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**Gendering Immigration: The Experience of Women in Sydney and
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**GENDERING IMMIGRATION:
THE EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN IN SYDNEY AND VANCOUVER**

by

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Abstract: This paper underscores the fundamentally gendered meanings of immigration, settlement and integration, and their intersecting relationships in gateway cities such as Sydney and Vancouver. We consider the gendered nature of immigration policies, labour markets, and homes and neighbourhoods, and how migrant women negotiate these spaces in Sydney and Vancouver. Particular reference is made to collective organizing for mutual aid amongst migrant women and the role of immigrant women's organizations in lobbying for enhanced delivery of settlement services.

Key words: gender, race, feminism, multiculturalism, labour markets, home, NGOs

Gendering Immigration: The Experience of Women

Immigration is a gendered process. Men and women often enter a new country under different immigration classes, have access to different services, and create and draw upon different networks. Definitions of masculinity and femininity (as well as ethnicity and race) are embedded in all spheres through which immigrants move, from immigration policies and labour markets to family relations and identities. Since immigration is gendered, then so too are settlement experiences in particular cities. Male and female migrants may move through space differently, and may indeed experience the same place (e.g. home, neighbourhood, workplace) in contrasting ways. Our purpose, therefore, is to consider the gendered meanings and experiences of migration and settlement in Sydney and Vancouver. We then consider how immigrant women negotiate these spaces with a special focus on collective organizing. Although this paper considers experiences within the two cities, the national contexts cannot be ignored. National policies and debates influence, either directly or indirectly, the gendered experiences of settlement in both Sydney and Vancouver.

Intersections of Gender, Ethnicity and Race

Theoretical debates around gender, ethnicity, race and class are important for understanding immigrant settlement. In both Australia and Canada female migrants come from many countries, with diverse skills, familial backgrounds and differential abilities to speak English. As recent generations of feminist scholars remind us, all women are not the same. Nor are all immigrant women, and neither are their settlement experiences. Canadian scholars have pointed out that women's experiences are shaped by differences in class, culture, language, migration and racialisation; indeed, gender, class, race and ethnicity are mutually defining (Agnew, 1996; Calliste, 1993; George and Ramkissoon, 1998; Ng and Das Gupta, 1981; Stasiulis and Jhappan, 1995). In Australia too, the relative significance of gender, class, ethnicity and race in constructing immigrant women's lives has been explored. For example, Gill Bottomley (1992, 146) argues that the settlement experiences of immigrant women are

“defined, limited and altered by migration, by economic and employment policies, by gender relations and by state policies and practices”. These points are highlighted in the intersections of gender, race and ethnicity in Sydney and Vancouver.

Feminists have become sensitive to the ‘othering’ processes embedded in language around migration, ethnicity and race. In Canada, this has led to a heated debate about appropriate terms for what Australians most commonly refer to as migrant women. The three most common terms used in Canada are ‘visible minority’, ‘immigrant’ and ‘women of colour’, each with its own genealogy and politics. The term ‘visible minority’ is the most contested because it is the Canadian government’s preferred term for people racialised as ‘non-white’ and is embedded in federal legislation (e.g. the Employment Equity Act). Some observers have argued that the term ‘visible minority’ is therefore a creation of the state, its adoption encouraged through selective consultation and funding in an attempt to de-politicise the politics of anti-racism (Carty and Brand, 1993). Others point out that successful community organizing forced the federal government to consult with and develop policies regarding visible minorities in the first place (Ng 1991, 1992; Das Gupta, 1994).

Similarly, the term ‘immigrant’ has been criticised because it applies to all those born outside Canada, and fails to acknowledge different circumstances of language, culture, and processes of racialisation (Agnew, 1996). Moreover, official data published about ‘immigrant women’ often mask diversity and the more complex realities of racialisation (Agnew, 1996; Boyd, 1997). On the other hand, as Roxana Ng (1992) argues, even though ‘immigrant’ technically applies to all foreign-born Canadians, its ‘common-sense’ meaning marks immigrants as people of colour. Thus the racialised construction of who is and is not perceived to be ‘immigrant’ remains central to an analysis of migration.

