VIOLENCE DENIED, BODIES ERASED:
TOWARDS AN INTERLOCKING SPATIAL FRAMEWORK
FOR QUEER ANTI-VIOLENCE ORGANIZING

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Interdisciplinary Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Okanagan)

November 2012

Abstract

The research undertaken for this dissertation applies an interlocking spatial framework to the study of anti-violence strategies in queer communities in Canada, with a focus on British Columbia specifically. Drawing on anti-colonial feminist and queer activism and scholarship, it examines the implications of different ways of framing violence and space and their material effects. It encourages scholars and activists to expand the way we conceptualize and respond to violence, by examining the interlocking nature of different forms of violence and the spaces in which the violence occurs. This research asks: What are the stories that queer anti-violence organizers tell about the violence in our lives? What do these stories do? What, and whom do they make im/possible or in/visible, and how do they do this? What stories are told about place and space and what kinds of understandings of violence are made possible or erased through these imagined geographies? What strategies exist for resisting normative narratives and frameworks?

To examine these questions, I focus on a discursive analysis of texts as well as on key social and historical moments through which I also engage in autoethnographic approaches. I critically analyze discourses in various texts including interview and focus group transcripts, lesbian anti-violence curricula, pamphlets and booklets, print and web-based news articles, a website for an urban development proposal, and a report from a human rights tribunal. To do this, I use an interdisciplinary framework, drawing on methodological tools from Women's Studies, Geography, Social Work and Sociology.

The research critiques the colonial, racialized, heteronormative and homonormative discursive practices and politics in queer and feminist anti-violence movements, and

examines how different geographies and forms of violence, such as intimate partner violence and hate-motivated violence, are linked to the violence of imperialism, colonialism and nation-building. It also challenges normative and neoliberal constructions of subjectivity, health, safety, violence, belonging and citizenship in community-based feminist and queer anti-violence initiatives. My analysis reveals the way whiteness is produced through homonormative discourses, and offers anti-colonial and anti-normative strategies for change within feminist and queer anti-violence movements.

Preface

As per policy of UBC College of Graduate Studies, this preface gives a list of any publications or submissions arising from work presented in the dissertation. It was my original intention to use the UBC manuscript-based dissertation format (University of British Columbia, 2008), however in 2010 the university changed the policy and removed this format. I discuss this further in Chapter One. The following publications arise from my dissertation research:

1) A version of Chapter Five has been previously published. Sections from the published article also appear in Chapter One. I am the sole author and all research and writing was conducted by me.

Holmes, C. (2009). Destabilizing homonormativity and the public/private dichotomy in lesbian domestic violence discourses. *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography,* 16 (1), 77-95.

2) A version of Chapter Six has been previously published. I am the sole author and all research and writing was conducted by me.

Holmes, C. (2011). Troubling normalcy: Examining constructions of healthy relationships in lesbian domestic violence prevention. In J. Ristock (Ed.), *Intimate partner violence in LGBTQ lives* (pp. 209-231). New York: Routledge.

3) Sections from Chapter Seven have been previously published. While I am first author, the writing and research was shared equally between myself and the second author Anne

Fleming. In cases where I include material written by Anne in this dissertation, I specifically make note of this in the text.

Holmes, C. & Fleming, A. (2009). The move. In R. Epstein (Ed.), *Who's your daddy and other writings on queer parenting* (pp. 251-261) Toronto: Sumach Press.

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation was researched and written on the traditional, unceded and occupied Syilx (Okanagan) and Coast Salish territories (Musquem, Squamish and Tseilatuth) in the cities also known as Kelowna and Vancouver. I express my appreciation to and solidarity with these nations in their on-going struggles for sovereignty and social, economic and spatial justice.

I could not have completed this work without the incredible support of my family, friends and wider community of scholars/activists. During my six years as a PhD student, many close family members faced life-threatening illnesses, and five immediate family members died. I am grateful for support from my grandparents Margaret and Wilbert McFee, and my parents Allan and Shirley Ann Holmes. Thanks especially to my Mom for her generosity over the last three years when we were both experiencing so much loss and grief.

My daughter Kate was 3 ½ when I started my PhD and is now 9 ½. She doesn't remember a time when I was *not* a PhD student. Thanks to Kate for her sense of humour, wisdom, understanding, courage and sensitivity, and her understanding of social and environmental justice, which always inspires me.

Thanks to my partner Anne Fleming, for her friendship and love, endless conversations about my research, editorial support, unwavering patience, a shoulder to cry on, parenting and kid support, and most importantly for believing in me, reminding me to laugh, never judging, and encouraging me to keep going.

I could not have wished for a more supportive and collegial supervisor and supervisory committee — deep thanks to Dr. Lawrence Berg and Dr. Janice Ristock and Dr. Rachelle Hole for their insightful guidance, support, critiques and friendship, as well as publishing and employment opportunities. I also wish to thank Dr. Kath Browne, Dr. Sunera Thobani and Dr. Sherene Razack for their support.

A wide community of friends, colleagues and fellow students sustained me during this long and challenging process. Thanks to: Benita Bunjun, Gwen Chapman, Fionna Chong, Emily Drew, Marlo Edwards, Michael Hathaway, Laura Hockman, Maria

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents
and in loving memory of my father who died in 2011 before this PhD was completed
and who so wanted to see his daughter become Dr. Holmes.
Even though we would have disagreed about the politics in this research,
I can still feel his love and pride.
This is for you Dad.

Chapter One:
Re-conceptualizing Violence and Resisting Normative Frameworks

This study looks at the way we define, understand and construct violence in anti-violence movements that address the problem of violence in the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two-Spirit and queer (LGBTQ[1]) people, with a focus on community programs that address intimate partner violence (IPV) in queer women's relationships in British Columbia Canada. The research examines the way we conceptualize and respond to violence, by examining the interconnections between space, subjectivity, discourse and violence from an interlocking spatial framework.[2] The analysis that I present in the following chapters attends to these overarching questions: What are the stories that queer anti-violence organizers tell about the violence in our lives? What do these stories do?

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[1] LGBT or LGBTQ is a frequently used (and contested) umbrella category to represent gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, Two Spirit, and queer people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. In some contexts another "T" or "2S" is added to represent Two-Spirit. LGBTQ can have a homogenizing effect blurring differences between gender identity and sexual orientation, and erasing the specificities of power and privilege based on gender, race, class, ability. The distinct experiences of bisexuals, trans and Two-Spirit people are often not addressed or homogenized with this category. Although I use LGBTQ in this dissertation I feel unsettled by it and recognize the limitations and problems it creates. Two-Spirit is used by some Indigenous people to describe the diverse roles and identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer people of Aboriginal descent in North America. Queer is often used as an umbrella term for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two-Spirit identities and communities, or as non-normative gender and sexual identity category, but it emerged in politics and theorizing as a critique of identity, norms and normalcy, where queer is less of an identity and more of an anti-normative practice (Sullivan, 2003). While some transgender people may identify with queer, others do not. In the dissertation I employ the term queer in all of these ways, recognizing the inherent contradictions in using it as an identity category and a radical critique of identity and normative discourses. This reflects the multiple uses and meanings of the term in social movements. I remain troubled by the tensions, contradictions and problems that arise here.

[2] This interdisciplinary poststructuralist framework draws on analytical tools from Women's Studies, Geography, Social Work and Sociology and it is described in detail in Chapter Four. Discourse refers to "a set of assumptions, socially shared and often unconscious, reflected in language" (Ristock & Pennell, 1996, p. 114) that constructs knowledge, produces meaning and organizes social relations. Subjectivity is a concept of the self as socially produced, historically specific, discursively and multiply constituted and shifting. I understand place, space and scale as geographical contexts. Like other cultural geographers, I view space as a social product that is discursively constructed through social practices and processes (for example see: Brown, 2000; Browne, 2004; Duncan, 1996; McDowell, 1999; Puar 2006; Razack, 2002; Valentine, 1996). This challenges the notion of space as natural, static and innocent and explore the relationships between symbolic meanings produced through discourse, social practices and material relations in the constitution of a space (Razack, 2002). An interlocking approach traces how systems of oppression come into being in and through each other, or in other words how they operate simultaneously and depend on one another to function (Hill-Collins, 1990; Razack, 1998).

What, and whom do they make im/possible or in/visible, and how do they do this? What stories are told about place and space and what kinds of understandings of violence are made possible or erased through these imagined geographies (Said, 1978)? What strategies exist for resisting normative narratives and frameworks and what are their effects?

I argue many stories queer anti-violence organizers tell draw on normative ideas that make visible some forms of violence and certain bodies and histories of oppression while simultaneously concealing, denying or erasing others. I ask: How are hegemonic norms (specifically whiteness) produced through these oppositional or so-called emancipatory discourses and what strategies might be useful for dismantling them?[3] What are the spatial narratives that circulate in queer anti-violence discourses and what is produced through them? How do these spatial imaginings influence what counts as violence and which strategies we use to eradicate it? A central goal of my research is to expose the taken-for-granted assumptions within dominant feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence discourses and examine their consequences or effects.[4] The dissertation has another related purpose, which is to examine alternative ways of framing and resisting violence.

My interest in these questions emerges from over twenty years of research and community-based practice in educating about violence against women and in LGBTQ communities, and in feminist and queer health promotion. To answer these questions, this

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[3] Whiteness is a historically specific and racialized social and spatial formation (Hoelscher, 2003; Kobayashi & Peake, 2000). It is: i) a location of structural advantage that white people occupy; ii) a standpoint from which white people understand the world and their position in it; and iii) a set of cultural practices that are usually dominant but also unmarked and unnamed (Frankenberg, 1993). In Chapter Four I discuss the work of critical whiteness scholars.

[4] By dominant discourse I am referring to the one granted the status of truth, the agreed-upon framework of language and meaning (Mareck, 1999).

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study examines three moments or case studies that emerged from my community anti-violence work, which I discuss below.

While organizing community educational forums about violence in lesbian relationships on unceded Coast Salish territories in the city of Vancouver British Columbia[5] in the 1990s, I became interested in how educational materials and workshops produced certain discourses about violence: who experienced it, when, where and how, and who was excluded from these narratives. To this end, for my MA thesis research, I analyzed discourses in educational pamphlets and transcripts of individual interviews and focus groups with white lesbian/queer feminist anti-violence educators. For this doctoral research, I conducted a secondary analysis of this previously collected data, applying a spatial framework informed by literature in cultural geography. I used it as a case study to help me understand the following questions: What are the spatial metaphors in dominant feminist and lesbian/queer anti-violence educational discourses and what are their effects?[6] How do conceptualizations of public and private spaces, influence our understandings of violence and the pedagogical strategies we develop? What is the a relationship between white normativity and the public/private dichotomy in lesbian/queer feminist anti-violence discourses?

Later from 2000-2005, as I developed and delivered a health promotion and violence prevention curriculum on healthy relationships for queer women in Vancouver, I had a similar concern about what I and my fellow feminist anti-violence educators were

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[5] The city falls within the traditional and unceded territory of three Coast Salish peoples who have lived in this area for thousands of years. All three are members of the Coast Salish Nation, they include Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh (City of Vancouver, 2012).

[6] Influenced by poststructuralist theory, cultural geographers often examine spatial metaphors in their approach to discourse analysis. This approach looks at the role that metaphors play in social life and in the production of spaces and places (Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts & Whatmore, 2009). I discuss this further in Chapter Four.

constructing through this curriculum. I therefore analyzed the discourses at work in the curriculum as a second case study for this research, asking: How do queer feminist anti-violence organizers reproduce and/or resist normative frameworks, such as heteronormative, neoliberal and white settler colonial discourses and practices?[7]

While working for the same province-wide feminist anti-violence organization, I co-coordinated a series of roundtables and training workshops in 2004-2005, about violence in the lives of LGBTQ people in smaller urban centres in British Columbia, including Kelowna located on the unceded traditional territories of the Syilx peoples.[8] Through this, I became interested in how the city of Kelowna is imagined as a certain kind place for a certain kind of citizen. My interest in these issues intensified upon moving to Kelowna in 2005, just before starting this doctorate. As a third case study in my doctoral research, I looked at Kelowna as a site, in the historical and socio-spatial production of the city, in stories of homophobia, transphobia and racism and anti-LGBTQ violence in the city, in the mayor's refusal to proclaim Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in 1997, and in the subsequent BC Human Rights Tribunal in 2000. Again, I critically examined the discourses surrounding the controversy, drawing on archival data in the form of print and web-based news articles, a website for an urban development proposal,

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[7] Heteronormativity refers to the practices and institutions that legitimize heterosexuality as "normal" and "natural" and thus privileged (Berlant & Warner, 1998; Cohen, 1997). More recently, the term cisnormativity has been used to describe the "assumption that all people are cissexual, that those assigned male at birth always grow up to be men and those assigned female at birth always grow up to be women. This assumption is so pervasive that it otherwise has not yet been named" (Bauer, 2010, p. 356). Cisnormativity is the belief system that underpins transphobia. The terms cissexual and cisgender are used to describe people who are not transsexual or transgender (Bauer, 2010). Throughout this dissertation I critically discuss homonormativity which refers to a particular formation of neoliberal sexual politics that uphold and sustain dominant heteronormative (and white bourgeois) assumptions and institutions (Duggan, 2003). I discuss neoliberalism further in Chapter Four and Five.

[8] Kelowna is located in the unceded territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan,' the Indigenous people who have inhabited the area since time immemorial (Okanagan Nation Alliance, 2004). Their territory is located in the Southern Interior of British Columbia, Canada. The Okanagan Nation Alliance is comprised of seven Aboriginal communities, covering areas both in Canada and the United States.

and a report from the Tribunal hearings, and I contextualized this analysis with autoethnographic accounts of my experience as a white middle-class queer anti-violence organizer and resident of the city. I wanted to understand how the Pride Day controversy and subsequent human rights case set the stage for a specific conceptualization of LGBTQ safety and rights in the city in the years that followed. Here, my questions were: What are the discourses surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day? What can this discourse analysis tell us about how geographies of violence and belonging in LGBTQ communities, are linked to the violence of colonialism and nation-building in a white settler society such as Canada? How is the city of Kelowna produced as a white heteronormative and bourgeois space? How are queer anti-violence and human rights movements related to other social and political movements such as those for Indigenous rights and sovereignty in Canada?

Throughout this time, my approach has been inspired by the anti-colonial queer feminist scholarship and social justice activism of Indigenous women, feminists of colour, low-income women, LGBTQ people and youth, who have challenged narrow and simplistic conceptualizations of violence and the subsequent normative anti-violence organizing strategies and politics, showing how they often secure white supremacy, settler colonialism, capitalism, heteropatriarchy[9] and neoliberalism. Their critiques point to the importance of developing a complex and interlocking understanding of the simultaneous and multiple forms of violence taking place *within* and *against* our communities (Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 1998, 2002; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Russo & Spatz, 2007; Smith, 2005).

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[9] Heteropatriarchy refers to systems that naturalize, normalize and institutionalize patriarchy and heterosexual family formations, identities and practices (Alexander, 1997). Heteropatriarchy fundamentally structures colonialism, white supremacy and capitalism (Smith, 2006).

Re-conceptualizing Violence

For four decades in North America, feminist activists have been organizing against violence against women by speaking out about the prevalence and nature of sexual and domestic violence and developing intervention services for women survivors, such as shelters and rape crisis centres, and working to create policy and legislative changes to address the issues (Richie, 2005). Deconstructing violence against women as a public sphere problem has been an important feminist strategy in contesting heteropatriarchal ideologies that make invisible the pervasive violence occurring in women's intimate relationships and the spaces of their homes. Feminist theorists and activists have disrupted this narrative that constructs public spaces as the primary site of violence and danger for women and the private space of the home as a place of safety (see Price, 2002; Russo, 2001). Similarly, feminist geographers have challenged masculinist ideological frameworks by demonstrating how the private space of the home is as important to understanding social and economic relations as "the public spaces on which geographers have traditionally focused" (Pain, 2001, p.127).

While effective in disrupting some hegemonic narratives, these ideological moves have had multiple and contradictory effects. Some activists and scholars (largely women of colour, Indigenous women, low-income and poor women, lesbian, bisexual, queer and transgender communities, and youth) have argued that the established anti-violence frameworks that have dominated the movement have focused too narrowly on gender-based interpersonal violence in the private sphere of the heterosexual home and have lacked an analysis of the intersecting and interlocking nature of gender, race, sexuality,

class and disability — thereby ignoring the complex, diverse and multiple forms and contexts of violence in women's lives (Almeida, Woods, Messineo, Font, Heer, 1994; Chen, Dulani, & Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarashinha, 2011; Hill-Collins, 1990; Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 1998; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Ristock, 2002; Russo, 2001; Russo & Spatz, 2007; Smith, 2004).

Some have argued that many attempts to address these theoretical and material exclusions have taken an additive approach that has continued to normalize some experiences while marginalizing others (Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 1998; Ristock, 2002; Smith, 2004; Van Natta, 2005). Frequently, certain forms of violence (such as racist, colonial, or state violence) are conceptually erased or denied within existing dominant Western feminist frameworks, which have focused exclusively on interpersonal violence (Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Monture-Angus, 1995; Price, 2002; Razack, 2002; Russo, 2001; Smith, 2005). Additionally, the connections between violence conceptualized as "hate-motivated" or "bias-based" violence (such as racist and/or homo/transphobic violence for example) and "sexual/domestic" violence are not usually made visible or integrated into the analysis and accompanying anti-violence strategies. Furthermore, the very public violence of racism, colonialism and nation building is normalized as something other than violence and thus erased or made invisible (Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 2002). Accordingly, there is a growing understanding that the categories we use to conceptualize violence are not merely descriptive, but they are also constitutive, in that they help bring our understandings of violence into being in some ways, but not in others.

Scholars who disrupt this "grand narrative" of feminist theorizing on violence (Ristock & Pennell, 1996) have suggested that feminist anti-violence theories and practices must incorporate an analysis of multiple and interlocking forms of violence including: white supremacy, colonialism and genocidal practices (Almeida et al., 1994; Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Lawrence, 1996; Monture-Angus, 1995; Razack, 1998; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Russo, 2001; Smith, 2005; Taylor & Ristock, 2011); racist violence (Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Monture-Angus, 1995; Razack, 1998, 2002); racist immigration laws (Carraway, 1991; Jiwani, 2006); history and processes of globalization (Bhattacharjee, 1997, 2001; Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Razack, 1998; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Smith, 2005); neoliberalism (Bumiller, 2008; Incite!, 2007; Spade, 2011); law enforcement (including all forms of policing and jailing) (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Incite!, 2006; Richie, 2005); poverty/economic oppression (Carraway, 1991; Lawrence, 1996; Monture-Angus, 1995); militarism and tourism (Trask, 2004); gender binaries and transphobic violence (Courvant & Cook-Daniels, 2000; Lombardi, Wilchins, Priesing, & Malouf, 2001; Namaste, 1996; White & Goldberg, 2006); and heterosexism and same-sex/gender relationship abuse (Eaton, 1994; Faulkner, 1991, 1998; Kanuha, 1990; Ristock, 1994, 2002; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Van Natta, 2005; Waldron, 1996). These theorists emphasize the importance of expanding the existing narrow definitions of gender-based violence (intimate partner violence and sexual assault), and argue for the need to address interpersonal and state violence simultaneously (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Chen et al, 2011; Chung & Lee, 2002; Incite!, 2006; Jiwani, 2006; Massaquoi, 2005; Monture-Angus, 1997; Nayak & Suchland, 2006; Razack, 1998; Russo, 2001; Russo & Spatz, 2007; Smith, 2005; Taylor & Ristock, 2011).

A central theme evident – but not explicit – in the work of these activists and scholars is the need to break down the discursive construction of public and private spaces. I argue that in different ways, they are calling for a spatial analysis of violence, one that pays attention to the violence enacted on bodies and communities at different sites, relational scales and from multiple sources. Feminist scholars and activists have long critiqued decontextualized framings of violence and have studied the diverse social, structural and economic contexts of violence; however, this has not always included an analysis of *spatial* contexts or the application of spatial analytical tools. A spatial analysis attends to the complex and relational processes by which violence on certain bodies, in certain spaces, becomes normalized or naturalized (Razack, 2002). A spatial framework informed by anti-colonial and critical race feminist theories in critical geography also draws attention to questions of geopolitics, colonialism, racism and racialization, migration, globalization, nationalism, state violence, citizenship, neoliberalism and the relationality of multiple scales and spaces.[10]

While these issues might appear to be primarily theoretical concerns, they emerged through my community anti-violence work developing curriculum, conducting training and prevention workshops, developing policies and organizing within various grassroots social movements. I approached the research presented here wanting to know more about the relationship between our explanatory frameworks, hierarchical power relations within social justice movements, our organizing strategies and the wider socio-spatial contexts including the impact of neoliberalism and the ongoing white settler colonialism in Canada. I saw how critical it is for us to shift the way we understand and talk about violence in order to transform the strategies that we use to prevent, intervene

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[10] I discuss these approaches further in Chapters Two, Three and Four.

in, and end violence. My approach challenges the binary distinction between theory and practice and recognizes that "we literally have to think ourselves out of these crises through collective praxis and particular kinds of theorizing. Crises are what provoke the opportunity for change within organizations" (Alexander & Mohanty, 1997, p. xx) and social movements.

Entry Points

My entry point in this research is my experience as a white middle-class able-bodied cisgender queer femme who has been active in feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence and social justice movements for over twenty years.[11] My activism and research interest about the realities of violence in queer women's lives grew out of my desire to better understand my own experiences of violence in my first lesbian relationship, and more recently the homo/transphobic harassment and threat of violence experienced by both my butch/queer partner and our gender nonconforming child. My social location not only speaks to the way I experience marginalization (as a queer woman and survivor of violence) but also how I am positioned in society in terms of power that comes from the privileges I experience (as a cisgender woman who is white, from a middle-class family, who is university-educated and able-bodied).[12] My research is also motivated by a desire to more deeply understand some of the persistent problems and tensions that I experienced and observed in anti-violence organizing, such as race-neutral analyses of

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[11] I have been involved in various community-based and academic strategies to address lesbian/gay intimate partner violence, as well as other forms of violence in the lives of LGBTQ people. This has included intervention, prevention and health promotion initiatives, curriculum development and training for anti-violence, health care and criminal legal system responders, networking strategies and community-development initiatives for advocates and service providers, as well as research and writing.

[12] I discuss the complexities of my class background further in a footnote in Chapter Eight.

gender and sexual violence, white supremacist and settler colonial thinking, classism, professionalization, neoliberalism, heteronormativity and homonormativity.[13] I use this personal narrative not as a confessional strategy or to claim an authoritative voice, but as a place from which to critically reflect on work I have been involved in, to acknowledge my investments and commitments to racial, economic, sexual and gender justice in my research and activism, and to critically examine how I am personally implicated and complicit in the interlocking hierarchies within these social movements and spatial formations in a white settler society. I also want to highlight the partiality of the story I tell in this dissertation and the way it is produced through my subject position, my experiences as a queer anti-violence activist, and my political and theoretical perspectives.

My research is informed by my commitment to use knowledge in ways that shifts and transforms discourses and practices (my own and others) within social justice movements and in the world more broadly. I use a critically reflexive feminist framework that challenges positivist approaches to research and instead recognizes that knowledge production is never neutral or objective and is always implicated in power relations. Using a critically reflexive approach is helpful for examining my own resistance and complicity in the research process and within the social movements of which I am a part (English & Irving, 2008; Ristock & Pennell, 1996).

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[13] The term homonormativity was first introduced by Lisa Duggan (2003) to refer to discursive and socio-material practices articulated by gays and lesbians that support rather than resist heteronormative neoliberal projects.

Themes Explored

My research expands the way we conceptualize and respond to violence by applying an interlocking spatial framework to examine discourses about violence, health, oppression and privilege, space and belonging, and from a number of related sites. I explore stories about violence and space — how violence is explained and represented through a series of nested and relational spatial scales[14] — the body, the city, the non-profit, social movements and the nation (drawing on Brown, 2000). Most importantly, the research critically investigates the way certain forms of violence are discursively erased, denied, repressed or coded as something other than violence in these stories (Jiwani, 2006).

I illustrate the normative racialized discursive practices and politics embedded in feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence organizing, and highlight the relational nature of different anti-violence and human rights struggles. This also involves a critique of neoliberalism, whiteness and colonialism within psychological and human rights discourses frequently embedded within LGBTQ anti-violence literature and activism. I argue that questions related to citizenship, belonging, white settler colonialism, racial state violence and Indigenous sovereignty are central issues that must be addressed within feminist and queer anti-violence movements. My research encourages activists and scholars to examine our "everyday acts of white supremacist thought and practice" (hooks, 2003, p. 40) and to commit to challenge all manifestations of settler colonialism –

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[14] Within geography, scale has been conceptualized as different levels of geopolitics (i.e. an ascending scale from the body to the globe) but with more recent attention to the social construction, discursive and relational nature of scale. This includes the understanding that the social construction of scale affects cultural and political landscapes and challenges hierarchical and binary constructions of scale, place and space (Howitt, 2000).

both within queer and feminist social justice movements and in the wider geopolitical contexts as well.

This study highlights specific examples from my work in queer and feminist anti-violence movements to illustrate the way the violent and "living nature of colonialism" (De Leeuw & Hunt, 2012) is continually erased within queer and feminist anti-violence, safety and rights discourses in Canada. A central assumption of my research is that the stories we tell about violence in a white settler society are also spatialized stories about who belongs and who doesn't belong in the nation (Razack, 2002). These stories (and the categories produced through them) rely on one another in complex and hierarchical ways, and they are materialized through racist violent practices. Central in this interlocking analysis, is the understanding that colonial violence is always gendered and sexualized (Razack, 2002; Smith, 2005) and that processes of heterosexualization are integral to colonial nation building (Alexander, 2005; Driskell, Finley, Gilley & Morgensen, 2011; Morgensen, 2011; Smith, 2010b). I also interrogate discourses and neoliberal politics of white homonormativity and settler homonationalism (Morgensen, 2011; Puar, 2007).

Within the field of anti-racist feminist studies, scholars and activists use various terms to describe their framework, including anti-racist, critical race, post-colonial and anti-colonial. While there are similarities between these (and I use them all in different contexts), I suggest that the term anti-colonial may be most productive for anti-violence theorizing in Canada for the way it can be understood as a critique of the on-going violence of colonialism in white settler societies. In doing so, I situate my work within a body of anti-colonial and Indigenous feminist literature that critiques the settler colonial thinking that exists within some postcolonial, anti-racist, feminist and queer studies in

North America. This framework places the past and present day violence of colonial land theft and dispossession, and strategies of decolonization at the centre of feminist and queer theorizing and social movement politics in white settler societies (Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Monture-Angus, 1995; Morgensen, 2011; Smith, 2005; Trask, 2004).

In this dissertation, I pay attention to the discursive and material conditions that determine and regulate what can be named and known, as well as what is unspeakable at specific historical points and socio-cultural and spatial locations. For example, my research reveals how white normative discourses within in queer and feminist anti-violence organizing produce a regime of truth (Foucault, 1980) through the exclusion of colonial and racialized violence. This is frequently accomplished through the rhetorical strategy of naming colonial and racial violence "off topic" or outside of the frame of reference.

The diverse themes and problems discussed in this dissertation include: (i) interlocking and relational analyses of violence and space; (ii) geographies of violence and belonging; (iii) public/private conceptions of space and violence; (v) the relationship between LGBTQ geographies of belonging, safety and violence in the city and racialized, gendered, classed and sexualized citizenship and nation-building discourses; (vi) racialized politics, whiteness and settler colonial thinking within feminist and LGBTQ social movements and heteronormativity and transphobia within feminist anti-violence organizing; (vii) the relationship between neoliberalism and queer/feminist non-profits and social movements in North America; (viii) and the relationships between LGBTQ rights discourses and the violence of white supremacy and on-going colonial violence against Indigenous people in Canada. While I understand race, class, gender, sexuality,

ability, age as interlocking categories, this dissertation research is primarily concerned with processes of racialization, heteronormativity and homonormativity.[15]

To examine these issues, I focus on a discursive analysis of texts as well as on critical, social, and historical moments through which I also engage in autoethnographical approaches. I critically analyze discourses in various texts such as anti-violence curricula, pamphlets and booklets, newspaper articles, interview transcripts and a report from a BC human rights tribunal. I also embrace an "autoethnographic sensibility" whereby I reflect on experiences from my own life circumstances as one research strategy for understanding the larger social or cultural phenomena that I am a part of, and that I am examining (Butz & Besio, 2009).

The Challenges of Defining a Conceptual Framework in Interdisciplinary Research

The title of my dissertation suggests that we should move "towards an interlocking spatial framework for queer anti-violence organizing" and this describes both my conceptual framework for this research, as well as a proposed framework for anti-violence organizing within queer communities. However, throughout the process of conducting my research and writing this dissertation, I have found it challenging to find the most accurate language to describe my analytical approach or framework.

As an interdisciplinary scholar (completing a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies) I have struggled to embrace an accurate and full description of the key definitional components of my framework that is not overly cumbersome. Problems can arise in interdisciplinary research when the research has poorly defined terms or an unclear or

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[15] Racialization refers to a discriminatory and stigmatizing process where a group or individual within a group, is marked and positioned as inferior (Omi & Winant, 1986).

missing conceptual framework or insufficiently explained methods (Moore, Newsome, Rodger & Smith, 2009). I have sought to address these issues in my research by clearly defining my terms and providing a detailed discussion of my interdisciplinary framework and methods throughout the dissertation (specifically in Chapter Four). The "official" disciplines of my PhD are: Sociology, Social Work, Women's Studies and Human Geography, but my research approach is also situated within and informed by other disciplines and sub-disciplines such as: education (sociology of education/adult education/curriculum and pedagogy studies); critical race/anti-colonial/postcolonial studies, Indigenous Studies, queer/LGBTQ studies, cultural studies, and narrative and discourse studies.

I argue for an "interlocking spatial framework" for queer anti-violence organizing; however, I feel that this description is also insufficient and does not fully capture my critique of colonialism in a white settler society.[16] As such, throughout the dissertation I also suggest and describe an "anti-colonial queer" approach. I do so intentionally to highlight and problematize a number of normative discourses and geographies that are produced in and through LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence movements in a white settler and neoliberal socio-spatial context. While my research examines a number of exclusions produced through these normative discourses, practices and spaces, I focus specifically on racialized exclusions and the marginalization of LGBTQ people of colour and Indigenous people. I use the term queer both as an identity and umbrella category, and also as a radical analytical critique of identity and normative discourses, and I recognize the inherent contradictions and tensions in using it in these ways. I situate my work alongside other critical race, feminist queer scholars who view a

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[16] These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapters Two and Four.

queer approach as one that is not only anti-normative, but that also goes beyond a sexual politics of recognition to engage deeply with interlocking/intersectional and anti-colonial/critical race theories and geopolitical issues such as imperialism, colonialism, globalization, migration, neoliberalism and nationalism (Oswin, 2008).

While the term interlocking is often understood as growing out of anti-racist/critical race feminist theorizing, it does not always signify an anti-colonial analytic and a critique of settler colonialism or heteronormativity. Intersectional and interlocking theories have not always adequately addressed how heteronormativity, white settler colonialism and racism operate simultaneously and depend on one another to function. I discuss this further in Chapter Four. For these reasons, I sometimes find the term interlocking inadequate and I therefore think it is important to also describe my framework as "anti-colonial queer" to highlight my focus on racialized, colonial and hetero/homonormative socio-spatial narratives and the way LGBTQ communities are positioned with these in white settler colonial spaces in Canada.

Dissertation Structure

It was my original intention to write a manuscript-based dissertation as per UBC policy allowing either a traditional and manuscript-based structure. The dissertation would have taken the format of three or four separate manuscripts (those accepted for publication, under review for publication, or judged by the committee members as of publishable quality), and would also have included an introductory and concluding chapter. In 2008, UBC Faculty of Graduate Studies' policy stipulated that "Other than minor formatting changes, [included chapters] must not be significantly altered from the

published or intended-to-be-published version" (University of British Columbia, 2008). This allowed for the possibility of some repetition between chapters within the overall dissertation (especially regarding the theoretical and methodological framework) while the author was still required to articulate thematic linkages between chapters.

However the manuscript-based format was phased out on September 1 2010.[17] When this was announced, my committee had already approved the manuscript-based format for my dissertation and I had already completed three manuscripts that would appear as stand-alone chapters in the dissertation: the first was published in 2009 in the journal *Gender, Place and Culture*, the second was accepted for publication in the book *Intimate Partner Violence in LGBTQ Lives*, and the third was under review with the journal *Antipode*. The policy change in 2010 required that I re-write some sections of the dissertation (i.e. to consolidate the methodology and theoretical framework) and to make changes to the format; however the overall structure follows this original vision. In the next section I outline the organization of the chapters of the dissertation.

Organization of Chapters

The next two chapters provide an overview of two relevant bodies of literature. In Chapter Two, I review some of the key theorists and debates regarding feminist intersectional and interlocking theories. In Chapter Three, I review some of the literature on violence on intimate partner violence in LGBTQ communities and briefly discuss the literature on anti-LGBTQ violence.

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[17] "On March 18 2010, the Faculty of Graduate Studies Council endorsed a new single structure and format to be followed for UBC theses and dissertations. The new structure provides considerably more flexibility than the previous structures outlined for traditional and manuscript-based theses and dissertations. For example, manuscript-based chapters can now be incorporated into theses and dissertations that otherwise follow the structure and format of the former traditional thesis" (UBC, 2010).

Chapter Four describes the theoretical framework and methods that inform my approach to research. I use an interdisciplinary framework, drawing on methodological tools from Women's Studies, Geography, Social Work and Sociology. In Part One, I list my research questions. Part Two outlines my theoretical framework with a particular focus on tools from feminist poststructuralist, anti-colonial queer and spatial theories. In Part Three, I discuss my qualitative research design and methods. Finally, in Part Four I discuss the strengths and limitations of my methodological approach.

In Chapters Five, Six and Seven, I apply these analytical tools to my empirical research. I use three case studies to examine my central research questions. In Chapter Five I analyze feminist community-based educational discourses about lesbian intimate partner violence. Drawing on qualitative data from interviews and a focus group with lesbian and queer feminist educators that was collected for a previous project, I conduct a secondary analysis to explore more deeply how the public/private dichotomy and white homonormativity in feminist and lesbian anti-violence educational discourses (found in workshops, conferences, pamphlets and booklets), produce racialized exclusions and white homonormativity.

I continue my analysis of community-based educational discourses in Chapter Six, this time focusing on a queer feminist violence prevention and health promotion curriculum that I designed and delivered, the "Safe Choices Support and Education Program's Healthy Queer Relationships Workshops." In this chapter I analyze competing discourses in a "healthy relationships" curriculum, exploring how they disrupt and/or reinforce normative conceptions of health, subjectivity, citizenship and neoliberal technologies of governance.

In Chapter Seven I take the Lesbian and Gay Pride Day controversy and subsequent BC Human Rights Tribunal in the city of Kelowna, British Columbia from the period of 1996-2000 as a case study for considering the interlocking spatial politics of belonging, gay rights, violence, heteronormativity and white settler colonialism. I also bring an autoethnographic perspective through a critical reflection of my personal experience in Kelowna, as the co-coordinator and educator with the provincial "LGBT Anti-Violence Project: Creating Safe and Healthy Queer Communities," and as a resident of the city.

Chapter Eight brings together the central arguments from the three empirical chapters and concludes the dissertation by discussing some of the resulting implications for practice. I argue that an interlocking queer spatial framework for addressing violence in the lives of LGBTQ people must focus on decolonization/anti-colonial strategies that interrupt and displace the spatial logics of white supremacy and that promote Indigenous sovereignty, coalition building and practices of accountability. This exploration raises crucial questions and directions for practitioners (such as social workers, advocates, counsellors, community-developers, educators, scholars and other activists) who are working to resist violence and promote gender, sexual, economic, racial and spatial justice.

Chapter Two:
Intersectional and Interlocking Feminist Theories

In this chapter I review some of the literature on feminist intersectional and interlocking theories, and discuss why I use an interlocking approach informed by anti-colonial feminist, queer and spatial theories.

Intersectional and interlocking theory is a political critique and methodology that grew out of the anti-racist activism and theorizing of feminists of colour and Indigenous women in North America in 1970s. It challenges singular and universal conceptualizations of identity and stresses the multiple and interlocking systems of oppression and domination operating in women's lives. These activists and scholars challenged white, heterosexist and masculinist frameworks within social movements that positioned gender, race, sexuality and class as separate categories of identity and oppression (e.g. Allen, 1986; Carty, 1991; Lorde, 1984; Maracle, 1988; Spelman, 1988). They emphasized that not only are women oppressed in different ways, but that they are positioned hierarchically to one another in relations of power and privilege (Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 1998).

While both words are used among activists and in the academic literature, intersectionality is most common. It has become a major research paradigm in women's studies and increasingly within other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, geography, cultural studies, social work and health sciences[18]. Despite the proliferation of intersectional discourse, it is not easy to pin down a definition, and differences in

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[18] Explanations of the theory and how to apply it in practice can be found in countless articles, books (Hankvisky, 2011; Lockhart & Danis, 2010; Sokoloff, 2005), textbooks (Andersen & Collins, 2012), manuals (Hankvisky & Cormier, 2009), conferences, university courses (Hill-Collins, 2009), and within materials produced by activist organizations (PeerThink, 2009; Simpson, 2009).

interpretation and practice can lead to confusion. Patricia Hill-Collins (2009) points out that "because intersectionality constitutes a new term applied to a diverse set of practices, interpretations, methodologies and political orientations, we cannot assume that we are studying a fixed body of knowledge or theoretical orientation" (p. 1). Similarly, Wendy Hulko (2009) states that although this paradigm has been popular and widely used,

> the complexity of intersectional and interlocking oppressions appears to become diluted in practice, and conceptual or theoretical interrogations are infrequent. In the absence of theoretical specificity, the misuse of concepts can and does occur, and the resulting confusion can prevent researchers, practitioners, and educators from understanding and applying an intersectional lens to their work. (p. 45)

In some contexts and disciplines, intersectionality is being taken up for the first time or adopted as a "new paradigm," such as within health sciences (Hankvisky & Cormier, 2009) and geography (Valentine, 2007). It is important, however, to resist framing intersectional or interlocking theory as *new*, but rather to encourage contextual specificity about *how, where, and for whom* these ideas and approaches are new. It is also important for researchers to clarify their understanding and application of the theory. In my research, I do this by explaining my preference for the term interlocking to describe my theoretical framework, and later in this chapter, I describe this in more detail.

Often the origin of the theory is traced to the work of Black feminists in the United States and specifically to legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989, 1991) use of the term "intersectionality" and sociologist Patricia Hill-Collins' (1990) use of the term

"interlocking,"[19] However the idea of the simultaneity of race, class, gender and sexuality-based oppression goes further back and in multiple global locations beyond what is now known as the United States. Racialized women have named and resisted the interlocking forms of oppression in their lives at various times and in many places. Importantly, Cherokee feminist scholar Andrea Smith (2006) cautions us to not recreate settler colonial narratives in feminist history. She states that the frequently cited theory of the "three waves of feminism"[20] in North America centres white feminists and ignores Indigenous feminist resistance and activism which began much earlier in the United States in 1492 with the arrival of Europeans and Indigenous women's resistance to the colonial patriarchal violence perpetrated upon Indigenous peoples and their lands. Many Indigenous feminist activists and scholars have addressed the interconnections between different systems of domination, such as Patricia Monture-Angus (1995) when she wrote:

> My world is not experienced in a linear and compartmentalized way. I experience
> the world simultaneously as Mohawk and as woman….To artificially separate my
> gender from my race and culture forces me to deny the way I experience the
> world. Such denial has devastating effects on Aboriginal constructions of reality.
> (p. 178)

Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix (2004) trace the feminist debates about the

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[19] The intersectionality paradigm was not widely recognized in sociology until the publication of Patricia Hill-Collins' (1990) work in the 1990s.

