Vancouver Centre of Excellence

Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis

Working Paper Series

#00-15

Cosmopolitanism at the Local Level: Immigrant Settlement and the
Development of Transnational Neighbourhoods

Daniel Hiebert

September 2000

RIIM

Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis

**Cosmopolitanism at the Local Level: Immigrant Settlement
and the Development of Transnational Neighbourhoods**

by

Daniel Hiebert
Department of Geography
University of British Columbia
dhiebert@geog.ubc.ca

and Senior Researcher
RIIM

September 2000

Abstract: In this paper I report preliminary findings, midway through a 6-year project on immigrant settlement in Vancouver, Canada, in an effort to examine the day-to-day dynamics of living in cosmopolitan neighbourhoods. In particular, the relationship between transnationalism (social and economic links between home country and settlement location) and cosmopolitanism (interaction with people from different cultures) is explored based on information gathered in focus groups and interviews with families who have recently settled in Vancouver. At times, transnationalism and cosmopolitan behaviour are complementary, and people are simultaneously active in keeping their in-group networks alive while building new, multicultural, ones in their new neighbourhood setting. Sometimes, though, these two types of social networks are difficult to reconcile, and individuals choose between them. This choice has significant implications in the process of individual identity formation, and also helps set the characteristics of neighbourhood life.

Introduction: a local vision of transnational cosmopolitanism

To set the scene for this paper, I'd like to begin at the micro-geography scale of the street on which I live in Vancouver's Eastside (or, more precisely, the lane behind my street). My street is situated in a neighbourhood called Cedar Cottage which, for around 100 years, has been an area of active immigrant reception, at first of new arrivals from the United Kingdom, then central, southern and eastern Europe and, most recently, the Asian side of the Pacific Rim. According to the latest census (1996), 72 percent of the residents of my part of Cedar Cottage are immigrants, 20 percent having arrived in the last 10 years. A large variety of national backgrounds are represented, including remnants of the earlier European migrations and, of course, many Asian-Canadians. In fact, just under 60 percent are classified by the census as 'visible minorities,' meaning that they are of non-Aboriginal, non-European descent. Of these, the bulk are of Chinese origin, from a number of countries that include China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Indonesia. Beyond the Chinese-Canadian population, there are still many, mainly older, Europeans, and new immigrants from various countries.

How does this diversity work in practice? This is a theme I wish to explore in detail below, but here I offer one vignette of neighbourhood life that speaks to the growing body of transnational literature, one that also reflects my personal background as a geographer. I'll call this 'towards a cosmopolitan ecology.' I mean ecology here in the straightforward sense of a particular regime of plant communities. On my lane, a great deal of neighbourly communication is focused around gardening (including, of course, the perennial subject of the weather). Members of the different cultural groups in the neighbourhood tend to grow the garden plants they grew up with in former countries, to, in effect, recreate familiar landscapes in their new residential setting.[1] Two particularly interesting things happen in this respect. First, in keeping with the literature on transnationalism, much of this activity contravenes the surveillance of the nation state. To everyone outside Agriculture Canada, this will seem a rather paltry example of smuggling, but several of my neighbours have told

---

[1] A number of researchers have noted this tendency, such as Gerda Wekerle in Canada and Susan Thompson in Australia (Thompson et al. 1999). Wekerle has collaborated with others to mount an exhibit on immigrant

me that they bring undeclared seeds when they return from visits to their homeland. Thus there are non-sanctioned varieties of tomatoes on my lane that come from Italy, varieties of mint from Vietnam, bok choi from China, and broad beans from Portugal. Secondly, gardeners from these different cultures exchange their seeds with one-another. For example, my neighbour who came to Canada from Italy has become a connoisseur of bok choi, and eagerly shares his tomatoes and basil with people who come from Asia. The end result is a new ecology on my lane, where plants from different corners of the world are brought into juxtaposition and (I'm told by my biogeography colleague) may selectively hybridize. Thus, a new micro-ecology, unlike any other on earth, is being created, one that only exists because of a combination of frequent to-and-fro transnational movements and the everyday cosmopolitan behaviour of neighbours.

However, aside from adding yet another example — in this case ecological — to the vast literature on transnationalism, I use this vignette, together with more 'formal' research, to pose several questions about the lived experience of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism. First, what is the relationship between transnational lifestyles and cosmopolitan behaviour? How does cosmopolitanism arise at the micro-geographical scale of the neighbourhood? Who participates (and who doesn't) in cosmopolitan interaction? Finally, what does it mean to grow up in a cosmopolitan setting? Tentatively, I find that transnationalism and cosmopolitan behaviour are both uneven, differing between groups, by gender, and across generations. Further, while the evidence I can bring to bear on this question is limited, it appears that transnationalism and cosmopolitanism — two processes routinely celebrated by researchers and others who champion the effects of globalization — may not be complementary. In fact, in certain cases transnational lifestyles may actually inhibit cosmopolitanism.

---

groups and their gardening practices in Toronto ("Growing cultures"), which opened in May 2000 at the Royal Ontario Museum (see: http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php3?mediakey=bej80w3358).

Conceptual beginnings

Before exploring these issues, two background comments are necessary. First, the bulk of the material I discuss in this paper has emerged out of a large, ongoing research project which is focused on understanding how the processes of immigrant settlement and integration differ in five distinct neighbourhood settings in Greater Vancouver. The neighbourhoods in question range from East Vancouver, a traditional settlement area, to distant suburbs that are playing a role in immigrant settlement for the first time. This community studies project is being conducted by seven researchers,[2] and we are using a combination of methods to acquire information. In this paper, I explore material gathered from two phases of the project, a series of 15 focus groups, between two and four in each of the neighbourhoods mentioned above, plus a set of detailed interviews that were conducted with families in East Vancouver (a large area of the city that includes Cedar Cottage). The families in question are from several different cultural groups, and we are interviewing them approximately every 18 months over the 1996–2002 period. There is a similar, though larger, project under way by researchers in Montréal, concentrating on the development of multi-ethnic neighbourhoods. I will also draw upon their work in the pages that follow.