In contrast, the term ‘women of colour’ is a self-defined identity adopted by most feminists in Canada, and is not used in state classifications. However, ‘women of colour’ fails to distinguish between Canadian-born and foreign-born women of colour, whose circumstances are not the same, and ignores the difficulties facing non-English speaking migrants who are of European origin. As this debate over language suggests, intersections of gender, ethnicity and

race are complex and multifaceted, and we should be mindful of processes of racialisation, as well as spatial and temporal specificity, when exploring the experiences of migrant women.

Gendering Multiculturalism

Both Australia and Canada are distinguished by similar policies of multiculturalism. Although a contested term whose meanings have shifted over time, multiculturalism broadly means the state sanctioning of a right to express and maintain cultural identity and diversity, with an emphasis on ‘tolerance’ of differences, while downplaying issues of equality within and between various ethnic communities. In Canada, for example, multiculturalism has alternatively been criticised for fragmenting national unity (Bibby, 1990), as a form of containment that ought to focus on anti-racism (Bannerji, 1995), and as a potentially progressive space to redefine a more inclusive national discourse (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis, 1992). There have also been important critiques of multiculturalism from the perspective of gender. Martin (1991) argues, for example, that Australian multiculturalism privileges ethnicity to the extent that the concerns of immigrant women *as women* are either ignored or marginalised. This is so because multiculturalism focuses on the expression of ethnic identities but does not acknowledge that these identities are also gendered. The concept of citizenship that underpins Australian civil society and hence multiculturalism is also based on a number of sexist assumptions. In particular, the domestic or private sphere, more commonly associated with women, is ignored (Vasta, 1993).

Gendering National Immigration Policies

Immigration policies, both in theory and practice, determine the official categories and policies under which women enter Australia and Canada and hence influence their subsequent labour market, education, and other experiences. Far from being neutral, immigration policies are gendered; national policies presume, and construct, men and women to be different, a situation not specific to Australia and Canada (Koffman and England 1997). In this section we outline some of the ways that different assumptions about men and women form central planks of immigration policy in both countries.

Immigration policies fall within broader citizenship policies (Boyd 1988, 1997). In Canada the use of family ties to define categories of admissibility, and the assumption that families must provide members with an economic safety-net, act together to define one family member as an independent immigrant and all others as dependants (Boyd, 1997). In the past it was mandatory for married men to be designated the independent immigrant in a family. This explicit gender-bias was removed in 1974 (Boyd, 1988). In practice, however, the points system used to determine admissibility (based on points for education, occupation, work experience, language ability and the like) favours designating men as the independent immigrant. Indeed, the very definition of 'skills' so central to contemporary immigration policies in Australia and Canada is embedded in male breadwinner norms and masculine privilege (Abu-Laban, 1998; Ralston, 1994). Not surprisingly, between 1981 and 1991 there were nine times as many women as men who entered Canada as dependent spouses (Boyd 1997,154).

This situation is almost exactly mirrored in Australia. According to Ruth Fincher's analysis, Australian immigrant selection policy was underpinned by racist and sexist constructions. For example, 'active immigrant entrants', or 'principal applicants' "are more frequently men, not because men are more active but because of the administrative interpretation of activity as something with which males best comply" (Fincher 1997, 223). Even with the current emphases on skill, women continue to enter Australia through family, partly because criteria like years of experience and record of success and achievement do not take account of time out of the workforce to bear and rear children (Fincher 1997, 226).

It is important to note, then, that in both Australia and Canada identities for migrant women associated with the 'traditional' nuclear family are crucial. Women are cast in the role of wife and/or mother, responsible for home, family and children. This focus on the nuclear family is deepened through the family reunion program. Marie de Lepervanche has argued that in Australia, because immediate family members (that is children, parents and siblings) are preferred in the family reunion program, "the state exercises a stricter control over immigrant

families than over local ones, ensuring that whenever possible the nuclear family is reproduced” (de Lepervanche 1991,145).

In Canada, moreover, distinctions between dependent and independent immigrant status affects access to language programs, which in turn mediates integration into the labour market and civil society. Until recently government funded English-as-second-language (and in Quebec French-as-second-language) programs, with a training allowance, were only made available to independent immigrants who were (erroneously) presumed to be the only ones destined to join the labour market. Women were only eligible to take ESL classes if they could demonstrate it was essential for their employment but, by definition, most jobs available to women with limited English fluency, such as garment workers and cleaners, were not deemed to require language training. Thus most women could not qualify for language training, and even the minority who did qualify received no training allowance since most were classified as dependent spouses. The result was that the majority of immigrant women had no access to language training at all (Boyd, 1988; Ng 1990; Ng and Das Gupta, 1981). The predictable consequences were social isolation, concentration in low-wage job ghettos, increased dependence on husbands and greater vulnerability in cases of domestic abuse (Abu-Laban, 1998). In response to lobbying by immigrant women’s groups, in 1986 the federal government began to fund a second tier of language training for 'immigrant housewives'. Run through community centres, schools, and settlement agencies, these ESL courses provided a basic level of English, without training allowances to offset paid employment.