[20] The hegemonic feminist discourse of the three waves of feminism, usually identifies the first wave of feminism in North America as the period from the mid-19th century until the 1920s when women fought to achieve basic political and citizenship rights, such as the right to vote. The second wave is often described as the period in the late 1960's and 1970's where feminists pushed beyond the early quest for political rights to address broader social relations and issues such as reproduction, mothering, sexual violence, education, the workplace, and domestic labour. The mid-to-late 1980s to the present has been called the third wave. Third wave feminists often contest and critique second wave feminism for a lack of attention to the inequities and differences among women due to the social construction of race, class, sexuality, nationality, age and ability.

exclusions/inclusions of the category "woman," to the Black women's anti-slavery movement in the US in 1832 and the famous speech "Ain't I a Woman?" by Sojourner Truth in 1851 where she critiqued racialized and essentialized definitions of gendered identity. In 1977 the phrase "interlocking oppressions" was first recorded in the feminist movement in the United States when the Combahee River Collective, a Boston-based group of Black lesbian feminists first used the term to explain the simultaneity of racial, gendered, sexual and classed oppression that they experienced in their everyday lives. In their collective statement they argued for an integrated analysis and practice that examines the interlocking systems of oppression:

> We are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the condition of our lives. As Black women we see Black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face. (Smith, 2000, p. 264)[21]

This view was also represented in the groundbreaking, and now classic works of many other Indigenous women and feminists of colour in the 1970s and 1980s such as bell hooks' (1981) *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, Angela Davis' (1981) *Women, Race and Class*, Cherrie Norris and Gloria Anzaldua's (1981) *This Bridge Called My Back*, Audre Lorde's (1984) *Sister Outsider,* Lee Maracle's (1988) *I am*

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[21] This statement was first published in 1983 in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* by Kitchen Table Women of Color Press.

Woman and many others.[22] This politic was built around the belief that we cannot successfully resist or dismantle one form of oppression in isolation from the others – that injustice against one group is connected to injustice against all, and therefore we must work to end them all. It grew out of the lived experiences of racialized women in social movements who were frequently expected to focus solely on one form of oppression in their analysis and political organizing (such as sexism and patriarchy in feminist organizing, white supremacy in movements of colour, capitalism in movements for economic justice, and homophobia and heterosexism in lesbian and gay liberation movements) (Incite!-Critical Resistance, 2005).

One aspect of the Combahee River Collective's statement that stands out is the emphasis on "an integrated *analysis* and *practice*" (emphasis mine) (p. 264). They also stress that it is "the synthesis of these oppressions that creates the conditions of our lives" (p. 264). Reflecting on this statement in 2000, one of the original members of the group, Barbara Smith, noted that their theory reflected a commitment to address the "basic bread-and-butter issues" facing Black women (p. xvi). It connects theory and practice and encourages the development of coalitions and strategic alliances to end multiple forms of social exclusion, subordination and violence (Hill-Collins, 1990; Hankvisky & Cormier, 2009; Lorde, 1984; Ristock & Timbang, 2005). As I discuss later in this chapter, this attention to the structural conditions that produce unequal power relations has not always been present in intersectional theorizing (Erel, Haritaworn, Rodríguez & Klesse, 2008; Ward, 2008).

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[22] Many others developed this conceptual framework including: Jeanette Armstrong, Emma LaRocque, Madeleine Dion Stout, Angela Davis, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Barbara Smith, Pat Parker, June Jordan, Chrystos, Gloria Anzaldua, bell hooks, and many others.

The Meanings of Intersectionality

Many scholars have traced the debates about different meanings and approaches to theorizing intersectionality (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Burman, 2004; Carastathis, 2008; Hankvisky & Cormier, 2009; McCall, 2005; Norris, Murphy-Erby, & Zajicek, 2007; Valentine, 2007). In this section I briefly review some of this literature.

Crenshaw (1989) used the metaphor of intersecting roads to explain the way race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences. Building on this initial work, she added that intersectionality "addresses the manner in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression and other discriminatory systems create background inequalities that structure the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities, classes and the like" (in Jiwani, 2006, p. 16).[23]

In 1990, Patricia Hill-Collins wrote that Black feminist thought fosters a fundamental paradigmatic shift in how we conceptualize oppression by rejecting additive approaches and instead viewing race, class, gender and other systems as *interlocking*. She explained that additive models "are firmly rooted in either/or dichotomous thinking of Eurocentric, masculinist thought" (p. 225) that rank oppressions (i.e. one woman is worse off than the other). Rather than starting with gender and adding others axes of oppression, she argued that Black feminist thought promotes an interlocking paradigm that

> expands the focus of analysis from merely describing the similarities and
> differences distinguishing these systems of oppression and focuses greater
> attention on *how they connect*. Assuming that each system *needs the others in
> order to function* creates a distinct theoretical stance that stimulate the

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[23] As I discuss further in subsequent chapters, there are limitations with viewing these inequalities as 'background' features.

rethinking of basic social science concepts. (p. 222; my emphasis)

Hill-Collins argued that this meant embracing a "both/and conceptual stance" that examines the relationship between various social relations of domination and that acknowledges that "all groups possess varying amounts of penalty and privilege in one historically created system" (p. 225).

In her later work, Hill-Collins (1997) used the term "interlocking" to refer to macro-level and "intersectional" for micro-level phenomena:

> …[t]he notion of interlocking refers to the macro level connections linking systems of oppression such as race, class and gender. This is the model describing the social structures that create social positions. Second, the notion of intersectionality describes micro level processes — namely, how each individual and group occupies a social position within interlocking structures of oppression described by the metaphor of intersectionality. Together they shape oppression. (p 74)

In this framing she associates "interlocking" with the larger structures and systems of oppression and "intersectional" with individual and social group positions or identities. In 2000, Hill-Collins wrote that "intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice" (p. 18). In a later article (2003), she used the term to refer to micro-meso-and macro-level processes.

In the late 1970s through to the early 1990s, the terms "double jeopardy" (Beale, 1979), "multiple jeopardy" (King, 1988) and "triple jeopardy" (Kanuha, 1990) were used to describe the complexities of multiple oppressions in the lives of racialized women.

Although this language implies an additive model (and has been critiqued and recently rejected for this reason), many of these scholars resisted additive theorizing and searched for new language to challenge singular identity categories that would describe the simultaneity of multiple oppressions without ranking one over the others. For example, Valli Kanuha's (1990) article "Compounding the Triple Jeopardy: Battering in Lesbian of Colour Relationships" was the first to address the simultaneous experiences of racism, sexism and homophobia in the lives of lesbians of colour experiencing intimate partner abuse. She addresses racism within lesbian and feminist communities, external and internalized homophobia within communities of colour and how the "combined" effects of racism, sexism, homophobia and violence impact lesbians of colour in abusive intimate relationships. In her development of the term "multiple jeopardy", Deborah King (1988) specifically sought to challenge an additive approach of "racism plus sexism plus classism equals triple jeopardy" (p.47). Similarly, Himani Bannerji (1993) developed the term "racist-sexism" to describe the interlocking nature of the race and gender-based sexual harassment experienced by racialized women. Scholars and activists use various metaphors and terms that may reflect different meanings and approaches, while in other cases they are synonymous with one another. These complexities point to the importance of paying attention to the politics of language — *how* it is used in practice and what is *produced* through it.

In recent years a number of scholars have sought to map the terrain of intersectional scholarship. Patricia Hill-Collins (2009) identifies three categories:

i) [those who] use intersectionality as an analytical tool to study specific topics and/or social practices; ii) [those who] conceptualize systems of power via

intersectional frameworks, e.g., how the study of saturated sites of

intersectionality reveal how race, class, and gender, sexuality, age, ability,

ethnicity, etc., mutually construct one another as systems of power; and (3) [those

who use] meta-theoretical analyses of intersectionality itself, e.g., projects

devoted to conceptualizing the dimensions of intersectionality as a social theory.

(p. 7)

Jane Ward (2008) suggests there are two central components that make up intersectional

theory. First, intersectional theory critiques universal, singular or essentialist identity

categories and places multiplicity at the centre (p. 34-35). Secondly, it refers to the way

multiple systems of oppression do not operate independently of one another but exist

simultaneously (p. 34). In their definition, Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix (2004)

emphasize history and context in understanding the complex relationship between various

dimensions of social life:

We regard the concept of 'intersectionality' as signifying the complex,

irreducible, varied, and variable effects which ensue when multiple axis of

differentiation – economic, political, cultural, psychic, subjective and

experiential – intersect in historically specific contexts. The concept

emphasizes that different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out

into discrete and pure strands. (p. 76)

Leslie McCall (2005) differentiates between three approaches to intersectional

methodology: *anti*categorical complexity, *intra*categorical complexity and

*inter*categorical complexity. Anticategorical complexity refers to the poststructural and

critical race critiques of universalist and essentialist constructions of categories and

subjectivities. In the intercategorical approach, categories are used in order "to document relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality among multiple and conflicting dimensions"(p. 1773). In this approach the "relational dynamics" are the centre of the analysis. She cites the work of Evelyn Nakano Glenn (2002) who suggests that intersectional theorizing should place greater emphasis on relationality and use race and gender categories as "'anchor' points – though these points are not static" (p. 14). As I discuss later in this chapter, this approach is similar to other scholars who use an interlocking approach, such as Sherene Razack (1998, 2008) and critical geographers who weave together intersectional theory and relational geography theory (see Hopkins & Noble, 2009; Hopkins & Pain, 2007; Valentine, 2007). Thirdly, McCall defines the intracategorical approach that focuses on particular social groups and analyses the complexity of lived experiences in these groups.

Rita Dhamoon (2011) refers to four "intersectional-type approaches" representing different aspects of socio-political life, noting that while they are sometimes used interchangeably, each emphasizes something different and can't be assumed to do the "same analytic work" (p. 233). She identifies these four approaches as:

> The identities of an individual or set of individuals or social group that are marked as different (e.g., a Muslim woman or black women), the categories of difference (e.g., race and gender), the processes of differentiation (e.g., racialization and gendering), and the systems of domination (e.g., racism, colonialism, sexism, and patriarchy). (p. 233)

In this study, I have used all four approaches that Dhamoon describes, although not

always interchangeably or simultaneously. In my work, I view an interlocking approach as not only about making connections between different axes of identity, but also between categories, systems of domination, discourses and spatial contexts. In my approach I look at processes, categories and systems of domination and how these are produced discursively, materially or spatially but with attention to the relationship between subject formation, discourse and power.

Intersectional theorizing is not solely or primarily an academic endeavor. Community-based and activist organizations have developed intersectional and interlocking theories and practices — through the leadership and activism of anti-racist feminists of colour and Indigenous women. For example, the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW) developed "Intersectional Feminist Frameworks" in their work and produced a tool-kit/manual for community groups (Simpson, 2009). Their work stresses the way "multiple forces work together and interact to reinforce conditions of inequality and social exclusion" and addresses the historical and current day contexts of colonialism and globalization (p. 10).

Contexts, Case Studies, Events

A number of scholars have recommended a context-specific approach and the use of case studies, moments or events for intersectional or interlocking research. A context-specific approach may include attention to social, political, economic and geographical contexts. And it may or may not, attend to the connections and relationality of these contexts. While most intersectional/interlocking research explores social-economic and

political contexts there has been less attention to geographical contexts. [24]

Leslie McCall (2005) suggests that by starting with a specific group, event or context as a starting point, the researcher can then work outward to understand how the categories or identities are lived, experienced and produced. She notes that "the point is not to deny the importance— both material and discursive—of categories but to focus on the process by which they are produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted in everyday life" (p. 1783). Sherene Razack's (1998, 2002) approach to studying race, gender, violence and space has similarly relied on a case study approach where she has used specific socio-legal moments and spatial contexts to consider the way different systems of domination rely on one another.

Gill Valentine, Robert Vanderbeck, Johan Andersson, Joanna Sadgrove and Kevin Ward (2010) suggest that examining a case study of a specific event is an effective way to study how the complexities of intersecting categories are experienced in everyday life. They note that by using the event as a "prism" this approach brings attention to the specificity of socio-spatial and temporal contexts and power relations: "as material spaces, events matter because they physically bring diverse people together in one location where abstract discourses and positions in diffuse social networks become transformed into actual tangible, emplaced social relations in which power is outworked" (p. 939).

Writing in the context of feminist social work and anti-violence work, Gita Mehrotra (2010) recommends that in order to understand the multiplicity and complexity of systems, identities and contexts, we should apply a context-specific approach that

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[24] I discuss contexts further in Chapter Three and Four.

attends to the goals and needs of specific groups and contexts. In this way, she is arguing against a one-size-fits-all approach to intersectionality. She argues that we should

develop and use a continuum of different theorizations of intersectionality, with various epistemological bases, that can be strategically applied, depending on the goals of a particular project or practice context. To articulate the experience of diverse groups of women throughout the world, these paradigms must go beyond the usual triumvirate of U.S.-based race, class, and gender to include migration, colonization, sexuality, ability, and other processes of oppression and identity. (p. 417)

I agree with Mehrotra's call for an interdisciplinary approach that recognizes a range of socio-spatial and historical contexts and complexities and my study extends this by highlighting spatial contexts and spatial theoretical tools. Other scholars researching violence from an intersectional framework such as Janice Ristock (2002), Natalie Sokoloff and Ida Dupont (2005), Anne Russo and Melissa Spatz (2007) have similarly argued against a one-size-fits-all approach and have stressed the importance of an intersectional and context-specific approach. In her research on violence in lesbian relationships, Ristock (2002) argues that we need to resist all-explanatory models and universalizing narratives and pay attention to the different social contexts, specificity and heterogeneity of relationships. She brings forwards women's stories that do not fit the available discourses, categories and constructs and argues for "the need to move away from either/or categories and static models, stressing instead the need for more contextualized, multiple and multifaceted understandings" (p. 179).

Intersectional or interlocking theories have not been widely applied in the field of

geography, although importantly some feminist geographers such as Audrey Kobayashi and Linda Peake (1994, 2000), Laura Pulido (2002), Ruth Wilson-Gilmore (2002), and Katherine McKittrick (2006) have been addressing connections between race and gender for many years. Still, theories defined as "intersectional" have only recently been taken up by some critical geographers (Brown, 2011; Browne, 2006; Hopkins & Noble, 2009; Hopkins & Pain, 2007; Oswin, 2008; Puar, 2007; Valentine, 2007). Gill Valentine (2007) has noted that feminist geography can make important contributions to "advance the theorization of intersectionality through its appreciation of the significance of space in processes of subject formation" (p. 10). Within the field of critical geography, scholars are calling for future research that applies an intersectional lens to examine the relationships between space, identities and systems of power, to deepen our understandings of the complexities of social and cultural geographies (Brown, 2011; Oswin, 2008; Valentine, 2007). For example, they have begun exploring the intersections of space with gender, body size and age (Hopkins, 2008; Hopkins & Pain, 2007; Longhurst, 2001), masculinities (Hopkins & Noble, 2009), of gender and class (McDowell, 2004), sexualities (Browne, Lim & Brown, 2007; Knopp, 2007; Oswin, 2008), and race and heteronormativity (Oswin, 2008; Puar, 2007).

My approach in this study, builds on and extends the work of the scholars discussed above, by applying a spatial framework informed by intersectional and interlocking feminist theories, to look at the relationship between social, political, discursive and spatial contexts. Specifically I apply this framework to examine discourses in three case studies: i) white queer/lesbian anti-violence educators in Vancouver BC; ii) a queer/lesbian violence prevention and health promotion curriculum in Vancouver BC;

iii) and homophobic and transphobic violence in Kelowna BC, and the related human rights struggles surrounding Kelowna's Lesbian and Gay Pride Day.

However my work is also attentive to the limitations with intersectional theories and to the issues raised about some problematic interpretations and applications of the theory, which I briefly discuss next.

Tensions and Limitations

Recently there have been important discussions about the limitations with intersectional theory (Erel et al., 2008; Puar, 2011; Ward, 2008). Some argue it has been used in ways that are contrary to its original intentions and as well, that it has become depoliticized and de-raced (Erel et al., 2008). While Crenshaw (1993) emphasizes that an intersectional approach challenges the idea of separate categories and stresses the importance of attention to the political and material contexts, too often intersectional theorists explore how systems or identities are separate but parallel, and many merely name multiple social locations but stop short of addressing the structural, spatial and material contexts that produce inequalities (Erel et al., 2008).

Another concern has been the limited engagement with axes of identity and oppression beyond gender and race. Until more recently, class, disability, age and sexuality have not been given the same attention (Brown, 2011). This is significant given the early intersectional theorizing by Black lesbian feminists such as Audre Lorde and those of the Combahee River Collective discussed earlier, which included an analysis of heterosexism and classism. In a recent anthology on intersectionality and sexuality, the editors made the following assessment about the literature:

A concern with sexuality is apparent within scholarly work on 'intersectionality' as a spoke on the 'intersectional wheel', but these intersections are often minimally gestured towards rather than empirically substantiated, demonstrated and 'delivered'; the formalistic addition and repetition of 'intersectionality' leaves out the intimate interconnections, mutual constitutions and messiness of everyday identifications and lived experiences. (Taylor et al., 2010, p. 2)

Some attention has been raised about the way intersectional theory is being taken up in different disciplines and contexts, which recently prompted Patricia Hill-Collins (2009, 2012) to refer to it as a "traveling theory":

As a 'traveling theory', intersectionality is being used across disciplinary borders, in different national contexts, as well as across boundaries that separate scholarly knowledge from the everyday knowledge of social activists. What happens when an idea like intersectionality travels across multiple social locations? For example, what are the effects on an idea developed within a specific social context, in this case, intersectionality developed within social movement politics that travels into other settings with very different power relations? The traveling nature of intersectionality enables us to see various boundaries and borders. (2009, p. 9)[25]

Hill-Collins raises questions about the potential for intersectional theory to become de-contextualized and detached from the politics, power relations and social movement agenda it was originally inspired by. Similarly, some anti-racist queer activists and theorists have recently raised concerns about the "depoliticization of intersectionality

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[25] In 1982 Edward Said developed the notion of "traveling theory" to describe the way ideas or theories "travel" from place to place (Bayoumi & Rubin, 2000, p. 195). While Said argued that through this process, theory can become de-historicized, de-contextualized and domesticated, he later revised his argument to contend that a theory could be revitalized through a reinterpretation in a new political and social context (Bayoumi & Rubin, 2000, p. 195).

talk" (Erel, et al., 2008). I share these concerns and have witnessed the way intersectional discourse can be mobilized to prop up and legitimate neoliberal regimes and secure white normativity, and I discuss some of the implications further in Chapter Six.

Some critics have argued that the term intersectionality frequently describes the multiplicity of identities and oppressions, but evades a deeper analysis of how they work together and what is produced through them, or in other words, how they *are* each other and give content to each other (Razack, 2008). Some apply an intersectional analysis to focus solely on multiply marginalized groups, missing the way *all* identities are multiple and intersectional, and the way privilege is produced through interlocking systems. Some have noted that these challenges are due to the successive nature of language or the constraints of space within publications. Gill Valentine (2007) suggests that the complexity of intersectionality means that it is difficult to fully illustrate the implications of this complexity within a single journal article. She argues that one of the problematic results "of this limitation is that work on intersectionality often collapses back to a focus on the experiences of nonprivileged groups rather than on how privileged or powerful identities are 'done' and 'undone'" (p. 14).

Anna Carastathis (2008) has noted, in many cases intersectionality is used to focus on the inclusion of "difference." Equally problematic are instances where the language of intersectionality (like the language of "diversity") is deployed primarily so as to not appear white/racist, middle-class/classist, etc. but lacks an applied intersectional analysis (for discussion of this see Ahmed, 2004; Puar, 2011). In Chapter Six I discuss how a discourse of intersectionality functions in this way in a queer relationship violence prevention curriculum.

Relatedly, Jasbir Puar (2005, 2011) has argued that intersectional theorizing fixes and stabilizes identities missing how time, spaces and bodies are mobile and interwoven. Drawing on the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Puar introduces the concept of "assemblage" into the discussion on intersectionality (2005). She writes:

> As opposed to an intersectional model of identity, which presumes components – race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, age, religion – are separable analytics and can be thus disassembled, an assemblage is more attuned to interwoven forces that merge and dissipate time, space, and body against linearity, coherence, and permanency. (p. 127-128)

She critiques the way intersectional theory stabilizes identity across space and time, which denies the "performative aspects of identification" (2007, p. 212). Puar argues that

> [n]o matter how intersectional our models of subjectivity, no matter how attuned to locational politics of space, place, and scale, these formulations—these fine tunings of intersectionality, as it were, that continue to be demanded—may still limit us if they presume the automatic primacy and singularity of the disciplinary subject and its identitarian interpellation. (p. 206)

In her most recent work (2011) she claims that in its most common usage, intersectionality always produces a racialized Other: "what the method of intersectionality is most predominantly used to qualify is the specific 'difference' of 'women of colour' " (p. 2). She suggests that "[m]uch like the language of diversity, the language of intersectionality, its very invocation, it seems, largely substitutes for intersectional analysis itself" (p. 2). Based on my analysis of intersectional discourses within anti-violence curriculum and pedagogical practice in this study, I concur with Puar

that these problems exist.

Like Hill-Collins' discussion of the limitations of intersectionality as a traveling

theory, Puar (2011) expresses concerns and questions about the "viability of

intersectionality as a theoretical frame" in this current socio-spatial and political context:

> What does an intersectional critique look like – or more to the point, *what does it*
>
> *do* – in an age of neoliberal pluralism, absorption and accommodation of
>
> difference, of all kinds of differences? If it is the case that intersectionality has
>
> been 'mainstreamed' in the last two decades – a way to manage difference that
>
> colludes with dominant forms of liberal multiculturalism – is the qualitative force
>
> of the interpellation of 'difference itself' altered or uncertain? (emphasis mine, p.
>
> 2)

Puar recommends "thinking through the intertwined relations of intersectionality and

assemblages" (p. 2). Puar is one of many anti-racist scholars who have recently critiqued

the mainstreaming of intersectionality as "a way to manage difference that colludes with

dominant forms of liberal multiculturalism" (p. 2; see also Ahmed, 2004; Tauqir, 2011;

Ward, 2008).

Interlocking Theory

Some theorists embrace many of the ideas and practices of intersectional theory

but in response to the above critiques and limitations, prefer the term interlocking to

describe their approach. They point out the interlocking nature of these systems and the

way identities are produced in and through them in symbiotic and hierarchical ways.

Anne McClintock (1995) describes interlocking systems of domination in this way:

race, gender and class [as well as sexuality and disability] are not distinct realms

of experience, existing in splendid isolation from each other; nor can they be

simply yoked together retrospectively like armatures of Lego. Rather, they come

into existence *in and* through relation to each other –if in contradictory and

conflictual ways. (p. 5; original emphasis)

I find her explanation persuasive and especially appreciate her attention to the

contradictory and conflictual production of these systems. Building on McClintock's

(1995) and Hill-Collins' (1990) work, Mary Louise Fellows and Sherene Razack (1998)

describe this relationship in the following way:

Systems of oppression (capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy) rely on one another in

complex ways. The interlocking effect means that the systems of oppression could

not be accomplished without gender and racial hierarchies; imperialism could not

function without class exploitation, sexism, heterosexism, and so on. (p. 335)

Fellows and Razack argue that respectability must be understood as that which sustains

hierarchical relations. They show how the discursive move of ranking oppressions or

trying "to change one system while leaving the others intact," ignores how various

systems mutually construct and rely on one another, and leaves "in place the structure of

domination that is made up of interlocking hierarchies" (p. 3). By employing an

interlocking analysis in their research on hierarchical relations between women, they

show that the problem of competing marginalities revolves "around the deeply felt belief

that each of us, as women, are not implicated in the subordination of other women" (p. 2).

This leads women to "race to innocence". They describe the problem of competing

marginalities and the race to innocence:

We draw the conclusion that the systems of domination that position white, middle-class, heterosexual, nondisabled men at the centre, continue to operate among all other groups, limiting in various ways what women *know* and *feel* about each other. Feeling only the ways that she is positioned as subordinate, each woman strives to maintain her dominant positions. Paradoxically, each woman asserts her dominance in this way because she feels like it is the only way in which she can win respect for her claim of subordination. We describe this practice as securing a "toehold on respectability." (p. 4)

This practice secures a subject's position of dominance at the centre by marking and containing the Other (p. 13-15).

Ian Barnard (2004) explains his interlocking theoretical approach to analyzing race and sexuality as "systems of meaning and understanding that formatively and inherently define each other" (p. 2). He also addresses problems with additive approaches, which normalize privileged subject positions as well as the persistent racism and whiteness within the lesbian and gay movement in the US (p. 3), and points out how anti-gay violence has been conceptualized within these singular identity-based frameworks and how this has excluded and marginalized the experiences of people of colour.

As numerous scholars have pointed out, Indigenous women were the first to articulate an anti-colonial feminist critique of white settler colonialism in North America (Razack, Smith & Thobani, 2011; Smith, 2006), and an interlocking analysis of violence has always been central in this analysis. Patricia Monture-Angus (1995) addressed the problem with colonial definitions of violence embedded within the white Western

feminist anti-violence movement. Speaking from her experiences as a Mohawk woman in Canada, Monture-Angus identified racism, colonialism and state violence as inseparable from other experiences of violence in the lives of Aboriginal women. She explains that "violence is not just a mere incident in the lives of Aboriginal women. Violence does not just span a given number of years. It *is* our lives. And it is in our histories" (p. 170). She poignantly argues that the dominant feminist ideology is colonial.

> Organizing against a single form of violence – men's – is not a 'luxury' that I have experienced. The general definition of violence against women is too narrow to capture all of the experiences of violence that Aboriginal women face. This narrow definition, relied on by dominant institutions, structures and groups, constrains my expression of my experience of violence and the reality within which I live in a way that is most counter-productive. In fact, this constraint feels very much like ideological violence. The fragmentation of violence and the social legitimation of only the wrong of physical violence results in a situation where I am constrained from examining the totality of my experience within a movement that is advanced as offering the solution to that violence. The simple truth is feminism as an ideology remains colonial. (1995, p. 171)

Monture-Angus is one in a long line of feminists of colour and Indigenous women activists and scholars in the West who have argued this point and who have stressed the need to embrace more complex, interlocking understandings of multiple forms of violence, and to place the lives of Indigenous women and women of colour and the realities of the on-going colonialism and racism in white settler societies at the centre of our theoretical and community-based strategies.

In 1979 Audre Lorde spoke out about the problems with single-identity analyses and argued for the need to understand the inseparable and interlocking nature of racism, sexism and homophobia (1984, p. 110). Similar to Monture-Angus' words, Lorde stressed that violence in Black women's lives could not be conceptualized as a single act. As she described: "violence weaves through the daily tissues of our lives" (p. 119). Her interlocking spatial analysis is striking, and worth quoting at length:

> Black women and our children know the fabric of our lives is stitched with violence and with hatred, that there is no rest. We do not deal with it only on the picket lines, or in dark midnight alleys, or in the places where we dare to verbalize our resistance. For us, increasingly, violence weaves through the daily tissues of our living — in the supermarket, in the classroom, in the elevator, in the clinic and the schoolyard, from the plumber, the baker, the saleswoman, the bus driver, the bank teller, the waitress who does not serve us. Some problems we share as women, some we do not. You fear your children will grow up to join the patriarchy and testify against you, we fear our children will be dragged from a car and shot down in the street, and you will turn your backs upon the reasons they are dying. (p. 119)

While these words were spoken in 1979, this analytical framework is still not consistently integrated within feminist anti-violence theorizing and organizing thirty-three years later. My research shows that many white feminists and queers continue to conceptualize these issues as unconnected to what they frame as the core and central issues within anti-violence organizing – sexual and gendered violence, and homophobic and transphobic violence. As I discuss throughout this dissertation, this points to the need to examine the

way white supremacist thinking operates (hooks, 2003) within anti-violence movements and to address decolonization as a central feature in all struggles to resist violence (Alexander & Mohanty, 1997).

Andrea Smith (2004) similarly highlights the racialized exclusions inherent in mainstream feminist approaches to violence, emphasizing the need for an anti-colonial framework that addresses interpersonal and state violence simultaneously. Smith maintains that these approaches have unwittingly strengthened white supremacy by missing the interlocking nature of racial and gendered violence and by centering the experiences of white middle-class women (p. 121).

Smith's (2005) work is important also for her detailed socio-historical mapping of gendered sexual violence as a tool of genocide, racism and colonialism. She shows how colonial, racial and gendered oppression cannot be separated because they come into being in and through one another, and as such, "colonial relationships are themselves gendered and sexualized" (p. 1). She argues that colonizers have always used sexual violence as a primary tool of genocide and colonialism, both historically and today — a tool by which certain people become marked as inherently rapable (p. 2-3). This understanding fundamentally alters the strategies for combating violence (p. 139).

Smith critiques Crenshaw's intersectional approach to understanding the nature of racism and sexism in the experiences of violence in the lives of women of colour, arguing that Crenshaw's analysis "falls short of describing how a politics of intersectionality might fundamentally shift how we analyze sexual/domestic violence. If sexual violence is not simply a tool of patriarchy but also a tool of colonialism and racism, then entire communities of colour are the victims of sexual violence" (p. 8). Although she does not

call her approach interlocking, I see her critique of Crenshaw's approach as similar to Sherene Razack's described below.

Sherene Razack (1998, 2008) argues for an interlocking framework that focuses on the mutually constitutive nature of systems and categories and distinguishes this from an intersectional approach. I find Razack's (1998, 2008) use of interlocking theory to examine cases of violence compelling. Inspired by her work, I prefer the word interlocking rather than intersecting to describe how multiple systems of domination, forms of violence, identities and spaces are connected, or in other words how they "come into existence through each other" (2008, p. 62). In the following excerpts Razack (1998) describes the difference:

> Analytical tools that consist of looking at how systems of oppression interlock differ in emphasis from those that stress intersectionality. Interlocking systems *need one another,* and in tracing the complex ways in which *they help to secure one another*, we learn how women are produced into positions that exist symbiotically but hierarchically. We begin to understand, for example, how domestic workers and professional women are produced so that neither exists without the other. First World policies of colonialism and neo-colonialism, which ultimately precipitated the debt crisis and the continuing impoverishment of the Third World and enabled the pursuit of middle-class respectability in the First World, were implemented in highly gendered ways. **(**p. 13, italics mine**)**

In discussing how interlocking systems of domination function in a specific case — the sexualized torture enacted on Arab men by American soldiers at the Abu Ghraib prison in

Iraq — Razack (2008) expands on this distinction between an intersectional and interlocking analytic, describing why she prefers to use interlocking:

> …intersecting remains a word that describes discrete systems whose paths cross. I suggest that the systems *are* each other and that they give content to each other. While one system (…white supremacy) provides the entry point for the discussion (language is, after all, successive), what is immediately evident as one pursues how white supremacy is embodied and enacted in the everyday is that individuals come to know themselves within masculinity and femininity. Put another way, the sense of self that is simultaneously required and produced by empire is a self that is experienced *in relation* to the subordinate other – a relationship that is deeply gendered and sexualized. An interlocking approach requires that we keep several balls in the air at once, striving to overcome the successive process forced upon us by language and focusing on the ways in which bodies express social hierarchies of power. (p. 62-63)

While some intersectional theorists speak about the way multiple forms of oppression *complicate* or *amplify* various experiences of gendered violence, Razack's contribution goes beyond seeing these as complications and stresses that interlocking analyses address how multiple oppressions rely on and produce one another. She acknowledges the successive nature of language but also refuses to allow this to be an end point. In other words, she suggests that we might see one system as an *entry* point for examining how systems interlock as well as how they produce subjectivities and position bodies relationally and hierarchically to one another. The challenge here is to not have the entry point become an *end* point or a point from which to merely *add* other systems, rather than

examine how they rely on one another. George Dei (1999) also stresses the distinctions

between intersecting and interlocking oppressions. Dei states that this distinction is

important for "emphasizing the situational and contextual nature of oppressions and

political practice" (p. 28). For Dei, an

> interlocking analysis goes further to critically challenge the players and policies
>
> that perpetuate the cycle of oppression. An interlocking analysis is a political,
>
> constructive and most importantly, transformative framework that exposes how
>
> subject locations are secured by the dominant power and articulated through the
>
> disempowerment of the subordinated. (p. 29)

Similar to Razack's approach, Dei stresses a political analytic and practice that attends to

the way subject formation is tied to relations of domination. He also underlines a

relational aspect to interlocking theory where dominant subjectivities are formed through

processes of marginalization and subordination. This makes visible the relational,

contextual and hierarchical nature of power relations.

An Argument for Interlocking

Inspired by the work of the above scholars, in this study I use an interlocking

framework to interrogate discourses and socio-spatial power relations through an

examination of three thematically linked case studies. My approach critiques neoliberal

constructions of normalcy and difference, "multicultural" diversity discourses and the

mainstreaming of intersectionality. I resist ranking oppressions or identities, but explicitly

acknowledge that social and spatial *hierarchies* are produced and sustained through these

interlocking relations of power. Although I find the term interlocking to be most salient

and helpful, I am not arguing against the use of intersectional or critiquing all scholars and activists who use this term. I value the work of many intersectional feminist theorists and recognize the significant overlap and points of commonality between those who use interlocking and intersectional in their research and practice. In some contexts I have referred to my work as intersectional because this term is more widely recognized, especially in certain fields or disciplines. However, I suggest the value of interlocking, and I point to the work of the scholars above whose work I find persuasive, compelling and helpful for thinking about the complexities and simultaneity of systems of domination. I am also concerned with problems arising within intersectional theorizing such as: the neoliberal mainstreaming of intersectionality (Puar, 2011; Ward, 2008); the depoliticization of intersectionality and the subsequent inattention to systems of power, privilege and hierarchies (Erel et al., 2008); and the way it is being mobilized within some feminist/queer activism and scholarship in ways that reify white and middle-class norms (Erel et al., 2008; Puar, 2011; Ward, 2008). As I discuss in Chapter Six, these problems can also occur with the way interlocking gets taken up. However I suggest that by paying close attention to the critical analysis of these problems articulated by feminist and queer critical race and anti-colonial scholars such as Andrea Smith (2005), Jasbir Puar (2011), Sherene Razack (1998, 2008), Jane Ward (2010), and Umut Erel, Jin Haritaworn, Encarnación Gutíerrez Rodríguez and Christian Klesse (2008), and by maintaining a vigilant self-reflexive critique, we may be able to deploy interlocking frameworks in ways that: resist the depoliticization, mainstreaming or co-optation of intersectional analyses; allow us to trace the complex ways in which different systems of domination secure one another; and address the relationship between subject formation

and the material relations of domination. Clearly in this socio-spatial-historical moment, part of this work involves keeping a close key on the way diversity discourses (*regardless* of the language used, including intersectional and interlocking) are co-opted and mobilized in ways that perpetuate rather than transform inequities and violence in white settler and neoliberal socio-spatial contexts. For as many of these scholars have noted, in the current neoliberal context, some LGBTQ and feminist social movement leaders and activists frequently draw on the language of diversity, equality, multiplicity and intersectionality in ways that keep racialized, gendered, and classed forms of normativity intact (Ward, 2010, p. 133). I discuss these issues further in Chapter Six in my analysis of a queer violence prevention curriculum.

By employing an interlocking analysis I ask the following questions: How does this category (or subject position, system of oppression, space, or form of violence), produce or make possible these other categories (subjectivities, forms of power and oppression, spaces or forms of violence)? How do they rely on one another? What are the effects? How can an anti-colonial queer feminist interlocking framework shape our strategies for social, economic and spatial justice in ways that do not collude with homonormative neoliberal and settler colonial agendas?

I will return to many of these issues about interlocking systems of power in Chapter Four where I outline my theoretical framework and methodological tools. In the next chapter I continue my review of literature that informs my study, although this time focusing on the body of knowledge about violence in the lives of LGBTQ people. The following chapter focuses primarily on IPV and also includes a brief discussion of anti-LGBTQ violence.

Chapter Three:
Research on Violence in LGBTQ Communities

In this study, I seek to make visible the conceptual frameworks that inform

community LGBTQ anti-violence work and consider the implications of different ways

of framing the violence. In this chapter I review literature about violence in the lives of

LGBTQ people, to provide a context for my work on the three case studies presented in

this research.[26] This chapter begins with a critical review of research literature on IPV in

LGBTQ communities, with a focus on same-gender abuse, and lesbian relationships

specifically. I conclude with a brief discussion of the research literature on anti-LGBTQ

violence, pointing to the trends and gaps in current research.[27]

Intimate Partner Violence in LGBTQ Communities

Most large studies on intimate partner violence (IPV) conducted in North

America have not included LGBTQ experiences (Ristock & Timbang, 2005). Writings on

the topic of "lesbian battering" first emerged within the feminist anti-violence movement

in the United States in the late 1970s to early 1980s, and in Canada in the mid-to-late

1980s (Holmes, 2000). More formal research on the problem of intimate partner violence

in LGBTQ communities began in the late 1980s (Ristock, 2011) although most of the

research to date has focused on lesbian couples and those who have been abused, and

there has been very little research that addresses the experiences of trans people and

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[26] This is not meant to be an exhaustive review of the literature. For a more comprehensive review see:
Faulkner (2006), Janoff (2005), Ristock (2002), Ristock & Timbang (2005).

[27] Throughout my work, I have primarily focused on the problem of IPV within queer women's same-
sex/gender relationships, however the provincial "The LGBT Anti-Violence Project: Creating Safe and
Strong Queer Communities", shifted this approach by addressing both within (IPV) and against
(homo/bi/transphobic violence) LGBTQ communities. Given that my dissertation addresses this and I argue
for an approach that examines the connections between different forms of violence, I include a brief review
of the literature on anti-LGBTQ violence.

bisexuals or those who have been abusive in their relationships (Ristock, 2011). For the

most part, the research is from the United States with some writings from Canada, the

UK, Australia and recently from Asia (Distephano, 2009; IGLHRC, 2010). This literature

includes a wide range of writing including personal stories, service delivery strategies

and clinical issues, community organizing accounts, as well as academic research on

prevalence rates, dynamics and contexts of violence, and theoretical frameworks to

explain and respond to the violence. Despite the increase in research over the past

twenty-five years many gaps remain in our knowledge. Little research examines the

connections between and complexities of violence in the lives of LGBTQ people who

experience multiple forms of marginalization based on their sexuality or gender identity,

as well as racism, colonialism, immigration, poverty and economic oppression, ableism,

incarceration, ageism (impacting elders and youth) and the socio-economic disparities in

rural, northern and isolated communities.

Understanding the Problem: Forms of Abuse

Studies documenting the different forms of relationship violence in LGBTQ

communities have also revealed many similarities to heterosexual IPV. The violence is

typically understood as "the conscious manipulation and control of one person by another

through the use of threats, coercion, humiliation and/or force" (Ristock & Timbang,

2005, p. 4). It can include all forms of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal and financial

abuse and has serious physical and emotional health impacts. There may be an on-going

pattern of abuse including a cycle or increased intensity over time, while in other cases,

abuse may happen less often (Ristock, 2002). Dynamics can seem confusing due to

shifting power relations or due to the similarity of size and strength of some same-gender partners (Ristock & Timbang, 2005). As well, physical appearance or gender expression cannot be used to determine abusive behaviours or patterns.

