, the American Psychiatry Association removed homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. Nevertheless, a few years later in 1975, CSW leadership invited Chief Davis to participate in Pride and he replied on official LAPD letterhead: "I would much rather celebrate "GAY CONVERSION WEEK" which I will gladly sponsor when the medical practitioners in this country find a way to convert gays to heterosexuals" (E. M. Davis, 1975). It is no surprise that anti-police signage and performance flooded the early Pride events (Figure 3). Queer participants even used BDSM imagery to reclaim police symbology as connected to queer sexual practices, diminishing police control, and making fun of police behavior through the public celebration of their own sexual experiences.

5. Pride as Political Organizing

Through this ritual of remembrance, archival pieces also demonstrate how Pride operated as a joyous space for diverse queer communities to mobilize in urban landscapes. The earliest archival artifacts from LA Pride demonstrate its potential as a site for radical planning. The first LA Pride poster was designed by Angela Douglas, an early white trans woman activist, and founder of Transvestite/Transsexual Activist Organization. Her poster decenters the cisgender, white male figure that has come to dominate LA Pride, featuring instead a gender ambiguous figure whose headpiece resembles Pharoah-like iconography (Figure 4). Despite being organized by CSW from its earliest years, the first LA Pride flyer lists numerous queer organizations, suggesting a role for Pride as a bridging organization to build grassroots political power across heterogeneous groups, as well as to develop social capital among queer people.

In exploring Fanon's theories of decolonial resistance, Pile (1997, p. 23) reminds us that in this postmodernist era, "the map of resistance is not simply the underside of the map of domination." Rather, resistance charts a new course toward transformational space that brings people and groups from the margins to the center (hooks, 1984). From this, we see an opportunity for destabilizing power dynamics as social movements reinscribe the streets as sites of cultural production on their road trip toward social, economic, and political capital. As a vehicle for developing a collective identity, early Pride flyers demonstrate general demands that the queer marchers and organizers sought from public institutions. Like many other gay liberation groups at the time,

Figure 3. A "Pride float" in the form of a re-tooled "police car" that incorporates BDSM imagery to protest police violence. Source: Photograph of Pride marchers [ca. 1975].

Figure 4. 1970 LA Pride poster designed by Angela Douglas. Source: Douglas (1970).

the Lavender People demanded abolishing homophobic laws and police harassment, obtaining rights to employment and child custody, and releasing people who were incarcerated because homosexual acts were criminalized (Figure 5). Betty Friedan, the President of the National Organization for Women, first used the phrase "Lavender Menace" in 1969 to demonize lesbians as a threat to the women's movement, effectively banning them from the organization. The term was here reclaimed and used by many lesbian groups. Other demands centered criminal justice reform, aligning with our observation of this repeated policing theme within archival materials.

By 1974, artifacts show less uniformity in demands and more fragmentation. Though groups of women, such

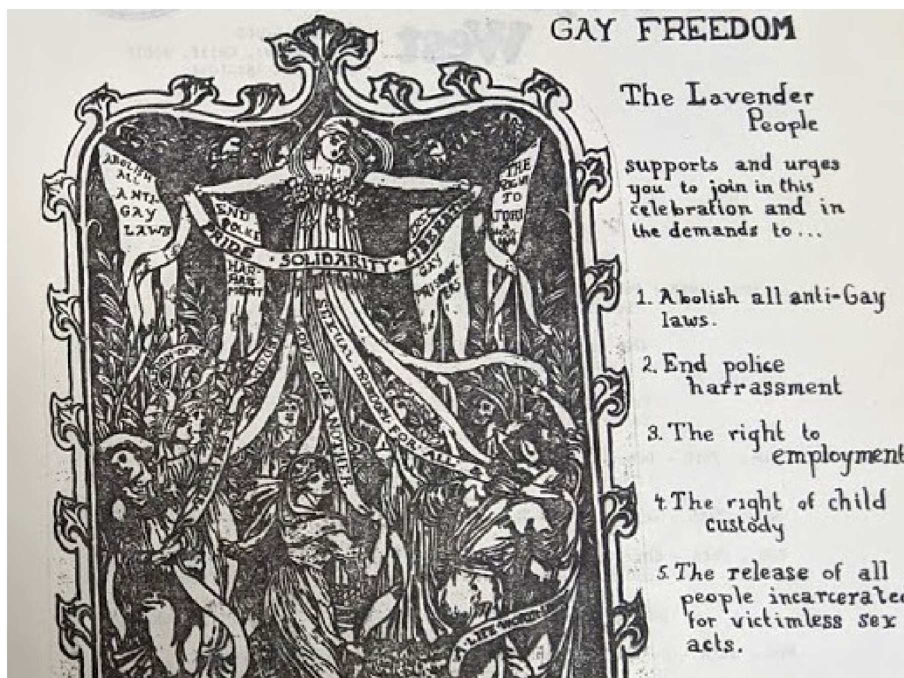


Figure 5. Flyer from The Lavender People listing their political demands. Source: The Lavender People (1972).

as the Gay Sisters' Christopher Street Coalition, called for an end to police harassment, they also developed feminist goals since independence as women was essential to their sexual liberation. They called for rights to economic equity and houses, as well as child custody. Family courts became a key site for criminalizing lesbians during the 1970s and 1980s, ruling that lesbians were unfit mothers and granting full custody to fathers or extended family (Gutterman, 2019).

By 1980, planning rosters show that over 100 groups participated in Pride. It is unclear whether having a float necessarily signifies any meaningful engagement with the larger queer rights movement, but they at least needed to contribute money, time, and their own visibility to collective efforts of the parade (Figure 6). There is substantial variety in the types of groups that were participating: groups hailed from different universities, ethnicities, religions, and geographies. While these groups may not have all shared political demands like in Pride's earlier years, the annual act of planning Pride nevertheless acted as a joyous space of community organizing where disparate groups came into discursive interaction with one another, building social and political capital as they demonstrated a shared, public identity.

Only a few of these groups had participated in the initial Pride parade. The radical political elements of early LA Pride manifested in joyful, spontaneous, and informal kinds of participation with less cooperation from the LAPD. This radical political space created an opportunity for heterogenous political groups to gather and express joy. We see the radical and queer planning represented in Pride's earliest days as demonstrative of the kind of spatialized queer joy that might offer potential for political and spatial justice in the city.