The Canadian government changed this language program in 1992 and the new program, Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC), removed explicit gender barriers. The majority of funding was diverted from specific language training for employment to more general and basic language skills available to every landed immigrant who was not a Canadian citizen (Boyd, 1997). In addition, responding to further demands made by immigrant women's groups, some subsidised childcare spaces were provided, although spaces are limited and waiting lists often long (Creese, 1998). Moreover, in the process of eliminating explicit biases against women the government eliminated training allowances and reduced the level of language instruction for everyone. In addition, women’s domestic responsibilities, which

actually intensify after migration (Giles and Preston, 1996; Man, 1995; Ng, 1982), can prevent women from accessing language training and other services designed to aid integration into the larger community. Family economic strategies may favour sending men to language classes, while women often accept low-wage jobs to support their husband's training. Citizenship can be achieved after three years in Canada, at which time eligibility for language training and other services ends. Child rearing responsibilities and family economic strategies may combine to delay women's ability to take language training in the period before the family applies for citizenship status. In 1991, 60 per cent of foreign-born women between 15 and 55 years of age who did not speak either English or French were Canadian citizens (Boyd 1997, 157).

Gendered Aspects of Immigration in Sydney and Vancouver

Like national immigration policies, the effects of cities are not gender neutral. The structure of cities, and especially the physical separation of residence from employment, results from the perception that men and women occupy separate spheres – home for women and paid work for men. Home means different things for men and women; a place of respite for men but a place of work for women. Work places have specific gender connotations and construct gender identities. Distances travelled within the city, and how travel occurs, vary for men and women. Both Sydney and Vancouver replicate these general patterns of the gendering of urban space (Gibson and Watson, 1994; Ley, Hiebert and Pratt, 1992). We thus explore the intersection of gender, immigration and the city by taking the categories typically adopted in analyses of gender and cities and chart them in terms of immigrant women.

Labour Markets, Immigration and Gender

What sorts of jobs do immigrant women do? In both Australia and Canada analyses of immigrant labour markets point out significant differences between immigrant men and women, native-born versus overseas born women, and women from English versus non-English speaking backgrounds. Fincher, Foster and Wilmot (1994) point out the following variations:

- historically immigrant women had higher rates of labour force participation than Australian born women, though this difference has now almost completely disappeared
- immigrant women are much more likely to be employed in manufacturing than in, for example, services and retail
- females born overseas in non-English speaking countries were relatively under-represented in professional, clerical and sales and personal service occupations, but over-represented in labouring and related occupations and plant and machine operators
- not all immigrants have similar labour market experiences, specifically the various birthplace groups have had different experiences with manufacturing employment.

Analysis of the 1996 Australian census confirms these general trends. According to Forrest and Johnston (1999, 282) “Migrant females are approximately twice as likely to be unemployed and seeking work, on average, as their Australian born counterparts ... and also much more likely to be in occupations classified as unskilled labourers”. Male migrants, in contrast, were more likely to be unemployed, and less likely to be in trades, managerial and service occupations than their Australian counterparts.

These broad employment trends are fairly similar in Canada. The 1991 Census (Statistics Canada 1995, 129-132) shows that, overall, immigrant women have employment (62 percent) and unemployment (10.8 percent) rates comparable to native-born women (62.9 percent and 10.1 percent respectively), with similar full-time employment earnings (\$26,601 in comparison to \$26,478). However, immigrant women are less likely to be employed in professional and clerical positions, and more likely to be employed in service, processing and product fabricating. Moreover, there are considerable differences within each category that point to the importance of racialisation, something that particularly affects more recent migrants. In comparison to non-visible minority women, visible-minority women have significantly higher rates of unemployment (13.4 percent compared to 9.9 percent), lower full-time employment income (\$24,650 compared to \$26,037), higher rates of employment in service and manual work, and lower rates of employment in management, professional, technical, clerical and sales occupations (Statistics Canada 1995, 144-145). A recent study clearly shows that it is

immigrant visible minority women who fare badly in the labour market, for they face an earnings gap of 9.1 percent in comparison with Canadian-born white women. In contrast, Canadian-born visible minority women have no earnings gap in relation to their white counterparts (Pendakur and Pendakur 1998, 543).