Secondly, given the varied meanings associated with the increasingly popular concepts of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, I begin with a comment on my use of these terms. By transnationalism, I refer to individuals who experience, and are attached to, two or more places simultaneously (Glick-Schiller et al. 1992; Appadurai 1996). As a geographer, my training has always emphasized the long-term relationship between people and place that is sedimented into distinctive, local landscapes. The process of hyper-mobility that lies behind transnationalism undermines this traditional way of understanding the people/place nexus. Instead, immigrant communities should be conceptualized as "dense fields consisting of people, money, goods, and information that are constituted and maintained by migrants over time, across space, and through circuitry which repeatedly cross

---

[2] The research team is comprised of: Gillian Creese (Sociology, UBC), Isabel Lowe Dyck (Medical Rehabilitation Sciences, UBC), Daniel Hiebert, Audrey Kobayashi (Geography, Queens' University), David Ley (Geography, UBC), Arlene Tigar McLaren (Sociology, Simon Fraser University), and Geraldine Pratt (Geography, UBC). While I have written this paper, we framed the research project, collected information, and discussed our findings together. This paper therefore represents a joint effort despite its apparent single authorship.

borders." (Goldberg, quoted in Hyndman and Walton-Roberts 1999: p6). According to this logic, national borders are "spaces of possibility" as well as spaces of control, and diasporic groups develop identities based on *movement* and connection across space (Ong 1999), rather than intimate associations with specific places.

The term cosmopolitanism has been used more variably. In everyday language, the term is generally applied to places with marked cultural diversity (e.g., "x is a more cosmopolitan city than y"). Among researchers, cosmopolitanism is often equated with political internationalization, whether in the form of institutions such as the United Nations, or global protest movements (Kaldor 1996; Wainwright et al. 2000). Alternatively, many use cosmopolitan as an adjective to describe individuals who are well traveled and have learned to be comfortable in many cultural settings (Hannerz 1996; Robbins 1998; Ong 1999). Ghassan Hage (1998) follows this line of thought, and portrays 'cosmopolites' as elites who pursue refined consumption and are "open to all forms of otherness":

> Just as important as his or her urban[e] nature, the cosmopolite is a class figure and a white person, capable of appreciating and consuming 'high quality' commodities and cultures, including 'ethnic' culture. (p.201)

Their sense of citizenship is 'beyond' affiliations with local places or nation states (Van Hear 1998; Cohen 1999; Urry 2000). Christopher Lasch (1995) takes this argument furthest, asserting that cosmopolites feel no loyalty to particular places or polities, and live lives in which "no commitments [are] required" (p. 6). From this perspective, cosmopolites have much in common with transnationals, since both make use of the interstices between places.

I wish to retain aspects of these views, but emphasize a different dimension of cosmopolitanism. In particular, I think of cosmopolitanism as a way of living based on an 'openness to all forms of otherness,' associated with an appreciation of, and interaction with, people from other cultural backgrounds. This lifestyle is exemplified in the vignette of my back lane, where men and women from different origins create a society where diversity is accepted, is rendered ordinary. I use the term not in the sense of an uncaring, disconnected elite, but as the capacity to interact across cultural lines. This perspective bears some resemblance to Leonie Sandercock's (1998) utopian view of *cosmopolis* as a place of a civic culture based on 'multiple publics,' where people build "bridges of cooperation across difference" (p 218), and also to Stuart Hall's concept of 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' and

Steven Vertovec's characterization of cosmopolitanism as a 'practice' or 'habitus' (both presented at a recent conference on cosmopolitanism in Warwick, UK). Using this logic, I prefer to equate cosmopolitanism with cultural 'outreach,' with the everyday practices of hospitality (see Germain and Gagnon 2000) between people of different cultural backgrounds.

Cosmopolitanism, in this sense, can occur in several facets of everyday life, as I try to show in a rough way in Table 1. Each row is related to a basic context of social life: home and neighbourhood, work, consumption, and social interaction. The columns indicate the type and degree of cross-cultural interaction in each of these domains. For example, an individual might be of British origin, live in a neighbourhood dominated by British people, have only British friends, and shop in British markets, consuming products associated with British culture. Similarly, an Indo-Canadian person might confine all of his or her interactions within a co-ethnic context. In contrast, some people live in multicultural neighbourhoods, spend their days in mixed-culture workplaces, interact socially with a variety of people, and consume a multicultural menu of products. Of course many people are not so easily classified, and interact in mono-cultural contexts in certain aspects of their lives (e.g. friendship networks) and cosmopolitan ones in other aspects (e.g. at work).

Table 1: conceptualizing cosmopolitanism

Setting	Interaction		
	Mono-cultural		Multi-Cultural
	Dominant	Minority	
Neighbourhood Production (work) Consumption Social interaction			

Individuals who fall into the first column, which in Canada would be those of European ancestry who keep to their own culture, are outside the frame of cosmopolitan behaviour and may in fact be constructing exclusionary barriers. Individuals in the second column are equally non-cosmopolitan, which may be the result of discrimination, choice, or a combination of both. Most, though not all, people in this category suffer diminished

opportunity. Those in the third column, especially those who consume multicultural products and services and who interact across cultures, are actively cosmopolitan.

Most theories of globalization and multiculturalism imply a sense of process, assuming that dominant and minority cultures will become 'integrated,' and that this process will be impeded if individuals live out their lives exclusively within the bounds of their cultural communities. At the individual scale, this means that people gradually move from the left or centre column of the table toward the right column, increasingly adopting cosmopolitan ways of life. Furthermore, we tend to assume that this is both a one-way process and that it is desirable: once individuals become cosmopolitan they don't return to mono-cultural patterns of interaction, and their lives are enriched by their experience of alternate cultures. As I will explain in more detail later, we should be wary of this logic.