ALPHABETICAL
40 – 89 = DIV. B CROFT
90 – 150 = DIV C WESTKNELL

A 80 Abe Lincoln Republican Club
M 15 Abortion Rights
M 21 Action Coalition
M 85 Advocate Experience
M 45 Afirmation / Mormons
A 37 Ah Men
M 14 Alcoholic Center for Women
T 56 Don Amador, Mayor's Laison
A 136 Andrea "Miss Gay California"
T 96 Apache Disco
M 93 Bakersfield Contingent
63 Steven Banks
M 33 Temple Beth Chayim
AM 119 Blue Parrot auto & marchers
F? 120 Blue Parrot Elephant and attendants
A,A 10 Buckingham Livery
M 125 Cal Poly Pomona
M 68 Cal State Long Beach
M 95 Cal State Los Angeles
T 116 Chateau Properties
T 32 Chrysalis Hotel Float, Palm Springs
F 132 Circus Disco Float
M 133 Circus Disco Clowns
A 60 Compass Magazine
F 3 C.S.W. float
A A 84 Cycle Sluts
T 61 D.E. Motor Club
M 35 Dignity L.A. / S.F.V.
M 1 Dykes on Bykes
F 36 Eagle Bar Float with marchers
M 58 East Side Assoc.
A 26 Supervisor Ed Edelman
M 25 L.A. Gay Community Services Center
50a Gay Fathers
M 27 L.A. GAY Freedom Band
M 43 Gay &Lesbian Psychotherapists
T 82 Gene's TV
A 5 Grand Marshal Grace Davis
73 Julie Hanson & Superstuff
M 100 Hawaii Gays
M 30 H.E.L.P.
88 Hollywood Hawaiian
T 34 Holy Trinity Church
M 83 Hudson House
M 118 The Hunger Project
M 91 I.C.A.U. Athletic Teams
M 46 Iglesia Latina
M 66 Imperial Courts of Long Beach
A 42 Just L.A. Magazine
A M 59 Keystone Cops
M 75 Keys to the City
M 72 K-9 Corps
F H 70 L A Bar Float with 2 horsemen
M 55 L.A. City College Gay Student Union
M 65 Lambda Democratic Club
S 41 Lambda Roller Skate Club
T 40 Lambda Roller Club Soundtruck
106 L.A. MimeCo.
T 76 L.A. Tool Co.
M 8 Lesbians of Color
M 47 Lesbian & Gay Latins
M 126 Lesbians & Gays from Pomona
M 103 Lesbians & Gays from Orange Co.
LONG BEACH CONTINGENT
M 13 L.O.V.E.
F 112 Machismo, Jeep & Tank
M 57 March On Washington
M 52 MCC All Saints / West Hollywood
M 105 MCC Anaheim / Santa Ana

54 MCC Downtown Chorus
53 MCC Downtown Float
M 67 MCC Long Beach
M 127 MCC Pomona
B M 48 MCC Valley, bikers & marchers
HT 49 MCC Valley horse drawn wagon
M 51 MCC West Bay / Santa Monica
A 29 MECLA
M 2 Men's Biker Team
A 131 The Men's Room "Mr. Leather"
A 113 Midnight Cowboy, Databoy
M 97 Jim Morris Gym
M 18 N.O.W.
A 109 Odom's Intermission Bar
F 114 Odyssey Float with Love & Kisses
T 110 Once Only, Brotherhood
T 31 One, Inc. L.A.
AH 98 One Way Bar (auto or horses)
B 102 Orange County Bikers
A 104 Orange Bussinesspersons Assoc.
M 38 Orange County Community Center
ORANGE COUNTY CONTINGENT
103a Orange Co. Firetruck
A 12 Palms Women
A 139 Parade Chairpersons Ernie & Joy
M A,A 4 Parents & Friends, L.A.
A 16 Women of Peanuts
M 108 The Phoenix Gym
86 Charles Pierce
F 107 Pink Elephant Float
POLICE ABUSE CONTINGENT
POMONA CONTINGENT
M 128 Pomona Valley Women's Assoc.
44a Press Release Newstand
AM 122 Probe auto and marchers
F 123 Probe Club Float
T 101 P.X. Village People Tribute
M 50 Rainbow Society of Deaf
AM 62 Riverside County, P.A.C.
A 134 Ron Allen Shoes
T 44 Rooster Fish Bar
F 24 Rusty Nail Float
M 135 San Diego Pride Alliance
M 90 San Francisco Freedom Day Band
M 64 San Francisco Men's Chorus
M 137 San Gabriel Valley Coalition
F 74 Spike Bar Float
TS 92 Sports Locker/ Jeep, Boat, Dave Kopay
129 Starwood Disco
M 28 Stonewall Democratic Club
F 78 Studio One Float
M 79 Studio One Marchers
A 130 Sweet As A Rose Flowers
M 11 Swinging Misses
M 115 U.S.C. Gay Student Union
M 111 U.C.L.A. Gay Student Union
M 22 Union of Lesbians and Gay Men
T 124 El Camino, Veronica Va Voom
M 17 Wages for Housework
M 140 We Are Everywhere
87 Dan Webster
T 121 West Hollywood Presbyterian
WOMENS CONTINGENT
M 7 Women's Outreach
M 9 Women's Softball Teams
M 6 Women United
F 94 Zephyr Productions Float
M 81 Zero to Success
99 Zipco with skaters

Figure 6. Alphabetical list of participating organizations for 1980 Pride. Source: List of march participants (1980).

6. Inclusion vs. Queer Joy

Political theorists have long cited a politics of recognition as critical for gaining social and political inclusion (Taylor, 1992; Young, 2002). Normative interpretations of Pride are often limited to the march being a "coming out" for queer people, an expression of desire for *inclusion* in dominant society. Only focusing on inclusion decenters the radical potential of a queer politics, favoring a limited vision for heteropatriarchal institutions to accept queers into dominant society. This has certainly become the primary goal for Pride in recent years, but this goal appears to have generated some tension during Pride's earliest days. The very first CSW newsletter hints at the othering of non-white, non-male identifying people, listing "women" as a separate agenda item. Though our modern interpretation suggests this to be indicative of a male hegemony, gay men and lesbians were distinctly different groups during the start of Pride; meanwhile, Angela Douglas' contributions are the only artifacts to reflect trans involvement. The notion of a broader umbrella group had not yet developed. These early archival materials reflect a reality that Pride organizers may not have fully realized the potential in Audre Lorde's (1984, p. 111) perspective that people's differences offer a "creative function" for social movement work.

What else, then, does Pride offer as a political practice apart from inclusion? Our reading of early Pride marches centers the agency of expressing public joy as an act of resistance. What is the power that lies in one's agency to choose joy in light of oppression? Sarah Ahmed (2016) offers the theory of the feminist killjoy whose everyday practice is to speak uncomfortable truths, disrupting the comfort of the dominant, patriarchal culture. We offer queer joy as a complimentary practice to the feminist killjoy: By taking joy in one's own identity, an identity constituted from all that is antithetical to heteropatriarchal culture, one also disrupts the comfort of that culture. The queer joy of Pride also holds tight to the feminist killjoy within its performance. Thus, Pride demonstrates a powerful message to "the straight state" (Canaday, 2009) precisely because its central purpose is for queer pleasure.