Specific trends within Sydney and Vancouver are, unfortunately, less well documented than national trends. In Sydney, Burnley, Murphy and Fagan (1997) focused on the consequences of industrial restructuring for immigrant labour market experiences, and how these consequences have been shaped by the social, economic and cultural infrastructure of particular places. They suggest that the loss of manufacturing work has had a differential impact on different groups, partly related to stage of initial migration. Whilst not addressing gender in any detail, they document that female unemployment rates were higher than those for males for some immigrant groups (e.g. former Yugoslavia, Greece, Vietnam) but lower for others (e.g. Lebanon, UK/Eire), though some of these differences can be explained through different labour force participation rates. They also outline a geography to this impact of restructuring: “the most severe localised unemployment was found in suburbs with high concentrations of recently-arrived migrants, such as Fairfield and Liverpool” (127). These are suburbs where women (especially those born in Vietnam) are most likely to be employed in manufacturing.

Other labour market positions are also occupied by immigrant women in Sydney. A survey of migrant women’s involvement in small business found that migrant women play important roles as entrepreneurs in their own right. However, migrant women face particular disadvantages:

Businesses owned by women are open for fewer hours, report a lower turnover and find it harder to make a profit than male-owned businesses. ... Immigrant women small business owners were found to be more likely to be married, have a larger family size and rely more on family labour than non-immigrant small business owners (Collins et.al. 1995, 190).

Immigrant women also played a substantial role in their husbands' small business. In the same survey, almost 60 percent of firms comprised a business run by a man whose wife also worked with him (Collins et.al. 1995, 199).

Research on labour market segmentation in Vancouver shows a similar diversity of employment experiences for immigrant women. The employment pattern for immigrants in Vancouver is bifurcated, with more settled immigrants (those who arrived before 1986) faring better than more recent migrants, and visible minority immigrants more likely than others to get 'locked' into marginal jobs in the secondary sector regardless of when they arrived (Hiebert 1999, 362). Women of British origin are evenly dispersed across the (gendered) Vancouver labour market. In contrast, some other groups, for example those of Vietnamese, Indo-Canadian and Filipina origin, all of which contain significant numbers of immigrants, are concentrated in particular sectors of employment: Vietnamese women in manual occupations and manufacturing, Indo-Canadian women in farming and manufacturing and Filipinas in health care and domestic service (Hiebert 1999, 351). For Filipina domestic workers, entry under the Live-In-Caregiver program has become a woman-led process of family migration. The program is typically the only route into Canada for these women, many of whom trained as nurses or other professionals in the Philippines. They must endure at least two years on a temporary work visa, performing long hours of domestic service, while residing in a private home without benefit of enforceable labour standards (Pratt, 1999).

The experience of migrant women in the Sydney and Vancouver labour markets thus reflects the complex interweaving of ethnicity, race, gender and class. At the same time, important differences arise because of variations in local economies and the configuration of immigration trends in the two cities. Like non-immigrant women, moreover, interactions between, rather than separation of, home and work are crucial in both cities. These connections will be explored further in the next section.

Experiences of Place: Homes and Neighbourhoods

The implications of mass migration for the slippery issues of identity and ethnicity, for the social production of place and for the spaces of people's everyday lives, have for the most part only recently been examined by social scientists (Thomas, 1999).

As the above statement illustrates, specific places within cities can have a significant impact on the experiences of immigrant women, not least their negotiations and networks of neighbourhood and home. We suggest that these landscapes are substantially mediated through ethnicity and race.

Both Sydney and Vancouver suburbs are complex mosaics of ethnicity, class and gender (Dowling, 1998; Evenden and Walker, 1993; Murphy and Watson, 1995). But it is also the case that the physical fabric of suburbs is Eurocentric and therefore limiting to migrant women. The layout of suburban streets and the relative neglect of spaces for public assembly, for example, conform to, and reproduce, a western nuclear family norm (Watson and McGillivray, 1994). Housing design is far from appropriate for many immigrant families, not accommodating more than three children, extended family forms, or spaces for worship (Creese, Dyck and McLaren, 1999; Watson and McGillivray, 1994). The work of immigrant women as mothers, therefore, may be limited by city and housing design.