Certain abusive tactics are produced through the social contexts of heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia and biphobia such as: a threatening to "out" a partner to family, employers, landlord, religious or ethno/racial/cultural community; telling a partner they are confused because they identify as bisexual; denying or ridiculing a partner's gender identity or telling a trans partner they are not a "real" man/woman; threats to negatively influence immigration status or custody/access of children due to sexual and/or gender identity; or threats to disclose HIV/AIDS status (Courvant & Cook-Daniels, 1999; Cruz, 2003; Renzetti, 1998; Ristock, 2002). In some cases, these tactics are combined with and produced in complex ways through racist, classist, and ableist forms of abuse. For example, an abusive partner may use the interlocking contexts of anti-immigrant racism within society and mainstream LGBTQ organizations and communities, along with the homo/bi/transphobia in their partner's particular racialized community, to increase isolation and maintain greater control over their partner (Garcia, 1999; Choudhury, 2007; Ristock, 2002). While some research has identified these complexities, the vast majority of the research has focused primarily on similarities with heterosexual IPV and forms of abuse that are produced through homophobia and heterosexism (Holmes, 2000; Poon, 2011; Ristock, 2002).

Prevalence and Research Contexts

Much of the research has sought to determine the extent of relationship violence within LGBTQ communities to demonstrate the seriousness of the problem. However, it has been difficult to determine clear and accurate prevalence rates because of the social context of heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, and problematic research methodologies (Holmes, 2000; Irwin, 2008; Ristock, 2002; White & Goldberg, 2006). These contexts, combined with other forms of systemic oppression such as racism, classism and ableism, can make it very difficult for LGBTQ individuals to speak out and report experiences of abuse for fear of discriminatory and re-victimizing responses from police, victim assistance programs, health care providers and crisis counselling support services, and as a result most IPV is not reported to these services (Ard & Makadon, 2011; Hardesty, Oswald, Khaw & Fonseca, 2011; Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Ristock, 2004; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; White & Goldberg, 2006; NCAVP, 2011). As well, some are reluctant to seek help due to past negative experiences where their concerns were minimized or ignored (Hardesty et al., 2011; Ristock, 2002). Many LGBTQ people have been hesitant to acknowledge IPV for fear it will be used to fuel harmful heterosexist and homo/bi/transphobic stereotypes about LGBTQ people as abnormal, violent or pathological or that it will be used as justification for an anti-feminist de-gendered analysis of power relations and violence (Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Ristock, 2002, 2004; White & Goldberg, 2006). The dominant definition of intimate partner violence is heteronormative and cisnormative making it difficult for some LGBTQ people to access the discourse and apply this explanatory framework to their experiences (Brown, 2007; Chung & Lee, 2002; Holmes, 2000; Irwin, 2008; Ristock, 2002). For

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example, the categories "domestic violence" and "rape" have been constructed as gender-based forms of violence perpetrated by cisgender men towards cisgender women and thus many LGBTQ people do not even consider describing their experiences using the language because of the heteronormative, cisnormative, gendered, racialized and classed assumptions implied within these categories. Hegemonic masculinity and heteronormative gender role ideologies also convey the message that men should defend themselves in a fight which can influence how gay and bisexual men understand violence in their intimate relationships (Lettelier, 1996; Merrill, 1998; Santaya & Walters, 2011). Some LGBTQ people of colour (Chung & Lee, 2002) and Two-Spirit people have also noted that the category "domestic violence" is conceptualized in ways that does not relate to their experiences therefore making it difficult to recognize abuse in intimate relationships.

In addition, it is difficult to determine prevalence rates due to problematic methodological and sampling procedures (Holmes, 2000; Hardesty, 2011; Ristock, 2002, 2011; Santaya & Walters, 2011; White & Goldberg, 2006). Due to a heterosexist and transphobic social context, many people are not "out" as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans, making it difficult to identify a large random sample (Irwin, 2008; Ristock, 2002) Without this, the rates of violence cannot reliably demonstrate a true prevalence rate (Ristock, 2002). As well, different definitions of violence are often used and with little or no examination of the different social meanings and motivations associated with various acts of violence based on social identity and context, making it difficult to assess if what is being counted as abuse is the same across the board (Ristock, 2002, p. 12; Ristock, 2011; White & Goldberg, 2006). Similarly, differences between lesbians, gay men,

bisexuals and trans people are sometimes erased through the use of the category

"LGBTQ" domestic or partner violence (Ristock, 2011; White & Goldberg, 2006).

In their review of the literature, Janice Ristock and Norma Timbang (2005) found

a wide range of 17% to 52% of IPV in lesbian and gay relationships, which reflects the

issues discussed above. Despite the limitations associated with the research methods and

contexts, statistics are often used problematically by some researchers, journalists and

community groups to argue that IPV in lesbian and gay couples occurs at the same rate or

higher than in heterosexual relationships (e.g. Anderssen, 2008; Messinger, 2011;

Ristock, 2011). This highlights the importance of bringing a critical lens to our

interpretation of these statistics.

There have been fewer studies that examine the rates of IPV within transgender

communities. The largest survey to date of transgender and gender non-conforming

(T/GNC) people (6,450 respondents), found that 19% had experienced violence

perpetrated by a family member because of their transgender identity or gender non-

conformity (Grant, Mottet, Tanis, Harrison, Herman, & Keisling, 2011).[28] In White and

Goldberg's (2006) review of the literature on violence in the lives of transgender people,

they note that trans people "may be more vulnerable to violence across their lifespan than

the general population" (p. 124). Trans individuals can be involved in heterosexual or

same-sex/gender intimate relationships and often the data about IPV does not specify

this. Studies on sexual violence and IPV in the lives of transgender people have noted

high rates of violence in intimate relationships. For example, one study found that 29% of

respondents had been sexually assaulted by an intimate partner (Munson & Cook-

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[28] This statistic is not specific to IPV and refers to violence perpetrated by family members generally, including but not limited to intimate partners.

Daniels, 2005). Another found that 50% of respondents had been raped or assaulted by an intimate partner, yet only 62% (31% of the total sample) of those raped or assaulted identified as survivors of domestic violence when asked directly (Courvant & Cook-Daniels, 1998, p. 2), confirming that trans people may not feel that the category applies to their experiences of violence.

Studies on IPV in the lives of bisexuals are lacking and their experiences are often subsumed within the category of lesbian or gay partner abuse (Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Sulis, 1999), or made invisible in research on heterosexual couples. Controversies about the inclusion of bisexual women and trans people within feminist and lesbian anti-violence organizing, and wider bi/transphobia within LGBTQ communities and society at large has contributed to a lack of understanding of bisexual and trans experiences and the related gaps and theoretical exclusions in the literature on IPV.

Limitations with Research

In community training initiatives and educational brochures, statistics from various studies are often cited to discuss the prevalence of IPV in LGBTQ communities and they are often applied universally without mentioning the limitations of the research. Many studies homogenize experiences thereby ignoring the diversity of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, class, and the different forms of abuse (e.g. emotional, physical, sexual) or contexts of violence (rural/urban, or other contexts of violence such as poverty). Some researchers have problematically suggested that violence may be more rare within certain communities (such as LGBTQ people of colour) based on the fact they were in the minority in the sample without examining factors that might have produced

this narrow sample (e.g. Renzetti, 1998). Similarly, some have made claims about prevalence from research that compares IPV in heterosexual and same-sex/gender relationships, but that actually includes very few LGBTQ people in the sample (e.g. Stevens, Korchmaros, & Miller, 2010). Often these limitations are not readily apparent in the discussion only to be found hidden in the footnotes or conclusion. Even when limitations are acknowledged, they are often disregarded in order to make certain truth claims (e.g. Klosertmann, K., Kelley, M., Milletich, R. & Mignone, T. 2011; Stevens et al., 2010). For example, in one study (Stevens et al., 2010) the authors acknowledge it is problematic to assume that prevention and intervention models based on heterosexuals' experiences will necessarily work for lesbians, yet they compare "drug abusing" women's use of violence in heterosexual and lesbian relationships without discussion of the significantly different social contexts of these relationships. As well, in this study, they had a very small sample of lesbians compared to heterosexuals, and the women in the study reported higher levels of victimization than perpetrating IPV, however these facts are minimized in their discussion.

Janice Ristock (2011) recently examined similar truth claims in a large study conducted by Statistics Canada and the subsequent national media discourses that followed the release of this report. In 2008, the *Globe and Mail* ran an article based on data from this study with the headline: "Domestic violence is more widespread among same-sex couples than straights" (Anderson, 2008). It cited the Statistic Canada study which reported high rates of violence experienced by LGB people — 15 % of gay men and lesbians, and 28% of bisexuals abused by an intimate partner, compared to only 7% of heterosexuals – suggesting this large study revealed that LG relationships are more

violent than heterosexual ones (Ristock, 2011, p. 2). However, as Ristock astutely points out, there are significant problems with these claims. Her analysis shows that while higher victimization rates were reported by LGB people, they didn't ask respondents if the abuse took place in a same-sex/gender relationship or a previous or current heterosexual relationship, so it isn't possible to claim that violence in same-sex/gender relationships is more widespread. They also neglected to differentiate between types of violence (physical, emotional, sexual) and didn't address gendered differences (i.e. the LGB female and male respondents were combined into one category). Ristock compares this to other large comparative surveys that have looked at differences and more specific details, such as one of the largest studies on IPV in the U.S., the National Violence Against Women Survey, which involved a telephone survey with a nationally representative sample of 8,000 women and 8,000 men which compared IPV rates between same-sex and heterosexual couples (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). This survey found that women living with female intimate partners experience less IPV than women with male partners, and men in same-sex relationships experienced higher rates of violence than men with female partners, and the lowest rate of IPV was for men living with female intimate partners (Ristock, 2011 p. 2). Their "findings suggest that intimate partner violence is perpetrated primarily by men, whether against male or female partners" (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000, p. 31).

In her discussion of this context, Ristock (2011) cautions us to avoid making sweeping generalizations based on the limited and partial information gathered in research thus far, and to bring greater awareness to the contexts and specific details of the violence that is perpetrated and experienced. With Norma Timbang, she argues that at

this time "we simply cannot say for certain what the prevalence rates of violence are in LGBTQ relationships" (Ristock & Timbang, 2005, p.6). While existing studies show that there are some similarities in experiences of IPV between heterosexuals and LGBTQ people, "…we have yet to research and fully interrogate the impact of differing levels of severity and types of abuse and the differing motivational factors for abusive behaviours" (Ristock, 2011, p. 3).

This way of thinking continues to show up in community-based educational materials such as booklets and websites where a heteronormative paradigm is applied universally. For example, in Canada the YWCA produced a booklet on relationship violence titled *Fresh Start*, which first mentioned "lesbian battering" in 1984. However in the most recent revised version in 2009, abuse in lesbian relationships is described mostly as the same as abuse in heterosexual relationships. The booklet problematically suggests that a heterosexual paradigm and use of male pronouns for the abuser can all just be applied for relationships regardless of the sexual orientation or gender of the individuals involved. For example, "However, because the vast majority of abusers are men, in this book we use male pronouns (he, his, him) when we are talking about abusers. The information is correct for and can be applied to situations of woman on woman abuse" (LeFeuvre, 2009, p. 9). As the above example shows, these harmful heteronormative assumptions continue to pervade community educational materials about IPV in queer communities.

Conceptual Frameworks for Explaining Same-Sex/Gender Partner Violence

Within the field, there have been various theoretical approaches for explaining the cause and nature of IPV within LGBTQ communities, and tensions exist between those who stress individualizing versus social explanations (Ristock, 2002). Most of the literature has relied on existing theories about abuse in heterosexual relationships to inform the analysis of IPV in LGBTQ communities. Research on gay and lesbian partner abuse has relied on a comparison model looking at the similarities and differences with heterosexuals, which has predictably lead to heteronormative understandings of violence (Holmes, 2000; Ristock 2002). Generally speaking, there have been four approaches which have been described as: psychological/individual; socio-psychological theories; feminist; and more recently, intersectional.

A number of authors have argued for the need to move away from a gender-based framework although with different motivations, analyses, politics and goals. Those taking a psychological or individual approach argue against feminist theories of partner violence and recommend a gender neutral psychological model claiming that the presence of violence within some lesbian and gay relationships demonstrates that analyses of gendered power dynamics are irrelevant and problematic (Island & Letellier, 1991; Landolt & Dutton, 1997). Others have critiqued feminist gendered theories but have sought to combine insights from both psychological and feminist sociological models, and social learning theory to explain how individuals learn to abuse (Merrill, 1996; Perilla, Frndak, Lillard & East, 2003; Renzetti, 1992). Some suggest a focus on "theories of power and power differentials within relationships that move beyond a gender framework" (Stevens et al., 2010) however scholars are not always explicit about which

theories of power are recommended and in some cases this can lead to a de-contextualized and depoliticized analysis of power relations and violence.

Feminist scholars have challenged a psychological discourse that attributes IPV to pathology or family dysfunction, stressing instead the social context of oppression and violence. They have also critiqued positivist and liberal approaches to research on lesbian and gay partner abuse for making generalizing statements that individualize and neutralize violence rather than examining it within a socio-political, cultural and historical context (Holmes, 2000; Faulkner, 1998; Ristock, 2002), and for applying problematic research methods to determine the frequency of violence without looking at the context in which IPV occurs (Perilla et al., 2003; Ristock, 2002). Some early feminist research on lesbian abuse focused on internalized misogyny, heterosexism and homophobia as the causes and effects of abuse (Eaton, 1994). As I have argued elsewhere, in much of the feminist writing on the topic of violence in lesbian relationships, the social context of the violence is primarily described as patriarchy and heterosexism, and the central figure in the texts is a woman whose life is structured primarily by her sexuality (Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Ristock, 2004). Despite some important attempts to integrate the effects of racism, classism and ableism into the analysis (which I discuss below), a gender and/or sexuality-based analysis of power has been the primary lens through which researchers have studied IPV in LGBTQ communities. Gender and/or sexuality have remained at the centre of the dominant model and these "additional oppressions" have not been fully integrated into the framework.

Many feminists and LGBTQ people of colour have argued against a race and class neutral, gender-based framework of IPV, however most of the literature has not

taken up these anti-racist critiques of the mainstream anti-violence movement and theorizing. Writing in the 1990s, lesbians of colour such as Valli Kanuha (1990), and Charlene Waldron (1996) noted that the literature on violence in lesbian relationships had been limited to the perspectives of white lesbians as the result of racism in lesbian and feminist communities and society at large (Kanuha, 1990, p. 143). In my research on the topic nearly a decade later, I found that despite a few important exceptions "most of the research [had] not integrated the extensive anti-racist critiques from feminists of colour and First Nations women of the dominant (white) gendered analysis of violence against women, and as such [had] taken an additive approach to discussing the violence experienced by lesbians of colour" (Holmes, 2000, p. 23). I argued it was at times "hard to glimpse a woman whose life is structured fundamentally by racism and classism. When we do see her, it is briefly at the margins — the violence she experiences and the realities of her life are added on as important issues for her but unconnected to everyone else" (p. 74).

Queer women of colour, Indigenous and Two-Spirit women have always been active in the work to end violence in queer women's relationships, however as Charlene Waldron (1996) notes, their contributions have been marginalized within a white dominated movement that has positioned them as "appendices to the 'central' work" (p. 49). As she explains "We and the work we do are often considered expendable when conflicts over budgets and/or ideas arise" (p. 49). Writing a decade later on the experiences of IPV in the lives of South Asian LGBTQ communities, Pranja Paramita Choudhury (2007) and Gita Mehrotra and Soniya Munshi (2011) all concur that these problems continue. Maurice Kwong-Lai Poon's (2011) recent analysis of the

contemporary research on gay male partner abuse highlights similar exclusions where the literature has predominantly focused on individual pathology rather than the effects of racism, classism and ableism in men's lives. He notes that this "frequently reflects the socio-economic position of the authors: namely white middle-upper class gay men" (p. 123-124).

These significant problems notwithstanding, there have been some notable shifts and developments in the research: a number of important studies drawing on a larger number of research participants, including an increase in qualitative research; greater application of intersectional theory; and an increase in research that challenges narrow, de-politicized and de-contextualized accounts of IPV in LGBTQ communities. However this kind of work continues to be in the minority.

Conceptual Frameworks for Explaining IPV in the Lives of Trans People

Within the literature, the framework for explaining IPV experienced by trans people is somewhat different than that of same-sex/gender abuse. Research conducted by trans people and their allies has not only stressed the experiences of IPV, but the intersections between multiple forms of interpersonal, hate-motivated, institutional and state violence. Caroline White and Joshua Goldberg (2011) point out that the history of trans organizing against violence is different from the dominant feminist anti-violence movement in a number of ways:

> Trans activism was led in large part by racialized working poor and
> working class sex trade workers and night club entertainers, many of
> whom identified as male-to-female (MTF). As a consequence, the ways

that 'violence' and 'safety' were tackled by trans activists were not limited

in the same ways as dominant feminism; police violence, prison violence,

violence against sex trade workers and people living on the street, violence

in psychiatric system, deaths resulting from refusal of emergency services,

and other manifestations of systemic as well as interpersonal class-race-

gender violence were high priorities for many early transgender organizers

in urban areas throughout North America. (p. 57)

While gender and sex were the central analytic tools, these concepts were not understood

as binary, unchanging and universal categories (p. 57) and a critical analysis of race, class

and state violence was a central and integrated part of the organizing work. Recent work

has also addressed the interconnections between economic discrimination, racialization

and anti-transgender stigma (Grant et al., 2011; Lombardi et al., 2001; White &

Goldberg, 2006). While hate-motivated violence is the most frequently recorded form of

violence in the lives of trans people, there has been some research that has specifically

looked at experiences of relationship violence (Brown, 2011; Courvant & Cook-Daniels,

1998, FORGE, 2005; White & Goldberg, 2006) and this work has been conducted by

trans people and/or allies. Nicola Brown's (2011) work examines the experiences of trans

individuals who have been abused and/or abusive in their intimate relationships, and

emphasizes the significance of the social contexts of transphobia and cisnormativity in

the experiences. Her research shows how dominant feminist understandings of partner

abuse, privilege and marginalization, often function so to make it difficult for individuals

to conceptualize their trans partner's behaviour as abusive because of their oppressed

status.

Many trans activists and allies have argued that a traditional gender-based heterosexual or generic LGBTQ IPV framework does not address the multiple forms of violence and the complexity of power dynamics in trans people's abusive relationships, and typically conflates gender identity and sexual orientation ignoring the specificity of trans experiences (Brown, 2007, 2011; White & Goldberg, 2006, 2011). Many are calling for a critical trans feminist and intersectional lens that challenges and shifts dominant conceptualizations of violence (including narrow victim/perpetrator and gender/sex binaries), the related prevention and intervention strategies, and which critiques and resists criminal legal responses to violence in the lives of trans people (Brown, 2007, 2011; Spade, 2011; White & Goldberg, 2006, 2011).

In the next section I discuss examples that highlight the importance of a context-specific approach for understanding IPV in LGBTQ communities. I begin this discussion by first describing the work of Janice Ristock (2002) which has been instrumental within the field in helping to address the negative effects of heteronormative and de-contextualized approaches in research and community response in the area of IPV in lesbian relationships, and within LGBTQ communities more broadly.

Janice Ristock (1994, 2002, 2011) has been studying the problem of violence in lesbian relationships for over twenty years. She argues for the need to critically examine how we construct the category of "lesbian abuse" and LGBTQ intimate partner violence, and has called for a critical feminist intersectional approach to research, prevention and intervention strategies. She reminds us that we cannot assume that relationship violence is the same regardless of the sexuality and gender of the individuals involved and that we cannot simply apply a heteronormative gender-based framework to all abusive

relationships. She has consistently advocated for an analysis and approach that recognizes the specific and diverse social contexts surrounding IPV in LGBTQ lives.

Ristock's study (2002) on lesbian partner abuse offers an in-depth analysis of the complexities of the problem (including how it is conceptualized), and presents an inspiring feminist postmodern methodological approach to qualitative research. Based on interviews with over one hundred women who were in abusive lesbian relationships, and focus groups and interviews with eighty anti-violence service providers in Canada, Ristock's study is the most comprehensive to date. Her central argument is that we need to resist all-encompassing explanatory models and universalizing narratives about intimate partner abuse, and "focus on the social context, on the specificity and heterogeneity of relationships as the way to encourage openness to seeing the complexities and dynamics because of variously gendered, racialized, sexualized, and personal relations between two women, or two men, or a man and a woman" (p. 20).

This research provides new insights and findings on power dynamics and contexts of abusive relationships that do not fit the existing theories on same-sex/gender IPV. More than half of the women interviewed experienced abuse in their first lesbian relationship, which up until this point had not been reported in other research (p. 58-59). Ristock argues that a heterosexist context contributes to invisibility and isolation, which can contribute to vulnerability to relationship violence (p. 59). She also discusses "the closet" and the way fears of encountering homophobia and heterosexism contribute to many women staying in an abusive lesbian relationship (p. 61). Other contexts emerged in the research: dislocation as a recent immigrant (moving to a new city or from another country or speaking English as a second language), normalizing violence (the way

drugs/alcohol or histories of previous abuse can normalize the violence women are

experiencing), and a lifetime of violence experienced through racism, colonization and/or

poverty. The dynamics of abuse that women described also reveal complexities and

diversity, including shifting power dynamics and fighting back. She stresses the

importance of examining the complexities of the different social contexts in which

partner abuse occurs, along with experiences of privilege and oppression, and the

interpersonal dynamics in understanding experiences of intimate partner violence.

Ristock also discusses women's emotional responses to the violence, the impacts

of the violence and the ways they sought help from others including formal services.

Here she brings forward stories that "contest the either/or dichotomies of victim/survivor,

active/passive" (p. 81) and draw attention to women's agency and diverse responses

arising from their social contexts. She also discusses service providers' understandings

and experiences in supporting women in abusive lesbian relationships, highlighting the

complexities and relationships and the difficulties they face in assessing the dynamics.

Her findings also remind us of the difficulties queer women "encounter in accessing help

and the way responders emphasize certain features of being a victim/survivor to keep

dominant understandings in place within social services, health care and criminal justice

systems" (p. 105). She argues that "we need to deconstruct, revise, and expand our

understandings of concepts such as victim if women are to truly get the support and

services they need" (p. 108).

She analyzes dominant beliefs about lesbian abuse, which have become

institutionalized within social service organizations. This includes a strong reliance on

heteronormative categories and constructs such as a "constellation of power and control"

(a foundational feminist discourse for understanding all forms of abuse), which she argues "homogenizes experiences of relationship violence" (p. 142) and limits our thinking through a de-contextualized understanding of relations of power (p. 113-114).

She recommends a critical self-reflexive practice for researchers and service providers including ideas for new ways of working that might begin to shift some of the problematic frameworks and responses. She argues that the main categories that we have been using to make sense of the violence (power and control, victim/perpetrator, domestic violence, trauma) cannot describe and explain the range of contexts or their complexity (p. 175). Most importantly she states we need to move away from "either/or categories and static models, stressing instead the need for more contextualized, multiple and multifaceted understandings" (p. 179).

Ristock also co-authored an article with Norma Timbang (2005), which is one of the first articles on the topic that clearly explains a feminist intersectional framework for understanding IPV in LGBTQ communities.[29] They argue that the feminist gender-based framework developed to address male violence against women in heterosexual relationships is inadequate for responding to partner violence in LGBTQ communities.

As I discussed in Chapter One, many other activists and scholars have argued for the need to move beyond a gender-based, heteronormative and cisnormative lens and expand the definitions and frameworks for understanding intimate partner violence in LGBTQ communities. However as my review of the literature so far shows there are wide ranging diverse political perspectives informing this call, from depoliticized non-

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[29] This has become a very influential article on the topic — it is written in an accessible manner and is widely available from the Violence Against Women Online Resources website. It is also one of the first articles to integrate an intersectional feminist analysis and apply it to the research in LGBT communities. As a result it has been read and cited widely and is used in community-based education and training.

feminist frameworks (Island & Lettelier, 1991) to intersectional, trans and critical race

feminist approaches (Chung & Lee, 2002; Dempsey, 2011; Mehrotra & Munshi, 2011;

Richie, 2005; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; Russo & Spatz, 2007; White & Goldberg,

2006).

A number of authors have begun to draw on insights from feminist intersectional

theory in their discussion of partner abuse in LGBTQ communities, albeit in different

ways and to varying degrees. For example, some attempt to move beyond a gender-based

or sexuality-based lens by examining: racialization and whiteness (Butler, 1999; Holmes,

2000; Kanuha, 1990; Poon, 2000, 2011; Ristock, 1998, 2002; Waldron, 1996); poverty

and homelessness (ACON, 2004; Davis & Glass, 2011); the relationship between the

public and private violence of racism, colonialism, classism and heterosexism (Almeida,

et al., 1994; Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Ristock, 2004; Ristock, 2002; Ristock & Timbang,

2005; Taylor & Ristock, 2011); multiple identities and complex contexts (Brown, 2011;

Holmes, 2000; Ristock; 2002); how intersecting systems produce abuse dynamics

(Hiebert-Murphy, Ristock & Brownridge, 2011); the intersectional or interlocking nature

of race, class, gender and sexuality, and the application of intersectional methodologies

(Davis & Glass, 2011; Guadalupe-Diaz, 2010; Hiebert-Murphy et al., 2011; Holmes,

2000; Holmes & Ristock, 2004; Renzetti, 1998; Ristock, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2011; Ristock

& Timbang, 2005; White & Goldberg, 2011; Smith, 2011).

An intersectional analysis is also used to consider the connection of relationship

violence to all systems of oppression and to take a "both/and" stance rather than an

"either/or" binary approach to understanding contexts and identities (Ristock & Timbang,

2005, p. 10). For some this involves examining contexts, identities, the interlocking

nature of systems and privilege rather than compartmentalizing or simply adding LGBTQ experiences onto a universal experience (Holmes, 2000; Ristock & Timbang, 2005, p.10). Poon (2011) argues we need to explore how experiences of violence are mediated not only through heterosexism and homophobia but through forms of privilege such as whiteness, as well as through other forms of oppression, and how "meanings of violence, power, control, agency, strength, and resiliency intersect with social dimensions such as race, gender, class, disability and sexual orientation within relationships" (p. 124). In the next section I discuss the conceptualization of contexts.

Conceptualizing Contexts

Context can be thought of in various ways: social, cultural, historical, political, economic, and geographical.[30] Analyzing contexts is not a new direction in the field of research on IPV (in heterosexual or same-sex relationships), for as I have discussed in Chapter One, feminist scholars have long critiqued de-contextualized analyses and argued that violence against women must be examined in socio-political and situational contexts rather than reducing violence to the level of individual behaviours. There is now is a large body of literature on heterosexual IPV that draws attention to the contextual factors (Lindhorst & Tajima, 2008). In their review of the literature, Taryn Lindhorst & Emiko Tajima (2008) identify and argue for the systematic assessment of five contextual dimensions in research on IPV: the situational or relational context, the individualized social construction of meaning by the survivor, cultural and historical contexts, and the context of systemic oppression. They contend that increasing our assessment of these

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[30] In the field of cultural geography, "any place or area, at any scale, or in any circumstance could be thought of as a geographical context" (Anderson, 2010, p.3). I discuss this further in Chapter Four where I explain how my research is informed by spatial theories within the field of cultural geography.

contextual factors "will lead to more valid understandings of the nature, dynamics, meaning, and consequences of IPV" (p. 2).

Much of the research on violence in same-sex relationships has included socio-political contexts in the framework, but as I have shown in my literature review above, this has most often been limited to heterosexism and homophobia (and patriarchy in some cases), and other oppressions are added on when discussing the experiences of people of colour, Aboriginal people, working-class people and people living in poverty. As well, the literature has not always explored geographical contexts. However a number of recent studies examine a wider diversity of social contexts of IPV in LGBTQ communities. In their review, Ristock and Timbang (2005) discuss examples that confirm the contexts outlined in Ristock's study, as well as additional ones such as: social isolation in rural communities, and the impact of one or both partners dealing with a stigmatized illness such as HIV/AIDS (p. 7). As they note, "although these differing contexts are not exhaustive and may overlap with one another, they reveal the ways that violence is reinforced in a larger context of social structures that create and sustain inequalities and disadvantages" (p. 7).

Some research looks at the intersections between gay male partner abuse and HIV/AIDS, recognizing that it is both a disease and a progressive disability that is highly stigmatized making it an especially effective tool of abuse (Hanson & Maroney, 1999; Lettelier, 1996). As well, some research has included people with disabilities, such as Ristock's study on lesbian partner violence in which 14% of participants indicated living with disabilities including hearing impairment, physical disabilities, chronic illness and mental illness (2008, p. 444). These exceptions notwithstanding, the vast majority of the

research has not addressed the experiences of LGBTQ people with disabilities who experience IPV. Given the high incidence of violence in the lives of people with disabilities, including the high risk of IPV for heterosexual women with disabilities (Brownridge, Ristock, & Hiebert-Murphy, 2008), future research needs to examine how the contexts of disability, ableism, stigma, homo/bi/transphobia and IPV work together in the lives of LGBTQ people.

Although often marginalized, some research has focused specifically on the experiences of LGBTQ people of colour and Indigenous people. For example: IPV in the lives of lesbians and bisexual women of colour, including immigrant women, African American, South Asian American, and Asian American women more broadly (Butler, 1999; Choudhury, 2007; Chung & Lee, 2002; Garcia, 1999; Kanuha, 1990; Mehrotra & Munshi, 2011; Waldron, 1996); interracial partner abuse against Asian Canadian gay men in relationships with white Canadian gay men (Poon, 2000) or within interracial lesbian relationships (Ristock, 2005); the influences of race, income and gender on help-seeking behaviour of LGBTQ survivors of violence (Guadalupe-Diaz, 2010); and IPV in the lives of Aboriginal LGBTQ people in Canada (Ristock, 2002; Taylor & Ristock, 2011). At times researchers apply intersectional theory to look at issues that are created by the power dynamics of intersecting identities (race, socio-economic status, age, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity) (Ristock & Timbang, 2005).

Most of this important literature focuses on the way socio-economic inequities produce contexts that make it difficult to identify the violence, seek help, leave an abusive partner and access support and resources. Contexts are also described for the way they produce specific forms of abuse (for example, using cisnormative or transphobic

ideology to deliberately undermine a person's trans identity, to isolate, or restrict access to services). However in most cases, the contexts are described as "backdrop," "background" or "conditions" surrounding episodes of IPV (e.g. Santaya & Waters, 2011) or as "factors" that make things worse or make someone "more vulnerable" to abuse. This may stem from Kimberlé Crenshaw's (2000) description of intersectionality where she states that systems of oppression "create background inequalities" (p. 8).[31]

Critical race feminists Sherene Razack (1998) and Yasmin Jiwani (2006) have argued that these are "far from remaining as background features" and instead emphasize the interlocking nature of systems of power, privilege and oppression (Jiwani, 2006, p. 16). Conceptualizing contexts as "background" factors can lead to problematic understandings of violence and individuals (Razack, 1998). For example, it can result in seeing these contexts as outside of, or separate from the violence, or as factors that *complicate* a universal experience of intimate partner violence. This way of understanding contexts can also lead to seeing the violence as a fixed condition in the lives of certain communities. While recognizing differences in experience is crucially important, describing the multiple forms of violence in the lives of Two-Spirit people, queer people of colour, queer people with disabilities, who are working-class or living in poverty in an additive fashion as one of triple jeopardy or vulnerability *can* have the effect of seeing these differences as essential, fixed characteristics of a biological or a social condition rather than as produced through social relations (Razack, 1998a). In examining the construct of vulnerability in discourses of violence against women with disabilities, Sherene Razack (1998a) has argued that it privatizes disability:

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[31] This is not unique to the LGBTQ literature and is reflected in recent literature on IPV in heterosexual relationships as well.

Relying on additive analysis (where disability plus gender equals double

oppression), we have been content to describe the situation of women with

disabilities as one of double vulnerabilities. With the concept of vulnerability, we

successfully manage to see disability as a condition that is pre-given, a biological

essence or even a social condition, but one that simply is. We privatize the

condition of being disabled and do not ask questions about the social relations that

transform a physical and mental situation into one of great vulnerability. (p. 20-

21)

In some of the literature, social and situational contexts are described in this way and

while they may not be constructed as biological conditions, they are often described as

social conditions that *simply* just exist. We miss seeing how these conditions of violence

or vulnerability are produced and therefore also miss how they can be *undone*. These

issues have also been discussed in critical whiteness studies and anti-racist pedagogy,

where scholars note the problem when white privilege is seen as something fixed and

natural — an unfortunate state of the world, but something that just *is*. For example, Ruth

Frankenberg (1993) has described how white feminists often view

anti-racist work as an act of compassion for an 'other', an optional extra project

but not one intimately and organically linked to our own lives. Racism can, in

short, be conceived as something external to us rather than as a system that shapes

our daily experiences and sense of self. (p. 6)

This critique can be applied to some conceptualizations of contexts in anti-

violence research and organizing. In most of the literature on IPV (both hetero and same-

sex/gender), contexts are often constructed as an external backdrop — factors occurring

"out there" that are somewhat disconnected or detached from the immediate lives and bodies of individuals. When we detach socio-spatial contexts from the bodies and subjects who are experience or enact violence, we remove questions of relationality and complicity and miss seeing the productive effects and relational nature of socio-spatial contexts and violence. As well, when social contexts are described they are often described as something fixed and static and unconnected to individual actors.

These problems can occur with an analysis of geographical contexts as well, if space is imagined as background, static or natural. By extending the work of feminist and cultural geographers who challenge these normative ideas about space as neutral, static, innocent, natural or pre-existing, in my research I bring a focus on space as something that is produced and is productive. I raise questions about the way social difference and social contexts of marginalization and power are spatially produced, and examine the way spatial narratives rely on interlocking hierarchies of power to produce socio-spatial contexts of inequity. I also apply a multiscalar analysis with attention to the relational nature of discourses, forms of violence and different scales — such as the scale of an urban feminist anti-violence non-profit and colonial nation-state violence, for example. In this way we can think about how different forms of violence are related to one another in and through space, and how violence produces space and place (Oikawa, 2002; Razack, 2002; Tyner, 2011).

It is insufficient to see these socio-spatial contexts as *background* features or merely as conditions *surrounding* the violence. We must look at how socio-spatial contexts of violence shape and produce different forms of violence, responses to violence, and strategies to end violence. As I argue in this research, an interlocking

spatial analysis urges us to examine how socio-spatial contexts are relational and how the violence is not only produced by these, but how different forms of structural, state and interpersonal violence produce spaces and social contexts together. We need to look at how various socio-spatial contexts (such as poverty, rural isolation, small cultural or ethnic communities, anti-immigrant racism, religious and political conservatism, colonial state violence, and homophobia and transphobia), relate to one another and produce contexts within which IPV occurs.[32]

In addition to Ristock's (2002) study discussed above, there have been a number of other important studies which offer insights into the socio-spatial contexts that shape IPV in LGBTQ communities. In the following section I highlight a few that are noteworthy, drawing attention to a number that address the spatial context of small communities and rural isolation. For example, in Hardesty et al.'s (2011) study on lesbian and bisexual mothers who have experienced IPV within their same-sex/gender relationships revealed important data about the powerful impact of close-knit small ethno-cultural neighbourhoods and rural geographical communities on the help-seeking behaviours of African-American lesbians/bisexual mothers. In this study half of the participants identified as African American lesbians or bisexual mothers in same-sex/gender relationships. The researchers in this study identify how these women's socio-spatial contexts influenced their decision to try to "solve it alone" (i.e. not seek external help). They argue that while this resembled the experiences of lesbians in Ristock's (2002) study who did not disclose IPV because they feared being "outed," the African-American mothers in their study did not identify fear of being outed as a predominant

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[32] In Chapter Four I further discuss my spatial theoretical framework and I then demonstrate this analytical approach specifically in Chapters Five and Seven.

barrier. Instead, the women "with this experience attributed their lack of support to their residential and cultural communities (e.g., ethnic enclaves, isolated rural communities)" (p. 41). As the authors note,

> This has implications for providing services that are sensitive to the immediate contexts. For instance, racially marginalized women (e.g., African Americans) may feel pressured to keep private information, such as violence, secret from others to protect their community (West, 2005). This combined with the historical maltreatment of lesbians may make help seeking among Black lesbian/bisexual women particularly difficult. In addition to cultural competence regarding race and rurality, providers must recognize there is a subgroup of mothers who are being victimized but not served, which may include women in same-sex relationships who do not identify as lesbians. (p. 41)

This article is important for examining issues that have not significantly addressed within previous research (i.e. mothering, African-American lesbian/bisexual women's experiences of IPV, women in same-sex relationships who do not identify as lesbians and neighbourhood/small community contexts).[33]

Another study by Yu-Wei Wang (2011) examines the contexts of rural U.S. geographical isolation and conservative Christian culture in the experience of woman-to-woman sexual assault. This case study provides a close examination of one white lesbian's experience of sexual assault by her lesbian partner in a rural socio-cultural context (e.g., conservative culture, religious fundamentalism, low levels of anonymity,

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[33] Interestingly, while the authors bring forward this important intersectional-type analysis of the socio-spatial contexts that influence African-American lesbian/bisexual mothers experiencing IPV in same-sex relationships, they do not explicitly name societal racism or whiteness as a part of the context, nor do they discuss the way racism within the legal system interlocks with heterosexism and classism to produce this context of marginality regarding custody/access for racialized lesbians and bisexual mothers of colour.

small LGBTQ communities, geographical isolation, heterosexist and homophobic systems, and myths about lesbian utopia within the lesbian community). The survivor described the kind of ostracism, harassment, discrimination and threats of violence that she and her lesbian friends experienced living in rural areas (e.g., anonymous phone calls, hate mail, dead animals on the lesbians' properties, being forbidden to participate in local church services, being pressured to quit their jobs or be fired after they came out in the community) (p. 170). This study is helpful for offering insights into how certain social and geographic contextual factors "intersect with other intrapersonal (e.g., lesbian identity and coping styles) and interpersonal factors (e.g., social reactions) in affecting a survivor's recovery outcome." (p. 173). However the author does not examine the geographies of *whiteness* in this conservative rural place, thereby missing the opportunity to further our understanding of lesbian IPV, spatial contexts of marginality/dominance and racialization.

Kierrynn Davis and Nel Glass' (2011) research on lesbian IPV in rural Australia highlights similar issues related to the smallness of communities, geographic isolation, lack of confidentiality and services, and internalized and external oppression, along with the contexts of poverty, and classism from within the lesbian community and professional. They emphasize the need to understand the way geographical contexts intersect with social and personal contexts in understanding violence in lesbians' lives (p. 34).

A study conducted by the New South Wales' and Australia's community-based gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) health and HIV/AIDS organization ACON (2004), showed that LGBTQ people leaving abusive relationships are at risk of

homelessness because of the extremely limited shelter and housing options available to them.

Very little research has examined IPV in the lives of Indigenous LGBTQ people in Canada or internationally. Writing as white lesbian allies who have worked as researchers with Aboriginal community-based research projects in Canada, Catherine Taylor and Janice Ristock (2011) argue for an "anti-oppressive research ethics of solidarity" with LGBTQ Aboriginal people experiencing intimate partner violence. This framework involves embracing decolonizing and Indigenous methodologies and community-based approaches, along with "an anti-oppression framework that is committed to producing meaningful knowledge that respects the integrity and rights of Indigenous peoples and communities to Ownership of the project, Control of the process, Access to the data, and Possession of the findings" (p. 302). They review studies that have documented the high incidences of multiple forms of physical and sexual violence, historical trauma and state violence in the lives of Indigenous LGBTQ people (e.g. O'Brien-Teengs & Travers, 2006; Ristock, 2002; Taylor, 2009; Walters & Simoni, 2009). As Taylor and Ristock describe, this context of violence is "linked to and supported by larger social structures that create and sustain inequalities and disadvantages" (p. 309) and as a result our anti-violence efforts must be allied with anti-colonial Indigenous strategies to oppose state violence.