In addition to Ahmed's work, our formulation of queer joy owes much to scholarly theories of Black joy. Jessica Lu and Catherine Knight Steele (2019, p. 824) have examined Black "rhetorical arguments in pursuit of freedom," tracing a line from the "hidden transcripts" of enslaved people found in music and oral cultures to digital cultures of today, citing author Alice Walker's line that "resistance is the secret of joy." Bonilla-Silva (2019, p. 7) has noted that there is a "racial economy of emotions" that spans all races and both positive and negative feelings, serving to construct shared subjectivities and "affective interests." Where dominant racial groups can use animosity and exclusion to reinforce supremacy, subjected groups can use pleasure and joy as a form of resistance, maintaining some degree of protected space, freedom, and humanity. Bonilla-Silva cites Stephanie Camp's (2002, p. 552) scholarship on enslaved women in the plantation south, who notes "pleasure gotten by illicit use of the body must be understood as important and meaningful enjoyment, as personal expression, and as oppositional engagement of the body." Cohen's "queer politics" intersects neatly with this joyful practice, borne out in the presence of intersectional contingents in Pride since its earliest days, such as queer Chicanos and Latinos, or queer Black performers (Figures 7, 8, and 9).

By the mid-1970s, however, queer social groups that formed around LA Pride began to fracture and people formed more varied groups with different goals. Ironically, the emerging inclusion model from the earliest days exhibited tensions between Pride leaders' goals and the heterogeneity within the queer population. One organizing flyer of the time proclaims, "Speak up for inclusion—and be heard!!!" (Lavender & Red Union [L&RU] [ca. 1975a]). Yet as some groups questioned the limits of Pride's inclusion, particularly for racial, gender,

Figure 7. A contingent of "Gay Chicanos and Latinos" marches in an early Pride parade. Source: Photograph of Pride marchers [ca. 1975].

Figure 8. A trio of queer Black performers joyfully play tambourines in an early Pride parade. Source: Photograph of Pride marchers [ca. 1975].

and class minorities, leaders doubled down on a version of inclusion that privileged a focus on being "included" within broader society rather than including diversity within Pride planning itself.

The 1975 strike against the LA Gay Community Services Center (now the LA LGBT Center, colloquially referred to as "the Center") demonstrates how radical politics was expunged from Pride and its organizing in favor of identities that were more palatable to mainstream capitalist society. Archival materials from 1975 show how a socialist contingent in previous Pride parades, The L&RU, helped launch a strike for workers at the Center. The managers were infringing on employees' rights, so they went on strike. Management

Figure 9. Dykes on Bikes rides in the Pride parade, accessorized with balloons. Source: Photograph of Pride marchers [ca. 1975].

fired about 20 staff within one week, mostly women and working-class white people. Because the organizers of LA Pride publicly sided with management, Pride organizers banned militant gay groups, including L&RU, from marching in the 1975 Pride, saying they were likely to create violence and disrupt the commemoration (Quin, 2019). Among those banned from Pride was Ron Grayson, an LA activist who was regarded as the "dean of the black gay community in Los Angeles" (Quin, 2019, p. 227). One flyer for "The Liberation Contingent," which L&RU leaders like Ron Grayson created, contested Pride organizers' "neutrality in the face of a strike [and] police violence" and called for an alternative march in opposition to Pride (Figure 10).

With their banishment from any Pride events, the Liberation Contingent marched separately along the parade route on Hollywood Boulevard and invited Grayson to speak. As depicted in the flyer, he weaponized the theme of that year's parade, "It's a Gay, Gay World" to alert the crowd "it's Not a Gay, Gay world." His speech reflects his "sustained antiracist and anticapitalist critiques of the political and economic gains of gay liberation" (Quin, 2019, p. 234). Other archival materials from L&RU detail an ideological split between:

> Those people who want nothing to do with revolution and whose primary interest is to continue to make a profit from the Gay sub-culture (for example the pimps, bar owners, bath owners, government sponsored Gay projects, many professionals, etc) and those people who want to overthrow the system that oppresses them. (L&RU [ca. 1975b])

Yet another flyer notes the hypocrisy of CSW's call for Pride participants to remain "non-political" despite its radical, anti-police origins. This strike shows not only how Pride began to transform into what it is today, but it also shows how radical planning might be reintegrated into Pride activities: through the incorporation of participants and organizers who pursue grassroots action.

Miraftab (2009, p. 41) argues that citizens' perceptions of inclusion are critical to neoliberal governance: "Insurgent planning recognizes, supports and promotes not only the coping mechanisms of the grassroots exercised in invited spaces of citizenship, but also the oppositional practices of the grassroots as they innovate their own terms of engagement." Some 25 years later, the inclusion model focusing on "gay rights" within existing legal structures became dominant, contrasting gay liberation models from Pride's earliest days (e.g., Bernstein, 2016). In one *LA Times* article from 1990, for example, a white businessman promoting CSWA's $30,000 advertising campaign is showcased. Nothing in the advertisement explicitly tells readers that the models are gay. Even the verbiage is diluted for mainstream readers' comfort: "With pride in yourself, you can appreciate the differences in others" (Figure 11).

7. Conclusion: Pride and Joy Moving Forward

Bacchetta et al. (2015), in their work on queer of color formations, have posited that queer urban justice requires dismantling market-driven violence and racial and colonial capitalisms. Telling critical histories about who has been allowed to take up space and be remembered is one strategy for doing so. During the first few years, Pride seemed relatively radical, featuring trans women and women of color in its promotional materials and offering space for queer groups and individuals to resist loneliness by building community and *joy*. In our analysis, we highlight how the importance of rituals and political resistance manifested in queer people's