Generally, transnationalism and cosmopolitan are depicted as complimentary aspects of globalization, as twin outcomes of the movement of people from around the world into closer quarters, particularly in world cities. In fact, they appear to be used interchangeably by some writers. Yet, according to the definitions used in this paper, the two terms refer to separate states/processes, as seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Transnationalism and Cosmopolitanism

	- Transnationalism	
+ **Cosmopolitanism**	e.g. Melting pot	e.g. Cedar Cottage
	e.g. Gated suburb	e.g. Sojourners

Transnationalism and cosmopolitanism converge in certain kinds of multicultural settings (as in the vignette of everyday life in my back lane), but not in all of them. We can find examples where neither occur, such as in homogeneous societies with little inward or outward movement (e.g., Newfoundland in Canada), or in exclusive residential subdivisions where minorities are absent. But there are also many instances where only one or the other exists. Labour migration, or sojourning, is a classic case where individuals move around the world in search of economic opportunity but do not interact much with the societies they enter. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the American 'melting pot' ideology, where immigrants from many places settle and interact but, critically, *become American* by embracing their new society and detaching themselves from their old one, is an example of cosmopolitanism without transnationalism.

Summarizing these general remarks, I emphasize these points: the experiences of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism are both uneven — they are more fully realized in some places, and among some groups, than others; transnationalism and cosmopolitanism do not necessarily occur together; and we should adopt a critical stance to the frequently assumed belief that people *become* increasingly cosmopolitan over time.

Transnationalism and cosmopolitanism in Vancouver

Nearly 400,000 immigrants settled in metropolitan Vancouver during the 1990s, accounting for the lion's share of population growth over the decade. The 1996 census captured a snapshot view of the changing nature of Vancouver at a particularly opportune time, the peak of Asian migration to the city (Hiebert 1999; Ley 1999). The census revealed a complex emerging social geography of immigrant settlement, with several inner-city neighbourhoods populated almost exclusively by immigrants (most of whom are non-European minorities), as well as a number of immigrant concentrations in the suburbs. These are relatively new on the Vancouver scene and are challenging long-held assumptions about the difference between inner-city and suburban communities. The growing immigrant presence in suburbs is becoming widely reported in the local media, and there is a strong tendency to associate particular groups and neighbourhoods (e.g., the suburban municipalities of Richmond with Chinese-Canadians; Surrey with Indo-Canadians; and North Vancouver with immigrants who have recently arrived from Iran). Significantly, however, nearly all parts of Vancouver — including the areas just mentioned — are characterized by ethnic diversity. The proportion of ESL (English as a Second Language) students in schools in mid-city and even some outer suburbs, for example, is frequently over half. Typically, one cultural group predominates in these areas, but there are always a number of other groups present. Many of Vancouver's neighbourhoods, then, both inner-city and suburb, are characterized by multicultural diversity. Most also house a mixture of recent immigrants and individuals born in Canada. The potential is high, therefore, for both transnational linkages and cosmopolitan systems of social interaction.

In the initial phase of immigrant settlement, social interaction between immigrants and people outside their cultural community is minimal, and is mainly confined to the mechanics of finding work and shelter. Most immigrants to Vancouver are not fluent English speakers and this creates major obstacles inhibiting everyday interaction. In focus groups and family interviews, immigrants emphasized, repeatedly, the stress associated with this period of isolation from mainstream society. Few have sufficient experience of the

'host' society and the luxury of time needed to evaluate the reception they receive. Most rely on local in-group social institutions, and many are also nurtured by extensive transnational networks. Cosmopolitanism, in an active sense, occurs rarely given the struggle for survival and communication barriers.

Systems of in-group support become institutionalized into social, economic and political enclaves, especially for larger cultural groups. In Vancouver, the Chinese-origin population of nearly 300,000 is the extreme case, and individuals can live their entire lives in a Chinese milieu if they so choose. Similar, though not quite as extensive, enclaves have been developed by Vancouver's Indian and Persian communities (though, significantly, not by a number of other groups, notably from the Philippines, Latin America, and African countries). Many of the immigrants surveyed for this paper noted the double-sided nature of these enclaves, how they both help immigrants cope but also hinder their integration with mainstream society or, using different terms, impede their capacity for inter-cultural communication. For this reason, critics have charged that institutions such as the Richmond Chinese soccer league, or the separate Chinese commercial district that has emerged in Richmond (with around 50 'Asian theme malls'), fragment society.

However, there is also abundant evidence that immigrants are engaged in a process of integration. A South Asian woman living in Surrey, for example, speaks of the "confidence of language" she has attained since coming to Canada, and how she feels increasingly comfortable with her new neighbours. A Latin American teenager in East Vancouver noted that, while there is definite ethnic fragmentation in ESL classes, once students join the regular school system they mix readily with their classmates of different cultures. In fact, there was a general feeling throughout the focus groups and family interviews that children integrate quickly and build friendship networks that span cultural boundaries. When asked about her experience of integration, a Ugandan-born woman mused that she used to feel that Canadians were distant and obsessed with performing their jobs and other activities; however, as the pace of her life has increased, she realizes she has fallen into the same behavioural patterns and no longer feels culturally isolated. Quite the opposite, family who come to visit from Uganda have begun to comment on *her* obsession with time.

Reflecting the classic predictions of 'assimilation' made nearly a century ago by sociologists at the University of Chicago, a large number of immigrants make deliberate choices to leave their cultural enclaves behind and embrace multicultural lifestyles. In general, when recent immigrants were asked in interviews where they would prefer to live in Greater Vancouver, they favoured multicultural neighbourhoods. Many have already exercised this choice. A woman born in Bolivia, for example, spoke of her decision to leave the major concentration of Hispanic people in Vancouver because she craved a quieter environment; another woman from El Salvador moved from the same area to ensure that her children would grow up in an English-speaking neighbourhood, believing that their long-term opportunities might be compromised if she stayed in her cultural enclave. My colleagues and I heard, over and over, criticisms from Chinese-origin immigrants that there are 'too many Chinese' in Richmond. Finally, a young Punjabi-origin woman commented unfavourably on the level of surveillance and corresponding lack of freedom in an ethnic enclave.

> That was a conscious effort to move into a multicultural neighbourhood and not just an Indo-Canadian neighbourhood, because there would have been a lot of other things being monitored in our neighbourhood: what time we left the house, came home and all that kind of stuff would have been a concern had we been living in an Indo-Canadian dominated neighbourhood.