Cultures of planning reinforce these limitations. Louise Johnson's (1994) analysis of the planning of a new suburb on the outskirts of Melbourne suggests that services required by non-English speaking groups living in new suburbs are not addressed. In Vancouver too, settlement services are concentrated in neighbourhoods with the densest immigrant settlement and geared to the largest ethno-cultural communities. Few services are directed specifically to women's needs. Women from smaller ethno-cultural communities and/or living in neighbourhoods with smaller numbers of immigrants face particular problems of isolation (Creese, 1998; Hiebert et al, 1998).

Cultures within neighbourhoods may implicitly or explicitly exclude women from non-English speaking backgrounds. In Melbourne, Lyn Richards' (1992) detailed interviews of residents moving into a new housing estate found residents articulated what they described as 'acceptance' of migrants through a language of *us versus them*. If migrants were seen to 'fit

in' with Anglo-Australian norms then they were accepted; otherwise they remained outsiders. Moreover, cultures of mothering in Sydney are increasingly dependent on cars (Dowling, forthcoming). Yet a recent study (Pe-Pua et al, 1996) of Hong Kong Chinese women in Sydney found their lack of familiarity with driving to be a significant barrier to carrying out parenting responsibilities. Similarly, a poorly developed public transit system was identified by immigrant women in the outer Vancouver suburbs of Surrey and Coquitlam as a particular problem for mothering and social integration into the community (Creese, Dyck and McLaren, 1999).

It is also necessary to look beyond these structural barriers to examine the gendered negotiations of migration and cities. We can see immigrant women transforming the everyday spaces of Sydney and Vancouver both physically and socially. Physical transformations in Vancouver include the introduction of new housing designs and streetscapes, while social transformations range from greater accommodation in the school system to the creation of extensive networks of mutual support (Creese, Dyck and McLaren, 1999; Hiebert et al, 1998). Similarly, in Sydney, Susan Thompson (1994) has demonstrated how immigrant women transform conventional Australian house design and meaning. In the Sydney suburb of Marrickville, places of worship for example can be established in corners of living rooms, while home more generally was a source of power and a symbol of success. Homes and home ownership are also re-negotiated along gendered and ethnic lines, according to Pulvirent (forthcoming). Home ownership is sought by Italian- Australian men *and* women, not because it represents an 'Australian way of life', but as a way to achieve familial goals.

Organizing and Activism

A final component of gendered immigration in Sydney and Vancouver is political organizing and lobbying, a strand that also sees marked similarities between the two cities. Organizations created to address the concerns of immigrant women in Canada first began to emerge in the late 1970s. With the liberalisation of Canadian immigration policy in 1967, and the subsequent shift away from 'traditional' European source countries, demands grew for language training, interpretation, employment training and orientation services for immigrants and refugees.

Grass-roots community organizations developed at the local level to provide services to recent immigrants and refugees. Over time community organizing produced a whole system of government funded settlement services largely contracted out to non-profit settlement organizations (Creese, 1998).

Attention to the gendered nature of immigration processes, and ways in which settlement programs often ignore the specific needs of women, also produced groups focusing solely on the needs of immigrant women (Das Gupta, 1987, 1994; Ng, 1990, 1991, 1992). A host of such organizations emerged at both the local and national levels. Some groups are concerned with direct service provision, for example employment programmes for immigrant women; some are research and lobby groups seeking to produce information and influence government policies; and others encompass both dimensions (Agnew, 1996).

In recent years settlement services for and by immigrant women in Vancouver have adopted a grass roots community development model, responding directly to needs and solutions identified by immigrants and refugees, and are thus potentially more gender sensitive. Programmes have been developed to respond to specific women's needs not met in general settlement provision. In the City of Vancouver they include a range of community health programs, services for battered women, outreach services for mothers of young children, and career development offerings. Some of these are ethno-specific while others are available to all immigrant women. In addition, a considerable number of women's support groups have emerged as immigrant women help each other negotiate the local landscape. There are at least 15 such groups known to us at the present time in the City of Vancouver, drawn from a wide range of communities including Chinese, Vietnamese, Afghani, Somali, South Asian, Latin American, Filipina, Cambodian, and African. For the most part community development workers are members of the communities with whom they work. Activism within women's support groups appears to be one route to a career in settlement work, a field dominated by women from immigrant backgrounds that is characterised by short-term contract work and high levels of job insecurity (Creese, 1998). In addition to grass-roots support, other immigrant women's groups have formed in Vancouver to run resource centres and to act as policy lobby groups.