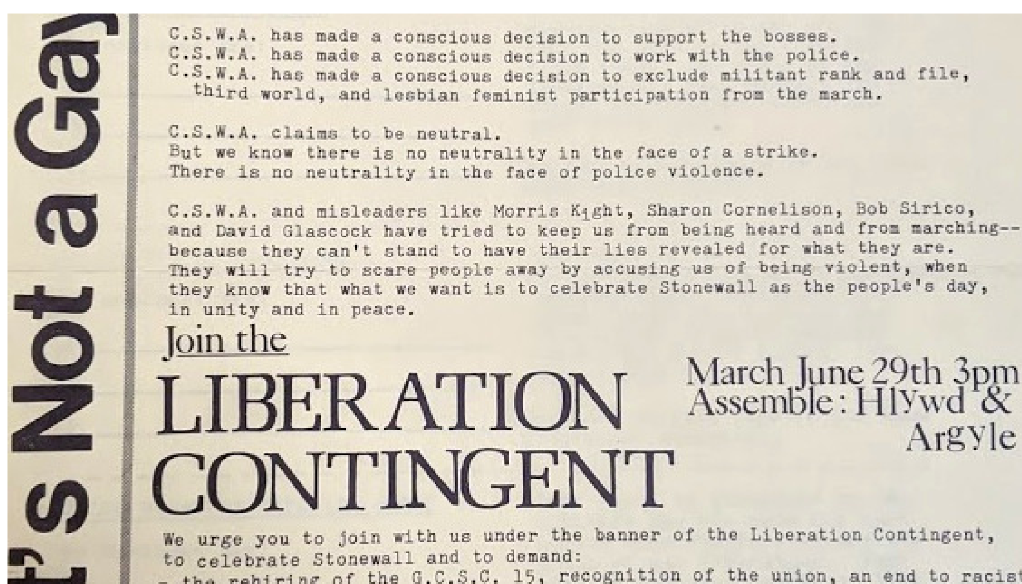


Figure 10. Flyer from "The Liberation Contingent," calling people to join a parallel march in opposition to Pride. Source: Liberation Contingent (1975).

MARKETS / MONEY / PERSONAL FINANCE

SECTION D

TUESDAY APRIL 24, 1990 — Los Angeles Times

BUSINESS

D6 TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 1990 *

MARKETING / BRUCE HOROVITZ

Gay Pride Ads—and a Proud Gay Adman—Challenge a Broader Public

Howard Wallman had never been nervous about having lunch with his daughter. Until last week.

After more than 25 years in the advertising business, Wallman told his 18-year-old daughter that he was finally about to star in one of his own ads, and he knew she wasn't likely to welcome his impending celebrity.

That's because the ad campaign—which broke Monday in Western editions of Newsweek—promotes the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Pride Celebration scheduled for June 23 and 24 in West Hollywood. The ad was conceived by Christopher Street West, the Los Angeles gay-rights group that has sponsored the celebration for the past 20 years.

In one of the ads, a smiling Wallman, who is senior vice president at Vogel Communications Group, is leaning shoulder to shoulder with another man. Under the headline "Take Pride," all the ads in the campaign feature similar portraits of gays and lesbians smiling—and occasionally hugging—for the camera. "With pride in yourself," Wallman wrote for the ads, "you can appreciate the differences in others."

The goal is not to promote homosexuality, said Joe Toy, president of Christopher Street West. "It's not meant to be confrontational. I hope it will simply get people to ask themselves 'What is pride, and what does it mean to me?' " said Toy. "If you feel better about yourself, you're not as likely to want to step on other people's toes."

In fact, the ads never say explicitly that they feature gays. Many of the photographs look as if they might just as easily be used to sell soft drinks or shampoo. All the adult models are unpaid gay and lesbian volunteers.

Until now, ads concerning sexual preference have generally been limited to gay-oriented publications. Is the larger public ready to accept ads sponsored by a gay-rights group that show men hugging men and women embracing women?

Wallman concedes that his daughter, who attends a local college, doesn't think so. Wallman was divorced from his wife five years ago and told his daughter of his homosexuality then. He now lives with a male lover. "She's very unhappy that people will suddenly judge her father as bad or good without knowing him," said Wallman, who added, "She is afraid that people will now jump to a conclusion about me that is unjust—and maybe even dangerous."

But a handful of national magazines and a major outdoor billboard company seem to think the public is ready for these advertisements. Notable among them is Newsweek, which several years ago was the first general-circulation news magazine in the United States to accept condom ads. For the "Take Pride" campaign, however, Newsweek asked that all models appearing in the ads sign releases.

"The ad went through our normal review process," said Diana Pearson, director of communications at Newsweek. "We don't discuss that process." More ads from the "Take Pride" campaign will appear in June issues of Harper's, Egg, L.A. Style and Interview. In addition, Gannett Outdoor Co. has donated 10 billboards in the Los Angeles area. "I imagine there will be people who object to the ad," said Bonnie Kingry, a spokeswoman for Gannett Outdoor. "Gannett has a policy of donating public service advertising. We try to help as many people and groups as we can."

Not a single publication contacted by the group turned down the ad, said David M. Smith, the public relations coordinator at Christopher Street West, who had the idea for the campaign. "There were no problems at all."

It hasn't always been such smooth sailing for gay advertising. Just five years ago, a number of major publications rejected a public service print ad from Christopher Street West. The ad featured actress Rita Moreno next to the headline, "Gay pride begins with me."

Not surprisingly, some groups are unhappy with the latest ads. "Like anyone else, Christopher Street West enjoys the right to advocate and advertise their own political agenda," said Louis P. Sheldon, chairman of Traditional Values Coalition, a fundamentalist lobby based in Anaheim. "However, what is really sad is that while Christopher Street West spends hundreds of thousands of dollars promoting homosexuality, thousands are tragically lying in hospital beds dying from the very same behavior."

As for Sheldon's contention that the ads promote homosexuality, well, Toy says it simply is not so. "What we're trying to sell is a human virtue—respect for others." He said the group is spending about $30,000 on the campaign, including $5,500 for the Newsweek ad, which the magazine sold to the nonprofit organization at a discount.

For Wallman, 43, his decision to appear in the ads as well as to create them was at once scary and uplifting. "No one strong-armed me or high-pressured me to do this," he said. "Hopefully, we can begin to change the opinions of what many people think gays are. We don't wear dresses and hate women. We have to change that stereotype. We just have to."

DOUGLAS R. BURROWS / For The Times

Howard Wallman, senior vice president at Vogel, with ad he created for the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Pride Celebration.

Castellanos Makes a Big Point With Small Account

A piece of advertising business worth $3 million doesn't sound like much. But when an account that size was handed to Castellanos Latina Advertising last week by the Board of Tourism of Mazatlan, Mexico, it ranked as one of the most intriguing wins by a Los Angeles agency this year.

Reason: Although the agency specializes in Spanish-language ads, it has now been hired to create general market advertisements written only in English. This is highly unusual in the ad business. "Many general market agencies get into Hispanic advertising," said Julio J. Castellanos.

Figure 11. Article celebrating the "Take Pride" ad campaign, and a sample of the ad. Sources: Horovitz (1990, p. D6; left) and "Take Pride" (1990; right).

expressions of joy in public space. The use of imagery, symbols, and movement might have affected the social attitudes, but such change was not the only transformative result of early LA Pride space making. This spatialized queer joy marks a kind of radical planning because it expressly centers queer pleasure. The freedom to find and express pleasure in one's queer identity in public space disrupts heteropatriarchal cultures.