> - Surrey focus group participant, female, Indo-Canadian

How does the shift from in-group to cosmopolitan interaction — indeed cosmopolitan preference — occur? Almost everyone who was asked to consider this question gave some variation of the same answer: active multiculturalism depends, fundamentally, on the attitudes and behaviour of the 'host' society. As mentioned, immigrants spend little time thinking about the culture of reception when they first arrive, but reflect on this question more and more as time passes. They endorse many aspects of Canadian society, especially the substantial effort made by settlement NGOs on their behalf. They also appreciate the adjustments many institutions have made to introduce multilingual services (e.g., libraries, hospitals, and the provision of counselors to explain the workings of the educational system). A few of the families interviewed in the community studies project participated in the Host

Program (newly arrived families are matched with volunteers who are well established in Canada), for which they are grateful. Finally, some — certainly not all — speak of a welcoming environment, of day-to-day acts of hospitality offered by their new neighbours, of efforts to provide a sense of belonging.

The issues of reception and the sociability of multicultural neighbourhoods have been studied extensively in Montréal (Rose 1997, Archambault et al. 1999). Like Vancouver, immigrants there typically settle in multicultural areas, though the degree of suburbanization has been more modest in Montréal. Researchers have paid close attention to the types of social networks that emerge in these settings and, based on the ideas of Granovetter, distinguish between 'strong' (family, kin, and friends) and 'weak' (acquaintances, neighbours who are not close friends) ties. They have found that immigrants who rely mainly on strong ties — those who have extensive in-group networks which often cross international boundaries — generally form closely-knit but isolated communities. In contrast, those with the most developed weak ties are more fully integrated (Chicoine et al. 1997). Groups with a combination of both types of social networks appear to adjust most readily to their new circumstances (Rose et al. 1998, Carrasco et al. 1999). Moreover, they have found that inter-group contact is self-perpetuating, that the more individuals from different cultural backgrounds interact, the more they develop an appreciation of other cultures and a tolerance for diversity (Joly 1996). In light of these findings, et al. (1995) and Germain and Gagnon (2000) highlight the importance of public space and municipal governments in facilitating local-scale 'cultures of hospitality' that reach out to immigrants, especially when the invitation for participation comes from the 'host' society in non-coercive ways. This type of hospitality fosters cosmopolitanism.

While, as mentioned, immigrants have made many complimentary remarks about their reception in Vancouver, and we can identify certain aspects of the hospitality that Germain and Gagnon advocate, they also voice a long list of concerns and criticisms. Above all, they express dismay over the way that credentials and experience obtained in their home countries are routinely disregarded when they attempt to find work in the Canadian labour market. The disappointment associated with finding work was raised in almost every focus group and family interview conducted as part of the community studies project. Nothing does more to foster a sense of Canada as a closed society. Moreover, the difficulty of finding

appropriate work in Canada forces many immigrants to rely on their ethnic community and transnational networks for economic support; one immigrant stated, when speaking to this issue "I'll have to keep coming and going and coming and going." As Ley (2000) has discovered, it also lies behind the 'astronaut' phenomenon, where adults commute across the Pacific Ocean for work while their children stay in Vancouver.

There were other complaints, but none were as universally made. Many believe 'Canadians' are aloof, and think that immigrants who come from the global south are ill-equipped to thrive in an industrialized environment (e.g., we were told that immigrants from India are often asked if they had ever seen a computer before coming to Canada). Canadians are also criticized as uncaring in general, and oblivious to the immigrants living within their society. Some speak of subtle discrimination in everyday events, such as store clerks who smile politely at Whites but treat minorities perfunctorily. A few told us that they experienced incidents of overt racism. As a man from Bangladesh put it, "…the general people, the people who are living in this country, apart from [those who administer] the immigration Canada are not very much happy about people like us coming in." Immigrants living in areas with high numbers of minorities (Richmond and Surrey) are convinced that there is widespread White flight, and that this exodus creates more homogeneous residential spaces — and, of course, fewer opportunities for cosmopolitan engagement. A focus group was held with European-origin residents of the Kerrisdale-Oakridge neighbourhood, an upper-middle-class area that has seen a rapid population turnover during the past 15-20 years. Unfortunately, some of these concerns appear to be well founded, as a few (though by no means all) participants noted that they feel increasingly isolated as the number of Chinese-origin residents increases, and that they see immigrants as 'pushy.' In this context at least, a degree of aloofness, of cultural distance, was expressed.

But one of the most consistent findings of both focus groups and family interviews was that immigrants reserve their most bitter criticisms for members of *other minority groups*. When asked about her experience of racism in public schools, a young woman from Guatemala living in East Vancouver commented that she felt little hostility from Whites — there were almost none in her school — but that children who had already adjusted to Canada were dismissive, or worse, to those in ESL programs. Another Latina complained that her recently-arrived Polish co-workers treated non-Whites with disdain. A Filipina, asked about

relations between cultural groups in her office, said "There's racism in our office. Yeah. Chinese against any culture." While few made such categorical statements, many immigrants from groups with small numbers expressed resentment against the Chinese-origin community, who are perceived as receiving special accommodations in Vancouver due to their large population base and growing level of political participation. Within the Chinese community, too, there is a notable degree of competition, sometimes friction, between Cantonese and Mandarin speakers. Finally, a number of immigrants did not raise specific criticisms of other groups, but questioned the legitimacy of the Canadian multicultural project, seeing little in common between their group and others. The man previously quoted, from Bangladesh, stated this view the most forcefully:

> So that's basically my opinion, you know, not to have too many races all together side by side. You cannot mix them up, you know. It is very difficult, probably it is very, very, very difficult. It takes quite a while, you know. The children of children, you know, probably they'll be able to mix, not me, base generation.

> - East Vancouver focus group participant

These comments raise a number of sensitive and important issues about the meaning of racism, and demonstrate that it is far more complex than simply the subordination of one undifferentiated group of 'others' by an equally homogeneous dominant population. In particular, they challenge the idea that we can draw a sharp boundary between 'hosts' and 'newcomers' in a society that receives large numbers of immigrants. In total, one out of every three residents of greater Vancouver was born outside Canada; in some neighbourhoods, the ratio is much higher, in a few cases virtually 100 percent. In these places, the 'host society' is made up of immigrants who have been in Canada a little longer than those who have just arrived. Therefore, immigrants themselves are critical to the development of — or lack of — a culture of hospitality and cosmopolitan engagement.