To sum up, many scholars and activists have been calling for a shift away from a one-size-fits all approach to responding to IPV – both within heterosexual and same-sex/gender relationships — and to respond to the problem in ways that address the complexities in the lives of LGBTQ people. However this has not necessarily

materialized "on the ground" and funded initiatives are often still premised on overly simplistic or additive approaches which continue to centre the perspectives and experiences of white, economically privileged queers and disregard the socio-spatial contexts of those who are most marginalized by multiple interlocking forms of oppression. Many of these same issues also show up in research that addresses anti-LGBTQ violence, and I discuss this next.

Anti-LGBTQ Violence

Although anti-LGBTQ violence has been recently recognized as a serious problem in Canada (Faulkner, 2001, 2006; Janoff, 2005), research that examines the extent, nature and impact of these forms of violence on LGBTQ people is very limited. In addition, disorganized community responses have been common (Faulkner, 2001). Ellen Faulkner (2001) has noted that "while American lesbian and gay organizations have documented anti-gay/lesbian violence since the early eighties…Canadians have either not recognized the importance of documenting such attacks or have lacked the resources and funds to do so" (p. 123). She also notes that queer communities in "isolated communities have lacked the capacity or, due to fear or secrecy, the will to organize against hate motivated crime" (p. 123).

There have been similar methodological problems as described earlier in the context of IPV research, which affect our ability to document and understand anti-LGBTQ violence. Research, policy and community initiatives on anti-LGBTQ violence have typically focused on documenting the prevalence of the problem and on how to respond to multiple forms of verbal, physical and sexual harassment and violence.

Faulkner (2006) has conducted research on anti-LGB violence and victimization in three Canadian provinces (Ontario, Alberta, and New Brunswick) and has also reviewed existing North American research on the issue. Her review of the literature shows that most research has used a de-contextualized conceptual framework that has ignored the way misogyny, sexism, racism, and heterosexism influence the construction of anti-LGB violence (p. 154). Similar to the research on IPV in LGBTQ communities, the vast majority of the research on anti-lesbian/gay violence has been positivist in nature and has positioned white middle-class gay men as the universal subject (Faulkner, 2001). Absent from the literature (and in many Canadian organizing efforts) are discussions of the connections between IPV and anti-lesbian/gay violence, thus constructing these as separate and unconnected social problems (Faulkner, 2001). Faulkner (2001) has argued that future work needs to bring a feminist, anti-racist and interlocking analysis that critiques criminal legal system interventions and the role of the state (p. 132).

Research has documented various forms of anti-LGBTQ violence including: threats and harassment, hate speech (via letter, email, phone or in person) vandalism, physical attacks, assault with a weapon, sexual violence and murder. It may be perpetrated by strangers but often is perpetrated by co-workers, neighbours, employers, acquaintances, ex-lovers[34] and community members (Browne, Bakshi & Lim, 2011; Faulkner, 2006; FORGE, 2011; Grant et al., 2011; Janoff, 2005). Forms of harassment, abuse and violence may have specific sexist, racist, economic/classist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic elements (Faulkner, 2006; Janoff, 2005; White & Goldberg, 2006). Importantly some "reports indicate that a significant number of trans survivors knew the

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[34] Violence perpetrated by ex-lovers can fall within the parameters of both categories of IPV and anti-LGBTQ violence illustrating the way these categories break down and the need to examine nuances and connections between different forms of violence (White & Goldberg, 2006).

perpetrator…which challenges conventional understanding of hate crimes as 'public' as distinct from family and relationship violence" (White & Goldberg, 2006, p. 125). Bias or hate-motivated violence can intensify during public events especially during LBGTQ specific events, such as Pride Day (Janoff, 2005).

In the largest study of homophobic violence in Canada, Douglas Janoff (2005) has noted specific geographical contexts of homophobic violence. In his review of cases of homophobic violence he found that 16% of the "queer-bashing incidents" took place in or near parks and/or cruising areas, 21 % occurred inside or near a queer establishment, 19% in a neighbourhood or street where queers are visible, 16% in or near the victim's residence, 4 % in custody (police, prison), 1% in or near the suspect's residence and 21% in other locations. The largest percentage was killed at home or very close to home (p. 78).

Violence against transgender people is often included within the category of LGBTQ violence without any distinction between homophobic or transphobic violence, as well as gendered and racialized forms of violence as well (White & Goldberg, 2006). While research is lacking on the rates and prevalence of violence in the lives of transgender people, there have been two large survey studies on transgender people's experiences of violence and discrimination (Grant et al., 2011; Lombardi et al, 2001) which reveal that transgender and gender nonconforming people experience pervasive and multiple forms of violence in numerous public and private places, suggesting they may be more vulnerable to violence across their lifespan than the general population (Grant et al., 2011; White & Goldberg, 2006). As well transgender people who are Aboriginal, of colour and/or living in poverty, face some of the highest levels of

discrimination and violence due to the combination of racism, poverty and anti-transgender stigma (Grant et al., 2011). One study on hate-motivated violence against transsexual/transgender people found that 60% of all transsexual and transgender people have experienced hate-motivated violence (Moran & Sharpe, 2004). When gender and race have been recorded, researchers have noted that the majority of violence has been perpetrated against male-to-female transgender individuals (98% in one study) and a high percentage of transgender murder victims internationally have been women of colour (White & Goldberg, 2006, p. 125).

Recently there have been many critiques of the dominant criminal justice and "rights" framework for conceptualizing and responding to anti-LGBTQ violence which has focused on a criminal justice approach to conceptualizing the violence (Browne, et al., 2011; Incite, 2006; Spade, 2011). Indigenous feminists, feminists of colour, and Two-Spirit, queer and trans people of colour, have long argued that criminal legal system approaches to addressing "hate crimes" have contributed to increased state violence in the lives of the most marginalized low-income and poor, queer and trans people of colour and Two-Spirit people (Mogul, Ritchie & Whitlock, 2011; Smith, 2007; Spade, 2011). As I've discussed earlier, trans activists/scholars and allies have critiqued the way the dominant lesbian/gay rights and LGBT anti-violence framework has conflated gender identity and sexual orientation and overlooked the specificities and complexities of trans people's lives. Trans anti-violence organizing has not historically adopted the approach of the mainstream gay and lesbian anti-violence organizations and many activists have integrated an analysis of race, class and state/police violence into their organizing frames.

Kath Browne, Leela Bakshi and Jason Lim's (2011) research has shown that the

dominant hate crime/criminal legal paradigm is insufficient for addressing the broader

socio-spatial contexts of marginalization, violence and safety in the lives of LGBT

people. Writing in the UK context (which despite some differences has similarities to the

Canadian context), they discuss the way academic and policy framings have been framed

around violence and harassment, and through a lens of criminalization and hate crime.

They note the need for broader and more appropriate supports to address the complexities

in experiences and effects of the violence for those who experiencing multiple forms of

marginalization and health needs (such as trans people and people with mental health

issues for example). Like other critical scholars and activists, they emphasize the need to

challenge neoliberal conceptualizations of LGBT "safety" which privatize and

individualize "responsibility" rather than recognizing the societal responsibility for

LGBT safety. Importantly, they state that

> Addressing LGBT safety within a broader scope, beyond paradigms that seek to
>
> define what abuse is and how it can be punished, directs attention towards how
>
> service providers, communities and other stakeholders might work to create safety
>
> – especially by creating services, environments and contexts for care and caring.
>
> In turn, this requires an account of the differential effects of abuse and the ways in
>
> which abuse is dealt with. (p. 5)

Their research shows that a hate crime paradigm is at "odds with the way in which many

LGBT people ignore abuse for their own self-preservation" (p. 5), which may contribute

to normalizing abuse.

Most studies of anti-LGBTQ violence have tended to overlook the intersectional

or interlocking nature of race, class, gender, ability and sexuality in the experiences of

victims or perpetrators of hate-motivated violence (Faulkner, 2006; Guadalupe-Diaz, 2010; Meyer, 2008, 2010). Despite this, a few scholars have begun to address this gap arguing for an intersectional approach. For example, the Welfare Warriors Research Collective's (Billies, Johnson, Murungi, & Pugh, 2009) study examines experiences of violence from the perspective of racially and ethnically diverse low-income lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender nonconforming people (LGBTGNC) in New York City. They argue that the violence in the lives of LGBTGNC people must be "critiqued beyond homophobia and transphobia, to include the racialized neoliberal context" (p. 376). Although they do not use the terms intersectional or interlocking to refer to their methodology, they make connections between neoliberalism, poverty and the increasing criminalization of people of colour, low-income people and LGBTGNC people, arguing it is impossible to separate questions of identity and violence from structural processes. Through their participatory community-based research they seek to:

> expose violent and discriminatory practices affecting LGBTGNC shelter residents; challenge anti-poverty and LGBT organizations to incorporate the priorities of low-income LGBT people; share knowledge on how to get around obstacles and through institutions in order to make these processes less hard, isolating and dangerous; and encourage low-income LGBTGNC people to become the architects and beneficiaries of new forms of research and social change. (p. 378)

Sarah Lamble (2008) applies a critical race and interlocking framework to study the racialized politics of Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR).[35] She argues that

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[35] In the last decade, "Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) has become a significant political event among those resisting violence against gender-variant persons. Commemorated in more than 250 locations

the frameworks and politics surrounding TDOR frequently have produced decontextualized and deracialized accounts of violence that have ignored the hierarchical and interlocking nature of different forms of violence, and the central question of white complicity.

Doug Meyer (2008, 2010) employs an intersectional approach to examine the way LGBTQ people interpret and experience hate motivated violence. As Meyer argues, the majority of the literature has focused on the psychological effects of the violence and has ignored the way race, class, gender and sexuality structure victims' experiences of hate motivated violence. The discussion of the psychological effects has also ignored race, class, sexuality and gender.

Within some of the anti-LGBTQ literature, some researchers have sought to understand how lesbians and gay men determine that the violence is based on their sexuality. Meyer notes that in this research, not surprisingly, many queer people of colour highlighted the way racism, homophobia and sexism structured their violent experiences including the nature and severity of the violence (2008, p. 269). In Meyer's study, many queer people of colour also stressed that "the violence directed against their racial identities was at least partially rooted in homophobia" (p. 269). A number of the experiences described were various forms of physical and sexual violence perpetrated by the police where multiple systems of oppression structured their violent experiences. As well, many queer people of colour found it difficult to determine the "primary cause" of the violence, highlighting how they "often faced situations in which many aspects of their identities were attacked and they frequently encountered situations in which their

predominantly throughout North America but also in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South America, and Southeast Asia, this day honors individuals who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice (Lamble, 2008, p. 24).

perpetrators did not mention homosexuality" (p. 270). Meyer's respondents who were of

colour noted that white perpetrators often mixed homophobic and transphobic insults

with racist and or sexist/misogynist ones (p. 271). Meyer's analysis also revealed that

white gay male victims of hate violence were able to understand their experiences

through a singular identity lens (the violence was rooted in homophobia) even in cases

where the perpetrators mentioned race. A number of low-income and working-class queer

participants in Meyer's study indicated that they had not thought about whether their

violent experiences were based on their sexuality and/or gender identity prior to the

interview. The harsh material realities of their lives — for example not having enough

food and/or adequate and safe housing — were more pressing concerns than determining

whether the violence was rooted in bias. It may also be useful to consider that low-

income and working-class people have experienced more violence in their lives as a

result of systemic oppression, which results in normalization of experiences of violence

(see discussion in Ristock, 2002). Meyer's research suggests that the lack of attention to

the intersections between race, class and gender and sexuality in researching anti-LGBTQ

violence has produced hate crime statutes based on sexual orientation that may serve the

interests of white gay and middle-class men more than queer and trans people of colour,

working-class and low-income queer and trans people (p. 276). Importantly, Meyer's

work points to the way "racism makes possible certain forms of homophobic violence

and homophobia makes possible some forms of racist violence" (p. 277). Also of

significance is Meyer's (2010) research on perceptions of LGBTQ hate crime victims,

which revealed that white middle-class LGBTQ participants were more likely than low-

income LGBTQ people of colour to perceive their violent experiences as severe, even though the latter experienced more physical violence than the former.

Accessibility and Systemic Barriers

The combined effects of racism within many white dominated LGBTQ communities and homo/bi/transphobia and heterosexism within some Indigenous communities and communities of colour, make it very difficult for racialized LGBTQ people of colour and Indigenous people experiencing IPV and/or hate-motivated violence to access support. For example, a recent analysis of websites of South Asian Women's organizations in the U.S. revealed that the majority are not currently presenting themselves as accessible to LGBTQ survivors of violence (i.e. not mentioning LGBTQ people) which reinforces the invisibility of IPV in LGBTQ communities and creates barriers for LGBTQ survivors (Mehrotra & Munshi, 2011). Programs aimed at addressing partner violence within LGBTQ communities "may not be accessible to queer South Asians or effectively meet their needs, given the intersection of their unique racialized, immigrant, and cultural experiences with gender, sexuality and other salient identities" (p. 9). LGBTQ people of colour who have experienced violence may be reluctant to seek help from mainstream LGBTQ organizations due to persistent whiteness and racism (Choudhury, 2007). The following quote from a South Asian victim of anti-lesbian discrimination in a medical context illustrates this:

> I would have not approached [the local mainstream LGBT organization] to help
> me with this issue. I feel they are an extremely white and extremely racist
> organization at times…Honestly if I had not reported this through [the local South

Asian agency], I would not have reported it. I wouldn't have reported it through a

white queer organization. (quoted in Choudhury, 2007, p. 136-137)

Summary

This chapter has provided a review of literature that addresses the problems of

IPV and anti-LGBTQ violence, discussing some of the relevant trends and gaps in the

research. As this literature review has illustrated, with the exception of some important

contributions discussed above, most research has not examined the connections between,

and complexities of, violence in the lives of LGBTQ people who experience multiple

forms of marginalization such as racism, colonialism, immigration, poverty and

economic oppression, ableism, incarceration, ageism, and the socio-economic disparities

in rural, northern and isolated communities.

In the case of IPV, the vast majority of the research has focused primarily on

similarities with heterosexual IPV, and heteronormative and cisnormative assumptions

are frequently embedded in the research designs and findings. Many studies homogenize

experiences thereby ignoring the diversity of gender identity, sexual orientation, race,

class, age, ability and the different forms or socio-spatial contexts of violence. A number

of activists and scholars have argued for the need to move beyond a gender-based,

heteronormative and cisnormative lens and expand the definitions and frameworks for

understanding intimate partner violence in LGBTQ communities. However as my review

reveals, there are diverse political perspectives and motivations informing this call. As

well many feminists and LGBTQ people of colour have argued against a race and class

neutral framework, however most of the literature has not taken up these critiques to shift the analysis.

Despite these significant gaps, some important shifts can be seen. For example: studies drawing on a larger number of research participants; an increase in qualitative research; integration of intersectional theory; increase in research that challenges narrow, de-politicized and de-contextualized accounts of IPV; some research conducted by trans people and their allies which emphasizes the intersections between multiple forms of interpersonal, hate-motivated, institutional and state violence.

Research on anti-LGBTQ violence in Canada is very limited. As well, most research has relied on a de-contextualized framework that has not addressed the interlocking nature of oppression and violence. Also often missing are discussions of the connections between IPV and anti-LGBTQ violence, thus constructing these as separate and unconnected social problems. For the most part, most studies elide a substantial analysis of the intersectional or interlocking nature of race, class, gender, ability and sexuality in the experiences of victims or perpetrators of anti-LGBTQ violence. While some research on anti-LGBTQ violence has gestured towards an inclusion of geographical contexts, a spatial analysis has been largely unexplored in the area of research on IPV in LGBTQ communities.

My research builds on and extends the work of scholars discussed in this chapter who are applying an intersectional and/or contextual framework, and who call for an approach that addresses the multiple forms of interpersonal, hate-motivated, and state violence in the lives of LGBTQ people. Most of the literature lacks a substantial analysis of racialization, space/geographical contexts, and intersecting/interlocking forms of

violence, and my research specifically addresses these three under-researched areas. My dissertation thus fills a significant gap in its effort to illustrate the way these systems, contexts and processes work together in creating violence in the lives of LGBTQ people, through the application of a spatial and interlocking theoretical framework. In the next chapter I outline this framework in more detail, as well my research methods.

Chapter Four:
Theoretical Framework and Methodological Tools

In this chapter, I describe the theoretical framework and methodological tools that I use to analyze discourses and interlocking systems of power in this research study. My qualitative research design includes three case studies: i) individual interviews and a focus group with white lesbian/queer feminist anti-violence educators in Vancouver, BC; ii) a violence prevention curriculum on "Healthy Queer Relationships for Women" in Vancouver BC; and iii) Lesbian and Gay Pride Day and the "LGBT Anti-Violence Project" in Kelowna BC. Multiple qualitative methods were used to collect data, including in-depth interviews, a focus group, and archival data. I critically analyze discourses in various texts including: interview and focus group transcripts, pamphlets and booklets, an anti-violence curriculum, print and web-based news articles, a website for an urban development proposal, and a report from a human rights tribunal. To do this, I use an interdisciplinary poststructuralist framework, drawing on methodological tools from Women's Studies, Geography, Social Work and Sociology.

My interdisciplinary theoretical framework shaped the direction of my research and influenced my qualitative research design, methods for data collection and data analysis. This chapter is presented in four parts: i) research questions; ii) interdisciplinary theoretical framework; and iii) qualitative research methods; iv) strengths and limitations of my methodological approach.

Part One: Research Questions

A fundamental assumption in my research is that the way we think and talk about violence (and other categories and experiences such as health, identity, rights and space) influences our material, socio-spatial and political experience. My research, then addresses the following over-arching questions: What are the stories that queer anti-violence organizers tell about the violence in our lives? What do these stories do? What, and whom do they make im/possible or in/visible, and how do they do this? What stories are told about place and space and what kinds of understandings of violence are made possible or erased through these imagined geographies (Said, 1978)? What strategies exist for resisting normative narratives and frameworks?

I explore these questions through an analysis of discourses and autoethnographic accounts, in three separate but thematically linked case studies which I describe in detail later in this Chapter. The additional analytical questions that underpin the research in each case study are as follows:

Case study 1) What are the spatial metaphors in dominant feminist and lesbian/queer anti-violence educational discourses and what are their effects? How do conceptualizations of public and private spaces, influence our understandings of violence and the pedagogical strategies we develop? What is the relationship between white normativity and the public/private dichotomy in lesbian/queer feminist anti-violence discourses?

Case study 2) How do queer feminist anti-violence organizers reproduce and/or resist normative frameworks, such as heteronormative, neoliberal and white settler colonial discourses and practices?

Case study 3) What are the discourses surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day? What can this discourse analysis tell us about how geographies of violence and belonging in LGBTQ communities, are linked to the violence of colonialism and nation-building in a white settler society such as Canada? How is the city of Kelowna produced as a white heteronormative and bourgeois space? How are queer anti-violence and human rights movements related to other social and political movements such as those for Indigenous rights and sovereignty in Canada?

Throughout the research, I examine how discourses of normalcy influence which subjectivities and bodies we come to see as intelligible or human through these representations in stories and narratives about violence, health, identity, rights, and space in various contexts, asking: What does the story do? What does it produce? What, and whom does it make im/possible or in/visible and how does it do this?

Part Two: Interdisciplinary Theoretical Framework

To address these questions, I employ an interlocking spatial analytical framework to examine three case studies. This combines the following interdisciplinary approaches i) a feminist poststructural analytic informed by Foucault's work on discourse, power, subjectivity and space and ii) an interlocking analytic that brings together anti-colonial and critical race theorizing on colonialism, racialization and whiteness, with a queer approach that critiques normativity beyond sexuality and gender, to trouble colonial, racial and classed norms as well (Lenon, 2008). The following section, describes this in greater detail describing the literature that informs my conceptual framework.

Feminist Poststructuralism. By using a feminist poststructuralist approach to research, I begin with the assumption that all research makes knowledge claims and it is important to ask how we know what we know, what counts as knowledge, and what the material effects of the production of knowledge are. To do so challenges positivist, masculinist and imperialist research paradigms that view research as an objective and scientific process that produces knowledge that is value-neutral, ahistorical and detached from experience.

Feminist poststructuralism is "a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change" (Weedon, 1987, p. 40-41). Feminist poststructuralist scholars use methodological tools such as discourse analysis, deconstruction, a critique of universalizing narratives and essentialist constructs, combined with feminist analyses of power, subjectivity, structural and material contexts of social inequities, and ethics of accountability (Naples, 2003; Razack, 1998; Ristock, 2002; Ristock & Pennell, 1996). By paying attention to material contexts, power relations and ethics they strive to have their research contribute to socio-political change.

Some use the same tools but refer to their approach as feminist postmodern. Generally speaking, postmodernism represents ideological shifts and challenges to modernist notions of objective knowledge, progress, reason, identity/autonomous self, and universal truths. Janice Ristock and Joan Pennell (1998) describe a feminist

postmodern approach as one that focuses on "feminist links and postmodern interruptions" which means:

> rejecting universalizing narratives while at the same time taking a firm political stance, affirming real people and their needs for social justice while at the same time destabilizing or disrupting categories that are socially constructed in order to reveal the workings of power and make it possible to imagine alternative ways of thinking that will generate less oppressive conditions. (p. 7)

Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (1994) also position their work as postmodern and argue that some feminist poststructuralist theorists do not integrate an analysis of the relationship between modernity and discourses of colonialism and race (p. 3). As they state:

> We see postmodernism as a critique of modernist agendas as they are manifested in various forms and locations around the world. Our critiques of certain forms of feminism emerge from their willing participation in modernity with all its colonial discourses and hegemonic First World formations that wittingly or unwittingly lead to the oppression and exploitation of many women." (p. 2)

Similarly in my research, I critique hegemonic discourses (such as modernist, colonial and neoliberal) that circulate within feminist and LGBTQ movements and also highlight counter-narratives that destabilize them. For example, in Chapter Seven I use an interlocking analysis to deconstruct the modernist civilizing discourse of tolerance which is considered synonymous with Enlightenment, showing how "tolerance of gays and lesbians" works as a racialized practice of nation building in a white settler society.

Feminist discourse analysts disrupt positivist assumptions about language as transparent, value-free and universal and instead examine how language produces and constructs reality (Cheek, 2004; Lather, 1991; Ristock & Pennell, 1996). They examine how discursive formations shape, or limit what can be said or heard in particular socio-political-spatial contexts (Naples, 2003; Ristock, 2002). I use this approach to highlight what is *unspoken* or *unrepresented* in discursive frames. In the next section, I explore this further, describing Foucault's understanding of discourse, power and knowledge.

Discourse and Power. There has been a "narrative turn" in social science research including within the disciplines of sociology, social work and human geography. This has included analysis of the role of stories/narratives and storytelling in: social movements (Davis, 2002; Hemmings, 2011; Razack, 1998); the constitution of identities and subjectivities (Razack, 1998; Ristock, 2002; Hole, 2007); the production of place, space and landscape (Razack, 2002; Price, 2010); and in many other contexts. Within this work there are many understandings of discourse, and many scholars have explored the distinctions between story, narrative and discourse. In my research, I use the terms story and narrative to refer to the same phenomena (Davis, 2002).[36] Some scholars see story and discourse as synonymous, while others view story as what is told and discourse as how the story is transmitted (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005). I focus on discursive practices within stories told in anti-violence organizing in queer communities, and their theoretical and socio-political and spatial effects. I use a Foucauldian understanding of

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[36] Many scholars use them to refer to the same phenomena but others (such as those using structuralist literary theory for example) may draw distinctions between these terms (Davis, 2002).

discourse that examines how meanings are produced through language and the way power and knowledge are constituted in and through each other (Foucault, 1978, p. 100).

Geographer Gillian Rose (2007) draws on Foucault's work in her understanding of discourse, which she defines as: "…groups of statements which structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking. In other words, discourse is a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it" (p. 142). Ristock and Pennell (1996) also note that discourses are sets of assumptions that are socially shared and often unconscious (p. 114). For Foucault, discourses are not simply descriptive or representational but are *productive*. As he says, discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1972, p. 49). They make possible what can be said or known, they produce or position subjects within them, which all has material effects. It is through discourse that truth and subjects are produced. In my study, I demonstrate how discourses of violence, safety and health that appear to be race-neutral, produce innocent racial white subjects. This constitutive nature of discourse not only includes the production of meaning, but also the production of subjects and bodies in space, which I discuss further in this chapter.

Foucauldian discourse analysts specifically investigate the co-constitutive nature of discourse, power, knowledge and subjectivity. Foucault stressed that power "circulates" in the production of knowledge not in a repressive but productive manner (1980, p. 98). As he puts it:

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold

good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. (Foucault, 1980, p. 119)

Power is thus not a commodity or a force that only oppresses in a top down hierarchical way but is "employed and exercised" in a "net-like fashion" (p. 98) producing discourses, knowledge and subjects. Feminist Foucauldian discourse analysts are therefore interested in *how* power operates rather than why, as well as the material, social and spatial effects and implications of what is produced (Adams, 1997; Cheek, 2004; Ristock, 2002; Rose, 2007). In this study, I analyze discourses as socio-spatial practices and pay attention to the way power operates in and through them.

Regimes of Truth. Discourse produces categories of meaning, which make possible some thoughts while excluding others. While Foucault spoke of the multiplicity of discourses, he emphasized that power operates through the construction of knowledge producing what he called "regimes of truth" that legitimize and normalize certain knowledges while obscuring or subjugating others (Foucault, 1980). He described a regime of truth as follows:

'Truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with the systems of power which produce and sustain it, and effects of power which it induces and which extends it. (1980, p. 133)

By applying his theory, I ask: How do certain discourses come to be dominant, legitimate and considered true through the disqualification of other discourses (p. 82)?

Margaret Wetherell and Jonathon Potter (1992) note that, Foucault argues "…one way to undermine a 'truth' is not to counterpose it with another 'truth' but to examine the discursive process by which true and false statements become distinguished" (p. 67). In my research, I examine taken-for-granted assumptions and "truths," interrogating how they structure and limit what is thinkable in specific socio-historical and spatial contexts. My research interrogates regimes of truth within emancipatory and activist discourses that produce exclusions. For example, my research reveals how white normative discourses within queer and feminist anti-violence organizing produce a regime of truth that positions colonial and racialized violence as outside the category of "domestic violence" or "anti-LGBTQ violence". This is frequently accomplished through the rhetorical strategy of naming colonial and racial violence "off topic" or outside of the frame of reference. The production of these truth claims is directly related to existing power relations and racial and class hierarchies within feminist and LGBTQ social movements.

Certain discourses become dominant not only because of their location within socially powerful institutions but also because they claim absolute truth (Rose, 2007). As Julian Cheek (2004) argues "not all discourses are afforded equal presence or, therefore, equal authority. At any time in history, certain discourses will operate in such a way as to marginalize or even exclude others. Which discursive frame is afforded presence is a consequence of the effect of power relations" and socio-historical contexts (p. 1143).

Foucault argues that one is never outside of power but that this "does not mean that one is trapped and condemned to defeat no matter what" (Foucault, 1980, p. 141-142). He reminds us that "there are no relations of power without resistances" and that

like power, resistance is multiple (p. 142). Discourses are shifting and unstable: a "discourse can be an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy" (1978, p. 101). Thus, the possibility of a reverse discourse always exists (p. 101). In my research, I study reverse discourses where subjects resist regulatory practices, and I examine their complex and contradictory effects. For example, in Chapter Six, I examine how power moves in multiple and contradictory ways through discourses in a queer violence prevention curriculum, both resisting heteronormative neoliberal discourses in some cases, but at the same time reproducing some white homonormative neoliberal conceptualizations.

Foucault called the relationship between meanings and categories in a particular discourse, a "discursive formation" (1972, p. 38). He frequently referred to the relationality of categories, statements, meanings, institutions, social and economic processes and systems of norms (p. 44-46), and argued that we must examine "the degree to which they depend on one another, the way in which they *interlock* or exclude one another…the play of their location, arrangements and replacement" (italics mine, p. 34). I argue that Foucauldian discourse analysis works well with a relational and interlocking approach for examining discourse, space, subjectivity and power relations in anti-violence organizing.

Discourse and Subjectivity. Discursive practices operate so as to give stories and narratives meaning and also have material effects including shaping how we come to know ourselves as subjects and our place in the socio-spatial order of things. For poststructuralist theorists, the self does not exist outside of discourse. Foucault (2003)

sought to understand how human beings are made subjects. He argued that discourses produce and organize different subject positions. In other words, "discourses make available positions for subjects to take up. These positions are in relation to other people" (Hollway, 2003, p. 277). Drawing on Foucault, Joan Scott (1992) has claimed that "it is not individuals who have experience but subjects who are constituted through experience" (p. 27). In a similar way, Judith Butler's (1993) theory of performativity addresses the discursive process of reiteration through which a subject is constituted and produced (p. 95).

Many discourse analysts have grappled with questions about the relationship between subjectivity and discourses, asking: "How is it that people take up positions in one discourse rather than another?" (Hollway, 2003, p. 278); [Should] "discourse be read for signs of subjectivity?...[or it is] "useful to think of [someone] as the author of his discourse…?" (Wetherell & Potter, 1992, p. 8). In my research, I analyze discourses in various texts, such as anti-violence curriculum, interview transcripts, newspapers and a report from a provincial human rights tribunal. Importantly, my focus is not the educators, authors, journalists or tribunal participants themselves, but rather the discourses that constitute them as subjects. I investigate which subjectivities and spaces are produced or made (im)possible through the available discourses and how they rely on one another or interlock. At the same time, as an activist researcher, I do not view subjects as passive and un-implicated in the statements and organizations of power that they/we produce through discourse, and therefore I stress the importance of addressing complicity and accountability in research for social change. This process "begins with a recognition that we are each implicated in systems of oppression that profoundly

structure our understanding of one another. That is, we come to know and perform

ourselves in way that reproduce social hierarchies" (Razack, 1998, p. 10).

In my research, I examine how my subjectivity is constituted by the discourses I

examine, how it shapes what I see and don't see, as well as how I construct and assign

meanings to the data that I am analyzing. I am not outside of the issues examined in this

research, but rather am personally and politically invested and implicated in the problems

explored in this project, and this informs my approach to feminist autoethnography and

personal narrative (which I discuss in part three of this chapter).

Power and Normalization. My research troubles the meanings attached to the

category "normal", examining how normative discourses are produced and resisted

within feminist and queer anti-violence strategies. This involves examining power

relations and how social regulation and governance shape the construction of norms and

processes of normalization. Foucault demonstrated how power operates within and

through the individual ensuring that bodies regulate themselves and one another in

relation to a defined norm and through subtle practices of surveillance which produce two

kinds of bodies: the normal and abnormal body (Adams, 1997; Razack, 2002). Through

the imposition of precise norms and processes of surveillance, the discipline of

individuals and of a population is accomplished. The goal is to correct and reform deviant

behaviour. Normalization is thus a form of social regulation, and "what we take to be

"normal" are, for the most part, representations of dominant interests (Adams, 1997, p.

15). Elaborating on Foucault's work, Judith Butler (1990; 2002) argues that categories of

gender and sexuality come to be naturalized through the reiteration, or performance, of a

norm or a set of norms. For example, heterosexual identity seeks to naturalize itself as the original, the normal, and the real through the compulsory endless repetition of the category heterosexual.

Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality describes how this normalizing power works through techniques of governance that regulate and manage populations at a distance by relying upon people to govern themselves. Neoliberalism has been described as a contemporary form of governmentality that deflects attention away from the socio-spatial, economic and political conditions that produce violence or poor health, and emphasizes personal responsibility for preventing violence and illness through self-help discourses, expert knowledge and expert assistance (Bumiller, 2008; Lupton, 1999). Neoliberalism is "a facet of a racist society that works to both reinforce the racial structure of society, while also modifying the processes of racialization" (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010, p. 248-50). In Chapter Six, I examine how neoliberal forms of governance and racialized discourses operate in a queer IPV prevention and health promotion initiative.

A critique of normalcy is a central aspect of anti-colonial and queer theories and I now turn to a discussion of this part of my analytical framework – first discussing theorizing on race and colonialism, and then anti-colonial queer perspectives.

Anti-Colonial and Critical Whiteness Theories. Racism, imperialism and colonialism are deeply interconnected. Colonialism is the historical and on-going process of conquest and exploitation of people, land and resources (Loomba, 1998; Trask, 2004). Anti-colonial and critical race scholars have demonstrated how the production of others

is crucial in defining what is 'normal' and in locating one's own place in the world. The colonized subject is characterized as 'other' through discourses such as primitivism and cannibalism, as a means of establishing the binary separation of the colonizer and colonized and asserting the naturalness and primacy of the colonizing culture and world view. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 154-155)

Anti-colonial theories disrupt these racialized constructions of normalcy, including the normative power of whiteness and the binary of self/other. Yasmin Jiwani (2006) emphasizes that racialization is a violent process, which rests on the normativity and invisibility of whiteness (p. 6).

Sherene Razack (1998) has referred to whiteness as "the colour of domination" describing how it shows up in discursive moves of innocence and the repetitive denial of white dominance and complicity in systems of domination (see also hooks, 1994). Whiteness is also profoundly spatial (Kobyashi & Peake, 2000). In white settler societies such as Canada it is "that which historically removed and continues to remove [the ground of Indigenous sovereignty]– initially through *Terra Nullius* and policies and practices of assimilation" and other on-going colonial legal and socio-spatial practices (Nichol, 2004, p. 36).

In this research, I interrogate the production of whiteness in queer anti-violence discourses so as to dislodge it from its unmarked and unnamed status and to deconstruct the power it carries. I draw on feminist anti-colonial and critical whiteness scholarship (Dyer 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1992; Nichol, 2004; Morrison, 1992) for investigating how whiteness is constituted through discursive processes of othering and

how racialized assumptions are produced in and through discourses. My research examines how the terror and violence of whiteness (hooks, 1992) is denied, erased or naturalized within white hegemonic feminist and queer anti-violence discourses (Jiwani, 2006).

While the terms "racism" and "whiteness" evoke different processes and effects of white racial domination, many anti-racist activists and scholars have argued for the need to use the term white supremacy (hooks, 1989; Smith, 2006). Inspired by the work of these scholars, I engage what Zeus Leonardo (2004) calls a "critical pedagogy of white racial supremacy". This involves more than simply noting racial privileges and advantages, or viewing racism as an unfortunate social problem that is unconnected to white racial subjects. Leonardo (2004) explains:

> In order for white racial hegemony to saturate everyday life, it has to be secured by a process of domination, or those *acts, decisions, and policies that white subjects perpetrate on people of color*. As such, a critical pedagogy of white racial supremacy revolves less around the issue of unearned advantages, or the state of being dominant, and more around direct processes that secure domination and the privileges associated with it. (emphasis mine, p.137)

The focus is less on the state of privilege or dominance, and more about the direct socio-economic, legal and spatial acts and processes that secure domination. I find geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore's (2002) definition of racism very helpful here: "racism is the state-sanctioned and/or legal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerabilities to premature death, in distinct yet densely interconnected political geographies" (p. 261). Like the work of bell hooks (1992), Andrea Smith (2005, 2006)

and others, Gilmore focuses on how racism is produced systematically and spatially (for example, through policies and laws), how it is experienced by people of colour and Indigenous people, and how it fundamentally affects the quality and longevity of their lives. My research pays attention to these issues primarily by focusing on how white supremacy is discursively produced (and in some cases disrupted) in queer and feminist anti-violence organizing and education. It encourages activists and scholars to examine "everyday acts of white supremacist thought and practice" (hooks, 2003, p. 40) and to commit to challenge all manifestations of settler colonialism within social justice movements and in the wider state and global contexts as well. This approach foregrounds questions of white complicity and accountability to people of colour and Indigenous people in my analysis.

Scholars such as Andrea Smith (2010a/b) and Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua (2005) and Scott Lauria Morgensen (2011) have addressed the lack of critical analysis of settler colonialism and the on-going colonization of Indigenous people within much of critical race, postcolonial, feminist and queer theory. Lawrence & Dua (2005), call for the decolonization of anti-racist theory and organizing practices. By choosing "anti-colonial" as a descriptor for my approach, I situate my work within this body of knowledge which places the past and present day violence of colonial land theft and dispossession and practices of decolonization at the centre of feminist and queer theorizing and social movement politics (Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Morgensen, 2011; Monture-Angus, 1995; Smith, 2010a/b; Trask, 2004).[37]

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[37] Some have discussed the differences between post-colonial and anti-colonial theory (Angod, 2006; Berg & Gilmartin, 2007). In some cases, there has been tension and debate surrounding assumptions that the "post" in post-colonial theory describes a period free of colonial legacies or to refer to colonialism as a period that has ended, although not all post-colonial theorists make this assumption. A review of this

Anti-Colonial Queer. My framework integrates anti-colonial and critical race feminist theorizing on racialization and whiteness with queer theories (Barnard, 2004; Cohen, 1997; Morgensen, 2011; Puar, 2007; Riggs, 2006; Somerville, 2000; Smith, 2010b,). This approach expands critiques of normativity beyond sexuality and gender, to trouble colonial, racial and classed norms as well, and the interdependence of racialization and sexualization (Lenon, 2008; Oswin, 2008). Central to my interlocking analysis, is the understanding that colonial violence is always gendered and sexualized (Razack, 2002; Smith, 2005) and that processes of heterosexualization are integral to colonial nation building (Alexander, 2005; Driskell et al., 2011; Morgensen, 2011; Smith, 2010b). Andrea Smith (2006) argues that heteropatriarchy is the building block of empire and of the nation-state form of governance. As she explains: "in order to colonize peoples whose societies are not based on social hierarchy, colonizers must first naturalize hierarchy through instituting patriarchy" and heterosexuality (p. 72).

While the term queer is often used as an identity category or umbrella term for non-normative sexual and gender identities, it emerged as a critique of essentialist constructs and identity politics. Many theorists conceptualize "queer" as a verb, as a practice or set of deconstructive practices focused on challenging normative knowledges, identities and behaviours (Sullivan, 2003). Queerness is then less about a way of "being" and more about "doing" and offers the potential for radical social critique (Sullivan, 2003). I apply a queer approach in this way in my research, to trouble normative discourses – white and middle-class normativity, and hetero and homonormativity. My

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literature and the debates surrounding the differences is outside of the scope of this study and can be read elsewhere (see: Angod, 2006; Berg & Gilmartin, 2007; Loomba, 1998).

research interrogates the violence of normalcy and the way this is performed and spatially regulated in white heteropatriarchal settler societies.

Influenced by Foucault's *The History of Sexuality Volume 1* (1978), queer theorists explore how sexuality is constructed in various socio-historical contexts and to make visible how heteronormativity is produced, enforced and resisted (Adams, 1997; Lenon, 2008; Ristock, 2002). Foucault argues that since the 17th century, there was a "proliferation of discourses" concerned with sexuality (p. 18) which introduced new categories of identification. The subject position of the "homosexual" first emerged in medical discourses in the late 1800s and specific sexual acts were first understood as the expression of an individual, and tied to specific identities. These identities were constructed through normalizing discourses. Foucault also demonstrated that scientific efforts to define race were intricately linked to discourses of gender and sexuality, in order to manage populations and ensure race purity through "interventions at the level of the body, conduct, health and everyday life" (1980, p.149). Some scholars draw on his work to reveal the intimate and interlocking nature of discourses of race and sexuality (Lenon, 2008; McWhorter, 2004; Oswin, 2008; Sommerville, 2000; Stoler, 1995). In my work, this means paying attention to the interlocking and normalizing power of racialized hetero and homonormative discourses, as well as the way sexual subjects are positioned within racial and colonial hierarchies in white settler societies such as Canada.