Some principles of radical planning practice that we derive from our analysis of the history of LA Pride are as follows. We urge urban planning scholars, educators, and practitioners to center affective experience, joyful expression, and emotional labor in meaningful ways as "a mode of relationality [that] redefines care or mutualism by its ability to reorient ourselves to one another, that is, beyond an assertion of capitalist extractive productivity" (Hwang, 2019, p. 570). Such a reorientation aligns a radical queer planning with existing movements to repair histories of harmful policing and caging (Cullors, 2018). Today, BLM holds space for collective healing and political rituals (Farrag, 2018), suggesting that abolitionist organizing and the queer politics of early Pride hold similarities. We also observe that Pride has been its most powerful when the most marginalized are empowered to lead, enabling an intersectional approach to organizing and resisting state violence.

Future research must investigate questions to improve our understanding of how to sustain radical projects: How might planning redistribute resources toward abolition and reparation movements, and toward marginalized individuals and communities more generally? LA Pride's example suggests that a radical origin is not enough to sustain a justice-oriented practice into the future. Instead, a radical planning praxis requires continuous and ongoing evaluation and disruption to ensure that the state power embedded into planning is not captured, coopted, or otherwise utilized by empowered interests, let alone used to reify and justify the expansion of police power into planning practices and institutions themselves.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the co-editors of this thematic issue, Drs. Julie Podmore and Alison Bain, and the anonymous reviewers for their tremendous assistance and support. We are also grateful to Umi Hsu and the One Gay & Lesbians Archive for catalyzing this project with such a rich collection of artifacts.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Agyeman, J., & Erickson, J. S. (2012). Culture, recognition, and the negotiation of difference: Some thoughts on

cultural competency in planning education. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *32*(3), 358–366. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X12441213

Ahmed, S. (2016). *Living a feminist life*. Duke University Press.

Atluri, T., & Rodríguez, R. (2018). Black picket signs/ White picket fences: Racism, space, and solidarity. In J. Haritaworn, G. Moussa, & S. M. Ware (Eds.), *Queering urban justice: Queer of colour formations in Toronto* (pp. 148–168). University of Toronto Press.

Bacchetta, P., El-Tayeb, F., & Haritaworn, J. (2015). Queer of colour formations and translocal spaces in Europe. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *33*(5), 769–778.

Bailey, R. (1999). *Gay politics, urban politics: Identity and economics in an urban setting*. University of Columbia Press.

Bain, A. L., & Podmore, J. A. (2021). Placing LGBTQ+ Urban Activisms. *Urban Studies*, *58*(7), 1305–1326.

Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Rabelais and his world*. Indiana University Press.

Beard, V. (2003). Learning radical planning: The power of collective action. *Planning Theory*, *2*(1), 13–35.

Ben-Lulu, E. (2021). "Let us bless the twilight": Intersectionality of traditional Jewish ritual and queer pride in a reform congregation in Israel. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *68*(1), 23–46.

Bernstein, M. (2016). LGBT identity and the displacement of sexual liberation: New York City (1969–1986). In D. Paternotte & M. Tremblay (Eds.), *The Ashgate research companion to lesbian and gay activism* (pp. 89–103). Routledge.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2019). Feeling race: Theorizing the racial economy of emotions. *American Sociological Review*, *84*(1), 1–25.

Browne, K., & Nash, C. J. (2010). *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research*. Taylor & Francis.

Burke, D. B. (2002). *Understanding the law of zoning and land use controls* (1st ed.). LexisNexis.

Burns, K. (2019). Oral history as activism. In N. Stead, J. Gosseye, & D. Van der Plaat (Eds.), *Speaking of buildings: Oral history in architectural research* (pp. 118–134). Chronicle Books.

Camp, S. M. H. (2002). The pleasures of resistance: Enslaved women and the body politics in the plantation South. *The Journal of Southern History*, *68*(3), 533–572.

Canaday, M. (2009). *The straight state: Sexuality and citizenship in twentieth-century America*. Princeton University Press.

Chauncey, G. (1994). *Gay New York: Gender, urban culture & the making of the gay male world, 1890–1940*. Basic Books.

Christopher Street West. (1970). *Make the boulevard gay, at least for a Day.* Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Christopher Street West. (1971). *Parade permit application*. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Cohen, C. (1997). Punks, bulldaggers, and welfare queens: The radical potential of queer politics? *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian & Gay Studies*, *3*, 437–465.

Cohen, S. (2005). Liberationists, clients, activists: Queer youth organizing, 1966–2003. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, *2*(3), 67–86.

Consoletti, J. (2020, June 5). LA Pride organizers under fire after seeking police permit for Black Lives Matter solidarity protest. *Los Angeles Times*. https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-05/la-pride-organizers-under-fire-after-seeking-police-permit-for-black-lives-matter-solidarity-protest

Córdova, J. (2011). *When we were outlaws: A memoir of love and revolution*. Spinsters Ink.

Cullors, P. (2018). Abolition and reparations: Histories of resistance, transformative justice, and accountability. *Harvard Law Review*, *132*, Article 1684.

Davis, E. M. (1975, May 23). [Letter to Sharon Cornelison]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Davis, S. (1986). *Parades and power: Street theatre in nineteenth-century Philadelphia*. Temple University Press.

Delany, S. R. (1999). *Times Square red, Times Square blue*. NYU Press.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2015). *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces*. Routledge.

Douglas, A. (1970). [Flyer for rally-march]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Drinkwater, G. (2019). Creating an embodied queer Judaism: Liturgy, ritual and sexuality at San Francisco's congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 1977–1987. *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, *18*(2), 177–193.

Dubrow, G. (2012). Lavender landmarks revisited: Advancing an LGBT preservation agenda. In P. L. Doan (Ed.), *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice* (pp. 54–70). Ashgate.

Ellison, T. C. (2019). Black femme praxis and the promise of black gender. *The Black Scholar*, *49*(1), 6–16.

Faderman, L., & Timmons, S. (2006). *Gay LA: A history of sexual outlaws, power politics, and lipstick lesbians*. Basic Books.

Farrag, H. (2018). The spirit in Black Lives Matter: New spiritual community in Black radical organizing. *Transition*, *125*, 76–88.

Foucault, M. (1971). *Nietzsche, la genealogie, l'histoire* [Nietzsche, genealogy, history]. Presses Universitaire de France.

Friedmann, J. (1987). *Planning in the public domain: From knowledge to action*. Princeton University Press.

Frisch, M. (2002). Planning as a heterosexist project. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *21*(3), 254–266.

Greed, C. (1994). *Women and planning: Creating gendered realities*. Routledge.