Similar yet different processes occurred in Sydney. Immigrant women have been vocal in criticising Australian local, state and federal policies and the work of ethno-specific organisations. The critiques of multiculturalism elaborated earlier in the paper are an instance of this. Similar critical attention has been turned toward the gendered assumptions of immigration services. Fincher (1997, 222) has summarized this research:

Even the immigrant-run and government-funded welfare agencies, established since the 1970s to direct social-policy benefits to immigrants, have set up an ethnic politics that has subsumed women within apparently ungendered ethnic identities, although mentioning them amongst lists of ‘problems afflicting migrant groups’.

Jan Pettman (1992, cited in Fincher 1997, 230) has noted that women’s work in ethnic and community organizations reflects their marginalisation in the labour market. Specifically, “the male ethnic elite were incorporated as cultural brokers in the administration of the culturally appropriate services of multiculturalism, with immigrant women only present in insecure jobs as poorly paid grant-in-aid workers or as carers and nurturers in the home propping up government services in the usual fashion”. Ellie Vasta’s (1993) work is especially important in suggesting that some, though not all, migrant service delivery programmes operate with an ethnic group model, which means that disadvantage and need is defined through ethnicity rather than gender. Yet not only does this ignore disadvantage as defined through gender relations, but also “many immigrant women are politically committed to a broader range of issues than simply the politics of ethnicity” (Vasta 1993, 10). One shift in these trends is a different understanding of politics: “many immigrant women do their political work in community services, in the bureaucracy, in non-governmental organizations, in ethno-specific organization, in women’s organizations and in the academy” (Vasta 1993, 15).

These criticisms, and the work of immigrant women, led to the formation of a number of lobby and umbrella organizations for immigrant women. ANESBWA (Association of Non-English Speaking Women of Australia) is a national group, headquartered in Sydney, focusing on policy, advocacy and research. Speakout (Immigrant Women’s Speakout Association of NSW) performs similar functions in New South Wales only, focusing on casework, advocacy, community development and training in cross-cultural domestic violence issues. ANCORW

(Australian National Committee on Refugee Women Co-operative Ltd) is also based in Sydney. It focuses on improving the lives of women from a refugee or refugee-like background at local, national and international levels.

Within Sydney itself, immigrant women groups follow a pattern similar to that found in Vancouver. Most of these groups are ethno-specific, although some, such as Fairfield Multicultural Family Planning, Immigrant Women's Health Services and Asian Women at Work, address issues affecting many immigrant women. In terms of location, most are based in the communities with the highest concentrations of migrants, such as the Cambodian Women's Association and Vietnamese Women's Association in Sydney's southwest, for example, and the Muslim Women's National Network in Granville. These groups, like those in Vancouver, share aims of offering support, language services and assisting settlement.

Conclusions

This brief survey of migrant women's experiences in Sydney and Vancouver illustrates that the social geography of migration is always gendered. The historical and cultural contexts of both Sydney and Australia, and also Vancouver and Canada, produce similarities and differences in state policies, practices and discourses of immigration and nation-building. While the dynamics and politics around multiculturalism and racialisation shift over time, and vary by local and national contexts, the interconnections between gender and these other relations of power and privilege remain salient in defining women's and men's lives.

For many immigrant women in Sydney and Vancouver, as we have shown, effects are felt in family or dependent statuses that shape integration into civil society; in inadequate attention to women's settlement needs; in disadvantaged positions in local and national labour markets; in inappropriate housing and neighbourhood designs; and in increased pressures around mothering. At the same time, immigrant women negotiate their cities and neighbourhoods as they redefine everyday spaces, construct new networks and communities, and actively reshape

settlement, multicultural, and anti-racist policies and practices through political activism at local and national levels. Failure to consider the gendered nature of migration experiences not only results in incomplete accounts of the effects of immigration in Sydney and Vancouver, it often results in making immigrant women passive participants in the construction of their own lives.

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