A number of queer theorists have critiqued the emergence of a new social category "the normal gay/lesbian" (Richardson, 2005; Seidman 2001), and the homonormative discursive and socio-material practices articulated by gays and lesbians that support rather than resist heteronormative neoliberal projects (Duggan 2003;

Richardson 2005). These scholars are concerned with the way "normalizing social controls assign a moral status of normal and abnormal" to certain conceptions of family, intimate life, sexual acts and desires and subjectivities (Seidman 2001, p. 326; see also Puar 2007; Richardson, 2005; Riggs 2006). As Diane Richardson (2005) summarizes: "At the heart of neoliberal responses to homosexuality there is frequently both a (continued) recognition and maintenance of difference and, at the same time, an attempt to disrupt this through the introduction of new policy measures that constitute lesbians and gays men as 'ordinary normal citizens'" (p. 531).

In this dissertation, I critically examine homonormative sexual politics and the way they draw on normative and neoliberal representations of respectability that are racialized and classed (Duggan, 2003; Lenon, 2011; Puar, 2007). Anti-colonial queer[38] scholars have expanded the analysis to show how homonormativity is implicated in imperialism, white nationalism and settler colonialism (Morgensen, 2010; Puar, 2006, 2007; Smith, 2010b). These scholars have drawn attention to the way homonormative neoliberal discourses and political formations not only reproduce heteronorms of gender and kinship but national and racial norms as well (Morgensen, 2010; Oswin, 2008; Puar 2007; Riggs, 2006; Thorpe 2005). "Homonationalism" is a term coined by Jasbir Puar (2006) to refer to socio-spatial and political processes that strategically incorporate certain privileged queer bodies into nation-building projects. She has shown that there has been a rise in homonationalism in the post 9/11 context, which position certain queer bodies as less threatening to the nation than others (Puar, 2006).

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[38] This framework has also been described as "queer of colour critique", "postcolonial queer", "critical race or anti-racist queer" and "queer intersectionality".

Anti-colonial queer theorists have pointed out that the majority of queer theorists have neglected to address how race-based, class-based norms "circulate simultaneously with (and through) sexual identities" (Cohen, 1997; Riggs, 2007, p. 2). They challenge reductive notions of heteronormativity and narrow understanding of queer "which collapses our understanding of power into a single continuum of evaluation" (Cohen, 1997, p. 452). At the heart of this politic is an understanding of the mutually constitutive nature of race and sexuality and the fact that "the roots of heteronormativity are in white supremacist ideologies which sought (and continue) to use the state and its regulation of sexuality, in particular through the institution of heterosexual marriage, to designate which individuals were truly 'fit' for full rights and privileges of citizenship" (Cohen, 1997, p. 453). Anti-colonial queer feminists foreground the symbiotic relationship between heteronormativity, patriarchy and white supremacy to show that heteropatriarchy is the building block of empire and the nation-state (Smith, 2006, p. 71).[39] Queer Indigenous scholars and allies have pointed out how colonialism produced what Scott Morgensen (2010) calls "'settler sexuality': a white national heteronormativity that regulates Indigenous sexuality and gender by supplanting them with the sexual modernity of settler subjects" (p. 106).

This work challenges a harmful binarism of whiteness and settler colonialism within much of queer theory and the heteronormativity within much of critical race and postcolonial theory (Cohen, 1997; Hawley, 2001; Smith, 2010b). While a critique of settler colonialism has been part of this analysis for some Indigenous scholars and allies, much of the critical race literature has largely ignored past and present settler colonialism

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[39] This work has roots in the early activism and writings of Indigenous lesbian feminists and lesbian feminists of colour such as Lee Maracle, Paula Gunn Allen, Chrystos, Audre Lorde and Barbara Smith, to name but a few.

and as such as reproduced problematic colonial discourses (Lawrence & Dua, 2005). Settler colonialism has been described as "the social processes and narratives that displace Native people while granting settlers belonging to Native land and settler society" (Morgensen, 2010, p. 117). This critique and deeper analysis of the hetero and homonormativity of settler colonialism has only recently been integrated into the wider critical race literature (e.g. Morgensen, 2010; Riggs, 2006; Smith, 2010b).

A number of scholars draw on anti-colonial theorizing from Indigenous studies and activism that addresses the on-going violence of white settler colonialism (Morgensen, 2010, 2011; Smith, 2010a). Scott Morgensen (2010, 2011) examines "settler colonialism as a condition of the formation of modern queer subjects, cultures and politics" (2010, p. 106) in the U.S. and Canada. He extends Jasbir Puar's concept "homonationalism" and raises questions about "the conditions under which U.S. queer projects produce settler homonationalism" and the "terrorizing methods that create queer subjects as agents of the violence of the settler state" (p. 107).

Damien Riggs (2006) applies an interlocking framework to explore questions of what it means to claim rights or belonging as a white queer subject in a (post)colonizing nation. He interrogates whiteness within queer theorizing and political strategizing in the context of colonial nations, and argues for an analysis of power that recognizes the simultaneity of multiple forms of oppression rather than an additive analysis. He examines the way white queer subjectivities are formed simultaneously through privilege and oppression (p. 2) and how racism is a foundational component of white subjectivities in colonial nations (p. 3). Riggs contends that "queer rights campaigns on the whole have failed to interrogate white queer privilege" (p. 4).

Inspired by Riggs' work, I take up his call to action for white queer subjects in the following ways: engaging with issues of sovereignty and colonialism in queer politics and theorizing; examining racialized assumptions embedded in our discursive and political frameworks; challenging racial privilege; keeping an eye on on-going practices of white violence in colonial nations and interrogate our complicity with them; and moving towards greater accountability to Indigenous and other racialized people positioned as enemies of the white nation.

As critical race and post-colonial geographers have noted, these issues are deeply spatial (Berg & Gilmartin, 2007; Kobyashi & Peake, 2000; Razack, 2002). Geographer Natalie Oswin (2008) states that examining these issues requires a broader use of queer theory in geography beyond a liberal framework of oppression and resistance that focuses simply on the production of space as heterosexualized and the subsequent resistance by gay and lesbian subjects. She recommends a "queer geography that engages deeply with feminist, postcolonial and critical race theories to bring questions of race, colonialism, geopolitics, migration, globalization and nationalism to the fore" (p. 90). She suggests that this approach looks at much more than the lives of "queers" and instead focuses our attention on the ways in which "sexual norms do much more than to marginalize homosexuals" (p. 96). Following her work, and others such as David Eng (2001), I explore how the social and spatial regulation of sexuality produces and is produced by race (p. 5).

A key aspect of my approach involves a critical examination of the relationships between subjects, bodies and space and I discuss this next.

Subjectivity and Space. Foucault (1984) asserts that the production of space is "fundamental in any exercise of power" (p. 252). I understand space as something that is produced through social, political and discursive practices and processes and in turn, it has social and material effects. This challenges the common sense notion of space as natural, static and innocent and explores the relationships between symbolic meanings produced through discourse, social practices, power and material relations in the co-constitution of a space (Massey, 2005; Razack, 2002). In this research, I analyze how discourses simultaneously constitute and link subjects and spaces together.

There continues to be widespread tendency to see "place" as something that is concrete, and "space" as something that is abstract (Gregory et al., 2009). Social relations and interactions give meaning to spaces, and it is through these processes that spaces become places (Tyner, 2011). I position my work alongside scholars who understand the way space and place are both embodied practices and processes of production that are both material and discursive (Gregory et al., 2009). My understanding of space is informed by Henri Lefebvre's (1991) production of space, Doreen Massey's (2005) relational sense of place, Edward Said's (1978) imaginative geographies and Sherene Razack's (2002) interlocking analysis of race and space.

In the field of cultural geography, "any place or area, at any scale, or in any circumstance could be thought of as a geographical context" (Anderson, 2010, p.3). Geographers study a range of contexts ranging from a political territory, a physical landscape, a public square, a home, a park, a room, or an office of a non-profit organization, to other contexts such as the "contexts of communication" which could be understood as a "media spaces" or "places of the body" for example (p. 3). Cultural

geographers examine the interconnections between these contexts and at various scales asking: what produces these contexts and what effects do they have (Anderson, 2010)?

Drawing on the work of Judith Butler (1990), theorists have examined performative geographies showing how the production of space as white, or heterosexual, or male is a performative act — it is naturalized through repetition and regulation, and is continuously (re)created (Bell & Binnie, 1994; Brown, 2000; Browne, 2004; McDowell, 1995; Puar, 2006; Valentine, 1996). In this dissertation, (and as discussed more specifically in Chapter Five and Seven), I show how white hegemonic norms are performatively reinscribed through various repetitive discursive and spatial moves, such as constructing racial and colonial violence as off topic and o*ut of place* within hegemonic feminist and queer anti-violence organizing, or by naming violence against women a private sphere problem.

Like the work of the scholars above, I explore the symbolic meaning of spaces, paying close attention to the relationship between the discursive and material in the constitution of spaces. This also involves an examination of how spatial boundaries are mobilized and enforced through discourses to manage and regulate populations, and to separate and differentiate between respectable and degenerate subjects. For example, it is through these socio-spatial processes that certain bodies are seen to belong in certain spaces and not others (Nelson, 2008; Peters, 1998; Razack, 2002).

Cultural geographers argue that spaces are not simply ontologically pre-given, but instead the materiality of space and the symbolic meanings of spaces work through one another to make up a space (Razack, 2002). To understand how these meanings come to be, we need to denaturalize spaces, for example spaces coded as public or private, or the

space of the home, the city, the reserve and the nation. In some cases, this involves an analysis of spatial metaphors in discourses. Although geographers stress the importance of grounding this analysis in the material spatiality of life, many have also argued for the importance of unpacking spatial metaphors, such as "the closet" (Brown, 2000), "the Great White North" (Baldwin, Cameron, & Kobayashi, 2011), "empty space" (Razack, 2002), boundaries and borders, "out of place" and "in-between". Methodologically speaking, this means that we must deconstruct and problematize the taken-for-granted meanings attached to these spaces and the material consequences of these spatial metaphors. For example, in Chapter Five I deconstruct everyday assumptions and meanings about the public and private spaces of violence within feminist education about violence in lesbian relationships. In Chapter Seven, I use a similar practice to interrogate the way discourses about violence against gays and lesbians in the city of Kelowna became spatialized and racialized narratives about rights in the city and the nation. This includes an interlocking examination of the way social privilege and marginalization shape experiences of (un)belonging in the city (Kern, 2005; Peters, 1998) and the way spaces and subjects are relational.

Cultural geographers have brought our attention to the co-constitutive and relational nature of subjectivities and spaces (Massey, 2005) and my research illustrates how this spatial framework works well with anti-colonial and feminist interlocking theories. In this study, I critically examine how spaces and subject positions are socially and mutually constitutive of one another in different, relational and hierarchical ways (McDowell, 2004; Razack, 2002) and how certain constructs mask this relational quality. I am concerned with what they produce or *do*: for example how heterosexuality depends

on homosexuality for its meaning, how a respectable subjectivity requires a degenerate Other, or how the white settler city space is produced through the construction of an Aboriginal reserve. Stuart Hall (1996) describes this process:

> ...identities are constructed through, not outside difference. This entails the radically disturbing recognition that it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its *constitutive outside* that the 'positive' meaning of any term – and thus its 'identity' — can be constructed. (p. 4)

The status or privilege that comes from the construction of certain spaces, categories or subjectivities is dependent upon the subordinate status of another.

Despite the relatively recent engagement with feminist intersectional theory in the field of geography, human geographers have made important contributions to our understandings of the relational and co-constitutive production of spaces and subjectivities (Valentine, 2007). Doreen Massey's work (2005) has been instrumental in shaping our understanding of the relational nature of space and place. She advocates for "a relational politics of the spatial" (p. 147) and describes how this approach encourages us to consider how space is "constituted through interactions from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny" (2005, p. 9). Massey states that "space does not exist prior to identities/entities and their relations. More generally I would argue that identities/entities, the relations 'between' them, the spatiality that is part of them, are all co-constitutive" (p. 10). Importantly, she notes that this understanding of space calls for a politics that responds to a relational view of the world (p. 10).

Scholars influenced by Massey's work, have stressed the multiplicity and

relationality of socio-spatial relations of power, emphasizing that space is not static but dynamic, and challenging dualistic and binary conceptualizations of space (e.g. center/margin, core/periphery, urban/rural) (see: Amin, 2004; Anderson, 2000; Howitt, 1998; McDowell, 2004; Springer, 2009). This work sheds light on the way identities are forged in and through socio-spatial relations, as well as the way places are socially, relationally and mutually co-constituted.

Richard Howitt (1998) uses the metaphor of the musical scale to explain his conceptualization of scale as relational. He explains how various "scales of analysis might intersect and inform each other", or in other words, rather than thinking of the size and level of scale to examine "aspects of scale as relation" (p. 56). He urges geographers to "urgently tackle the crucial questions of how to act at multiple scales simultaneously; how to think globally and act locally, at the same time as thinking locally and acting globally (and at other scales simultaneously)" (p. 56).

Similarly Kay Anderson (2000) applies a relational framework to study geographies of nation-state building and politics of belonging, in order to move beyond binary thinking about space, identity and entitlement. She argues that processes of nation-state building take shape within and mediate various histories, spaces and scales which "need to be conceived relationally, so as to clarify how the forces of nation building extend and interact across a wide range of surfaces" (p. 386). Anderson suggests that relational geography can help us to "move beyond the binary fixes that inform such stock in-trade dualisms as center and margin, core and periphery, urban and rural, developed and underdeveloped, society and nature" (p. 388). She makes an important connection between this relational turn in geography, and theoretical work within postcolonial and

feminist studies, which urges scholars "to study the 'complex entanglements' and 'coexisting multiplicities' of previously opposed spheres" (p. 388). So while not explicitly naming this approach "interlocking geographies" or "spatial intersectionality", Anderson acknowledges the similarity between these literatures and the methodological directions they bring forth.

I draw inspiration from Anderson, Massey and Howitt's work and apply their ideas about relational space in this dissertation, to highlight relational geographies of violence that take shape in colonial white settler societies. I also employ these conceptual tools to explore how different struggles for rights (human rights and rights to the city) and anti-violence campaigns are relational, connected and depend on one another. This also involves an analysis of how different forms of violence are related to one another in and through space, and how violence produces space and place (Oikawa, 2002; Razack, 2002; Tyner, 2011).

In her examination of the violence of the spaces of the Japanese Internment in Canada, Mona Oikawa (2002) argues that critical geographers of violence must ask what the spaces of violence enable both in the past and in the present (p. 74)? In her work, she explains that "tracing the specific geographies of [violence] of the Internment uncovers both the scale of the violence perpetrated on Japanese Canadians and the microprocesses of power required to accomplish it" (p. 74). In Oikawa's powerful analysis of testimonies from Japanese-Canadian women survivors and their daughters, she shows how the violent spaces of the incarceration and displacement of Japanese-Canadians produced "a racial social order and a white nation" which "produced and sustained dominant [white] subjects" (p. 73-74). Her critical geography of violence focuses on "re-mapping the

spaces of the Internment…to reveal the ideological framework through which Canada was made and the forgetting of violence that is essential to this project of nation-building and the making of citizens" (p. 75). Similar to my theoretical framework, Oikawa illustrates how spaces and subjects were constructed relationally (p. 75) through the social, material and legal processes of racial violence.

Inspired by Sherene Razack (2002), Yasmin Jiwani (2006) and Mona Oikawa's (2002) work, I interrogate both the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic frameworks which mask or erase specific forms of violence and critically examine how spaces and bodies are relational or linked. This involves asking questions about how systems and practices of racism, white supremacy and heteropatriarchy for example, "become institutionally normalized in and through spatial configuration" (Goldberg, in Razack, 2002, p. 17).

Violence is both a social and spatial practice of control (Tyner, 2011) that has been examined by feminists within different historical, political, social, cultural and geographical contexts. Despite this, there has been limited research within the field of human geography that explores the complexities and relational nature of structural and interpersonal forms of violence. Geographers have examined the geographies of political violence (Gregory & Pred, 2007), geographies of fear, social identity and safety (Kern, 2005; Pain, 2000; Valentine, 1989, 1992), the complexities of privilege and oppression in people's fear of violence in public and private spaces (Kern, 2005), however there has been less attention to the geographies of interpersonal violence (Tyner, 2011). In Chapter Five I discuss some of this literature in detail (including research by a feminist geographers who have studied the geographies of interpersonal violence in women's lives) examine the interlocking constructions of public/private violence in lesbian

domestic violence discourses.

I now turn to a discussion of my approach to data collection, and the methods I used to apply the theoretical framework discussed thus far.

Part Three: Qualitative Research Design and Methods

In order to examine my research questions outlined in Part One of this Chapter, I developed a qualitative research design for my study, which examines three thematically-related case studies that emerged from my experiences working as a community anti-violence organizer and educator. I relied on multiple sources of data and used a feminist interlocking approach to discourse analysis combined with authoethnographic accounts and critical self-reflexivity.

Data Collection. Data in qualitative research take many forms. In this study, I collected and analyzed the following data: transcripts from semi-structured individual interviews and a focus group from a previous study, feminist anti-violence pamphlets, a queer violence prevention curriculum, and archival material in the form of print and web-based news articles, a website for an urban development proposal, and a report from a human rights tribunal. The research occurred in three phases and in each phase, I conducted a case study. In the next section I describe the data collected in each case study and following this, I outline my approach to discourse analysis and autoethnography before concluding the chapter with a discussion of strengths and limitations of my approach.

Case Studies. Case study research has been a common method in feminist qualitative research and researchers have used different methodological approaches including archival research, interviewing, literary analysis and other methods (Naples, 2003; Reinharz, 1992; Rossiter, 2005). They can be single or multiple case designs. Researchers often select a case to study to illustrate particular theoretical concepts or to analyze details that are often overlooked. Many feminist researchers interested in intersectionality "use the case study method to identify a new or invisible group—at the intersection of multiple categories—and proceed to uncover the differences and complexities of experience embodied in that location" (McCall, 2005, p. 1782). This is often accomplished with additional methodological tools such as deconstruction and critical discourse analysis. Similarly, I use a case study approach combined with feminist interlocking discourse analysis to examine multiple forms of data, which I discuss below.

Case study #1: White lesbian/queer anti-violence educators in Vancouver BC.
The research discussed in my first empirical chapter, Chapter Five, draws on a secondary analysis of previously collected data. I used multiple research methods including an analysis of three key Canadian educational texts (pamphlets and booklets) and semi-structured individual interviews and a focus group with five white, lesbian and queer-identified feminist anti-violence educators who deliver community workshops about violence in women's same-sex/gender relationships. Given my experience as a queer anti-violence educator, I had a research assistant interview me as well, and the transcript from my individual interview was included as data in my analysis[40]. I interviewed five

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[40] Throughout the dissertation, I have used the words "us" "we" and "ourselves" to refer to white lesbian/queers and/or feminists, deliberately including myself as I am not outside the analysis and am implicated in the discussion. In other cases I use "we" when referring to anti-violence activists more broadly but these distinctions are clear in each case.

white women although one woman also identified with a specific ethnic identity (not mentioned for reasons of confidentiality). Three women identified as middle-class, one as "mixed-class" and the other as working-class[41].

This research was conducted in 1999 in Vancouver, British Columbia, a large and diverse urban centre in Canada. Over a decade since the data was collected, the educational practices and conceptual frameworks revealed through this research are still prevalent in North American feminist anti-violence and LGBTQ organizations and constitute a dominant discourse. This is largely due to tight material constraints (lack of funding and subsequent time to develop and change materials and frameworks) as well as investments in maintaining an analysis that reflects and privileges the lives of queer women from socially dominant groups.

Secondary data analysis can be described as a method that involves using existing data, collected for the purposes of a prior study, in order to either explore a new theme or issue, or to gain a more in-depth understanding of an issue (Heaton, 2003). In my case, I conducted a secondary analysis of data, as a way to deepen and extend my understanding and analysis of a specific theme in the data that had been underdeveloped in the previous study. The goal was to explore and examine themes related to conceptualizations of public/private forms of violence and to apply a spatial framework informed by literature in cultural geography.

I completed this secondary analysis prior to conducting research on the other two empirical objects of my study (discussed in Chapters Six and Seven). By carrying out a secondary analysis first, I was able to identify key themes and problems that I could

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[41] Further discussion of the methods used in this previous study (i.e. participant selection, interview process, data analysis) can be found in: Holmes (2000).

examine in greater detail in subsequent research. The following themes were identified

through the secondary analysis and they helped to set the direction and priorities for my

remaining two case studies: i) the presence of a white settler mythology in feminist and

queer anti-violence discourses; ii) the discursive production of homonormativity and its

relationship to whiteness; iii) the relationship between violence and spaces

conceptualized as public/private.

Case study #2: "Healthy Queer Relationships Curriculum" in Vancouver BC.

In my second empirical chapter (Chapter Six), the source of data is a queer violence

prevention curriculum "Healthy Queer Relationships for Women" produced by the *Safe*

Choices: Support and Education Program (EVA, 2007). Given that I was involved in the

development and delivery of this curriculum in Vancouver BC, I also include a personal

narrative reflecting on my experiences as an educator, curriculum developer and activist

within this program.

Case study #3: Kelowna's Lesbian and Gay Pride Day and The LGBT Anti-

Violence Project. The third empirical chapter (Chapter Seven) relies on archival data

collected from print and web-based news media (news articles, editorials and letters to

the editor), a website for an urban development proposal, and a report from a BC Human

Rights Tribunal surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day. I also

include autoethnographic accounts of my personal experiences as the co-coordinator and

educator with a provincial LGBTQ anti-violence project in BC as part of the context of

this case study.

I reviewed and examined a large research file on the Kelowna Pride Day case

housed in the UBC Okanagan library collection that contains archival data collected by

Okanagan University College (now UBC Okanagan) students, faculty and librarians. This included: original and photocopied newspaper articles, letters to the editor and editorials, copies of the 1996 City Proclamation, and a booklet from the 1996 Pride Day celebration produced by the Okanagan Rainbow Coalition. I also relied on database searches with the "Canadian Newsstand" database and a Google search of websites, using the terms and phrases, "Kelowna Pride Day", "Walter Gray", "Kelowna Human Rights Tribunal" and "Okanagan Rainbow Coalition". For the news media analysis, I reviewed relevant news reports, articles, editorials and letters to the editor from the following news sources: The Daily Courier, and The Capital News, The Globe and Mail, The National Post, The Vancouver Sun, The Province, The Okanagan Sunday, The Oliver Chronicle, The Nanaimo Daily News, Trail Times, The Prince George Citizen, Times Colonist, The Toronto Star, The New York Times, Alberta Report, Xtra West, CBC, BC Christian News and the website LifeSiteNews.com.

Although I did not analyze discourses within all of these sources, I collected and reviewed other relevant data as part of my research and this included the following: the video "untitled part 4: terra incognita" produced and written by Jayce Salloum and the Okanagan Nation (2005) for Kelowna's Centennial Celebrations; the script for the play "The Orchard Drive" by Christopher Grignard (2002) which is based on this case and is set in Kelowna in 1997 at the time of a protest in response to Mayor Gray's actions; a booklet from the Okanagan Rainbow Coalition (1996); a memorandum on sexual orientation and human rights law in British Columbia produced and published by the Canadian Human Rights Reporter (2000); news articles and a report on the results of survey by the Indigo Spirit of Awareness Society (2007) about the safety of gay and

lesbian youth in the Central Okanagan; and Kelowna tourism and real estate advertisements. I also reviewed two other research files from UBC Okanagan library which included newspaper articles, editorials and letters to the editor from the time period I am examining, on the following themes: i) Racism in the Okanagan and ii) Aboriginal issues in the Okanagan. I also relied on secondary sources to contextualize my primary data sources, including Sharon Dale Stone's "Lesbians, Gays and The Press: Covering Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in Kelowna, 1996" (2001) and Mary-Woo Simms' "Human Rights in British Columbia" (2002).[42]

In this case study I also include autoethnographic accounts of my experiences living in Kelowna from 2005-2007 and as the co-coordinator and educator with *The LGBT Anti-Violence Project: Creating Strong and Safe Communities* from 2004-2005 — a partnership between the Ending Violence Association of BC (formerly known as the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs) and Qmmunity (formerly known as The Centre, A Community Centre Serving and Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual People and Their Allies), funded by the Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) and Victim Services Division (VSD), BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. The project focused on community development and education, and was not a research project. As such, in this research study I do not include direct quotes from participants but rather include general information shared by LGBTQ participants from the Roundtable Forum, which took place in Kelowna. Participants were aware that there would be widespread dissemination of information gathered through this project and agreed to this with the

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[42] Stone is the former event coordinator of the 1996 Pride Day celebration by the Okanagan Rainbow Coalition and Simms is the former Chief Commissioner of the BC Human Rights Commission.

understanding that identities would be protected. Information was shared with federal and provincial funders and policy makers, as well as participants from all three communities. A summary report was shared publicly. The project did not collect demographic data about the roundtable participants.[43]

Data Analysis. To analyze the data in each of the three case studies, I used a feminist interlocking approach to discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is an active process of "developing, testing out and justifying interpretations and readings of texts" (Wetherell & Potter, 1992, p. 105). Lawrence Berg (2009) has summarized seven key methodological approaches to discourse analysis within human geography, and I have applied all of these in my study to varying degrees. They are: i) suspending pre-existing categories and critical reflexivity; ii) absorbing oneself in the texts; iii) coding themes; iv) identifying regimes of truth; v) identifying inconsistencies (paradoxes and contradictions); vi) identifying absent presences; vii) identifying social contexts and how power operates through discourse to produce certain subject positions.

A feminist interlocking approach to discourse analysis situates the data within its socio-political, spatial and historical contexts and critically examines the dominant categories and taken-for-granted assumptions that may be at work. I examined how

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[43] The final summary report about the three communities stated it was "challenging to get diverse representation of LGBT community members on the planning committees and at the roundtable forums – particularly in some communities, gay men, trans people, older and younger people, people of colour and Aboriginal people" (Holmes & Toppings, 2005, n.p.). It also noted that "accessibility and violence impacting LGBT people with disabilities were not addressed in this project due to funding limitations and further work is needed to do outreach to LGBT people living with disabilities" (Holmes & Toppings, 2005, n.p.). Class identities and economic oppression were not discussed in the report, although in some communities participants spoke about the impact of poverty or limited access to employment. The summary report noted that "some Two-Spirit women, youth, older gay men and lesbians, trans people and bisexuals participated in the roundtables" (Holmes & Toppings, 2005, n.p.). While demographic information was not colleted, my assessment was that the majority of participants were white, able-bodied, cigender lesbians and gay men.

discourses, categories, subjectivities and systems of oppression come into being through one another, and interrogate how discourses reinforce and rely on one another. I examined the relational nature of binary categories in the data to examine how meanings are produced, for example what a category excludes and how the exclusion is implicated in the category (Hall, 1997).

As discussed earlier, feminist researchers often use methodological tools such as discourse analysis, deconstruction, a critique of universalizing narratives and essentialist constructs for identifying the processes by which certain stories and bodies come to be missing in texts and the implications of these erasures or exclusions. Similarly, in my data analysis I have paid attention to erasures, gaps and exclusions, but with a specific interest in what is made im/possible and in/visible through queer and feminist discourses that are constructed as emancipatory and "inclusive," such as feminist and queer anti-violence and human rights discourses.

In analyzing the collected data discussed above, I primarily paid attention to repetitive themes. I looked not only at the content of talk and text, but at the meanings associated with words and phrases bringing specific attention to the way these construct or disrupt normative ideas, practices and subject positions (Gough & Robertson, 2011). I read the texts with a critical lens examining how neoliberal, white/hetero/homo/middle-class and colonial norms are reproduced or disrupted through various discursive practices. I read the texts numerous times, noting repetitive words, phrases and themes. I tried to be mindful of silences and contradictions, which revealed insights into the productive nature of discourse and the operations of power.

Research Journal. My approach also embraces a critical self-reflexive stance

that has allowed for reshaping my research design and analysis based on the things I have

learned through the research process (Lather, 1991; Ristock & Pennell, 1996). I kept a

reflexive research journal throughout the research process, which provided a place where

I raised questions, grappled with epistemological and ontological questions, and clarified

my research questions and design. I re-read the journal throughout the research process,

paying specific attention to questions and themes that were repeated. The journal helped

me to clarify the theoretical framework and methods most appropriate for my research,

and at times also prompted me to shift my approach in new directions. I now turn to a

discussion of literature on the use of personal experience in research, including

autoethnography and critical self-reflexivity. [44]

Autoethnography and Personal Narratives. In each of the case studies in this

project, (discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven) I combine autoethnographic

accounts with discourse analysis. Autoethnography can be understood as one product of

the "crisis of representation" in the social sciences in the 1980s, where critics within

anthropology and other disciplines, argued that ethnographers did not simply describe or

reflect culture, but were producing it (Lather, 2007; Gregory et al., 2009).

Autoethnographers reflect on "their own life circumstances as a way to understand larger

social or cultural phenomena, and who often use personal narrative writing as a

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[44] I also discuss autoethnography in more detail in Chapter Seven.

representational strategy that incorporates affect and emotion into their analyses" (Butz & Bessio, 2009, p. 1665).[45]

Feminist researchers have developed numerous creative and innovative approaches to study personal experiences. In doing so they challenge a positivist ideology and disrupt binaries such as theory/praxis, subject/object, researcher/researched and personal/political (Naples, 2003; Reinharz, 1992; Ristock & Pennell, 1998). "Personal experience narrative" describes the practice where "social scientists take on the dual identities of academic and personal selves to tell autobiographical stories about some aspect of their experience in daily life" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 740). However simply sharing personal experiences is not an effective research tool on its own. Engaging in critical self-reflexive analysis of one's experience and placing this within the wider socio-historical context and relevant literature, is crucial.

Feminist, Indigenous, critical race and queer theorists stress the importance of conscious and critical self-reflexivity in the research process in order to address issues of power, complicity and accountability (Holman-Jones & Adams, 2010; Naples, 2003; Reinharz, 1992; Ristock & Pennell, 1998; Smith, 2005). They were some of the first researchers to advocate for the use of personal narratives in their research and to value the positionality of "insiders" in the research process or narrative (Smith, 2005). Sharon Holman-Jones and Tony Adams (2010) position autoethnography as a queer research method drawing attention to "autoethnography's and queer theory's commitments to uncertain, fluid, and becoming subjectivities, multiple forms of knowledge and representations, and research as an agent of change" (p. 108).

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[45] It is an increasingly common research method in the social sciences and humanities (including cultural geography) and takes various forms (Butz & Besio, 2009; England, 1994; Holman Jones & Adams, 2010, 2011).

In my research, I use autoethnographic accounts and critical self-reflection to draw attention to the fact that I am part of the group(s) and issues studied (albeit in multiple ways), and I use this positioning to deepen the study. This approach enables me to examine how I am positioned relationally as a researcher within and across discourses of safety/violence, belonging/un-belonging, inclusion/exclusion, privilege/marginalization and complicity/accountability. It also highlights contradictions and tensions within stories, and resists neat and tidy conclusions.

Feminist and other critical social science researchers have debated the benefits and complexities of "insider research," a term that refers to research practiced by researchers who study the population or socio-spatial circumstance they are part of and "use their insiderness as a methodological and interpretive tool" (Butz & Busio, 2009, p. 1669). This approach has been used frequently by marginalized groups to foreground experiences that have been silenced and to challenge grand narratives. However the insider/outsider binary does not reflect the complexities of subjectivities and sets up a false separation between these identities and experiences. These are not fixed or static positions but are "ever-shifting and permeable social locations" (Naples, 2003, p. 49) and individuals may be multiply positioned within the research context in multiple ways as both insiders and outsiders (Hill-Collins, 1986; Smith, 2005).

The limits of reflexivity have been discussed amongst critical researchers (Lather, 2007; Pillow, 2005). Personal narratives, autoethnographic accounts and self-reflexivity in social science research have been criticized by some as narcisstic confessional approaches, or "vanity ethnography (van Maanen in Lather, 2007), which can miss the productive nature of narratives, and lead to depoliticized and simplistic analyses (Pillow,

2005; Lather, 2007). Many scholars stress the need for *critical* self-reflexivity and attention to power relations and the representational practices when using personal narratives. A central goal in my research has been to critically reflect on anti-violence work that I have been a part of and to re-think some of the pedagogical and discursive strategies that we have developed. Thus, throughout my research I have worked to bring a critical lens to my use of personal narrative and autoethnography.

Finally, in the next (and last) section of this chapter I discuss the strengths and limitations of my methodological approach.

Part Four: Strengths and Limitations of Methodological Approach

One of the strengths of my methodology is my interdisciplinary and interlocking approach, which draws on theoretical tools from the disciplines of Sociology, Social Work, Women's Studies and Human Geography. An interdisciplinary approach supports researchers in addressing complex questions that cannot easily or successfully be addressed within the boundaries of a single discipline. For this reason, it works well with an interlocking analytic which recognizes the simultaneity and relationality of different systems of oppression. For my research, I sought to answer questions about the way different forms of violence and social-spatial hierarchies come into being through one another and this kind of project requires the tools from different disciplines to examine the way socio-economic, political, discursive and spatial processes work together. As well, by bringing different literatures into conversation with one another, my approach opens up new directions for research and practice within social movements. In addressing the strengths and limitations of interdisciplinary research, Sherene Razack (2002)

acknowledges that "borrowing from a variety of disciplines increases the risk that something of the depth of these scholarly projects will be lost" (Razack, 2002, p. 7). Yet, she also rejects the boundaries created by different disciplines noting that

> If there is anything we have learned about racial projects is that they come into being and are sustained through a wide number of practices, both material and symbolic. The study of the creation of racial hierarchies demands nothing less than the tools of history, sociology, geography, education and law among other domains of knowledge. (p. 7)

So while my research may lack the exhaustiveness of a project that is solely based within one discipline (such as geography or social work for example), it is definitely enhanced and strengthened by interdisciplinary tools.

There are strengths and limitations with my interlocking approach. I critique additive approaches, binary categories, neoliberal diversity discourses and the mainstreaming of intersectionality, for the way they keep racialized, classed, sexual and gendered forms of normativity intact (Ward, 2008). I underscore the relational and interlocking nature of systems of oppression attending to the way they produce subjectivities, spaces and bodies in symbiotic and hierarchical ways (Razack, 2008). While I embrace a feminist framework that views race, class, gender, sexuality, disability and age as interlocking systems, this study primarily focuses on sexuality and race. I critically reflect on classed and gendered socio-spatial relations, but this is not discussed to the same extent as race and sexuality. A critical trans feminist analysis of gender, transphobia and cisnormativity weaves throughout the research but is not central in all chapters. I do not critically examine the production of disability and ableist discourses in

LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence organizing or in the production of spaces, which represents a gap.

A strength of the study is my use of multiple forms of data and case studies. My use of multiple data sources in this project enhanced data credibility. Conducting a secondary analysis of interview and focus group data collected for a previous project, allowed me to extend and deepen a spatial framework and examine issues not fully explored in the earlier project. Analyzing discursive practices within a violence prevention curriculum that I developed and delivered, archival data (newspaper and on-line media accounts, reports from a tribunal), and combined with autoethnographic accounts offers a many-sided look at the framing of violence within queer anti-violence movements.

The local focus of this study (i.e. three case studies from British Columbia) can be seen as both a strength and a limitation. It is a strength in that it focuses on the specificity of certain spaces and time. There is also limited research that looks at Canadian (and British Columbian) anti-violence and social movement organizing and my research responds to this gap. It might be argued that the findings are not transferable due to the localized nature of the knowledge produced. However I argue that the findings are relevant beyond the specific location and time, are applicable to multiple feminist / queer sites of social justice organizing and movements. My analysis of white homonormativity is also applicable to other spaces dominated by white queers/feminists or organized through white normative frameworks, as well as other health promotion sites and social movements impacted by neoliberalism in their work to address violence and social inequities.

It could be argued that the secondary data analysis is a limitation because it draws on data collected in 1999. However as I discuss in Chapter Five, I argue that this represents a dominant or hegemonic discourse that is still prevalent in community organizing today. While there is evidence of some change and a greater range of discourses in some community contexts, my analysis about the public/private dichotomy and white homonormativity is very relevant in the current context in British Columbia. Similarly, in Chapter Seven I bring together data from different time periods to examine the contested and imaginary geographies of violence and belonging in Kelowna.

An additional strength of the research includes bringing an insider position to the research where I analyzed documents, interviews/focus groups, and personal experiences in anti-violence movements. Some might perceive this as a limitation arguing that as the researcher I am "too close" to the material and unable to maintain an "objective" stance. I challenge these assumptions arguing instead that my approach produces "socially situated knowledge" which provides a "strong objectivity" in research (Harding, 1991, p. 152). Sandra Harding's (1991) argument challenges positivist approaches that claim neutrality in knowledge production and that ignore the role of social location, power relations and the cultural assumptions that shape one's perspective. Instead she states that "strong objectivity requires that we investigate the relation between subject and object rather than deny the existence of, or seek unilateral control over, this relation" (p. 152). At the same time, I recognize the partiality of this study and the way I am telling certain stories and not others. My analysis might not be shared by others within the anti-violence organizations and social movements that I reflect on.

This dissertation is theoretically driven and this is both a strength and limitation.

One of my strengths as a scholar is my interest in and ability to theorize complex and interconnected ideas and concepts. Some might argue that a limitation is the somewhat dense and repetitive nature of this theorizing. Some theoretical concepts are re-introduced in different chapters to address the thematic and ideological connections between the case studies. As well, there is a tendency for some ideas to repeat themselves across chapters. This was partly shaped by a contextual factor where a UBC policy change regarding dissertation format demanded a restructuring and re-writing many of the chapters.

The research focuses on an analysis of texts. The validity of the results would have been increased if I had included other data sources such as participant observation, interviews with a much larger sample and/or quantitative survey data. I have not relied on extensive ethnographic material, which would have highlighted greater complexities and would have given a more nuanced and complex representation of issues explored. For example, the absence of ethnographic data related to Kelowna's 1996-1997 Pride Day could be seen as a limitation. I am aware that some complexities may be lost by not including the voices of activists and residents of the city. Similarly, a theme that emerged through this study is the racial and class dynamics of power within feminist and LGBTQ movement organizations and a limitation in the study is the absence of ethnographic data highlighting the voices and experiences of Two-Spirit people and LGBTQ people of colour and working-class queers. It has thus been important for me to acknowledge throughout the dissertation that my research tells a partial story, framed through my eyes and my personal experience, as well as media accounts, which are also (always) partial. It has been also important to bring forward the theoretical contributions of queers of colour and Two-Spirit people from which my theoretical framework is inspired.

Throughout my research I have sought to ensure that my research process has integrity and value. As Janice Ristock and Joan Pennell (1996) note, the concept of validity in feminist postmodern research refers to the "integrity and value of the research" and this is "achieved through accountability both to the participants and to those who will be affected by the outcome" (p. 50). In this research project, I have experienced this as a tension. For example, in all three case studies I draw on personal experiences and autoethnographic accounts and in some cases, such as the Healthy Queer Relationships Curriculum, I critically analyze discourses embedded within materials that I helped to develop and deliver in community-based feminist organizations. My goal has been to critically analyze discourses and practices with specific interest in the making visible the normative and hegemonic discourses reproduced within them (as well as the way they were contested and disrupted). In some cases, this has meant uncovering oppressive uses of power such as heteronormative, racist or classist practices (Ristock & Pennell, 1996, p. 50). It has also involved reflecting on, and writing about, issues that were contested and in some cases unspoken or what Foucault (1981) called "forbidden speech" (p. 55). There were times during the research process, when I was worried that my former colleagues and peers would disagree with my analysis or my goals.