Gutterman, L. J. (2019). *Her neighbor’s wife: A history of lesbian desire within marriage*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hanhardt, C. B. (2013). *Safe space: Gay neighborhood history and the politics of violence*. Duke University Press.

Haritaworn, J., Moussa, G., Ware, S., & Rodriguez, G. (Eds.). (2019). *Queering urban justice*. University of Toronto Press.

Hayden, D. (1981). *Grand domestic revolution a history of feminist designs for American homes, neighborhoods, and cities*. MIT Press.

Hayden, D. (1997). *The power of place: Urban landscapes as public history*. MIT Press.

hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto.

Horovitz, B. (1990, April 14). *Gay Pride ads—and a proud gay adman—challenge a broader public* [Clipping from Los Angeles Times]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Hwang, R. Y. (2019). Deviant care for deviant futures: QTBIPoC radical relationalism as mutual aid against carceral care. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *6*(4), 559–578.

Jacobs, F. (2019). Black feminism and radical planning: New directions for disaster planning research. *Planning Theory*, *18*(1), 24–39.

Kenney, M. (2001). *Mapping gay LA: The intersection of place and politics*. Temple University Press.

Lavender & Red Union. [ca. 1975a]. *Isn’t it about time that the Christopher Street West parade is open to everyone?* [Organization flyer]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Lavender & Red Union. [ca. 1975b]. *Open house at the Lavender & Red Union* [Organization flyer]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Liberation Contingent. (1975). *It’s not a gay world* [Organization flyer]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

List of march participants. (1980). Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider*. Crossing Press.

Lu, J. H., & Steele, C. K. (2019). “Joy is resistance”: Cross-platform resilience and (re)invention of Black oral culture online. *Information, Communication, and Society*, *22*(6), 823–837.

Martinez, A. (2015). Queer Cosmopolis: The evolution of Jackson Heights. In P. L. Doan (Ed.), *Planning and LGBTQ Communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces* (pp. 167–180). Routledge.

Mason, L. (1970). *Gay parade in Hollywood* [Los Angeles Free Press Clipping]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Miraftab, F. (2009). Insurgent planning: Situating radical planning in the Global South. *Planning Theory*, *8*(1), 32–50.

Muñoz, J. (2009). *Cruising utopia: The then and there of queer futurity*. NYU Press.

Patel, E. (2016). *Interfaith leadership: A primer*. Beacon Press.

Payne, W. J. (2021). Queer urban activism under state impunity: Encountering an LGBTTTI Pride archive in Chilpancingo, Mexico. *Urban Studies*, *58*(7), 1327–1345.

Photograph of Beth Chayim Chadashim. [ca. 1975]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Photograph of Pride marchers. [ca. 1975]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Pile, S. (1997). Introduction: Opposition, political identities and spaces of resistance. In M. Keith & S. Pile (Eds.), *Geographies of resistance* (pp. 1–32). Routledge.

Quin, K. (2019). “To stamp out the oppression of all Black people”: Ron Grayson and the Association of Black Gays, 1975–1979. *Journal of African American History*, *104*(2), 227–249.

Ransby, B. (2003). *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A radical democratic vision*. University of North Carolina Press.

Rawson, K. J. (2015). Archival justice: An interview with Ben Power Alwin. *Radical History Review*, *122*, 177–187.

Reed, C. (1996). Imminent domain: Queer space in the built environment. *Art Journal*, *55*(4), 64–70.

Sandercock, L. (1998). *Making the invisible visible: A multicultural planning history*. University of California Press.

Santino, J. (2011). The carnivalesque and the ritualesque. *Journal of American Folklore*, *124*(491), 61–73.

Schweitzer, L. (2016). Restorative planning ethics: The therapeutic imagination and planning in public institutions. *Planning Theory*, *15*(2), 130–144.

Simpson, S. A., Steil, J., & Mehta, A. (2020). Planning beyond mass incarceration. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *40*(2), 130–138.

Spade, D. (2020). *Mutual aid: Building solidarity during this crisis (and the next)*. Verso Books.

Take Pride. (1990, April 14). [Advertisement from Newsweek]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Taylor, C. (1992). The politics of recognition. In A. Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition* (pp. 25–74). Princeton University Press.

The Lavender People. (1972). [Gay Pride Week flyer]. Christopher Street West Collection (Coll2012-135, Box 1). ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Turesky, M. (2021). Aging back into the closet: Community planning for older LGBTQ+ adults. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *37*(1), 67–82.

Warner, M. (2002). Publics and counterpublics (abbreviated version). *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *88*(4), 413–425.

Weber, M. (2015). *Weber's rationalism and modern society: New translations on politics, bureaucracy, and social stratification.* Palgrave Books.

White, H. R. (2008). Proclaiming liberation: The historical roots of LGBT religious organizing, 1946–1976. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, *11*(4), 102–119.

Winkler, T. (2017). Rethinking scholarship on planning ethics. In M. Gunder, A. Madanipour, & V. Watson (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of planning theory* (pp. 81–92). Routledge.

Young, I. M. (2002). *Inclusion and democracy*. Oxford University Press.

About the Authors

Marisa Turesky researches how identity and emotions influence people's access to urban spaces and services across the lifespan. Her main areas of focus are community development, housing, and social movements. She is a PhD candidate in Urban Planning & Development at the University of Southern California.

Jonathan Jae-an Crisman, PhD, is a Los Angeles-based artist and researcher whose work focuses on the intersections between culture, politics, and place. He teaches at the University of Arizona in the Department of Public & Applied Humanities.

Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183–7635)
2023, Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 277–280
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v8i2.7033

Commentary

Re-Orienting Planning Practice

Petra L. Doan

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Florida State University, USA; pdoan@fsu.edu

Submitted: 20 April 2023 | Accepted: 5 May 2023 | Published: 22 May 2023

Abstract
This commentary reflects on the articles in the thematic issue on queering urban planning and municipal governance and the ways that they suggest that planning practice must be re-oriented to be more inclusive and incorporate more insurgent perspectives. Planning practice is susceptible to capture by neo-liberal corporate interests that marginalize vulnerable queer populations. More insurgent planning approaches are needed to resist the corporate take-over of queer spaces by empowering the voices of LGBTQ+ people.

Keywords
insurgent planning; LGBTQ+ planning; queer spaces

Issue
This commentary is part of the issue "Queer(ing) Urban Planning and Municipal Governance" edited by Alison L. Bain (Utrecht University) and Julie A. Podmore (John Abbott College / Concordia University).