Learning, and unlearning, cosmopolitanism

How do individuals shape their sense of identity in an increasingly diverse society? Returning to the conceptualization of cosmopolitanism introduced at the outset of this paper, do individuals move steadily from in-group to cosmopolitan forms of interaction? What of

second-generation immigrants raised in multicultural Vancouver, who have little experience of their parents' home countries? The evidence on these points reveals widely divergent patterns, with some appreciating culturally diverse workplaces, neighbourhoods, and the general ethos of multiculturalism, and — as already noted — others expressing discomfort with diversity. In this final section of the paper, I turn to examine statements made by young adults who either came to Canada as children or who were born in Canada shortly after their parents arrived in the country. So far, all of the young adults interviewed are from Indo-Canadian and Chinese-Canadian backgrounds, both relatively large groups characterized by a high degree of transnationalism and active immigrant settlement.

In focus groups dedicated to exploring the experience of these young adults, they were asked to reminisce about their childhood. Most, nearly all in fact, grew up in neighbourhoods where they were part of small minority populations. In most cases, they adjusted to the dominant culture which, twenty or so years ago, was European. In effect, they adopted the dominant culture, though this process was often fraught with anxiety and, inevitably, partial. Here are a few sample statements:

…during the mid 1980s … between the ages of 7 and 12, I went through this big emotional backlash - this identity crisis about being Chinese. … I seriously hated being Chinese. I would look at the television and quite honestly say, "man, I wish I were White." (a)

- Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, female, Chinese-Canadian

I lived in Port Coquitlam from Kindergarten to grade one. But I mean, when you are radically different, when you are the *only* person who is Chinese, I didn't think about myself as a Chinese person actually. You sort of look how everybody else is Caucasian and you don't even realize your own ethnicity is different until you look in the mirror. (b)

- Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, male, Chinese-Canadian

All my friends were white and I thought of myself as white except when I got home I was Chinese. (c)

- Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, male, Chinese-Canadian

> When I grew up I had Caucasian friends, and you just never talked about Chinese things because they were Caucasian, obviously. (d)
>
> > - Richmond focus group participant, female, Chinese-Canadian

> During my Elementary and High School, I could say that I almost about never spoke Chinese other than inside of my home and I could almost say that I didn't have any Chinese friends. (e)
>
> > - Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, male, Chinese-Canadian

The last three quotations indicate something almost universally stated by the Chinese-Canadians and Indo-Canadians who grew up a decade or two ago, as well as the children of the families *in small cultural groups* that we are currently interviewing. In these cases, children develop hybrid (at times confused) identities and intercultural friendship networks, though these processes can be unsettling. A young Latina woman was the most animated on this question, insisting that she should not be seen as one cultural type or another (in her terms, Spanish vs. Canadian) — she saw both labels as simplifying a much more complex reality.

Yet, just as the either/or approach to identity is unrealistic, so is the assumption that individuals who become cosmopolitan remain that way, that the development of a multicultural mode of behaviour is linear and irreversible. These experiences, for example, reveal that different outcomes are possible:

> In elementary school I noticed that they had friends of all religions and ethnic[ities] but then as they matured they, like most adults, like to be with their own kinds and so they just sort of filter off and they're more attracted to whoever they have more in common with, I guess.
>
> > - Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, female, European origin

> Before I was totally into listening to Caucasian music - White music or whatever. Not involved in my culture at all. I wasn't participating in anything really. And then I guess, as my cousins came, the next - like you said - the new wave of immigrants,

all they did was speak Punjabi language all the time. I picked up on a lot more words and they just totally got us involved into our own culture a lot, I think.

- Surrey focus group participant, male, Indo-Canadian

I can speak Chinese. I can understand it all and yet, when I went to work I actually thought I wasn't Chinese. … The only time I'm reminded that I'm Chinese is when I got older and into Richmond now, and here there's all Chinese people, and then the reminder, of course, is that you really are Chinese.

- Richmond focus group participant, male, Chinese-Canadian

These last two speakers indicate that their identity shifted in response to the large influx of new immigrants to Vancouver during the past few years. Actually, all the five individuals I quoted earlier went on to make similar points:

After that period the benefits were that there was a heightened awareness of my own sense of self and my sense in the community. I think of that entire growth of population, the biggest thing that I got out of it was that I identified myself as being Chinese, as a Chinese-Canadian. I no longer felt this hatred of being Chinese. *I seriously hated being Chinese...* (a)

- Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, female, Chinese-Canadian

When I grew up I had Caucasian friends, and you just never talked about Chinese things because they were Caucasian, obviously. And the older I got, the closer I became with my Chinese background. … Friends from your own background become more important. (d)

- Richmond focus group participant, female, Chinese-Canadian

During my elementary and high school, I could say that I almost about never spoke Chinese other than inside of my home and I could almost say that I didn't have any Chinese friends. But I notice that besides myself, I see a lot of Chinese people as they reach adulthood or when they are going through university there's a big change in their life. They start to look for their roots. That happened with me. Even first year university I spoke all English, but now if you look at my friends, most of my friends are Chinese now. A lot of times I speak Chinese now. (e)

- Kerrisdale-Oakridge focus group participant, male, Chinese-Canadian

These statements suggest a retreat from cosmopolitanism, or at least a different version of it. All of them — and they are representative of a much larger number — came to value their cultural background in new ways as they entered adulthood. A crucial phase in the life cycle became registered in a new mode of cultural interaction. This process of cultural reflection and re-evaluation occurred in conjunction with the entry of new immigrants, as stated, and a deepening degree of transnationalism. In fact, many spoke of a growing desire to visit, in some cases even to relocate to, Hong Kong. Several who had lost their Chinese or Punjabi language in an effort to conform, are relearning it. They are, in the process, challenging a view of cosmopolitanism as an end state, and also as the most desirable state.

Qualifications and conclusions

It is tempting to end here, questioning the logic of globalization and the interpretation of multiculturalism as a unidirectional process. However, significant qualifications are in order in light of the methodology behind this study. First, while the interviews and focus groups that form the background of this paper included some 150 immigrants and 1,000 pages of transcripts, there are over 600,000 immigrants living in Greater Vancouver, and perhaps that number again are second-generation immigrants. Therefore, despite the fact that the methods of recruitment for this study were comprehensive, I can hardly claim that the material presented here is representative.