In writing about these challenges within feminist research, Ristock and Pennell (1996) argue that it is important that the researcher make their own critical analysis visible and not hide it from the participants. In my case this meant asking myself throughout the research process about its integrity and value. I wrote about these quandaries in my research journal and this helped me to ensure that I addressed partialities and complexities when writing up the results in the chapters. I have published

some of this dissertation research (see Preface) and I have shared copies and links to the publications with some individuals in community organizations.

During my time working in the feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence movement, at times I have experienced a resistance by white and middle-class colleagues to embrace a spirit of critical self-reflection and discuss questions of complicity. Specifically, I have found it difficult to find other white feminists and queers who are willing and open to engage in critical dialogue about white supremacy, homonormativity, racism and colonialism. A strength of my research is my critical self-reflexive autoethnographic approach, commitment to social justice activism, interesting in pushing the boundaries of our thinking within social movements (including my own). However I am aware that this focus may not fully show or highlight the significant work these community organizations have done.

In this Chapter I have outlined the interdisciplinary conceptual framework and methodological tools that I have used to explore discourses in queer anti-violence movements. The theories outlined here informed my research design and approach to data analysis. In the following Chapter, I examine the public/private dichotomy in lesbian domestic violence educational discourses where I apply an interlocking spatial framework to destabilize white homonormative practices within feminist and queer anti-violence movements.

Chapter Five:
Destabilizing Homonormativity and the Public/Private Dichotomy
in Lesbian Domestic Violence Discourses

Over the past twenty years in North America, community-based educational

materials and workshops have been developed as common feminist approaches to

addressing violence in lesbian relationships. As practical tool they have been helpful in

disrupting many heteronormative assumptions about violence in intimate relationships

thus raising awareness about this form of violence within lesbian, gay, bisexual and

transgender communities and amongst heterosexual family members, friends and service

providers. This chapter explores the discursive constructions about violence and the

public/private dichotomy within educational pamphlets and workshops with a focus on

making visible what they produce and obscure. I investigate how certain stories and

constructs make visible (and produce) some subjectivities, forms of violence and histories

of oppression while concealing or suppressing others.

A central tenet of the dominant Western feminist discourse about violence against

women is that intimate relationship violence is hidden through the construct of privacy of

the domestic sphere of the heterosexual home. The term "domestic violence" (although

not universally applied) also conveys the idea that intimate relationship violence occurs

in private in the home. While there are differences between the dominant discourses

about domestic violence in heterosexual and same-sex/gender relationships, both rely on

this assumption about hidden violence in the privacy of the home. In this chapter I

explore the racialized exclusions in the public/private dichotomy in community-based

educational discourses about lesbian domestic violence. I examine how the public/private

dichotomy masks how the construction of each space, and the violence within them, depend on one another.

As I discussed in Chapter One, for four decades Western feminist anti-violence activists and theorists have disrupted hegemonic assumptions about violence and public/private spaces. They have contested the notion of the home (private sphere) as a place of safety and support for women and the street (public sphere) as a place of danger and the primary site of violence against women (McDowell, 1999; Pain, 1991; Warrington, 2001), by showing the high prevalence rates of violence against women perpetrated by someone known (most often an intimate partner) and the greater risks of experiencing violence in the home than on the street (Pain, 1991). This chapter contributes to this literature, but argues that while this conceptualization has been politically effective and salient for some women, it has produced another "regime of truth" (Foucault, 1980) that makes it difficult to see or imagine certain forms of violence enacted on certain bodies, thereby making it difficult to understand the way different forms of violence sustain one another. For example, certain forms of violence, such as the very public violence of colonialism and nation building, are normalized as something other than violence and thus erased or made invisible (Jiwani, 2006; Razack, 2002). I assert that the mobilization of certain analytical frameworks and discursive strategies within feminist and queer anti-violence movements, support this central feature of a white settler mythology — the denial and "disavowal of conquest, genocide, slavery, and the exploitation of the labour of peoples of colour" (Razack, 2002, p. 2). The dominant feminist analysis of domestic violence has focused on the private oppression of white, middle-class heterosexual women in the home and has ignored the public forms of

violence that shape the lives of women of colour, Indigenous women, poor women, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, as well as how systemic and intimate forms of violence intersect and interlock (Almeida et al., 1994; Bhattacharjee, 2001; Critical Resistance & Incite!, 2003; Jiwani, 2006).

I argue that the ideological scripting of domestic violence as private and domestic makes it hard to recognize certain forms of violence on certain bodies, as violence. While maintaining a steady gaze on *lesbian* domestic violence discourse, my analysis about the public/private dichotomy applies also to a feminist heterosexual domestic violence discourse and the way multiple forms of violence in the lives of women of colour, Indigenous women, low-income and poor women, young women, transgender women, and sex trade workers are erased through hegemonic frameworks. In this chapter, I am extending the work of scholars who have exposed this universality to highlight a spatial analysis and to problematize the way white homonormativity is produced through discourses that are positioned as liberatory or oppositional. Although I recognize race, class, gender, sexuality and disability as interlocking categories, this chapter focuses specifically on processes of racialization and the way whiteness structures lesbian abuse education. Whiteness produces differently classed subjects and "is not a monolithic construct and does not hold the same level of power and prestige in all its embodiments" (Lopez, 2005, p. 18). I focus here on the way whiteness is produced in homonormative discourses to highlight "the extent to which *whiteness as a concept* remains wedded to cultural imperatives that have historically been complicit in the oppression, colonization and outright genocide of nonwhite peoples the world over" (Lopez, 2005, p. 18).

Context of Educational Discourses

Feminist educational discourses about lesbian IPV emerged — in the United States in the late 1970s to early 1980s and in Canada in the mid-to-late 1980s. Lesbian/bisexual-specific anti-violence initiatives exist in only a few major cities in North America within a context of tight material constraints. Some domestic violence organizations and LGBTQ organizations in large urban centres have provided support, advocacy and outreach initiatives and public education campaigns including the development of pamphlets, manuals and websites. Until recently most community education in Canada has been funded through short-term grants and mostly on a part-time basis.[46]

Pedagogical approaches to address the violence have been developed as both practical tool and political strategy, and have appeared five main forms, i) pamphlets and booklets, 2) support and education groups (primarily for survivors), 3) web-based materials, 4) service provider workshops or training sessions, and 5) curriculum and training manuals for workshop facilitators/trainers. They are directed at three main audiences: i) LGBTQ communities;[47] ii) feminist anti-violence counsellors and advocates; and iii) social service and health care providers and criminal justice system

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[46] Recent exceptions are the Safe Choices Program in Vancouver funded by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and the Coalition Against Same-Sex Partner Abuse in Toronto funded by the Ontario Ministry of Attorney General. The state frequently funds organizations dominated by white, middle-class professionals to do outreach to immigrant women, women of colour and Aboriginal women rather than providing ongoing core funding to these communities directly (Shin, 1991). These state practices and hierarchical social relations affect the production of knowledge — such as who is funded, hired, published, and whose analysis is legitimized.

[47] Most educational work has focused primarily (or exclusively) on lesbian identity, although the late 1990s saw efforts to shift the language and analytical framework to include women who identify as bisexual, queer, Two-Spirit, and/or transgender, or who do not claim any of these identities. Although most materials are not directed towards transgender communities, some recent educational materials have tried to be trans-inclusive. As stated earlier, there are also debates within communities about the strengths and limitations with a LGBTQ model that can problematically conflate gender identity and sexual orientation.

personnel. Short training workshops usually incorporate an anti-homophobia component (Lobel, 1986; Elliot, 1990; Balan, Chorney & Ristock, 1995) and in some cases are part of a larger anti-oppression training.[48]

Over the last twenty years, a dominant discourse about violence in lesbian relationships has developed drawing on feminist heterosexual domestic violence discourses. Although not unified, static or stable, it can be seen in educational materials and workshops. It is not that this is the only discourse, but rather that power moves through discourses and that hierarchical power relations affect which knowledge is legitimized and positioned as "truth," or subjugated and obscured.

Tensions and points of rupture in the dominant lesbian domestic violence discourse can sometimes be heard in workshops, public forums, conferences and organizing committees and more recently can be seen in some web, print and workshop material (for example, Chen, Dulani & Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2011; Chung & Lee, 2002; Koyama, 2006; Northwest Network, 2006; Queer People of Color Caucus, 2004; Ristock, 2002; Ristock & Timbang, 2005; EVA, 2007). These often speak to how essentialist (and at times biological) constructions of "lesbian" and "woman" marginalize bisexual women and transgender people, and how racialized assumptions keep whiteness at the centre and miss the multiple forms of violence in the lives of queer women of colour and Indigenous women. As I discussed in Chapters One and Two, many scholars and activists have disrupted this grand narrative and have stressed the importance of expanding and deepening feminist anti-violence frameworks beyond a one-size-fits-all model, and to address the interlocking nature of interpersonal and state violence, and the relational

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[48] Although workshops range anywhere in length from two hours to two days, most last from three to five hours.

geographies of violence in the lives of people marginalized by race, class, sexuality, gender and ability. In doing so, we must deconstruct the false dichotomy between structural and interpersonal violence or spaces constructed as public and private.

Some scholars have specifically identified their use of a spatial analysis drawing on theoretical tools from feminist and critical geography to examine violence against women. These scholars have explored the social construction of violence (Pain, 1991; Valentine, 1989, 1992), the links between spatial constructions, identity and fear of violence (Pain, 1991, 2000), the construction of public spaces as dangerous (Valentine, 1992), the relationship between identity and space in acts of gendered racial violence (Razack, 2002), heterosexual male violence against women in the home (Pain, 1997; Price, 2002; Valentine, 1992; Warrington, 2001) and the multiple meanings of home for immigrant women experiencing violence (Bhattacharjee, 1997). Although there are some references to different axes of identity, most of this work has not integrated an analysis of race or an analysis of the relational nature of violence in public and private spaces (with the exception of: Almeida et al., 2004; Bhattacharjee, 1997; Duncan, 1996; Pain, 1991, 2001; Razack, 2002). As well, some feminist geographers have argued that the home is the primary site of violence against women (Pain, 1991; Warrington, 2001). As I argued earlier, while advancing this feminist analysis has been important in challenging the notion that the violence takes place primarily in public spaces such as the street and is perpetrated by strangers — it has multiple effects, one of which has been the production of hegemonic norms and the re-centring of whiteness.

Theorizing the Public/Private Dichotomy

The public/private dichotomy represents ideological divisions, which are fluid and shifting in time and space. Linda McDowell (1999) has rightly pointed out, "a focus on the social relations within a domestic space crosses the boundary between the private and the public, between the particular and the general, and is not, as is often incorrectly asserted, a focus on the 'merely' domestic or private sphere" (p. 72-73).While others have also asserted the blurry division between public and private spheres and that these spaces are not unrelated (Bhattacharjee, 1997; Boyd, 1997; MacKinnon, 1989; Pain, 2001), this spatial dichotomy continues to shape how we think about violence and our responses to it. When violence against women is assumed to occur only in the home, "other forms of violence are conceptually erased" (Price, 2002, p. 41).

Emphasizing the way public and private spaces are not fixed but fluid and shifting, has been important to a number of theorists; for example showing the way spaces can be rearticulated to disrupt hegemonic norms, such as heterosexing of space (Valentine, 1996) or the way spaces are multiply signified, such as for domestic workers, or for immigrants whose consciousnesses are shaped by migration (Bhattacharjee, 1997).

Feminist and queer geographers have theorized about the spatial construction and multiple meanings of home (Bhattacharjee, 1997; Johnston & Valentine, 1995; McDowell, 1999; Price, 2002; Rose, 1993; Valentine, 1993; Warrington, 2001; Westwood, 1997). This has contributed to a more nuanced perspective than that of the initial, and usually masculinist, work by human geographers who first drew attention to the spatial dimension of the home (Warrington, 2001). The home is more than a physical space and is socially constructed with symbolic meaning across time and space

(McDowell, 1999). As discussed earlier some feminists have deconstructed the masculinist notion of home as safety and comfort to show how the home is gendered and a site of unequal, and at times dangerous, relations for women and children (Warrington ,2001). Others have in turn challenged the idea of the home as a primary site of oppression for women noting the significance of the home (and family) as a site of resistance to societal racism for African-American women in the USA (Duncan, 1997; hooks, 1991) and Black women in Britain (Westwood, 1997). Rachel Pain (2001) has noted that the notion of home as site of oppression "applies most specifically to white middle-class women who have entered the labour force in large numbers from the mid-20th century onwards" (p. 132).

Lynda Johnston and Gill Valentine's (1995) research explores the multiple meanings of home for lesbians where the heterosexual parental home is often a site of surveillance and invisibility, and where this surveillance and lack of privacy from "the parental gaze" restricts expression of one's sexual/gender identity and creates tension for lesbians in the home (p. 100). Their research is important for showing the heterosexing of the home, the threat of homophobic domestic violence from heterosexual family members and the resistance strategies lesbians employ in this context. It also emphasizes the importance of lesbians creating their own homes where they can visibly express their identity and creating different kinds of homes such as communal houses and community networks of private lesbian homes. They articulate how a homophobic and heterosexist social and familial context can create isolation and contribute to an insular nature in some lesbian relationships, which "can give one the power to control or dominate the other,

especially if one women is just 'coming out' or has less experience of a lesbian lifestyle than the other" (Valentine, 1995, p. 110). [49]

The notion of privacy of the home has also been criticized by anti-racist theorists who have noted that "the private-public dichotomy is not a real opposition; the public intervenes in the private world of the family and none more so than in the case of Black families subjected to specific forms of state intervention which often break up Black families" (Westwood, 1997, p. 173; see also Almeida, 1994; Russo, 2001). Similarly the moral and state regulation of poor single mothers has been documented showing the pervasive and intrusive state intervention in their domestic lives (Little, 1998). White and middle-class Western feminist constructions of domestic violence, as something that takes place in the privacy of the home and receiving little attention or response from the state, have been critiqued by anti-racist and anti-poverty scholars who have emphasized that much of the private lives of people of colour, Indigenous people, poor people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people is "neither affirmed nor protected by institutions in our society" (Almeida, et al., 1994, p. 105; see also Russo, 2001). Anannya Bhattarchjee (1997, 2001), Rhea Almedia (1994), Jennifer Koshan (1997), Andrea Smith (2005), and others have challenged the myth of "the state's non-intervention in the private sphere" (p. 89-90) arguing that there is a large amount of state regulation in domestic spaces of the family and home and that it is those who most transgress the normative model of family (white, middle-class, heterosexual) that are most heavily regulated. The state takes an active role in determining the legitimacy of families. This

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[49] These kinds of relations were confirmed in Janice Ristock's (2002) research, where she found that more than half of the women she interviewed had been abused in their first lesbian relationship, and many spoke of a similar dynamic to the one that Johnston and Valentine (1995) describe.

analysis is important in thinking about how domestic violence is constructed as private or hidden in the home.

Some research has illustrated how space and place is heterosexualized (Bell & Valentine, 1995; Duncan, 1996; Valentine, 1996). The moral and social regulation of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people by the state highlights the way private lives are also public. Speaking to this point (in the context of violence in lesbian relationships) Mary Eaton (1994) notes,

> the notion that a lesbian's home is her castle, so to speak, and consequently, that state respect for lesbian privacy instills or reinforces battering lesbians' sense of entitlement to abuse their partners is fanciful at best….the state has no obligation to observe boundaries separating public from private when it comes to 'homosexuality.' (p. 214)

Eaton argues that privacy is an inadequate conceptual device for analyzing same-sex/gender abuse where gay and lesbian people's experiences of violence traverse the public/private divide and where the state continues to regulate non-normative forms of sexuality.

By looking at the work of scholars who destabilize the dichotomy by examining the way race, class, sexuality and gender interlock and shape the conceptualization and production of public and private spaces, we can see that the lives of some women have always been public lives and that they are frequently denied the privilege of privacy through constant scrutiny, regulation and violence (Almedia et al., 1994; Razack 1998; Russo, 2001). Additionally, specific social relations that occur within and outside different spaces contribute to how they are conceptualized and experienced as either

public or private. For example as discussed above, racism, colonialism, classism and economic regulation can in effect make the space of the home (commonly understood as private), public through scrutiny and surveillance. This highlights the relational nature of space.

Public/Private Dichotomy in Lesbian Partner Abuse Pamphlets and Booklets

I have illustrated elsewhere, in an examination of three frequently used Canadian educational pamphlets and booklets about lesbian abuse, that the central figure presented in the dominant discourse is a woman whose life is structured primarily by her sexuality and her private experiences of violence (Holmes & Ristock 2004).[50] The texts examined are: *Abuse in Lesbian Relationships: A Handbook of Information and Resources* by Laurie Chesley, Donna MacAuley, and Janice Ristock (1991); *Assisting Abused Lesbians: A Guide for Health Professionals and Service Providers* by Cheryl Champagne, Ruth Lapp, and Laurie Lee (1994); and *Violence in Lesbian Relationships: Are Relationship Dangerous?* Published by the University of British Columbia (UBC) (n.d.). Although produced in the 1990s, all three represent a dominant discourse reflected in community-based practices today. Two of these texts (Chesley, MacAuley & Ristock, 1992; Champagne, Lapp & Lee, 1994), are currently used in organizations in Canada over a decade later and are readily available from and cited by government sources (Health Canada, Department of Justice) and numerous websites on violence against women and women's health.

In these texts, essentialist constructions of sexual and gender identity are reinforced without references to bisexual or transgender identities. As well, lesbian

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[50] This section draws on my work in Holmes (2000) and Holmes and Ristock (2004).

identity is often structured around whiteness with the use of additive approaches to discussing multiple identities and oppressions. "Lesbian" is used to refer to white lesbians although never explicitly identified as such. In the following example, an additive approach secures whiteness as the invisible centre: "Lesbians have to face not only the sexist culture, but also a homophobic one as well. Lesbians of colour must face sexism, heterosexism and racism" (UBC, n.d.). Whiteness is concealed as neutral throughout two of the texts (Chesley et al., 1991; UBC, n.d.).

Although all three texts refer to multiple systems of oppression, the social context of violence in lesbian relationships is primarily described as patriarchy and heterosexism. One booklet discusses internalized patriarchy, heterosexism and homophobia as part of the causes and the effects of abuse (Chesley et al., 1991, p. 5, p. 11). Two argue that heterosexism and homophobia affect everyone – heterosexual, gay or lesbian (Champagne et al., 1994, p. 4-5; Chesley et al., 1991, p. 21) – yet all three texts describe racism and classism as issues for "other people" (Champagne et al., 1994, p. 4) or lesbians of colour, and working-class lesbians only (Chesley et al., 1991, p. 5; UBC, n.d.) Despite attempts to integrate multiple oppressions into the framework, a gender and sexuality-based analysis of power remains at the centre thus positioning white and middle-class lesbians as universal.

The discourse in the pamphlets begins with the foundational claim that "abuse has been hidden in Western society until recently" and specifically that abuse in lesbian relationships has been hidden or difficult to publicly acknowledge (Chesley et al., 1991, p. 1; Champagne et al., 1994, p. 2; UBC, n.d.). It also states that violence in lesbian relationships is something that lesbians do not usually discuss or know about each other

(UBC, n.d.; Champagne et al., 1994, p. 2) and that has been "kept behind closed doors until fairly recently" (Chesley et al., 1991, p. 1). Discursive strategies that highlight the invisibility or hidden nature of some forms of violence in certain lesbians' lives, can have a universalizing effect rendering unintelligible the experiences of queer women whose lives are fundamentally structured by racism and classism. By focusing on hidden, domestic violence in Western society the pamphlets highlight difficulties lesbians face in naming experiences of violence in the context of heterosexism. However, the violence experienced by racialized and working-class queer women may not have been veiled in secrecy or for the same reasons. For example, in some working-class lesbian communities violence in relationships has not necessarily been hidden or kept secret, nor has the home been the primary site of the violence in cases where relationship violence often took place in spaces constructed as public like bars (Kennedy & Davis, 1994). As well, it is possible that for racialized and working-class women, violence in intimate relationships may not be constructed as hidden, but visible and naturalized as evidence of the "degeneracy of the race" (Almeida et al., 1994; Kanuha, 1990;). Silence about violence may be related to the fact that these groups of women do not in fact have the privilege of privacy. "Hiding" violence in intimate relationships may be a response to the public violence of racism and its profound effects on individuals, families and communities. Thus perhaps the "hidden abuse" narrative applies most clearly to those groups of women who have been able to claim the privilege of privacy, such as white, middle-class lesbians.

White Lesbian Educators Speak about Public/private Spaces and Violence

The white queer women in this study are aware of the problems with hegemonic analytical frameworks that centre white, middle-class women's experiences and to varying degrees (and with varying success) attempt to assert what Foucault (1978) calls a "reverse discourse."

In workshops, various approaches are used to describe the connections between oppressions such as a dominance model, a focus on marginalization and references to colonialism. Despite efforts to move away from a gender-based model of oppression, some educators do take an additive approach to talking about racism and classism in discussions about difference or diversity and rely on the constructs "double or triple jeopardy" or "double or triple vulnerabilities" that have been frequently used in lesbian abuse educational materials to refer to the combined oppression that queer women face (e.g. sexism + heterosexism; or sexism + heterosexism + racism).[51] These constructs can have the effect of eliding how systems and identities are related and mutually constitutive of one another, as well as privatizing social relations where differences are seen as essential, fixed characteristics of a biological or a social condition (Razack, 1998). Constructing some groups of women as "more vulnerable," locates the problem at hand in the individual woman rather than in the social contexts of racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism and ableism that position women differently and unequally to one another, thereby privatizing the social relations that produce violence (Razack, 1998). When

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[51] This may stem from its usage in an influential chapter by Valli Kanuha (1990) *Compounding the Triple Jeopardy: Battering in Lesbian of Colour Relationships*, reprinted in a training manual on lesbian battering, *Confronting Lesbian Battering: A Manual for the Battered Women's Movement* (Elliot, 1990). Kanuha's (1990) important chapter does not privatize the experiences of lesbians of colour experiencing abuse and clearly locates the issues within the social and political context of racism and heterosexism. Her chapter addresses racism within lesbian and feminist communities and the complexities of experiences of lesbians of colour who are being abused or abusive.

feminist educators, "travel down the path of compound oppression — double and triple oppression — the relations between women, and the ways in which the advantages some women enjoy come at the expense of other women, are masked" (Razack, 1998, p. 131).

In a few cases, women try to shift from an additive model by beginning with a discussion of colonialism, then naming racism and heterosexism as roots of violence in relationships. While this is an important shift, white women sometimes still refer to colonialism or racism in an additive fashion (colonialism plus patriarchy equals doubly vulnerable woman). While the white educators interviewed have an intellectual understanding of the social context of racism and classism as part of the social context (public) this is often detached from our analysis of violence in intimate same-sex/gender relationships (private) thereby leaving the hegemony of whiteness in the discourse unexamined.

Educators in this study demonstrated an awareness of many of these gaps and limitations and searched for new language and models that would capture greater complexities. However, even when we intellectually understand that systems are interlocked, white educators can continue to use these existing frameworks because they seem to account for our lives and can limit the extent to which we can see ourselves as dominant. One educator spoke about how she has relied on a white, middle-class feminist anti-violence discourse in both her work with lesbians and heterosexual women:

> What ends up happening…is that it's real easy for me to slip back into using my own way of, and analysis….coming from a very (pause) a very white, middle-class viewpoint of lesbian battering…cause I bring that into the work that I do

around heterosexual violence…I struggle with expanding it further to a larger

picture. (Cheryl, interview)

She went on to speak about how white privilege influences her own and other white

lesbian feminists' analytical framework on lesbian abuse:

…it's very easy for us to go to a place where race doesn't come into it. Even

though we might be aware…it's easy for me to see lesbian battering uni-

dimensionally and to really only talk about it in the context of an intimate

relationship and not within a social context. (Cheryl, interview)

Another educator spoke about how privilege "gives us blind spots" and that she

finds it hard at times to make connections between different forms of oppression and said

she can't think "as quickly" around "the corners of race and cultural differences"

(Marcia, interview). These quotes highlight the way white lesbian feminist educators are

able to externalize the social context and see racism and colonialism as disconnected to

ourselves. This is similar to Razack's analysis cited earlier about pity and also Ruth

Frankenberg's (1993) comments about white women she interviewed, viewing anti-racist

work as a benevolent and optional act for the Other rather than about changing systems of

domination that shape our subjectivities and lives.

The educators spoke about the limitations with the public/private construct in

conceptualizations of lesbian domestic violence and gave examples where the

framework's exclusive focus on "domestic" violence in the private sphere (home) breaks

down around race. One educator described a conflict at a feminist anti-violence

conference that erupted during a panel presentation by survivors of violence in lesbian

relationships. The panelists had been assured that women who had been abusive would

not be on the panel. Conflict arose when conference participants interrupted the panel because one panelist — a Mãori survivor of lesbian abuse — also spoke about times in her life when she had been abusive and placed this in the context of colonization and a process of accountability in her community. A debate ensued about whether she was an abuser, with the Indigenous women in the audience arguing that the Mãori woman was further marginalized through this process.

> … the Maorian [sic] woman had been in this whole process of the entire community of people... taking accountability for times they had used abuse and putting that in the context of colonization and…in the context of surviving. And she was coming from this perspective of having like all this support around looking holistically at this... and then we were all up to judge, 'Was she a batterer or not a batterer?' And the women of colour… a lot of the First Nations women, were saying 'She's not a batterer and you've just set her up' and a lot of the other women were saying it was just this terrible thing. (Teresa, focus group)

This powerful example shows how various dichotomies in the dominant lesbian domestic violence discourse break down around race, such as batterer/survivor and private/public. The dichotomies cannot hold the complexities of multiple forms of violence, including the possibility that someone could be both a survivor and perpetrator of violence, as well as the interconnected "private" forms of intimate relationship violence and "public" forms of violence of colonialism and racism. The conflict highlights how this hegemonic feminist framework excludes the violence of racism and colonialism (i.e. the Mãori lesbian's experiences of victimization as a survivor of colonization were not legitimized within the category of "survivor/batterer") and forecloses an examination of how the

white lesbian survivors in the room are implicated in the structures of violence in the lives of the Māori woman, other Indigenous women and women of colour.

This illustrates the hierarchical nature of binaries and shows how "biopower" (Foucault, 1978) operates within and through the individual, ensuring that individuals regulate themselves and one another in relation to a defined norm. In this case, the norms of the dominant white hetero and homonormative domestic violence discourses — that one can be either a survivor or batterer and that the only legitimate form of violence is private. The binaries allow dominant groups to police the categories to ensure "safety." Yet, this space is not safe for racialized women or others whose experiences of public and private spaces do not fit the hegemonic norm. In this discourse, the public/private dichotomy, paradoxically, marks non-white bodies as Other and perpetuates hegemonic whiteness, but does so in a fashion that is invisible to white people.

Two other women spoke about a similar example where conflicts about racism and conceptualizations of public/private violence arose during the process of organizing an educational forum on woman-to-woman abuse. The organizing group was initially a group of white lesbians that took a liberal "outreach and inclusion" approach to addressing race. Lesbians of colour challenged the white lesbians about the racism inherent in this strategy, which tokenized lesbians of colour and ignored issues of power. After discussing these issues, the group decided to hold two forums – one open to all lesbians and another organized by and for lesbians of colour and Two-Spirit women only. Secondly, lesbians of colour and Two-Spirit women challenged the focus on woman-to-woman abuse in the private sphere and emphasized the importance of expanding the analysis to include discussions about violence perpetrated by women in spaces coded as

public — specifically white women's racist violence in the socio-historical context of colonialism and racism. This analytical shift felt confusing and threatening for the white women on the committee and in the sponsoring feminist organization. As Cheryl described, one of the sponsoring feminist organizations threatened to withdraw its support and funding because of the committee's decisions to expand the definition of violence to include racist violence perpetrated by women towards other women in "public" spaces and communities, and to hold a forum organized by and for women of colour and Two-Spirit women only.

> .... [white women in the organization were saying] 'Yeah you white girls can talk about what's happening, but you know, let's not really bring racism into this. Let's not really look at the breadth of the problem, let's more just look at it in a good little middle-class lesbian family, you know, lesbian homes, that's where the violence is *OK*. But when you start to bring racism into it, and you start to look at, you know, expand a bit into looking at…not *just* what goes on within the home but what goes on within our whole organizing community, then *that's* where we draw the line'. (Cheryl, focus group)

The resistance from some white feminists to expanding the dominant domestic violence framework is a good example of the way a discourse can promote a norm that threatens to render illegitimate and abject those experiences (in this case, experiences of violence) that do not comply with the dominant or normative framework. The discourse limits our thought, making some ideas unthinkable (Ristock & Pennell, 1996). It also shows how white women's investments in these models and subsequent regulation of definitions of violence are tied to seeing ourselves as innocent and unimplicated in the

oppression of other women. The question that must be asked is "when, and for whom is it advantageous to stress the private sphere over the public?" (Razack, 1998, p. 94).

Both of the above examples illustrate the discursive strategies of denial that show up among many white feminist anti-violence advocates. The resistance to include colonial violence or white lesbians' racism towards lesbians of colour and Two-Spirit women in the definition/discussion on "woman-to-woman abuse" was framed by white feminists as outside of the legitimate and privileged definitions, which focus on relationship violence in the homes of white, middle-class lesbians. These examples also show how white feminists' regulation of definitions of violence can be intricately linked to seeing ourselves as innocent and unimplicated in the oppression of other women. As Mary Louise Fellows and Sherene Razack (1998, p. 343) argue, in feminist debates women whose dominance is challenged frequently respond with emotional attachments to innocence, which can be "linked to colonial representations of white, innocent femininity" (Srivastava, 2005, p. 36-37).

As stated earlier, lesbian domestic violence education frequently conceptualizes the social context of domination as "out there" (responsibility of men and heterosexuals) and detached from us as white lesbians, which allows us to continue to see ourselves as innocent. In her research on anti-racism initiatives within feminist organizations in Canada, Sarita Srivastava (2005) argues that "imperial histories of innocent white femininity" and "historical constructions of a just feminist community underlie some feminists' emotional protestations of innocence" (p. 56).[52] She notes

Over the past two decades, as Western feminist practice has gradually integrated

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[52] Srivastava (2005) explains: "…just as first-wave feminism was shaped by the backdrop of imperialism and nation building, contemporary feminist communities have been similarly shaped by representations of morality rooted in racist and imperial histories" (p. 36-37).

antiracist thought, it seems that ideas about what makes a good feminist have also

shifted. My analysis finds, however, that as some white feminists move toward

new ideals of antiracist feminism, they often move toward deeper self-

examination rather than toward organizational change. (p. 30)

My research confirms this where participants identified their own and other white

feminists' resistance to change organizational practices despite an intellectual awareness

of the multiple forms of oppression.

White lesbian/queer feminists' narratives are contradictory. While the dominant

lesbian abuse discourse effectively destabilizes some heteronormative constructions of

violence, it has produced a homonormative construction that is constituted through

whiteness. Although this discourse *has* helped many women in abusive relationships, at

the same time the familiar, taken-for-granted assumptions contained within it produce

racialized exclusions. An exclusive focus on violence in the private sphere predictably

breaks down around race, concealing the relationship with public forms of violence, and

as a result the entire framework for understanding and responding to violence needs to be

re-worked.

By highlighting the inherent exclusions in the category domestic violence, I am

not suggesting that we should stop looking at abuse in intimate relationships. Rather,

when we look at interpersonal violence, we must critically examine our assumptions

about the spaces in which the violence occurs, and explore the multiple contexts of the

violence in women's lives. When we look at the home as the site of violence as separate

from an ostensible public sphere, we must ask whose life and what forms of violence can

be imagined or named. For example, at the anti-violence conference, the multiple forms

of violence and the violence of colonialism in the life of a Mãori woman were discounted and positioned as illegitimate within lesbian domestic violence discourse. We need to question what forms of violence are erased by white lesbians when they dismiss the violence that Indigenous women experience as part of racism and colonialism, and instead valorize only private or "domestic" violence in their analyses.

While I have focused on the production of whiteness in a homonormative discourse, it is evident that middle-class assumptions and classed power relations are also intricately intertwined with whiteness in many of the constructs and ideologies. Regardless of the classed locations of the research participants in this study, my research highlights the way white queer subjects call upon and reproduce, what is at times clearly a white *middle-class* domestic violence discourse. Further research is needed to examine the nuances and complexities of white middle-class homonormative anti-violence discourses.

This research urges us to unsettle familiar everyday notions about violence, space and identity and ask "how spaces come to be, and to trace what they produce as well as what produces them?" (Razack, 2002, p. 7). By demystifying and deconstructing the spatial metaphors that circulate in anti-violence discourses, we would seek to "queer the space" — that is to think outside of white middle-class hetero/homonormative notions of home and family and public spaces. In speaking about the limitations with binary thinking in same-sex/gender domestic violence work, Jasbir Puar (2000) and others (Chung & Lee, 2002; Chen et al., 2011; Incite!, 2006; Ristock, 2002; Smith, 2005; Spade, 2011) argue that we need to seek alternative strategies for safety and accountability that actively involve queer community members rather than solely relying on social service

providers. This calls for an examination and destabilization of white, middle-class hetero/homonormative assumptions about home and kinship. As Puar (2000) explains, developing these alternative strategies to address violence in same-sex/gender relationships "also radically rewrites the space of the domestic, queers it, because it rethinks the structure of the family, the function of a house, and the kinship patterns that are normally assumed to fit into that house" (p. 12). This suggests that we must pay greater attention to the way meanings (of abuse, the home, the family, safety and public for example) are constructed and reconstructed depending on which voices are highlighted (Ristock & Pennell, 1996). Narrow conceptualizations and constructs limit our ability to see or imagine certain forms of violence or strategies for safety.

In the next Chapter I continue this examination of homonormativity and whiteness through a critical reflection and discourse analysis of a "healthy relationships" curriculum for queer women that I developed and delivered.

Chapter Six:
Troubling Normalcy: Examining "Healthy Relationships" Discourses
in Lesbian Domestic Violence Prevention

In 2001, I had the opportunity to develop and coordinate a new feminist queer

violence prevention initiative — the Safe Choices Support and Education Program.

Aware of the limitations with hegemonic feminist anti-violence frameworks and the way

they position white, middle-class, able-bodied, and/or heterosexual women's experiences

as the norm, my colleagues and I were motivated to develop innovative anti-violence

programming for queer women that would shift this framework. This chapter offers my

critical reflections on some of the competing discourses in the "healthy relationships"

workshop curriculum of this program, and some of the struggles facing us in the feminist

and queer anti-violence movements.

The Safe Choices Support and Education program, located on unceded Coast

Salish Territories in the city known as Vancouver British Columbia, a large socio-

economically diverse Canadian city, is based in a non-profit feminist anti-violence

organization and funded by a health promotion program of the regional health authority.

Each year, the program provides six service-provider training workshops about abuse in

women's intimate same-sex/gender relationships and five healthy queer relationships

workshops for lesbian, bisexual, queer and Two-Spirit women. The healthy relationships

workshops offer "information and opportunities to break isolation in order to improve the

health of women who are currently, or have been, in abusive same-sex/gender

relationships" (EVA, 2007, p. 5). Their goal is to empower women and strengthen queer

communities to respond to the issue of abuse in same-sex/gender relationships.

Approximately seventy-five to one hundred women attend these free workshops annually.[53]

The curriculum manual includes five healthy relationships workshop modules: i) "After the Honeymoon: Healthy Communication and Problem-Solving;" ii) "Knowing You-Knowing Me: Negotiating Separateness and Togetherness in Intimate Relationships;" iii) "Mind Your Own Business – Don't Air our Dirty Laundry: Talking About Relationship Concerns with Friends and Family;" iv) "Sexuality, Intimacy and Desire;" and v) "Keeping Our Relationships Alive While Parenting." All workshops acknowledge they are open to all lesbian, bisexual, queer and Two-Spirit women (including those who identify as transgender) regardless of relationship status or the language they use to self-identify. They are not sequential and each is designed to be offered independently of the others. They follow a similar format, delivered over a three and a half hour period, and use a support and education model. They are not meant to function as a therapy or support group, but are intended to provide queer women with opportunities for connection, dialogue, exchange of information and resources, and skill building about healthy relationships.[54]

Over the years, participants have indicated through formal evaluations and informal feedback that the workshops were innovative and helpful by offering support and information outside of traditional counselling services. Early in the program's history, the possibility of funding cuts prompted some participants to write to the health

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[53] Safe Choices: Support and Education Program is a program of the Ending Violence Association (EVA) (formerly known as the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs) and is funded by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. In addition to service provider training and healthy relationships workshops, it provides referrals, consultation, resource development and facilitator training.
[54] The program was developed in 2002 and expanded over six years. In 2008 a facilitator's manual was produced.

authority about the significance of the workshops in helping to combat the negative effects of homophobia on queer women's relationships. Many told us that participating in the workshops enabled them to make positive changes in their lives, including in some cases, ending abuse in relationships. Some said attending a workshop was a first step in breaking their isolation and connecting to other queer women. In several instances, facilitators ran into participants outside of the program hours (for example, on the street, in a coffee shop, the doctor's office or a community event) where women shared these stories about the positive effects of the workshops.

While it was clear that the workshops were offering a new and positive prevention strategy for many queer women, there were a few comments, as well as some unspoken and unwritten feedback revealed through some participants' body language and awkward silences, suggesting that the workshops may not have been meeting everyone's needs. While difficult to analyze this "feedback" without interview data or written evaluations, I had a growing sense that some of the discourses in the curriculum had normalizing and exclusionary effects. And as I discuss below, these issues were difficult to fully address in a neoliberal context with excessive state monitoring and limited funding.

In creating the program, we shifted away from an earlier vision of providing on-going individual counselling and support groups, for two key reasons. First, we wanted to develop an innovative approach to queer violence prevention focused on creating healthy relationships. Second, we were compelled to work within the constraints of a limited budget and align the program more closely with the aims of the health promotion fund,[55]

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[55] Referrals to counselling services are offered to women wanting additional support, however there are few appropriate affordable services. As a result, capacity building and training for existing service providers is an important component of the program. Using a co-facilitation model, the workshop activities include information sharing, self-reflection exercises, and large and small group discussions. Unlike most

which centers on "cost-effective, innovative strategies for promoting and improving population health…build[ing] community capacities, skills and assets so communities can better identify and manage their own health needs" (Vancouver Coastal Health, 2008).

A "Healthy Relationships" Approach in the Context of Neoliberalism

Most LGBTQ anti-violence initiatives (primarily based in large urban centres) have traditionally focused on outreach, supportive counselling, and resources for victims and education for LGBTQ communities. Some have recently identified the need for innovative community-based approaches that concentrate on creating healthy queer relationships rather than focusing explicitly on domestic violence (Chung & Lee 2002; EVA, 2007; Northwest Network, 2008; Ristock, 2002; Ristock & Timbang, 2005). Partly, this is in response to the challenges queer women face speaking about relationship violence, as our identity is already stigmatized through its association with pathology, deviance and violence. As well, many queer women do not name their experiences "domestic violence" or "abuse" as a result of the heteronormative framework of domestic violence. Further, our experience in the late 1990s in Vancouver (like that of other advocates in Toronto and Winnipeg) had shown that many survivors of abuse in lesbian relationships were not accessing lesbian abuse support groups for a variety of reasons, including: shame about publicly identifying themselves as being in an abusive lesbian relationship; concerns about confidentiality within small communities; and/or confusion about whether their experience would fall within the category of "abuse" (Chung & Lee,

anti-violence groups, these workshops do not include an intake process to assess dynamics of abuse or victim/perpetrator roles.