© 2023 by the author(s); licensee Cogitatio Press (Lisbon, Portugal). This commentary is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

In the West, urban planning is often seen as a modernist tool for improving cities through interventions at the local and municipal level. Unfortunately, many such efforts have had "unintended" consequences for low income and other marginalized communities (Thomas, 1994). When planners and municipal decision-makers seek to establish "City Beautiful" style improvements, the results may be attractive for some of the population, and disastrous for others. Urban renewal destroyed many low-income African American communities when attempts to "clean up the slums" tore down existing housing and replaced it with more expensive apartments or other urban land uses, like highways and parks. Paul Davidoff (1965) highlighted the failures of urban renewal that was driven by top-down urban planning and called for advocacy planning in which planners were encouraged to be advocates for marginalized populations.

Unfortunately, the LGBTQ+ community is often treated in similar fashion by planners and local officials whose actions are colored by heterosexist bias (Frisch, 2002). Too often planning practices fail to seek input from queer populations about whether redevelopment plans are needed and if so what types of reforms might be of greatest use to those communities (Doan & Higgins, 2011). In the face of outright bias, advocacy is necessary but clearly not sufficient. A reframing of planning practice is required to overcome heteronormative biases (Doan, 2011). There are important lessons to be learned from the struggles to overcome the colonial legacy of planning across the global South where planning was a tool used by colonizers to control of urban spaces. The failure of colonial planning authority to consider indigenous populations as citizens with valuable input effectively silencing their voices in the planning process has led to what some have called insurgent planning (Miraftab, 2009). The articles in this collection illustrate the importance of re-orienting planning towards a model of practice that not only recognizes LGBTQ+ populations, but makes them central to the process.

The first two articles in the collection deal with the issue of housing which can be challenging for LGBTQ households in the context of traditional heteronormative expectations of family structure. Forsyth's (2001) review of planning issues for non-conformist populations highlights the importance of housing for LGBTQ families in the US context. The housing articles in this collection add a global dimension to this understanding by including case material from South Asia and Southern Africa. The article by Chan Arun-Pina (2023) explores the difficulties of LGBTQ+ higher education students in Mumbai to find adequate housing. The author describes the growth of the Deonar Campus of the Tata Institute for Social

Sciences in Mumbai that has led to increasing studentification, resulting tensions between town and gown. These struggles between traditional family householders and increasing numbers of young unmarried students cause special difficulties for LGBTQ+ identified students forced to rent rooms and apartments from more conservative families in the surrounding area who are resistant to this community. Housing for students is a kind of in-between zone between the parental home and the presumed marital home of adulthood, but for LGBTQ+ identified students this pathway is much more convoluted. The author also suggests that planning could be substantially improved with a greater focus on listening to the stories of queer community members as a means of gaining greater understanding of the difficulties that they face.

In the Southern Africa context, the second housing article by Delgado et al. (2023) explores the nature of housing policy and its impact on the queer population in Namibia. They highlight Sylvia Tamale's concept of coloniality in which the persistence of colonial power structures is ensured by the knowledge production processes created by those ex-colonial authorities. This patriarchal framework influences housing policy in Namibia because policy-makers are unable to grasp the critical needs of queer individuals for housing not based on traditional family structures. In the city of Walvis Bay they find that queer people must hide themselves to survive, and housing is essential to these strategies, providing essential safe spaces for the community. The authors also note that their informants consider that supportive human relationships are essential for ensuring safety. In short, the authors argue that queer decolonial thinking is critical in challenging modernist planning assumptions that have enabled such long standing patterns of discrimination in housing.

LGBTQ+ bars are often a source of noise complaints and loci of concern from gentrifying neighbors about trash on the ground as well as the "trashy people" who go there. Loud gay bars are NOT beautiful, but they are a critical element in queer spaces. Community centers that attract queer youth of color displaying a wide range of gender expressions are not creating "an attractive nuisance," but serve as insurgent spaces for organizing and building activist community. Sarah Gelbard (2023) provides an insightful analysis of the overlap between punk spaces and queer spaces, arguing that in spite of popular conceptions of punk as dominated by young white males, queer women and queers of color may find acceptance in punk venues. However, just like some gay bars, punk venues are often loud and grungy and neo-liberal gentrifiers often attempt to erase them. In the case of the Ottawa Music Strategy, the requirement that music venues feel safe for all people was problematic for punk places that are coded by outsiders as crumbling and decrepit environments, even though this ambiance is what makes the place feel punk.

In the next article, Karine Duplan (2023) explores the question of whether LGBTQ+ identified individuals can influence policy from within. In this piece Duplan interviews LGBTQ+ staff in Geneva, Switzerland in the municipal and regional levels of government to explore whether they are able to transcend "pink-washing" and make meaningful contributions to improving the lives of the wider LGBTQ+ community. She argues that her informants played a kind of in-between role that was both difficult for them, but also at times was a kind of Trojan Horse in one informant's words through which these insiders could use their ties to community groups and act as undercover lobbyists for progressive policy changes.

Trans individuals, especially trans people of color, are among the most highly marginalized groups in the city (Doan, 2007). Smith et al. (2023) suggest that most planning activities in Brighton and Hove in the UK use a kind of choreographing approach that although it makes trans people more intelligible to the wider population, also results in policies that fail to grasp the innumerable sources of heteronormative harm to trans individuals. The idea of planners trying to choreograph a community as variable as the trans and gender diverse community provides useful insights. While some drag routines can be carefully choreographed, the idea of a single dance routine working for the wide range of identities sheltering under the transgender umbrella (Doan & Johnston, 2022) is frankly ludicrous and might be more accurately conceptualized as a wild dance party in which each person's individual display of gender adds to the glorious swirl of identities. Trying to choreograph any part of this vibrant and yet marginalized group seems doomed to fail in terms of grasping the realities of discrimination faced by many trans and gender diverse people.

The article by Julie Podmore and Alison Bain (2023) uses the concepts of civic "rainbowization" and "festivalization" to describe the ways that suburban municipalities in the Vancouver metro area attempt to make neighborhoods more aesthetically pleasing and serve as advertisements for inclusivity, but in reality do little to provide more than face value recognition. Rainbows can be readily co-opted by neo-liberal developers in urban and suburban areas with a focus on revitalizing commercial areas and creating spaces for public festivals. These token efforts at recognition often fail to address critical needs of LGBTQ+ people. Painting rainbow crosswalks is not a sufficient means of planning for a broad range of LGBTQ+ community members. In fact, for many queer folks a grittier city may allow the diversity of community to gather and heal from the twin traumas of heteronormativity and homonormativity.

Tiffany Muller Myrdahl (2023) provides a contrasting framework for trans inclusion policies in the City of Vancouver, finding that a careful focus on equity over equality results in a more effective strategic framework. A critical element in this approach was the explicit inclusion of trans community members in a group called the Trans and Gender Diverse Two Spirit Working Group (TGD2S) that produced a working paper and provided input on a variety of policies of concern to the broader

community. Muller Myrdahl finds that the local planning effort revolved around a co-design process with trans community members that addressed issues such as accessible washrooms, training of municipal staff, and a rethinking of the ways that the city collected data on this diverse community.