Secondly, I have reported everything in this paper as a series of straightforward texts, with little thought to the many subtleties and potential difficulties involved in collecting and representing these 'data.' It is difficult to judge the effects of the particular structure of the focus groups and interviews reported here. Most of these sessions were comprised of White researchers and non-White participants. Bilingual and multilingual research assistants were frequently involved, but this was logistically possible only for the Chinese, Punjabi, and Hispanic groups. Meetings between researchers and subjects are inevitably performative events, where each side assumes certain roles. No doubt the uneven power relations involved in this project, between academic researchers and recently-arrived, minority immigrants, had an impact on what we were, and weren't, told. I vividly recall, for example, an interview in the living room of a couple who had come to Vancouver from Hong Kong. I conducted the

meeting with the help of a Cantonese interpreter. At the end, as usual, I asked if the interviewees had anything else they would like to say. They turned to the translator and initiated, in Cantonese, an animated conversation about their experience of discrimination and its effect on their lives. They had said none of this to me, even though I had asked several questions related to the issue of prejudice. Also, the dynamics of focus groups with first- vs. second-generation immigrants were completely different. In the former case, individuals treated the events formally, had to grope for words to make their points and, in some cases, participants seemed uncomfortable. In the latter, conversation flowed freely and no-one seemed to mind discussing sensitive issues of identity or their experiences as minorities. Clearly, there are important limitations to this paper and the material lying behind it.

With these considerable caveats in mind, I was surprised in this research by the flux of identity and patterns of communication within and between immigrant communities, by how some immigrants become cosmopolitan, some stay within the boundaries of their group, and some shift — back *and* forth — between these options. At times, as in my back lane, everyday hospitality extends between groups that each are linked into extensive transnational networks. In other cases, there appears to be a contradiction between the development of transnationalism and the intensity of inter-cultural communication. In a society that, at least officially, espouses multiculturalism, should we worry about the potential for transnational networks to fragment individuals into distinct, bounded cultural worlds? I'm afraid the answer is, yes and no.

I take my cue here from Iris Marion Young's (1990, 1999) thoughtful work on the politics of difference, where she attempts to balance a commitment to diversity with a concern for exclusion. In advocating 'differentiated solidarity' Young maintains that societies must, on the one hand, allow groups the freedom to form residential concentrations and build in-group cultural institutions. Above all, she believes the dominant culture should keep a respectful distance from minorities, that it should exercise "an openness to unassimilated otherness" (1999) and allow multiple identities and hybridities to flourish. The flux of identity described in this paper — especially the return to in-group social networks — therefore carries no negative connotations. On the other hand, though, Young reminds us that ethnic solidarity, in all its forms, can yield exclusionary barriers. For example, if the

Chinese-Canadians who spoke about the comfort of interacting with people from the same background begin to show a preference for Chinese-origin workers when they are in charge of hiring, or Chinese-origin tenants in their buildings, at some point a significant line is crossed. It makes little difference to a Filipina or Vietnamese immigrant, for example, if she is excluded by White or Chinese-origin employers or landlords — the end result is the same. From this point of view, it is important to maximize the frequency and intensity of interaction between groups and to ensure that neighbourhoods in multicultural cities become spaces of "shared responsibility" where no group suffers exclusion.

The trick, as Young argues, is to reach a point where group solidarity can develop without the corollary of exclusion. In the Canadian context, the dominant population has not managed to achieve this state of affairs and, through time, has marginalized minorities. Arguably, though, the degree of openness is gradually increasing, especially as legal and institutional frameworks are being created to address discrimination and racism. Significantly, as minorities increasingly become hosts, with all of the power relations that such a turn of events implies, they take on the same responsibilities to extend fairness, and hospitality, to newcomers — in effect, to be cosmopolitan. Hopefully, they will exercise these responsibilities more conscientiously that the dominant group has done!

References

Appadurai, A. 1996. *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Archambault, J., B. Ray, D. Rose et A.-M. Séguin. 1999. *Atlas de l'immigration à Montréal*. Immigration et métropoles. (http://www.riim.metropolis.net/research-policy/research_content/atlas/index.html).

Carrasco, P., D. Rose and J. Charbonneau. 1999. La constitution de liens faibles : une passerelle pour l'adaptation des immigrantes centro-américaines mères de jeunes enfants à Montréal. *Études ethniques au Canada / Canadian Ethnic Studies* 30: 73–91.

Chicoine, N., et J. Charbonneau, avec la collaboration de D. Rose et B. Ray. 1997. Le processus de reconstruction des réseaux sociaux des femmes immigrantes dans l'espace montréalais. Note de recherche. *Recherches féministes* 10 (2): 27–48.

Cohen, R. 1999. Back to the future: From metropolis to cosmopolis. In *From metropolis to cosmopolis*, ed. J. Hjarnø, 9–26. Esbjerg: South Jutland University Press.

Germain, A., and J.E. Gagnon. 2000. Constructing cultures of Hospitality: Municipalities and the management of cultural diversity. Presented at the Fourth National Metropolis Conference, Toronto, March 2000.

Germain, A., J. Archambault, B. Blanc, J. Charbonneau, F. Dansereau, et D. Rose. 1995. *Cohabitation interethnique et vie de quartier.* Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des Affaires internationales, de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles, collection Études et recherches, no. 12.

Glick-Schiller, N. L. Bosch, and C. Blanc-Szanton (eds). 1992. *Towards a transnational perspective on migration: Race, class, ethnicity, and nationalism reconsidered*. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences.

Hage, G. 1998. *White nation: Fantasies of White supremacy in a multicultural society*. Sydney: Pluto Press.

Hannerz, U. 1996. *Transnational connections: Culture, people, places.* London: Routledge.

Hiebert, D. 1999. Immigration and the changing social geography of Greater Vancouver. *BC Studies* 121: 35–82.

Hyndman, J., and M. Walton-Roberts. 1999. Transnational migration and nation: Burmese refugees in Vancouver. Vancouver: RIIM Working Paper 99-07.