2002; EVA, 2007; Ristock, 2002). Some advocates noted that more queer women were showing up for groups to learn about healthy relationships than to talk about their experiences of abuse (Ristock, 2002, p. 165). At the same time, many of us supporting friends in abusive relationships spoke about feeling confused by complex dynamics we observed that could not easily be explained with the available feminist anti-violence frameworks. We often felt unconvinced that the traditional feminist power and control model and victim/perpetrator binary used in counselling practices were the most effective or accurate ways for understanding, intervening and supporting change in queer women's relationships.

This shift to a focus on "healthy relationships" was seen not only in queer anti-violence work, but also more broadly within the anti-violence movement in North America where an increasing number of programs began to develop healthy relationships curricula for (predominantly heterosexual) high school students. Interestingly, these efforts coincided with a differently motivated move taking place more broadly within the movement – that is, the increased alliance with the neoliberal state.

Neoliberalism is often used to describe the dominant economic, cultural and political system that is driven by pro-corporate free-market priorities (Duggan, 2003). Neoliberal discourses support the development of economic and social policies that encourage the privatization of services. There is an emphasis on individual freedom and rights where "the role of government is to provide advice and assistance to enable self-governing subjects to become normal/responsible citizens, who voluntarily comply with the interests and needs of the state" (Richardson, 2005, p. 516). In this chapter, I am concerned with the relationship between neoliberal discourses, strategies of governance,

and the spaces of community non-profit anti-violence and health promotion initiatives.

Kristin Bumiller (2008) argues that over the past two decades, there has been a growing and problematic alliance between the neoliberal state and the movement to end violence against women "where the feminist campaign was modified and integrated into state and quasi-state organizations and became part of the routine business of social service bureaucracies and crime control" (p. 7). Alongside this, she argues, we can see how a growing anti-feminist backlash campaign contributed to a normalizing and mainstreaming of the movement focused on addressing violence by "situating it as part of programs to combat sexism in workplaces, build healthy relationships, and improve communication between men and women" (p. 10). Interestingly, she makes the point that "the progressive ideals of this campaign deferred to the more pressing prerogatives of security, public health, preservation of the family, and other demands to maintain order" (p. 7).

In the Safe Choices program, our attempts to shift the existing lesbian anti-violence framework proved to be very challenging in this neoliberal context where our work in feminist anti-violence organizations was often highly constrained by the regulatory demands of state funding. The effects of neoliberalism on the feminist anti-violence and LGBTQ social movements are complex and contradictory. While the move to neoliberal principles of government has meant the divestment of state funding for public services in favor of privatization, it has also meant an increase in regulatory functions of the state and policies that enforce personal responsibility (Bumiller, 2008; Richardson, 2005). The feminist rationale for state funding for anti-violence services has become modified and transformed by the neoliberal agenda. There is now a growing

presence of the state within many feminist anti-violence organizations and these

organizations often function as part of the regulatory apparatus (Bumiller, 2008). As a

result of these trends, many community non-profit anti-violence and LGBTQ health

promotion programs are burdened by funding requirements in conflict with their feminist

or anti-oppression philosophy that require an excessive amount of staff time to complete,

such as guidelines for professional practice or "outcome measurements" expectations

(Bumiller, 2008; Ward, 2008). Ironically, the requirement to *measure* outcomes often

comes without sufficient funding to *develop* strong and innovative programs in the first

place. Importantly, those of us developing the healthy relationships workshops often

spoke of the need for more time to critically reflect about the categories we were

constructing, the gaps and limitations produced in the curriculum, and ways to disrupt

white and middle-class lesbian norms in the healthy relationships workshops. However,

the program was seriously under-funded and there was barely enough time to meet the

"deliverables," let alone to reflect on, critique and revise our work.

Despite our best efforts to disrupt these normative frameworks, I remained

concerned that my own and other facilitators' white, and in some cases middle-class,

privilege continued to influence the (re)production of hegemonic discourses and social

practices in the program. Further, I had an underlying sense that the discourses embedded

in the healthy relationships model we were building were homonormative and

contributed to the making of the ideal "healthy citizen" of the neoliberal, colonial nation-

state. Like other feminist and queer scholars and activists, I worry that neoliberal

techniques of governance are presented as benign, necessary steps in creating healthy

relationships and healthy societies, when in effect they may contribute to increased moral

and social regulation. The workshops draw on a normalizing discourse of healthy relationships to counter homophobic constructions of queer relationships as violent and pathological, but in doing so may render white and middle-class queer subjects complicit with processes of nation building (drawing on Riggs, 2006, p. 75).

This chapter is a response to these concerns and offers theorizations of how hegemonic discourses of neoliberalism, citizenship, homonormativity and whiteness operate through healthy queer relationships discourses.[56] I examine how healthy queer relationships workshops are implicated in processes of normalization and how these contribute to and/or resist forms of social marginalization.[57]

As I write this chapter, I am mindful of the current political context impacting the anti-violence movement in British Columbia, where the provincial government has announced further funding cuts to health and social services, including women's anti-violence services. Given this climate and the dearth of resources for queer and feminist anti-violence work, I am aware my critique could be misused to deny queer rights, eliminate designated services, fuel homo/bi/transphobia and anti-feminist backlash. I want to stress that my intention is not to deny or minimize the positive outcomes of this initiative and others like it. The Safe Choices program has been lauded for its innovative and unique programming, not only within Canada but recently in the UK where scholars and community-based advocates identified it as a "best practice" or "model" for other communities to adopt in their efforts to prevent and respond to same-sex domestic

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[56] My focus is not the curriculum writers and facilitators them/ourselves, but rather the discourses and the way they constitute us as subjects. That being said, I do not view subjects as passive or un-implicated in the statements we produce through discourse.
[57] While I view systems of oppression as interlocking, this chapter focuses primarily on sexuality, gender and race with a limited discussion of class. My analysis about normative frameworks and their exclusions could also be applied to disability and age.

violence. I believe it has helped many women and offers crucially needed violence prevention tools. My interest is not to find fault but rather to examine some of the "pitfalls of well-meaning efforts" (Srivastava, 2005, p. 29) — including my own - and the hegemonic tendencies within strategies deemed to be "health promoting," "innovative" or "anti-oppressive."

The concerns and issues I raise here are not specific to this program or to the anti-violence movement in Vancouver or Canada. They reflect common struggles that confront us, and a historical context of racialized and classed hierarchical power relations within the feminist anti-violence and queer movements in North America. The issues are embedded in a political context where there is a growing and problematic relationship between social movements and the neoliberal state, contributing to normative conceptions of identity and citizenship that (re)produce social exclusions. I want to highlight the contradictions within normalizing discourses and interrogate my complicity and race and class privilege, with the hope that this investigation contributes to an on-going dialogue amongst anti-racist and queer feminist activists and scholars who are committed to a politics accountability. In doing this, I recognize the contradictions and dilemmas that come up in reflexive practice where declarations of white reflexivity can unwittingly draw on notions of moral goodness, and want to instead "trouble the possibilities for 'coming clean' in practices of researcher reflexivity" (Lather, 2007, p. 17).

As discussed in Chapter Four, Foucault understood power as operating within and through individuals ensuring that bodies regulate themselves and one another in relation to defined norms and through subtle practices of surveillance which produce normal and

abnormal bodies (Adams, 1997; Razack, 2002). His concept of governmentality (1991) illustrates how this normalizing power works through techniques of governance that regulate and manage populations at a distance by relying upon people govern themselves. Neoliberalism has been described as a contemporary form of governmentality that deflects attention away from the socio-spatial, economic and political conditions that produce violence or poor health, and emphasizes personal responsibility for preventing violence and illness through self-help discourses, expert knowledge and expert assistance (Bumiller 2008; Lupton 1999).

As noted earlier in Chapter Four, a number of queer theorists have critiqued the emergence of the category "the normal ordinary gay/lesbian citizen," and the homonormative discursive and socio-material practices articulated by gays and lesbians that support rather than resist heteronormative neoliberal projects (Duggan, 2003; Puar, 2007; Richardson, 2005). In the following analysis of the Safe Choices curriculum, I examine how some queer violence prevention discourses reproduce these troublesome normal/abnormal, irresponsible/degenerate binaries in ways that concurrently reproduce hegemonic forms of subjectivity.

My discussion in this chapter reflects a growing critical concern within feminist and sexuality studies in geography about the relationship between neoliberal forms of governance, the state, social movements, and voluntary-sector health and counselling organizations (Andrucki & Elder, 2007; Bondi, 2005; Richardson, 2005). Like the work of these scholars, this chapter highlights the relationship between neoliberalism, processes of normalization and professionalization, and power at the spatial scale of the urban non-profit and its relationship to other geopolitical scales such as the state, and the

nation. While I do not explicitly examine the production of space in LGBTQ or feminist

non-profits or anti-violence organizations in this chapter, I do elaborate a critical

geographical perspective on neoliberalism, professionalization, normativity, racism,

whiteness and intersectional feminist political discourse in the socio-spatial context of a

feminist non-profit anti-violence organization in Canada. I examine curriculum

discourses at the scale of the feminist or LGBTQ non-profit organization, with attention

to how they are directly related to broader critical geopolitical issues such as colonial

state violence and homonationalism for example. I discuss these interconnections further

at the end of this chapter and in the final concluding chapter of the dissertation.

Analysis of the Curriculum: A Discursive Mosaic

Discourses are shifting and unstable. While discourses can be "an effect of

power" they can also be "a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing

strategy" (Foucault, 1978, p. 101). In my examination of the curriculum, I have identified

a "discursive mosaic" (Kiely, 2005) where contradictory and "reverse discourses" can be

seen (Foucault, 1978). This reflects both the curriculum writers' and facilitators'

recognition of the limitations with existing discourses, as well as their investments in

many of them. Various factors influence how discourses are taken up or resisted. Power

Each facilitator brings a unique analysis and approach to the workshops, and their social

locations and experiences of privilege and marginalization most probably come to bear

on how facilitators' interpret the curriculum. Many women contributed to the workshop

development, and the contradictions within may also reflect tensions and disagreements

between them/us. It appears that despite falling back on certain normative frameworks

that produce limitations and exclusions (which I discuss below), the curriculum is also a welcome departure from other educational materials on lesbian abuse which present a seemingly unified, coherent or universal narrative which does not fit with women's lived experiences (Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Ristock, 2004).

Feminist Anti-Oppression Philosophy

A "feminist anti-oppression" discourse is evident throughout the curriculum with references to "interlocking oppressions or identities," "multiple locations of oppression," "inclusion" and "diversity." While there are different meanings and effects of these terms, together they function as a discursive strand. The facilitator's manual begins with the philosophy of the Safe Choices program, which outlines the program's feminist anti-oppression approach to same-sex/gender relationship abuse. It defines abuse and states that the social contexts of various forms of oppression interconnect and impact an abusive relationship in complex ways.

The curriculum reveals investments in a dominant feminist domestic violence discourse that can have what Foucault would refer to as a homogenizing effect of normalization (1980). For example, the curriculum relies on a power and control model emphasizing a power imbalance in all abusive relationships where the abuser has the power and the victim does not or where "abuse is abuse" (Ristock, 2002). It also, however, complicates and challenges normative assumptions. The philosophy challenges hegemonic feminist discourses that take an additive approach to "difference" and argues instead that multiple systems of violence operate simultaneously and depend on one another. It foregrounds "the social context of structural inequality, systemic oppression

and power imbalances based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender

identity, ability, age, immigration or refugee status, class and HIV status," as well as

forms of abuse that are linked to "exploiting one's societal power by using norms of

dominance such as racism, sexism, ableism, classism, anti-semitism and ageism" (EVA,

2007, p. 5). It states that the program "speak[s] out against harmful stereotypes and the

scapegoating of communities such as people of colour, First Nations people, the bar

crowd, the S/M community, femme/butch couples, transgender and bisexual

communities" (p. 6) – groups often stigmatized as inherently "more violent." In addition,

by mentioning abusive dynamics that can feel confusing, abusers in one relationship who

are also survivors of abuse in previous relationships, complexities of same-sex/gender

abuse, and differences between abuse in heterosexual and same-sex/gender relationships,

it offers another narrative: there is *not* one universal experience.

These examples show how the program attempts to shift hetero and

homonormative feminist thinking about same-sex/gender abuse in new directions,

specifically reflecting the influences of anti-racist critiques by feminists of colour and

Indigenous women of over the past two decades (see Crenshaw, 1991; Davis, 1987;

Kanuha, 1990, 1996; Razack, 1998, 2002; Smith, 2004), as well as the influence of Janice

Ristock's (2002) research, whose analysis about violence in lesbian relationships has

been instrumental in highlighting problems with normative frameworks.

The philosophy is followed by a section that discusses how language is political

and both shapes and reflects identity. It challenges notions of stable, static and universal

knowledge and identities, and instead explains in non-academic terms how ideas,

knowledge and identities are socially and historically constructed, fluid and changing. It

stresses the importance of facilitators problematizing language and its implications for inclusion and exclusion:

> The terms individuals and communities use to describe them/ourselves are informed by our age, gender, race, ethnicity, geography, etc. Language and meaning evolve as individuals, communities and social movements change. For example in recent years queer has been reclaimed from its oppressive origins and reclaimed as an expression of power and pride. However this does not mean that all members of the LGB and T communities will feel comfortable using or even identify with this term. Analyzing the language we use reveals the complexities of experience, history, politics and power that shape the meaning of the terms and concepts we use to think about identities and same-sex/gender relationships abuse. At Safe Choices we use same-sex AND same-gender to talk about relationships abuse because sometimes the two people in the relationship may NOT identify as the same gender, but identify as the same sex, or they may identify as the same gender but NOT the same sex. (EVA, 2007, p. 7)

The example given is the use of gendered pronouns and the way they can impact bisexual women and transgender participants. It addresses a universalizing tendency within "LGBTQ" anti-violence models and approaches, where categories of gender and sexual orientation are often conflated which not only leads to confusion but also the erasure or marginalization of transgender experiences of violence (White & Goldberg, 2006). This is a change from previous feminist educational discourses about lesbian abuse, which have tended towards a rigidified analysis that relies on essentialist constructs (Holmes & Ristock, 2004). Yet, there are contradictory discourses about

identity within the curriculum where we see a reliance on many binary oppositions (male/female, lesbian/heterosexual, white lesbians/lesbians of colour) all the while trying to foreground the multiplicity, fluidity and socially constructed nature of language and identity.

Through the language used, and in the examples of relationship scenarios, most of the workshops still privilege a non-trans lesbian identity. While the curriculum states that the healthy relationships workshops are inclusive of people who identify as transgender, this was a point of confusion for many workshop facilitators and transgender participants over the years. There were many times when trans-identified participants — specifically those who identified as gender queer, female-to-male (FTM) or neither male nor female — indicated they did not feel the workshops were inclusive or responsive to their identity and experiences. In a recent attempt to address this, the following was added to the philosophy statement: "we attempt to make our healthy relationships workshops trans inclusive. This means that women who are in relationship with a trans partner, trans couples, MTF (male to female) and FTM (female to male) trans people as well as people who identify as intersex are welcome" (EVA, 2007, p. 6-7). Examples, however, that address the very diverse experiences of these groups are on the whole, absent in the healthy relationships curriculum.[58]

Similarly, homogenizing and tokenistic inclusion strategies adopted by some facilitators in workshops to address bisexual women's experiences produced the very exclusionary effects they ostensibly set out to contest. Surprisingly, while the curriculum

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[58] The only exception is the workshop on *Sexuality, Intimacy and Desire* which integrates an analysis of trans experiences within same-sex/gender relationships more than the other workshops, reflecting the analysis of a specific facilitator and curriculum developer (Caroline White) who is also active as an ally in the trans anti-violence movement.

reminds facilitators that "our attempts to be inclusive [must] be reflected in practice as well as language, i.e. we want to avoid adding on other identities (such as trans) but not offering a curriculum that explores and addresses the unique issues trans folks face" (EVA, 2007, p. 8), this was mostly not the case as the content and examples are based primarily in non-trans lesbian experience. This example shows how an intellectual understanding about the problems with tokenistic inclusion strategies does not necessarily translate into an understanding of how to change practice. I now look at the way this anti-oppression philosophy addresses racial identities where similar issues surface.

Good Non-Racist Feminists

The discussion about language in the curriculum is followed by a section on the strengths and limitations of the program, which acknowledges shortcomings and encourages critical reflection for facilitators. It addresses how the program is innovative and the only program of its kind in Canada with on-going funding. It also notes that participants' feedback indicate that the program is meeting many community needs. It recognizes the combined efforts and knowledge of many queer women involved in the program's development, making special note of "the important contributions of women of colour and Aboriginal women" as advisory committee members, workshop participants and facilitators (EVA, 2007, p. 9). This is followed by the program's limitations where it states: "However, we also recognize that the majority of the workshops' curriculum has been produced and delivered by white middle-class non-disabled North American women working from within an anti-oppression lens and viewing the curriculum with an understanding of the intersectionality of all oppressions.

More work is needed to increase the content to reflect the experiences and to honor the leadership of women of colour, Aboriginal women, low-income women, immigrant women and women with disabilities" (EVA, 2007, p. 9). A few pages later, there is a statement encouraging facilitators to expand the analysis, raise questions and problematize ideas, emphasizing: "we are particularly interested in expanding the notes section in ways that reflect our commitment to provide inclusive, anti-oppressive workshops that reflect an understanding of the intersectionality of identities and the interlocking nature of oppressions" (p. 9).

These statements could be seen as a "responsible" move to make whiteness, and other forms of dominance, visible — marking and destabilizing norms that are naturalized and made invisible. The emphasis is on the good intentions of the privileged subjects who "mean well." While different axes of identity are mentioned, I want to draw specific attention to racialized discourses and the way confessional narratives of good intentions, function in feminist discourses to recite and secure the dominance of white subjects. The program is represented as "meeting many needs" and yet anxieties about white racism – that there are women who are excluded, not having their needs met – appears in the narrative with the mention of women of colour and Aboriginal women.

Anti-racist scholars argue that "whiteness gets produced through being declared" (Ahmed 2004, p. 12), and that these moves often mask other motivations, such as white feminist subjects' emotional attachments to innocence and to seeing ourselves as good non-racist feminists (Ahmed, 2004; Fellows & Razack, 1998; Srivastava, 2005). Discourses of benevolence and "good intentions" have been a historical foundation of whiteness (Riggs, 2004; Srivastava, 2005). While there is a recognition of gaps in

curriculum content and related power imbalances in the production of knowledge, explicitly naming the dominant subjects as "anti-oppressive" and "with a lens of intersectionality" works as a redemption discourse and further asserts our/their dominance — we cannot really be blamed for any exclusions or on-going oppression because our intentions were/are good. Here, as Sarah Ahmed (2004) explains in relation to whiteness, admitting racism or declaring whiteness does not represent evidence of anti-racist practice. Anti-oppression can become a matter of making dominant "anti-oppressive" subjects "feel better" about their dominance or the exclusions produced through it (Ahmed, 2004, p. 33). Clearly, these declarations of privilege do not function merely as descriptions, but can also work as confessionals, which recite the dominance of white, middle-class, able-bodied women. I argue that this example in the curriculum functions in this way despite its claims to do the opposite.

Intersectional Identities

Informed by feminist anti-oppression philosophy, efforts are made in the curriculum to contest and complicate universalist discourses that construct queer women's identity around race, class, age, and ability privilege, although to varying degrees and success. For example, a section on workshop planning offers guidelines for facilitators:

> Think about how race, immigration, ethnicity, class, ability, gender identity, sexuality, age, health, having children, homophobia and heterosexism, racism, colonization, sexism, ableism, ageism, classism, past or present substance use, and other factors impact our relationships as queer women and abuse. For

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example: fears of calling police because of the homophobia and racism of the legal system, or because you don't have your landed status yet; fears that no-one will believe you because your partner is a disability rights, feminist anti-violence or anti-racist activist, etc.; your partner's emotional abuse includes racist and ableist comments. (EVA, 2007, n.p.)

There are also attempts to apply this analysis in a workshop on communication and conflict. In the workshop "After the Honeymoon: Healthy Communication and Problem-Solving", the narrative states that "styles and meaning of non-verbal communication vary tremendously across culture, class, gender, age, etc." and that health, extended family responsibilities, money, children, immigration and racism (among other factors) can impact a couple's communication (EVA, 2007, n.p.). Likewise, the section on conflict instructs facilitators to "introduce this section by acknowledging that gender, class, race, culture, ability, family of origin, our own disposition and other factors such as stereotyping influence how we deal with and respond to conflict" (EVA, 2007, n.p.). Yet importantly, there is no discussion of *how* these factors influence communication. The lack of language and theory about power differences based on class, race and ability in intimate lesbian relationships has made it very difficult to resolve conflicts and build healthy and just lesbian relationships (Kadi, 1993). The curriculum reflects an awareness of this reality but the analysis is not fully integrated into the workshop content, which can inadvertently produce a universal subject whose life is not impacted by racism, classism, poverty and ableism.

Thus, points of resistance and contestation to universalist discourses show up in the curriculum reflecting contradictions that produce a wider range of subjectivities than

in the earlier educational discourses on lesbian abuse produced in the 1990s that I discussed in Chapter Five. I remain concerned, however, that a discourse of intersectionality or anti-oppression can mask a racist liberal "inclusion" or additive approach to addressing race/racism by white women, where issues of power are ignored (or discussed but not acted upon or changed) and where women of colour are "needed" so as not to appear white. Often in these tokenizing "inclusion" efforts (perhaps now framed as "anti-oppression" efforts) queer women of colour and Two-Spirit women are acknowledged without deconstructing the constructs that maintain white privilege and changing institutional norms and power relations.

As feminists, we must examine how feminist "anti-oppression" discourses are used by dominant subjects; are they mobilized to abdicate responsibility, as a way of "coming clean" and maintaining power, or do they help us address hierarchical power relations between women, create greater accountability and activate organizational change? We must examine the contemporary manifestations of historical constructions of racial innocence in feminist anti-violence organizing and be prepared to look at some of the problematic effects of well-meaning feminist anti-oppression efforts and make necessary changes (Srivastava, 2005).

Expert Knowledge – Psychology and Health Promotion Discourses

In addition to feminist anti-oppression and anti-violence discourses, the workshops draw on psychology and health promotion discourses. These disciplines promote activities that can be identified as strategies of governmentality in the ways they construct and regulate the population through systems of knowledge (Foucault, 1991),

and produce health promotion and psychology experts who provide their knowledge "directed at improving individuals' health through self-regulation" (Lupton, 1995, p. 10). Neoliberal trends in responding to sexual and domestic violence emphasize a normative vision of professionalized service providers with specialized expertise to diagnose, treat and prevent sexual/domestic violence (Bumiller, 2008). This has lead to defining the problem of violence through public health discourses of surveillance and expanded forms of expert psychological knowledge about, and programming for, women who have been victimized (Bumiller, 2008).

The healthy relationships workshops begin by challenging this dominant neoliberal discourse of expert knowledge that positions mental health, social service, criminal justice and educational professionals as experts and in relations of power over "users" or "consumers" of services. The guide states: "Explain that you are not experts. Acknowledge that everyone in the room has experience and knowledge and that one of your goals is to make sure there are lots of opportunities for them to share some of it with one another. Add that you're there to facilitate and share some information and ideas about strengthening our relationships" (EVA, 2007, n.p.). Further, the curriculum includes exercises that validate the participants' knowledge base, creating opportunities for collective knowledge production and problem solving. This was a deliberate move to contest professionalization and the resulting individualist models of many health and social service approaches that diminish the significance of collective self-help that has been a foundation of grassroots feminist anti-violence philosophy (Bumiller, 2008).

Despite this, the discourses that inform and shape the facilitators' practice — social work, counselling psychology and education — position them hierarchically in

relation to the participants. Deeply classed and raced psychological and social work discourses (including some that are "feminist") are extremely significant in the way in which one social group or class "comes to be responsible, often as professionals, for the moral regulation of the other" (Walkerdine, 1996, p. 357). Individual facilitators may have different degrees of attachment to these expert discourses and questions remain to what extent in practice they encourage participants to critically examine and challenge knowledge and taken-for-granted truth claims. Discourses of empowerment, critical pedagogy and community development often mask the investments of "public health professionals in persuading groups to develop 'skills' and 'exercise control' over their lives" (Lupton, 1995, p. 59-60). These so-called emancipatory discourses have been "absorbed into the complex bureaucratic network of public health" with increased focus on techniques of self-surveillance and control (Lupton, 1995, p. 76). Through government-funded health promotion programs the state functions as the facilitator shaping the health of the community, and in a neoliberal context they ensure that citizens are healthy in order to promote productivity. Safe Choices is positioned in this way — emphasizing its role assisting queer women to develop skills to improve their health. While the program's feminist philosophy tries to contest these discourses, contradictions can be seen in the curriculum's narrative.

In the healthy relationships workshops, new information is offered after participants generate their own individual and collective knowledge. Nevertheless, information is presented from key texts written by psychologists — some of whom are lesbian and feminist — who are recognized as experts in the field. Although various feminist and queer/lesbian resources are recommended at the beginning of the

curriculum, it is material from *No More Secrets: Violence in Lesbian Relationships* (Ristock, 2002), *Lesbian Couples: A Guide to Creating Healthy Relationships* (Clunis & Green, 2005), *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* (Gottman & Silver, 1999),[59] and material from psychologist Brent Atkinson (2008) that are most prevalent in the workshop content for two of the workshops on healthy communication and separateness and togetherness.[60] Most references to research in these modules refer to the work of Gottman and Atkinson.[61] Thus, while expert knowledge is seemingly eschewed by the curriculum, on closer examination, it is evident that the program privileges the research of experts in psychology.

Additionally, although beyond the scope of this chapter, my analysis of Gottman and Atkinson's work thus far reveals a de-gendered, de-raced, de-classed analysis of (predominantly) heterosexual couples. When this work is used in the curriculum the diverse socio-cultural contexts of queer women's relationships recede or disappear with references to generic couples. I argue that by applying this material in this way, the unintended result was the reproduction of some of the hegemonic assumptions we were seeking to disrupt. As I show in the following section, this reliance on psychological, as well as health promotion, knowledge in the healthy queer relationships workshops is problematic in that it serves to reproduce normalcy.

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[59] Gottman's work is used widely by family and marriage therapists and he is currently conducting research project on Creating Healthy Relationships funded by the US government (Gottman, 2009).
[60] These workshops were offered more often than others based on requests by participants.
[61] The exception is the workshop on *Sexuality* which includes references to research on lesbian sex as background resources for facilitators

Healthy Subjects = Normal Subjects?

The disciplines of psychology and health promotion play a role in governmentality through the (re)production of normalizing discourses that are racialized, classed, and heteronormatively gendered (Gleason, 2003; Riggs & Augoustinos, 2005; Walkerdine, 1996). These discourses (re)produce binary oppositions between healthy/unhealthy or civilized/uncivilized subjects. We come to understand what constitutes a "healthy" (and/or "normal") self in part through comparisons between the self and "unhealthy" (and/or "abnormal") others (Lupton, 1995). These disciplines rely on liberal individualist discourses that emphasize health as an individual and moral responsibility, which has a depoliticizing effect (George & Rail, 2006). In addition, they are premised on a generic model of subjectivity, which constructs the subject as autonomous, rational, self-regulated, controlled, individualized and civilized (Cermele, Daniels, & Anderson, 2001; Lupton, 1995; Riggs, 2007). The white able-bodied bourgeois heterosexual masculine body is valued as most closely conforming to this idea of the civilized body (Sibley, 1995). Generic models of subjectivity rely on an additive approach to difference, which misses how different axes of identity are connected and hierarchical. For example, these discourses position whiteness as an indicator of health (Cermele, Daniels, & Anderson, 2001; George & Rail, 2006; Riggs, 2007).

In developing the Safe Choices curriculum we sought to disrupt generic and additive models of subjectivity and construct a queer subject whose experiences of abuse and health were shaped by many interconnected factors and social systems. Yet, many taken-for-granted "truths" show up in the curriculum and do present a neoliberal individualist discourse. In all of the healthy relationship workshops and in many of the

handouts there are references to the importance of "self-care" and "taking responsibility for your own feelings and behaviour and needs" (EVA, 2007, n.p.). In Foucauldian terms these could be described as psychological "technologies of the self" such as self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-discipline. Most (heterosexual) relationship self-help manuals are based on the "notion of social obligation in that technologies of the self such as self-discipline and self-knowledge are the 'right', or ethical, thing to take on, not only for the sake of the self, but for one's partner and for the wider society. By prescribing what is emotionally 'right' or 'healthy' for the individual they also provide a picture of how healthy relationships between individuals should be conducted, and the healthy society that would result" (Hazelden, 2003, p. 425). These neoliberal individualist discourses produce effective healthy citizens who are self-regulating and who can take care of themselves, rather than subjects that are interdependent and relational (Hazelden, 2003; Kiely, 2005).

Similarly, neoliberal approaches to violence against women promote individualistic strategies of problem solving rather than those that rely on more complex understandings of the multiple forms of domination and violence in women's private and public lives (Bumiller, 2008). In social work and public health literature this discourse focuses on how "women need to be trained to make better choices" so that they can have a "normal, non-violent family" (p. 84).

Once again, the Safe Choices healthy relationships curriculum is contradictory in its up take and resistance to these discourses. References to self-care and taking responsibility for one's self, feelings and needs are consistently combined with discourses of relationality, accountability, mutuality, community, interdependency and a social

context of hierarchical power relations. All of the workshops emphasize the importance of the individual's connectedness to community and a number of them address the complex role and significance of extended family in queer women's lives, including responsibilities to and/or loss of extended family and "chosen family" in the context of a heteronormative, homophobic and racist culture.

One example of a discourse of community connection and accountability is the workshop "Mind Your Own Business, Don't Air Our Dirty Laundry: Talking About Relationship Concerns with Friends and Family". The workshop speaks to the silence about partner abuse in many queer communities, and the reality that many queer women who have been in abusive same-sex/gender relationships are more likely to talk with a friend or family member about the abuse, than anti-violence, health care or social service providers (Ristock, 2002). As a departure from neoliberal discourses of self-help or expert knowledge, the workshop seeks to increase the capacity of friends and queer communities to strategize and problem solve together about relationship violence. The workshop examines how "community values" play a role in supporting, condoning or preventing abuse and sustaining healthy queer relationships. It encourages critical thinking about discourses of shame, privacy and accountability and promotes collective dialogue about ways queer women can support values that foster safe, strong, healthy, accountable and non-violent relationships and communities.

This discourse clearly challenges neoliberal individualist discourses by emphasizing interdependency, collective power, social and communal responsibility, and accountability. The regulatory power of the state-funded health promotion model, however, and the neoliberal techniques of governance it produces, may limit and

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constrain the potential of this discussion to move in more radical or transformative ways. As well, even when there is attention to interdependency and relationality, neoliberal technologies of the self (self-esteem, self-care and self-improvement) can still function to privatize and individualize socio-economic and political issues (such as poverty, racism and violence). I also wonder how, as a technology of governance, the workshop may unwittingly encourage queer subjects to monitor and regulate one another.

Queer Sexual Subjects?

Neoliberal discourses also "promote a narrow kind of sexual subjectivity which obscures sexual pleasure and desire" (Kiely, 2005, p. 254). Heteronormative neoliberal discourses pathologize queer sexuality and promote heterosexual sex within the confines of marriage only, while homonormative ones desexualize queer identity in order to promote a responsiblized, respectable gay or lesbian citizen (Richardson, 2005; Seidman, 2002). As well, normative discourses about lesbians erase the possibility of sexual assault within lesbian relationships.

Interestingly, Safe Choices' "Sexuality, Intimacy and Desire" workshop offers a counter-hegemonic discourse that troubles these normative narratives. The goals are to help women develop a language to talk about sex, intimacy, and desire in queer women's relationships, to identify the socio-cultural "messages we receive about our sexuality" from "dominant society and lesbian/queer communities," to understand some of the barriers to talking about sex, these issues, and strengthen communication skills when talking about sexuality (EVA, 2007, n.p.). This workshop also addresses the topics of

consent and boundaries and provides information and discussion about sexual assault in women's same-sex/gender relationships.

Evident here are deconstructive strategies that provide opportunities to examine discourses influencing our sexuality and desires. The narrative disrupts neoliberal normalizing techniques that assign a moral status of normal and abnormal to queer sexual acts and desires (Seidman, 2001), with discussion of a wide range of issues such as: polyamorous and nonmonogamous relationships, butch/femme, transgender and bisexual experiences, sexual practices such as masturbation, S/M, the use of sex toys, erotica/porn, and social factors such as racism, aging, health issues and disability. A queer feminist discourse of desire is combined with a discourse of relationality, ethics and accountability to self and one's sexual partner(s). These non-normative sexual discourses, however, fade in some of the other workshops in the curriculum. Given that the workshops are not offered sequentially and that women do not necessarily attend them all, these non-normative discourses of sexuality and desire remain marginal, which could have the effect of promoting a desexualized queer subject in the rest of the curriculum.

In this chapter, my concern has been to examine the extent to which the Safe Choices healthy queer relationships workshops rely on and reinforce normative frameworks and neoliberal discourses and technologies of governance. My examination reveals many contradictions within the curriculum's discursive framework. The workshops both resist and reproduce some of the neoliberal discourses of professionalization, expert knowledge, individualism and narrow approaches to responding to violence. Neoliberal self-help discourses are evident in the workshops but integrated with relational, communitarian and social discourses to varying degrees. As

well, the curriculum destabilizes narrow neoliberal models of subjectivity that desexualize queer women. A discourse of intersectionality and anti-oppression challenges universalism, however it functions in complex and contradictory ways — to complicate generic models of subjectivity and relationship violence in some cases, but also to reinscribe them most often through white feminist moves of dominance. The presence of discourses of benevolence and racial innocence ("being good nonracist feminists") position white queer women not only as the norm but also as "benevolent helpers" to racialized others.

This exploration raises a number of areas for future research, education and organizing work. Clearly there are different levels of engagement with neoliberal agendas (Richardson, 2005), and the contradictions in the Safe Choices program reveal this. These discourses and techniques of governance, however, are insidious and their normalizing power is often secured through common-sense language.

The limited funds and excessive state monitoring of the program greatly impacted our capacity to invest resources in curriculum development, facilitator training, mentoring and grassroots community organizing. While queer anti-violence initiatives need stable financial resources to accomplish their work, I am also mindful of how a reliance on state funding can create increased surveillance of social movements, thus constraining our ability to challenge racist, classist and (hetero)sexist state policies and practices. My analysis is similar to the critique of the non-profit industrial complex by Incite! Women of Colour Against Violence Against Women (2007; see also Russo & Spatz, 2007), which highlights the regulatory state structures and systems that non-profit organizations must follow and that regulate and constrain our social justice work. I do not

see simple or easy answers to the dilemmas and questions raised about the impacts of state funding and neoliberal ideologies on the LGBTQ and anti-violence movements. But as anti-violence and queer activists, we must engage with one another in a critical dialogue about some of these paradoxes and pitfalls with our reliance on state funding and explore creative strategies for transformation of social movements that resist processes of bureaucratization. This also requires looking at the role of the state in perpetrating violence and the forms of state violence in queer women's lives.

We need to exercise caution about the development of "best practice models" given the growing alliance between feminist anti-violence and LGBTQ organizations and the neoliberal state. While developing these tools can be helpful in sharing knowledge and encouraging consistency, neoliberal trends suggest that best practice models and educational tools can become techniques of governance and contribute to rigidified and universalist analyses that perpetuate normative constructions and exclusions. Similarly, we must continue to resist the professionalization of social movements, instead encouraging collective peer resource and community mobilizing strategies as well as on-going dialogue and critically reflexive dialogue about the values guiding our choices and how these expert and professional discourses shape our violence and health prevention efforts within non-profit organizations. Through this, we can examine how these discourses produce us as dominant normative queer and feminist subjects and ask how we are accountable to marginalized communities struggling for social justice. In these collective and self-reflexive efforts we need to move away from a moral and regulating stance and keep focused instead on an ethical stance (Ristock, 2002, p. 170). A strength in the Safe Choices curriculum is the frequency with which the

narrative reminds facilitators to think critically about the inclusions and exclusions produced through language, how it foregrounds the social construction of knowledge and is grounded in popular education philosophy. But the "critical" language we use can lend itself to the same techniques of governance that we critique (Ahmed, 2004, p. 9), and as programs become more established, often popular education strategies and philosophy fade as facilitators fall back on more familiar and state-supported social service models. For dominant feminist and queer subjects, this stresses the importance of staying implicated in what we critique, attending to our responsibility and accountability, while at the same time, moving away from a focus on ourselves as hegemonic (white, middle-class, able-bodied) subjects (Ahmed, 2004, p. 59).

Anti-violence strategies for queer women need to place the experiences of women of colour, Indigenous women and low-income women at the centre, rather than focusing on increased accessibility or specific multicultural programs (Smith, 2004). This requires not only addressing institutional power and hierarchical relations within feminist and LGBTQ organizations and widening the circle of power and opportunity, but critically examining how white and middle-class cultural norms and practices are produced and legitimized as natural even through the use of "diversity" or "intersectionality" rhetoric (Ward, 2008) in a neoliberal context. It also means working on grassroots political issues that are not typically defined by white and middle-class queers and feminists as "queer anti-violence issues." For example, community organizing with queer women around issues such as welfare cuts, racist immigration policies, on-going struggles for Indigenous sovereignty, police violence or the structural violence imbedded in state programs such as the Live-In Caregiver Program in Canada (for example, see Pratt,

2005). Similarly queer anti-violence prevention initiatives could focus resources on strengthening relationships and alliances with grassroots groups working on these struggles for racial, economic and spatial justice. The Safe Choices program did participate in events surrounding many of these issues, however the requirement to meet the programs' "deliverables and outcomes" (as defined by the funders) often meant there was little space to expand in new ways and the focus became service delivery (workshops) despite a desire to work from a social justice and community-organizing framework.

My analysis of the healthy queer relationship curriculum suggests that we bring greater attention to how "health" as a category is never neutral, universal or inherently good, and the way healthy relationships are constructed through various normalizing discourses. This requires greater understanding of which models of "health" and "family" are sanctioned by the neoliberal and colonial state and whether our feminist and queer anti-violence prevention and health promotion efforts destabilize or prop up white and middle-class nationalist agendas. It means resisting trends towards white middle-class homonormative relationship models and (re)envisioning the many ways queer women *can* and *do* form non-violent and ethical intimate relationships. We can focus on promoting ideas about subjectivity, health and citizenship that are not only relational, but that further stress the interconnections of the socio-economic and political contexts of queer women's lives and the way these contexts shape our understandings of queer women's health, relationships and violence through normalizing frames.

I explore the interlocking nature of these issues further in the next chapter, where I critically investigate the relational and multiscalar geographies of violence and

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belonging through a close examination of whiteness, hetero and homonormativity the

surrounding anti-LGBTQ violence and Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in the Western

Canadian city of Kelowna, BC.

Chapter Seven:
Contested geographies of violence and belonging: Queering discourses of tolerance and gay rights in a white settler Western Canadian city

The hegemonic national story of Canada is framed around the central themes of tolerance, multiculturalism and universal belonging. Yet this story masks the everyday material, discursive and spatial relations of violence and un-belonging that are hierarchically produced in a white settler society such as Canada. As such it also masks the interlocking and contested nature of geographies of belonging in Canada and how they are racialized, gendered, heterosexed and classed.