In another article in this collection, Daniel Hess and Alex Bitterman (2023) analyze the importance of LGBTQ+ community groups in sustaining LGBTQ+ spaces. Their contribution examines the wide variety of community service organizations that are critical elements in reaching out to LGBTQ+ residents and providing them with needed services. They develop a typology (the Hess-Bitterman taxonomy) of LGBTQ+ organizations that seems useful for planning agencies wishing to connect with this marginalized community. The 227 community service organizations from across North America reach an estimated 40,000 LGBTQ+ clients every week suggesting that these groups are a very important pathway to at least some of the hard to reach LGBTQ+ community.

In his article on queer urban space in Acapulco, Mexico, William Payne (2023) provides a useful historical analysis of the evolution of municipal governance and its support of international tourism. While Acapulco's reputation as a place for the Hollywood jet set did generate significant economic and associated urban growth, it has also developed a reputation for violence due to the rise of organized crime and narco-trafficking that falls more heavily on the spontaneous settlements around the fringe of the more developed downtown near the famous beaches. At the same time, the city's planing focus on making a place attractive for tourism, also created a city that happened to be equally attractive to both LGBTQ+ tourists as well as LGBTQ+ Mexicans. Unfortunately, these planning policies were explicitly oriented to the LGBTQ+ persons with the result that a number of the LGBTQ+ individuals interviewed in this article reported increasing levels of vulnerability and economic instability suggesting that overall, tourism has not been helpful to this community.

In the final article, Marisa Turesky and Jonathan Jae-an Crisman (2023) explore how the radical and insurgent potential of traditional Pride parades has been transformed into neo-liberal corporatization. They describe the healing and restorative nature of early Pride marches as spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals suffering from the trauma of discrimination and exclusion to experience a kind of "queer joy." The authors argue in fact that it is the "ritualesque" nature of some of the more overtly queer symbols and images that disrupt the status quo and allow healing from the traumas of discrimination and exclusion. They argue that a more radical planning practice is needed that centers "affective experience, joyful expression, and emotional labor in meaningful ways" (Turesky & Crisman, 2023, p. 273) allowing for a realignment of planning with movements to heal those harmed by policing and red-lining practices in poor neighborhoods. They call for a radical planning praxis that seeks to disrupt efforts to co-opt planning and use the police power to undermine efforts by marginalized groups to be seen and recognized by municipal decision-makers.

Traditional planning practice does not adequately serve the LGBTQ+ community. The authors of the articles in this collection provide detailed evidence of the need for a more activist and engaged planning practice that seeks out and identifies marginalized individuals from the LGBTQ+ community, and then actively incorporates those voices into an authentic co-design planning process. Only by ensuring more meaningful engagement with a broad range of LGBTQ+ people can planning hope to promote positive change on issues that are of central concern to this community.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Arun-Pina, C. (2023). Homonegative labyrinth of representational distortions: Planning im/possibilities for higher education LGBTQ+ students in Mumbai. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 150–163.

Davidoff, P. (1965). Advocacy and pluralism in planning, *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, *31*(4), 331–338.

Delgado, G., Castán Broto, V., & Mukesi, T. (2023). Queering housing policy: Questioning urban planning assumptions in Namibian cities. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 164–176.

Doan, P. L. (2007). Queers in the American city: Transgendered perceptions of urban space. *Gender, Place and Culture*, *14*(1), 57–74.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2011). *Queerying planning: Challenging heteronormative assumptions and reframing planning practice*. Ashgate.

Doan, P. L., & Higgins, H. (2011). The demise of queer space? Resurgent gentrification and the assimilation of LGBT neighborhoods. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *31*(1), 6–25.

Doan, P. L., & Johnston, L. (Eds.). (2022). *Rethinking transgender Identities: Reflections from around the globe*. Routledge.

Duplan, K. (2023). Pinkwashing policies or insider activism? Allyship in the LGBTIQ+ governance–activism nexus. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 187–196.

Forsyth, A. (2001). Nonconformist populations and planning sexuality and space: Nonconformist populations and planning practice. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *15*(3), 339–358.

Frisch, M. (2002). Planning as a heterosexist project. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *21*(3), 254–266.

Gelbard, S. (2023). Radical solidarities in punk and queer refusals of safety and inclusion narratives in planning. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 177–186.

Hess, D. B., & Bitterman, A. (2023). Community support organizations in gay neighborhoods: Assessing engagement during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 235–248.

Miraftab, F. (2009). Insurgent planning: Situating radical planning in the Global South. *Planning Theory*, *8*(1), 32–50.

Muller Myrdahl, T. (2023). At the intersection of equity and innovation: Trans inclusion in the city of Vancouver. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 223–234.

Payne, W. J. (2023). Territorial inequality driven by tourism: A queer mapping of urban space in Acapulco, Mexico. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 249–261.

Podmore, J. A., & Bain, A. L. (2023). Redistributing more than the LGBTQ2S acronym? Planning beyond recognition and rainbows on Vancouver's periphery. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 208–222.

Smith, M. C., Gilchrist, P., & Lim, J. (2023). Planning in the "LGBTQ capital": Choreographing transgender in and out of policy. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 197–207.

Thomas, J. M. (1994). Planning history and the black urban experience linkages and contemporary implications. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *14*(1), 1–10.

Turesky, M., & Crisman, J. J. (2023). 50 years of Pride: Queer spatial joy as radical planning praxis. *Urban Planning*, *8*(2), 262–276.

About the Author

Petra Doan is professor emerita of urban and regional planning at Florida State University. She conducts research on transgender experiences of the city and the relationship between urban planning and the LGBTQ community. She has published numerous academic articles and edited three books: *Queerying Planning: Challenging Heteronormative Assumptions and Reframing Planning Practice* (2011), *Planning and LGBTQ Communities: The Need for Inclusive Queer Space* (2015), and *Rethinking Transgender Identities: Reflections from Around the Globe* with Lynda Johnston (2022).

URBAN PLANNING
ISSN: 2183-7635

Urban Planning is a new international peer-reviewed open access journal of urban studies aimed at advancing understandings and ideas of humankind's habitats — villages, towns, cities, megacities — in order to promote progress and quality of life.

The journal is founded on the premise that qualitative linked to quantitative approaches provide mutually sympathetic outcomes for adding knowledge to the complex and polyhedral system par antonomasia as the city is.

cogitatio

www.cogitatiopress.com/urbanplanning