Joly, J. 1996. Sondage d'opinion publique québécoise sur l'immigration et les relations interculturelles. Québec: Ministère des Relations avec les Citoyens et de l'Immigration, Études et recherches collection, No. 15.

Kaldor, M. 1996. Cosmopolitanism versus nationalism: The new divide? In *Europe's new nationalism*, ed. R. Caplan and J. Feffer, 42–58. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lasch, C. 1995. *The revolt of the elites and the betrayal of democracy*. New York: Norton.

Ley, D. 1999. Myths and meanings of immigration and the metropolis *The Canadian Geographer* 43: 2–19.

———. 2000. *Seeking homo economicus: The strange story of Canada's business immigration program.* Vancouver: RIIM Working Paper 00-02.

Ong, A. 1999. *Flexible citizenship: The cultural logic of transnationality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Robbins, B. 1998. Introduction, part I: Actually existing cosmopolitanism. In *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and feeling beyond the nation*, ed. P. Cheah and B. Robbins, 1–19. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Rose, D. 1997. State policy, immigrant women's social support networks and the question of integration in Montréal. In *Migration and Gender: Place, Time and People Specific*, ed. J. Fairhurst, I. Booysens and P. Hattingh, 403–24. Pretoria: University of Pretoria, Department of Geography, on behalf of International Geographical Union, Commission on Gender and Geography and Commission on Population Geography.

Rose, D., P. Carrasco, and J. Charboneau. 1998. The role of 'weak ties' in the settlement experience of immigrant women with young children: The case of Central Americans in Montréal. Toronto: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS) – Toronto. Working Paper.

Sandercock, L. 1998. *Towards cosmopolis: Planning for multicultural cities*. Chichester, NY: John Wiley.

Wainwright, J., S. Prudham, and J. Glassman. 2000. The battles in Seattle: Microgeographies of resistance and the challenge of building alternative futures. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18: 5–14.

Thompson, S., B. Hanna, K. Dunn, and P. Murphy. 1999. Urban governance and citizenship: The Sydney case. Paper presented at the Immigration, Integration, and Social Cohesion: Sydney and Vancouver in Comparative Perspective workshop, June.

Urry, J. 2000. *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. London and New York: Routledge.

Van Hear, N. 1998. *New diasporas: The mass exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant communities*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Young, I. M. 1990. *Justice and the politics of difference*. Princeton: University of Princeton Press.

———. 1999. Residential segregation and differentiated citizenship. *Citizenship Studies* 3: 237–252.

Working paper series

Number	Author(s)	Title	Date
96-01	James W. Dean & Don J. DeVoretz	The Economic Performance of Jewish Immigrants to Canada: A Case of Double Jeopardy?	5/96
96-02	Kris Olds	Developing the Trans-Pacific Property Market: Tales from Vancouver via Hong Kong	8/96
96-03	Krishna Pendakur & Ravi Pendakur	The Colour of Money: Earnings Differentials Among Ethnic Groups in Canada	4/96
96-04	Alan Green David Green	The Economic Goals of Canada's Immigration Policy, Past and Present	
97-01	John E. Hayfron	Language Training, Language Proficiency and Earnings of Immigrants: Lessons from Norway	2/97
97-02	Daniel Hiebert	The Colour of Work: Labour Market Segmentation in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, 1991	3/97
97-03	Abul Shamsuddin & Don J. DeVoretz	Wealth Accumulation of Canadian and Foreign-Born Households in Canada	6/97
97-04	Abul Shamsuddin	The Double-Negative Effect on the Earnings of Foreign-Born Females in Canada	6/97
97-05	Abul F. M. Shamsuddin	Savings, Tax Contributions and Australian Immigration	6/97
97-06	Peter Sheldon	Estimation of Labour Market Participation Rates for Canadian-Born and Foreign-born Families Resident in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area Circa 1991	8/97
97-07	John E. Hayfron	Estimating Immigrants' Occupational Choice and Occupational Wages with Selectivity Bias	9/97
97-08	David Ley & Heather Smith	Is there an immigrant "underclass" in Canadian cities?	10/97
97-09	Dominique Gross	Immigration Flows and Regional Labour Market Dynamics	10/97
97-10	Krishna Pendakur & Ravi Pendakur	Speak and Ye Shall Receive: Language Knowledge as Human Capital	11/97
98-01	Karl Froschauer	East Asian Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Vancouver: Provincial Preference and Ethnic Strategy	01/98
98-02	June Beynon & Kelleen Toohey	Careers in Teaching: Participation Rates and Perceptions of Two Minority Groups in British Columbia	01/98
98-03	Iris Geva-May	Immigration to Israel: Any Lessons for Canada?	01/98
98-04	Rebeca Raijman & Moshe Semyonov	Best of Times, Worst of Times, and Occupational Mobility: The Case of Russian Immigrants in Israel	02/98
98-05	Fernando Mata & Ravi Pendakur	Immigration, Labour Force Integration and the Pursuit of Self-employment	02/98
98-06	Samuel A. Laryea	The Impact of Foreign-born Labour on Canadian Wages: A Panel Analysis	02/98

Number	Author(s)	Title	Date
98-07	Gordon Dicks & Arthur Sweetman	Education and Ethnicity in Canada: An Intergenerational Perspective	02/98
98-08	Steven Globerman	Immigration and Health Care Utilization Patterns in Canada	03/98
98-09	Samuel A. Laryea	The Substitutability and Complementarity of Canadian and Foreign-born Labour: Circa 1990	04/98
98-10	John E. Hayfron	Panel Estimates of the Gender Gap in Norway: Do Female Immigrants Experience A Double Earnings Penalty?	04/98
98-11	Thomas Bauer and Klaus F. Zimmermann	Occupational Mobility of Ethnic Migrants	07/98
98-12	Gillian Creese	Government Restructuring and Immigrant/Refugee Settlement Work: Bringing Advocacy Back In	07/98
98-13	Abul Shamsuddin	Labour Supply of Immigrant Women in Australia	07/98
98-14	Yitchak Haberfeld, Moshe Semyonov and Yinon Cohen	Ethnicity and Labor Market Performance among Recent Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union to Israel	08/98
98-15	Daniel Hiebert	Immigrant Experiences in Greater Vancouver: Focus Group Narratives	09/98
98-16	Daniel Hiebert	The Changing Social Geography of Immigrant Settlement in Vancouver	09/98
98-17	Arti Nanavati	Labour Market Experiences of South Asia-born Women in Vancouver	09/98
98-18	Don DeVoretz and Samuel Layrea	Canadian Human Capital Transfers: The USA and Beyond	10/98
98-19	Trinidad L. Vicente	Undocumented Migrants: A Social and Political Issue in Spain	10/98
98-20	James Dunn and Isabel Dyck	Social Determinants of Health in Canada's Immigrant Population: Results from the National Population Health Survey	10/98
98-21	Keith Head, John Ries, and Don Wagner	Immigrants and the Trade of Provinces	12/98
99-01	Eran Razin	Immigrant Entrepreneurs and the Urban Milieu: Evidence from the United States, Canada and Israel	1/99
99-02	Marvin Wideen and Kathleen A. Barnard	Impacts of immigration on Education in British Columbia: An Analysis of Efforts to Implement Policies of Multiculturalism in Schools	1/99
99-03	Joseph Schaafsma and Arthur Sweetman	Immigrant Earnings: Age at Immigration Matters	1/99
99-04	Harold Coward	Hindus in Canada	2/99
99-05	K. Toohey, B. Waterstone and A. Julé	Performing carnival: Language learning in a Punjabi Sikh school	2/99

Number	Author(s)	Title	Date
99-06	Don DeVoretz and Yunus Ozsomer	Immigrants and Public Finance Transfers: Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal	2/99
99-07	Jennifer Hyndman and Margaret Walton-Roberts	Transnational Migration and Nation: Burmese Refugees in Vancouver	2/99
99-08	Kangqing Zhang	Problems and Strategies of Chinese Immigrants: A Study of Restaurant Sector in the Dutch Labor Market	3/99
99-09	David Ley and Judith Tutchener	Immigration and Metropolitan House Prices in Canada	3/99
99-10	Gillian Creese, Isabel Dyck, and Arlene McLaren	Reconstituting the Family: Negotiating Immigration and Settlement	3/99
99-11	Linda LaRocque	The Changing Role of Administrators in Ethnically Diverse Schools	4/99
99-12	Kris Olds and Henry Wai-chung Yeung	(Re)shaping 'Chinese' Business Networks in a Globalizing Era	4/99
99-13	Ravi Pendakur and Fernando Mata	Where do immigrants work? Tracking industrial location propensities of 1960s immigrants	5/99
99-14	J. Anderson, S. Tang, and C. Blue	Health Systems Renewal: 'Writing in' Cultural Plurality	5/99
99-15	John Rose	Immigration, Neighbourhood Change, and Racism: Immigrant Reception in Richmond, B.C.	5/99
99-16	Randal G. Tonks and Anand C. Paranjpe	Am I a Canadian, an Ethnic, or an Ethnic-Canadian?: Dilemmas of Second Generation Immigrant Youth	6/99
99-17	Margaret Walton-Roberts	(Post)colonial Constellations of History, Identity and Space: Sikhs and the Royal Canadian Legion	6/99
99-18	Parin Dossa	The Narrative Representation of Mental Health: Iranian Women in Canada	7/99
99-19	Samuel A. Laryea	Housing Ownership Patterns of Immigrants in Canada	7/99
99-20	Diane Dagenais and Catherine Berron	A Case Study of Multilingualism and Educational Choices in Immigrant Families	7/99
99-21	Carl Mosk	Convergence and Divergence in The Asia-Pacific: Economic and Demographic Integration between Asia and Pacific Canada	8/99
99-22	John E. Hayfron	A Double Cohort Analysis of Residential Overcrowding among Immigrants in Norway	9/99
99-23	Noah Lewin-Epstein and Moshe Semyonov	Migration, Ethnicity and Inequality in Homeownership	9/99
99-24	Jörgen Hansen and Magnus Lofstrom	Immigrant Assimilation and Welfare Participation: Do Immigrants Assimilate Into or Out-of Welfare?	11/99

Number	Author(s)	Title	Date
99-25	Don DeVoretz and Christiane Werner	A Theory of Social Forces and Immigrant Second Language Acquisition	12/99
00-01	J. Atsu Amegashie	A Political Economy Model of the Permissible Number of Immigrants	01/00
00-02	David Ley	Seeking *Homo Economicus:* The Strange Story of Canada's Immigration Program	05/00
00-03	Chieko Tanimura	Immigration of Nikkeijin to Ease the Japanese Aging Crisis	05/00
00-04	Eden Nicole Thompson	Immigrant Occupational Skill Outcomes and the Role of Region-Specific Human Capital	05/00
00-05	Christiane Werner	A Taste of Canada: An Analysis of Food Expenditure Patterns for Canadian-born and Foreign-born Consumers	05/00
00-06	Don DeVoretz and Chona Iturralde	Probability of Staying in Canada	08/00
00-07	Ravi Pendakur, Fernanda Mata, Stan Lee and Natalie Dole	Job Mobility and Promotion in the Federal Public Service. A Joint Project with Strategic Research and Analysis, Multiculturalism Program, Canadian Heritage and Research Directorate. Public Service Commission.	05/00
00-08	Barry R. Chiswick and Paul W. Miller	The Complementarity of Language and Other Human Capital: Immigrant Earnings in Canada	07/00
00-09	John E. Hayfron	The Housing Market Outcomes of Immigrants in Norway	08/00
00-10	Greg Cunningham, Daniel Hiebert and Brian Klinkenberg	Immigration and Greater Vancouver: A 1996 Census Atlas http://www.geog.ubc.ca/metropolis/atlas	09/00
00-11	Barry R. Chiswick	The Economics of illegal Migration for the Host Economy	09/00
00-12	Daniel Hiebert	The Social Geography of Immigration and Urbanization in Canada: A Review and Interpretation	09/00
00-13	Barry R. Chiswick and Paul W. Miller	A Model of Destination Language Acquisition: Application to Male Immigrants in Canada	09/00
00-14	Jamie Winders	Immigration to Vancouver: An Analytical Review	09/00