This chapter explores some of these contested geographies of belonging (Anderson, 2000) and violence in Canada, by examining the interlocking nature of race, sexuality and space in discourses within stories surrounding Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in the mid-sized Western Canadian city of Kelowna, British Columbia. I focus specifically on the period from 1996-2007, as 1996 was the first year that Lesbian and Gay Pride Day took place in this city — an event which sparked controversy and struggles over what Henri Lefebvre (1968) called the "right to the city," which he described as the right to inhabit, appropriate and participate in the production of urban space (Mitchell, 2003). In the following year, the city's next Mayor refused to include the word "pride" in a Lesbian and Gay Pride Day city proclamation requested by a local gay and lesbian coalition. His primary motivation was that "he did not approve of homosexual behaviour and did not want to appear to be supporting or approving or endorsing a homosexual lifestyle" (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v. City of Kelowna, 2000). The coalition filed a human rights complaint, which resulted in a British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal where members of the local lesbian and gay communities spoke

about the relationship between the mayor's actions, homophobia, and a lack of safety for LGBTQ people in the space of the city. In 2000, the tribunal Chair ruled that the mayor's actions were discriminatory under provincial human rights legislation.

These struggles are not unique to Kelowna, British Columbia or Canada. Accordingly, in this chapter I use the controversies surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day as a case study of a specific event to examine how we construct and imagine belonging, safety, violence, and queer rights in the space of the city in white settler societies more generally. The struggle for rights produces space in particular ways, through rules of law, the construction of public and private spaces, and boundary enforcements (Mitchell, 2003). Places are defined, produced and called upon in struggles over rights (Blomley & Pratt, 2001). The politics of rights and space intersect in Canada in specific ways that reflect the country's colonial nation-building history and its contemporary rights culture entrenched in Canadian political discourse through the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Blomley & Pratt, 2001).

In this chapter I explore the following questions: What are the discourses surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day and what "work" do they do? What can this analysis tell us about how geographies of violence and belonging in LGBTQ communities, are linked to the violence of colonialism and nation-building in a white settler society such as Canada? How is the city of Kelowna produced as a white heteronormative and bourgeois space? What stories are told about places and whats kind of understandings of violence are made possible or erased through these imagined geographies (Said, 1978)? How are queer anti-violence and human rights movements related to other social and political movements such as those for Indigenous rights and

sovereignty in Canada? In this examination, I explore the interlocking and relational nature of geographies of violence and belonging, and discourses of tolerance and gay rights, looking at the way they construct worthy and abject subjects in city space and produce racialized, gendered, classed and sexualized exclusions and entitlements to citizenship in Canada.

To examine the issues I've discussed so far, I draw on autoethnographic accounts, and analyze discourses within archival data (news media, a website for an urban development plan and a report from the BC Human Rights Tribunal). Overall, I'm investigating the relationship between violence and belonging in a white settler society, and specifically how the city is constructed as a certain kind of "safe" space for a specific kind of citizen. I contextualize all of these questions within the colonial present, and raise questions about Indigenous rights to the city and what it means for white settler subjects (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and heterosexual) to claim belonging or rights to space in a white settler society.

Autoethnographic Accounts of Kelowna

Places are often thought to be naturally occurring, however they are produced and shaped through narratives, however shifting, contested and multiple they may be (Price, 2004). I begin the story about Kelowna's Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in a number of ways. As I am not separate from these geographies and stories, I include autoethnographic accounts of my experiences as a co-coordinator and educator in a provincial LGBTQ anti-violence initiative from 2004-2005, and my experience living in Kelowna during the period from 2005-2007. These experiences sparked my interest in the

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geographies of belonging and violence in Kelowna and led me to analyze the struggles over Pride Day and lesbian and gay rights in the city during the years 1996-2000. I wanted to understand how the Pride Day controversy and subsequent human rights case, set the stage for a specific conceptualization of LGBTQ safety and rights in the city in the years that followed.

I use this personal narrative to bring forward some of the experiences and discourses that constitute me socially as a subject and to contextualize my interest and analysis of the relationship between geographies of belonging, violence and human rights in the city of Kelowna. I use autoethnographic accounts to convey the personal impact of the dominant discourses of heteronormativity, cisnormativity and white settler colonialism in Kelowna. However by sharing this personal narrative I do not set out to present it as the authoritative truth, but instead recognize how this story is discursively constructed, context-specific and not outside of power relations. By applying a feminist poststructuralist lens, I acknowledge that autoethnographic narratives do not merely represent reality, or a self, but are socially and discursively constructed stories also constitutive of identity (Butz & Besio, 2009). Through a process of critical self-reflexivity, I trouble the truth claims produced through my personal narrative by drawing attention to the interlocking systems of privilege, power and marginalization. I examine what stories are told and not told, with an interest in the regimes of truth that are disrupted and/or reproduced through my personal narrative (drawing on Ristock, 2002).

Autoethnographers also acknowledge "that memory is fallible, that it is impossible to recall or report on events in language that exactly represents how those events were lived and felt; and we recognize that people who have experienced the same

event often tell different stories about what happened" (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, p. 32). I provide a "layered account" where I share personal experience and critical reflection, alongside data analysis, and discussion of relevant literature (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 20).

Before discussing the Pride Day case, I offer an autoethnographic account and critical self-reflection that contextualizes my interest in the Kelowna Pride Day case and includes discussion of the provincial LGBT Anti-Violence Project that I developed and co-coordinated. Following this, I situate the story of Kelowna's Pride Day in the historical and contemporary production of the city as a white settler space.

The LGBT Anti-Violence Project: Creating Strong and Safe Queer Communities[62]

The LGBT Anti-Violence Project was a provincial anti-violence project that addressed both hate-motivated violence against, and intimate partner abuse in LGBTQ communities in British Columbia. This one-year community development project focused on increasing safety, preventing violence and improving the strength and well-being of LGBTQ people in three small or mid-sized communities in British Columbia: Nanaimo, Kelowna and Nelson. The project did this by building community capacity to respond to these issues and empowering individuals in the following ways: (i) education and community development with LGBTQ communities in the form of roundtable discussion forums; (ii) training workshops for service providers; and (iii) resource development and

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[62] In 2004-2005 I lived in Vancouver and coordinated the provincial project from the offices of a provincial feminist anti-violence organization. I shared the role of Coordinator with a white gay male colleague who worked at Qmmunity. At this time my co-coordinator and I worked collaboratively with a local planning committee from the Okanagan (primarily comprised of individuals from Kelowna although a few committee members lived in Vernon) to plan a 1-day Roundtable Forum for LGBTQ community members and a 2-day Training Workshop for social service and health care providers. We then traveled to Kelowna to facilitate the Roundtable and Training Workshops in June 2005. In August 2005, I moved from Vancouver to Kelowna with my partner and our child.

distribution (educational pamphlets), in three small or mid-sized communities —

Nanaimo, Nelson and Kelowna.[63] Both of the sponsoring organizations had a provincial

mandate although their offices were based in Vancouver. In each community, we worked

with a local planning committee comprised of LGBTQ people and service provider

allies.[64]

     While anti-LGBTQ discrimination, harassment and violence were prevalent in all

three communities, the stories my colleague and I heard of fear and violence, isolation

and silence, homophobia and transphobia in the Okanagan horrified us. From what we

heard, things seemed much worse than in our other project sites: a heterosexual man

threatening to kill his lesbian neighbour, teachers terrified to be out in their communities

and schools, fearing homophobic retaliation and possible firing, children of lesbian

parents taking knives to school as a response to homophobic threats, gay men facing

homophobia in court when negotiating custody and access visits with their children, a

trans woman being refused medical care upon disclosure of her transgender identity, and

high levels of conflict and horizontal hostility among queer community members. Many

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[63] While the training and roundtable forums took place in these cities, some participants lived in the outlying areas near these cities. In the case of Kelowna, most participants lived in Kelowna but others lived in the surrounding Okanagan communities of Lake Country, Winfield, Penticton, Vernon and Salmon Arm. Despite this, participants focused their discussions on the city of Kelowna, identifying it as more homophobic, transphobic and heterosexist than some other places in the Okanagan, such as Vernon and Salmon Arm for example.

[64] The local committee planning model gave the project credibility and provided a sense of ownership to local LGBTQ community members. They were able to highlight the work already being done on these issues in their community, and ensure that the project built upon and supported this work. Using a community development model, the Roundtable Forums provided an opportunity for LGBTQ people to come together and break their isolation and disconnection, build relationships and new connections. In the first part of the Forums, community members had an opportunity to discuss the climate of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism in their communities, share personal (or anecdotal) stories and experiences of violence, as well as discuss the barriers and silence about intimate relationship abuse in LGBTQ communities. In the second part of the Forums community members brainstormed strategies to address violence and the threat of violence within their communities and developed 'action plans' of short- and longer-term goals. Most participants identified individual and collective actions that they could take to effect change.

participants described how they experienced "dirty looks" and stares in everyday spaces in the city (i.e. hetero and cisnormative gaze), which all contributed to feeling unsafe. While individuals also indicated that there were many straight allies in the community, they described the climate as one of fear and hostility where LGBTQ people experienced surveillance, stigma, harassment and the threat of violence and discrimination on a regular basis. Some participants stated that this climate of intense homophobia and transphobia creates an environment where LGBTQ people remain closeted in order to protect themselves or their families. Many people stated they did not feel safe being out at work, with neighbours, with their children's teachers, and in numerous other contexts. A number of individuals also stated that they felt the absence of overtly queer friends and experienced isolation and disconnection from other queer people. [65]

The stories we heard from LGBTQ people in Kelowna, indicated that the city did not feel like a safe and welcoming space for non-heterosexual and gender non-conforming people and their children. Many said that they felt that the mayor's refusal to include the word pride in the city's proclamation of Lesbian and Gay Pride Day nearly a decade earlier had contributed to increased homophobia, transphobia and violence in Kelowna and had communicated a message to LGBTQ people that they did not belong in the city. We heard of people's resistance, too, and their courage and determination in the face of this hostility.

At the same time, significantly, some white lesbian and gay participants told us that the racist violence in the city was as bad or worse than the homo/transphobic violence. As well, two queer women who had been in interracial same-sex relationships

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[65] Some participants noted that this socially conservative and heteronormative climate, promoted and encouraged harassment towards feminists and anti-racist social justice activists as well.

(a white woman and an Aboriginal woman) spoke about the denial of racism within queer communities and its negative impact on their relationships. Tensions surfaced over how to address racist violence within the project. While no-one actually said "racism is not a gay issue," some white gays and lesbians implied this by asserting that racist violence was "off topic" and would take time and energy away from addressing what was defined as the *real* issue at hand — homo/transphobic violence. The normative categories and frameworks for LGBTQ (and feminist) anti-violence organizing in Canada positioned the problem of racist violence as "off topic" and outside of the mandate of our work. By relying on these categories white queer subjects end up participating in the denial of racism and the perpetuation of white supremacist ideologies. As I discuss throughout this dissertation, in doing so, we miss examining the way colonial, racist and heterosexist violence are related and rely on one another in white settler societies like Canada, and miss crucial opportunities for coalition and alliance building.

In my role as co-coordinator of anti-violence project, I was also involved in a provincial planning committee to organize a roundtable for government policy makers about hate crimes in BC. I saw similar discursive moves here, where the pervasive gendered colonial violence experienced by Aboriginal women in Canada was seen to fall outside of the category of "hate crimes." A suggestion to invite a regional representative from the Sisters in Spirit Campaign of the Native Women's Association of Canada to join the planning committee was met with disapproval.[66] While the (all white) committee

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[66] Sisters In Spirit was a research, education and policy initiative driven and led by Aboriginal women, with a goal to conduct research and raise awareness of the high rates of violence against, and murder of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. In 2005, the federal Liberal government provided $5 million for this initiative but in 2010, the federal Conservative government announced that they would not longer continue funding and mandated that all future federal funding could no longer be used for advocacy or research.

members reluctantly agreed, they privately voiced concerns that this was getting "off topic" and not a legitimate form of hate-motivated violence. They argued that while violence against women was a serious social problem, there were other places to address it and not in a hate crimes forum. Committee members argued that homophobic and transphobic violence was clearly "on topic" but the gendered-colonial violence experienced by Aboriginal women did not constitute a hate crime. The committee included racist hate-motivated violence in its mandate, but the violence in the lives of Aboriginal women was not seen as racialized or racist and therefore it was constructed as being "off topic" or outside the committee's mandate. These examples of white queers or hate-crimes activists and policy makers arguing that colonial violence is "off topic" or outside the category of hate crimes, not only illustrate how whiteness continues to shape both feminist and LGBTQ activist and policy discourses on violence but also produces and maintains the hegemony of white spaces within feminist and LGBTQ social movements.

A number of scholars have pointed out how anti-LGBTQ violence has been conceptualized within these de-raced, de-classed singular identity-based frameworks and how this has excluded and marginalized the experiences of Two-Spirit people, LGBTQ people of colour, and low-income and poor LGBTQ people (Barnard, 2004; Lamble, 2008; Meyer, 2010; Richie, 2005; Spade, 2011). As Ian Barnard (2004) explains:

> If you were being attacked on the street because of your sexual orientation, your outrage and pain were relevant. However, if you had been attacked because of your gender or colour rather than your gayness your concerns belonged elsewhere. Those who had been assaulted for all three reasons or who didn't know

exactly why they had been assaulted often confused the group's very raison

d'etre. (p. 4)

Troubled by the (re)production of white normativity through these rhetorical strategies in

LGBTQ anti-violence organizing, I wanted to understand more about the relationship

between this pervasive denial of racial violence, white identity formation, and discourses

of safety and belonging and safety for LGBTQ people.

An Insider Story? Moving to Kelowna

Shortly after this, in 2005, I moved from Vancouver to Kelowna with my partner

and our three year old child when my partner accepted a tenure-track faculty position at

the newly formed UBC Okanagan campus. We knew the move would be challenging.

Although we had lived in small cities in the past, we would be leaving a large urban

centre where we had fourteen years worth of community, including a close-knit network

of friends, wider social and political networks in the feminist and queer communities, a

queer parents group, work contacts, and so on. In short, a lot of support and connection to

the city. We were going to a small urban centre where we knew no-one, known for its

conservatism, its fundamentalist churches, its Conservative MPs, its racism, its miles of

malls.

During the two years that we lived in Kelowna, we regularly spoke of not feeling

safe as a butch/femme queer couple, and feeling that we did not belong. We struggled to

articulate to ourselves (and even more to others such as our heterosexual parents and

friends) how hard it was living and parenting as a butch/femme couple with a young child

in this conservative community. It was a specific combination of factors in this place that

made it hard, and in fact like no other place we had lived before. As a queer family we experienced the pervasive homophobia and white heteronormative and cisnormative gender norms, as well as the impact of a socio-political context of Christian conservatism, white colonial attitudes, racism, anti-Semitism and the promotion and privileging of bourgeois and middle-class social norms. As well, given the stories we heard about the heterosexist, homophobic and socially conservative climate in Kelowna's schools, we worried about our young daughter's safety and well-being once she would start elementary school.

We felt the surveillance of the heterosexual and cisgender gaze on our bodies, the feeling of not belonging, not seeing oneself anywhere, feeling out of place, isolated, stifled, and under surveillance. What Foucault called "the normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates and judges them" (1977, p. 25). Getting a hair-cut, taking our daughter to the playground or soccer practice, going grocery shopping, to the doctor, and the local swimming pool, were just a few of the everyday spaces and experiences in the city that were marked with covert and overt homophobia, heteronormativity and gender policing. Heterosexual and cisgender looks of disapproval, whispers and long stares work to create an environment of discomfort and make queer and trans people feel "out of place" in everyday spaces (drawing on Valentine, 1996). These everyday experiences inscribe difference (not being straight or gender conforming). Petra Doan (2010) argues that this "tyranny of gender exerts a pervasive influence" on the way gender variant people experience different places (p. 636). As my partner Anne remarked, part of the experience of not belonging or not

feeling safe, was directly related to the frequency with which she experienced this

tyranny of gender or gender policing:

> it is the way that I'm read as male probably 80 or 90% of the time in Kelowna
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> versus, say, 30 or 40% in Vancouver or Toronto or Guelph or Kitchener or
>
> London. It's the way in two years I've seen maybe two masculine women around
>
> town. One time each. In two years, I've seen only two other people who look like
>
> me, whereas I sit five minutes in Continental Coffee in Vancouver and see half a
>
> dozen gender-queer souls with female biology. What the dearth in Kelowna says
>
> to me is that it's not okay to be a masculine woman here. And I think that's borne
>
> out when you look at the kind of femininity that predominates. (Holmes, &
>
> Fleming, 2009, p. 252)

We were also acutely aware of the way our white middle-class privilege and

academic careers protected us and how our ability to assimilate and conform (although

precarious and unstable at times) to the norms of Kelowna's white middle-class two-

parent family ideal, allowed us to escape more overt forms of violence and

discrimination. And we grappled with how to reconcile this reality, with our experience

of feeling unsafe and out of place.

Throughout the winter and spring of 2006 there was a series of violent

homophobic/transphobic threats on campus including: threats against a trans student at

UBC Okanagan[67] (including a note attached to a rock listing the things the perpetrator

would do to the victim with the rock), a homophobic hate letter sent to the student

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[67] The violent incidents were framed by the RCMP and many at the University, as examples of homophobic violence towards a gay man, however the student identified as transgender and not gay. The RCMP Hate Crimes Unit was called to investigate however they determined that the incidents did not legally constitute a hate crime. Many people involved as allies supporting the individual, felt that the violence was minimized and that the student did not receive appropriate support.

newspaper, the proliferation of anti-gay graffiti on campus, and a year later, a homophobic incident in my shared graduate student office space. Central to these incidents of violence was the message: you do not, and should not belong here. That same year, motivated by the work of the provincial LGBT Anti-Violence Project, a Kelowna non-profit organization received a grant from the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) to conduct a needs assessment on the safety of gay and lesbian youth in the Central Okanagan. They concluded from the results of their survey that "it is not safe for students to be gay in our community" (ISWA, 2007).

One of the recommendations to come out of the 2005 Roundtable Forum in Kelowna was the need for education in LGBTQ communities about intimate partner abuse and community initiatives to support and foster healthy relationships for LGBTQ people. Based on this feedback, in 2007 I organized a "Healthy Queer Relationships" workshop in collaboration with the UBC Okanagan Health and Wellness Centre for the campus' first "Outweek" — a week of events on campus to raise awareness of LGBTQ issues. While the event was advertised widely, open to all members of the Okanagan LGBTQ communities (not only UBC students) and was free of charge, no-one came. While there may be various factors contributing to this outcome, I heard anecdotally from a number of queer students that this was because they did not feel safe being out in the community. Attending a public workshop for queer people in Kelowna, did not feel safe in this context. My effort to organize queer relationship violence prevention workshops seemed to confirm the results of the federally-funded survey, where the socio-spatial context of homo/transphobia, closeting, and the insular nature of small queer and trans communities, meant that LGBTQ people were too afraid to come to a LGBTQ workshop

for fear of being seen by others. Fear of harassment, discrimination, loss of employment, loss of family or hate-motivated violence can keep many LGBTQ people from living our lives openly. In this context, queer and trans relationship violence prevention and intervention is extremely difficult. IPV in LGBTQ communities arises in a context of systemic oppression, stigma and discrimination. Efforts to prevent relationship violence in queer and trans communities, are inextricably linked to our struggles for safety and social justice. When we have to hide who we are as a result of heteronormative and cisnormative socio-spatial contexts that deny who we are and threaten our safety, it is very difficult to come together to strategize about building and sustaining strong and non-violent intimate relationships with partners.

During this time, I also heard anecdotal stories from faculty and fellow students about the racism that Aboriginal students, and students and faculty of colour were experiencing on the campus and in the wider community of Kelowna, and the subsequent denial and minimization of this racism by many white Kelowna citizens. In response to the homo/transphobic incidents on campus, queer students, faculty and allies on campus initiated a Positive Space campaign, an initiative intended to raise the visibility of safe and supportive places for LGBTQ people on campus and foster a welcoming atmosphere on campus for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. In the initial planning meetings, some committee members discussed the racism on campus and the importance of addressing multiple forms of discrimination and violence. However the majority of the participants (who were all white) were not committed to this vision and analysis, and many expressed concerns that LGBTQ issues would be minimized or lost if other forms of oppression were included. It was challenging at this time to mobilize a

campaign to address the interlocking forms of discrimination and violence taking place on campus and within the wider Okanagan community. Addressing the multiple forms of violence and oppression on campus was difficult to sustain under a white liberal rubric of "LGBTQ rights or safety" and whiteness was re-centred through this gay rights frame.[68]

All of these experiences combined to make me want to investigate further how different forms of violence are related to one another — such a colonial violence and homophobic or transphobic violence — and how they are produced in and through space. Although these issues and experiences are not unique to Kelowna or the Okanagan, I use this specific spatial context to help me tease apart the interlocking nature of violence and deepen my understanding of how hierarchical social processes are spatialized.

Troubling Insider/Outsider Status, Confessionals and Truth Telling

When I look at my own personal narrative about Kelowna, strategies of deconstruction help me to frame questions that may destabilize my story, and illuminate other stories and alternate truths (Lather, 1991). To engage in a critical self-reflexive process, we need to trouble taken-for-granted assumptions and dominant categories that are embedded within the stories we tell (Lather, 1991; Ristock, 2002). In doing so, I ask: How have I constructed the story? What is produced through these stories and what is excluded? What stories are not told? How do I acknowledge the contexts and motivations

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[68] Subsequently in 2010, the "Equity Matters" campaign was established at UBC Okanagan — "a campus-wide campaign on equity and diversity." The campaign integrates an analysis of equity, discrimination and harassment based on the following 13 grounds, which the B.C. Human Rights Code declares prohibited grounds of discrimination, violates both the Human Rights Code and UBC's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment: Age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical and mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex (including gender and pregnancy), sexual orientation, unrelated criminal conviction. Protection against sex discrimination includes protection for males, females and transgender people. For more information see the website (UBC, 2012).

for conducting our research without centering myself? Whose interests are served through this story? How does telling this story in this way, produce my identity? How does this story disrupt and/or reproduce hegemonic discourses?

Insider/Outsider

In this personal narrative, my status as an insider and/or outsider is complex, multiple and shifting. While living in Vancouver in 2005, I was an outsider working to coordinate community development and deliver LGBTQ anti-violence training in Kelowna. As a queer woman, I was also an insider, reflected in my shared experiences of homophobia, heteronormativity and as a survivor of violence in a lesbian relationship. Yet my privileges as a white middle-class woman simultaneously positioned me as an outsider to the Aboriginal communities, racialized immigrant communities, and working-class/low-income people I worked with through this project.

I was also an outsider as a community organizer and educator from the "big city" of Vancouver coming to facilitate a 3-day roundtable and training in the interior of BC. There are spatial hierarchies that reflect unequal power relations between urban and rural spaces. Individuals living in large metropolitan cities often make assumptions that they "know more" than those in smaller cities or rural environments. Smaller cities, rural and geographically isolated communities are often stereotypically portrayed (by those from the metropolis), as backward, uneducated, ignorant and/or intolerant. In some communities – especially those that are socially and religiously conservative — the assumption is that these communities are filled with "rednecks", a racialized and classed category for rural white poor people (Jarosz & Lawson, 2002). Geographers Lucy Jarosz

and Victoria Lawson point out that the discourse of redneck functions to reinforce class differences between middle and working class whites. Importantly they argue that "discourses of white poverty invoke imagined rural spaces that are constructed as wild, empty, backward, and sometimes threatening" (Jarosz & Lawson, 2002, p. 9). As a white middle-class Vancouverite, I recognize how these racialized and classist discourses work relationally to construct the city of Kelowna (and other non-metropolitan spaces in British Columbia) and white working-class residents of the city, as backward and "unsophisticated," thereby producing white middle-class Vancouverites as superior, sophisticated and more tolerant.[69] While these spatial imaginings are prevalent, representations of Kelowna in tourism and real estate discourses, simultaneously construct the city as a place of middle and upper-class whiteness and class mobility, and the realities of economic inequities, working-class life and increasingly high rates of poverty are typically erased from view (Aguiar & Marten, 2011).

When I moved to Kelowna I was a "newcomer" to the community and this status continued to hold an element of outsiderness. However through living as a resident of the city, owning a house, attending graduate school at UBC Okanagan, participating in the civic life of the city through voting in municipal and federal elections, and having race and class privilege, I was also very much an insider. Despite this, as a queer anti-racist

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[69] My own relationship to these discourses is complex. My maternal and paternal grandparents were farmers in rural Ontario and my parents were the first in their families to leave the farm and move to the city to attend university – moves that caused tensions and resentments within their working-class families. I grew up in a small city, close to my grandparents' farms and as a child, I grew up hearing classist stereotypes of rural working-class farmers as intolerant, backward and uneducated and was aware that my working-class family members were constructed in this way. At the same time, my maternal grandfather often made disparaging remarks about middle-class people who valued the 'easy life' of university and schooling more than the 'hard work' of farming. Conversations about our family's relationship to poverty, education, shifting class identities and privileges across the generations have been emotionally painful and fraught with tensions. I include this short note to highlight some of the complexities of my own class background in relation to the discourse of rural rednecks and my location in urban/rural contexts.

feminist activist and mother, I felt like an outsider and I had difficulty coming to terms with these feelings given my socio-economic privilege that I knew positioned me within discourses and material power relations of entitlement and inclusion.

By bringing my attention to the multiple and interlocking locations of privilege and marginality, I highlight the way feelings of displacement and belonging are complex. As Patricia Hill-Collins (1998) has noted, many people may express feelings of being outsiders (people of colour, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, working-class/low-income people and others) while simultaneously experiencing belonging and not belonging through these experiences of marginalization and privilege. As I discussed in Chapter Four, she developed the term "outsider within" in order to "describe social locations or border spaces occupied by groups of unequal power. Individuals gain or lose identities as "outsiders within" by their placement in these social locations. Outsider-within-spaces are riddled with contradictions" (p. 5). In my personal narrative about Kelowna, my identity as an insider, outsider, or outsider within, shifts through space and time and these systems of privilege and subordination are connected and rely on one another.

Troubling Hegemonic Discourses and Truth Claims

What do I mean by "safety"? What are "we" talking about when we say we feel unsafe? Clearly, there are various factors that contribute to one's feelings of safety. At times, they were non-verbal cues that conveyed threat or acceptance. As my partner Anne and other queer and trans participants in the anti-violence project noted, it was the looks that created feelings of lack of safety or fear — "the double-takes as people try to gauge

gender, the hostile gaze as people sense gender transgression, the long stares" (Holmes &

Fleming, 2009, p. 257). For some participants in the Roundtable, it was also the threat of

physical violence and experiences of systemic discrimination in employment, health care

and the civil legal system. Telling these stories can make visible the heteronormative and

cisnormative production of this urban space and provide insight into the relationship

between socio-spatial practices of exclusion and experiences of safety and violence. The

stories reveal hegemonic socio-spatial practices and bring forward narratives that are

often silenced in the official stories about the city, which present Kelowna as a place of

safety and a great place to raise a family (Aguiar, Tomic & Trumper, 2005).

However as I stated earlier, stories not only reflect the identities of people and of

places, but they produce them. Interlocking analyses show that not all LGBTQ people

experience oppression, violence and spaces in the same way, and that these positions of

privilege, power and marginalization are relational. It is important to deconstruct race and

class-neutral discourses about queer and trans safety in urban space and to trouble the

common sense and taken-for-granted understandings of belonging, fear and violence.

How are these terms used and what do they stand for? Race, class, gender and sexuality

all influence perceptions of "safe" or "unsafe" spaces. How are discourses of safety and

fear of violence in Kelowna racialized and classed? Hegemonic narratives about safety

and violence in urban spaces, construct certain spaces as unsafe and certain bodies as

more likely to be perpetrators of violence. The way in which threats, gestures and looks

are interpreted and understood across differences, are marked by racial and classed

constructions of the Other.

Certain spaces are coded as unsafe or as "problematic neighbourhoods" (often

labeled as "bad" or "seedy areas") through racialized and classed discourses. After my

partner accepted the position at UBC Okanagan, the university put us in touch with a

local realtor who recommended that, as a (white? middle-class? professional?) lesbian

couple we should avoid living in the neighbourhood of Rutland because it was "known"

to be less tolerant towards gays and lesbians and therefore "not safe." It was later that we

learned that Rutland is home to lower-income and working-class, immigrant, visible

minority and Aboriginal people and that there are widespread racist and classist

stereotypes about Rutland (Lewis, 2010; Teixeira, 2009).

   In this case, the realtor called forth hegemonic narratives and representations of

people of colour, Aboriginal people and low-income and working-class people as "less

tolerant," "more homophobic" and potentially more violent than white middle-class

people and elites. These narratives also produce queer subjects as white and middle-class

and erase the bodies of queer and trans people of colour, Two-Spirit people and low-

income queer and trans people within Rutland and other neighbourhoods in Kelowna. To

apply an interlocking analysis makes visible how the space of Rutland makes possible the

space of the white bourgeois home or white middle-class suburban neighbourhood — for

example, the neighbourhood of Glenmore where we lived, represented by realtors as a

safe neighbourhood. Bourgeois subjects come to know themselves as respectable and

civilized through these place-making and identity-making practices that separate them

from those deemed to be degenerate and uncivilized (Razack, 2002). Jasbir Puar (2007)

shows that constructing immigrant families and communities of colour as more

homophobic than white mainstream North American families serves white

hetero/homonationalist agendas. Drawing lines between spaces and social groups is a

performative act of dominance – of delineating who belongs and who doesn't.

Perceptions of safety and violence are shaped by experiences of privilege and marginalization (Kern, 2005; Meyer, 2010). As discussed earlier in Chapter Three, Doug Meyer's (2010) research on perceptions of LGBTQ hate crime victims, revealed that white middle-class LGBTQ participants were more likely than low-income LGBTQ people of colour to *perceive* their violent experiences as severe, even though the latter experienced *more* physical violence than the former. In reflecting on my personal narrative about violence and belonging in Kelowna and Vancouver, I am aware that my perceptions of safety, violence and belonging are shaped by my lifetime of privilege as a white, middle-class, able-bodied, cisgender woman. Meyer's research highlights for me how my privileges influence my perceptions of violence, fear, safety and belonging. In Vancouver (and other cities), my race and class privilege has enabled me to feel safe and unmarked in most urban spaces.[70] My privilege allowed me to construct a sense of belonging in the socio-economically diverse city of Vancouver. Geographer Leslie Kern's (2005) research illustrates that white middle-class women's ability to feel safe, at home and in place in "diverse" areas of the city is directly related to the perception of invisibility based on race and class. "Although sexist harassment may occur, whiteness and other and other unmarked privileges allow for a greater sense of belonging in a multicultural neighbourhood." (p. 368). Although Kern's study does not discuss homophobic or transphobic violence (and her participants were heterosexual and presumed to be cisgender), her findings provide important insights into the racialized and

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[70] As a queer woman I do experience heterosexism and homophobia in public spaces, but as a femme, I sometimes pass as straight. While this also contributes to invisibility, it also affords me some safety. I often experience a greater threat of harassment when I am with my butch partner. I discuss some of these complexities further in: (Holmes, & Fleming, 2009).

classed dimensions of perceptions of safety and belonging in space. What is remarkable about my experience in Kelowna, is that I experienced socio-spatial exclusion and being marked as Other in this way for the first time, highlighting the lifetime of entitlement and feelings of safety that I have enjoyed in most urban spaces as a white middle-class, cisgender woman.

Confessionals and Truth Claims

I was motivated to share these personal stories to "place" myself in the research and describe experiences that sparked my research interest in Kelowna's Pride Day controversy. By using this autoethnographic method, my goal was to trouble the heteronormative and hegemonic discourses about Kelowna as a place of safety and an ideal place to raise a family. However I *queer* my autoethnographic account (Holman-Jones & Adams, 2010), by engaging in a critical self-reflexive process "to look closely at [my] own practice in terms of how [I] contribute to dominance in spite of [my] liberatory intentions" (Lather, 1991, p. 15). To queer my story, is to trouble and question white and middle-class normative conceptualizations of safety and violence. To bring a reflexive lens, I examine how I frame the story — how I frame myself, others, places, safety, violence and belonging — and how these framings position me within discourses and spaces of innocence and complicity.

Some scholars have expressed concern that autoethnographic practices of personal narrative and self-reflexivity become techniques of confession (Pillow, 2003). For Foucault (1978), the confession is a form of truth telling that actively constitutes the self. As activist researchers committed to ethical and accountable practice, how can we

position ourselves, examine our complicity and describe a specific socio-spatial context without using personal narrative and self-reflexivity as an "ethical or moral technique of truth telling" (Webster, 2008, p. 65)? And as I discussed in Chapter Six, discourses of benevolence and confessional narratives of "good intentions" have been a historical foundation of whiteness and continue to secure the dominance of white subjects (Riggs 2004; Srivastava 2005).

While I recognize the problematic and uncritical use of personal narrative or self-reflexivity to claim truth, or virtue, moral authority, my intention is to use these methods explicitly to examine relations of social power, complicity, and accountability — a process that "begins with a recognition that we are each implicated in systems of oppression that profoundly structure our understanding of one another. That is, we come to know and perform ourselves in way that reproduce social hierarchies" (Razack, 1998, p. 10). I trouble the truth claims produced through my narrative (that re-centre white middle-class experiences of violence), and complicate a race/class-neutral account of violence and exclusion, by critically examining how privileged aspects of my identity contribute to feelings of safety in the city.

Yet I am left with an uneasy feeling as I write this. I am concerned that my personal narrative and reflexivity fails to offer new insights or disrupt normative relations of power, and may instead re-centre white middle-class subjectivity through confessionals. I also feel that there is much left unsaid and untroubled. For example, whose perspectives should be privileged when we encounter competing and overlapping experiences? (Naples, 2003). I have struggled with how to reconcile my experience with/against those who have a different experience. For example, the experiences of

racialized queers of colour or Two-Spirit people in Kelowna whose experiences of fear and safety may be profoundly different. How do I make sense of other marginalized individuals (including, but not only LGBTQ people) who live in Kelowna and may have different experiences — those who like the city, who feel safe and that they belong? How do I reconcile my experience with theirs? And importantly, there are differently-located people in Kelowna who actively resist white, bourgeois hetero and homonormativity. To not address their place in the city seems to be tell an incomplete story. I think of the Okanagan Indigenous communities, immigrants of colour who have lived and worked in the Okanagan for over a hundred years, the activists (environmental, peace, anti-racist, feminist, LGBTQ, anti-poverty and labour activists), the critical thinkers and intellectuals, the artists, the LGBTQ people who are not activists but who are living their lives and transforming attitudes in the community in small and big ways, the academics, social workers, youth workers, the anti-violence and the women's organizations. They are not a monolithic group — they are not all anti-heteronormative, they are not all anti-racist, they are not all "progressive", but many are and it is important to mark their presence as part of what makes Kelowna. I have always resented the way some social justice or so-called progressive Vancouverites negate the very existence, strength and presence of these activists in rural or geographically isolated communities, and name Vancouver as the place where everything "good" and "alternative" begins and ends. There are problems in Vancouver too – heteronormativity, homonormativity, gender policing, racism, poverty and classism are alive in East Vancouver as well.

These reflections are attempts to interrupt reflexivity — to render "the knowing of myself as uncomfortable and uncontainable" (Pillow, 2003, p. 188). Wanda Pillow

(2003) recommends that qualitative researchers practice uncomfortable reflexivity:

> a reflexivity that pushes toward an unfamiliar, towards the uncomfortable, cannot
> be a simple story of subjects, subjectivity, and transcendence or self-indulgent
> tellings. A tracing of the problematics of reflexivity calls for a positioning of
> reflexivity not as clarity, honesty, or humility, but as practices of confounding
> disruptions – at times even a failure of our language and practices. (p. 193)

By embracing a queer analytical approach to autoethnography in this research, I try to honor the value of the unsettled, unfinished and unanswered "in a world relentlessly searching for stability and certainty" (Adams & Holman-Jones, 2011, p. 114).

Before discussing the Pride Day case, I briefly contextualize this case within the larger white settler production of the space of the city of Kelowna.

Making White Settler Space

I situate my inquiry in the historical and contemporary production of the city of Kelowna as a white settler space. Kelowna is located in the unceded territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan, the Indigenous people who have inhabited the area since time immemorial (Okanagan Nation Alliance, 2004). Their territory is located in the Southern Interior of British Columbia, Canada. The Okanagan Nation Alliance is comprised of seven Aboriginal communities, covering areas both in Canada and the United States.

A central aspect of Kelowna's historical and contemporary colonialism, has been the production of the city as a white settler space and the related denial of Indigenous title and rights to the city. As Mi'kmaw scholar Bonita Lawrence (2002) notes

in order to maintain Canadian's self-image as a fundamentally 'decent' people

innocent of any wrongdoing, the historical record of how the land was acquired

— the forcible and relentless dispossession of Indigenous peoples, the theft of

their territories and the implementation of legislation and policies designed to

effect their total disappearance as peoples must also be erased. (p. 23-24)

While an in-depth discussion of these colonial practices is beyond the scope of this

chapter, I begin by acknowledging the Syilx people, their land and the colonial violence

that is routinely erased from the story of Kelowna, because the contemporary colonial

geographies of belonging and violence in the city are the legacy of these colonial

practices central to the development of the city as a white space.

Before the European invasion of their territories in the late 1800s, the Syilx

people were a self-sufficient, self-governing people and their communities thrived on

hunting, fishing, gathering, and trading (Okanagan Nation Alliance, 2004). Subsequently,

they were forced off their lands through a long series of colonial practices such as the

enactment of the Indian Act and the establishment of reservations. The Okanagan Nation

Alliance states: "The Okanagan people opposed the establishment of the reserves without

first having negotiated a treaty. Today the Okanagan people still believe that the land is

theirs, as no treaty has been negotiated" (Okanagan Nation Alliance, 2004).

The imperial desire to bring order and respectability to British Columbia led to

the development of land and immigration policies between 1849-1871 with the goal of

bringing white Anglo-Europeans to British Columbia who would own land and establish

permanency (Mawani, 2002; Perry, 2001). The first European "settlement" in the area

known as Kelowna was established in 1859 when Catholic missionaries established a

mission (Okanagan Historical Society, 2009). In Kelowna, white British and Scottish settlers were given land and a process began to recruit more white Anglo-Europeans to the area and resist the settlement of non-white immigrants in the city (Aguiar et al., 2005; Perry, 2001). Kelowna officially became a municipality in 1905 with a population of 600 people (Kelowna Museum, 2005). As I discuss later, Indigenous people have continually resisted these colonial practices and to inhabit the city of Kelowna in spite of these violent practices.

Currently, the city of Kelowna is one of the fastest growing cities in Canada. It is the largest community in the Okanagan Valley with a population of 106,707. Despite the rapid growth in the city over the past twenty five years, Kelowna's current "demographic profile is older, whiter, more English speaking…than the rest of the province and country" (Bahbahani, 2008, p. 3-4; see also, Aguiar et al., 2005; Teixeira, 2009). The Okanagan valley has a long history of racism towards people of colour, including Japanese Canadians interned in the area during World War II, as well as Chinese Canadians, and other non-white migrant workers and immigrants (Bahbahani, 2008). Racist and white supremacist campaigns of exclusion in the Okanagan Valley have continued into the present (Aguiar, Tomic & Trumper, 2005; Aguiar, McKinnon & Sookraj, 2010; Aguiar, Berg & Keyes, forthcoming). Over the past two decades scholars have noted an increase in Kelowna's white population as a result of "white flight" from Vancouver (and other more racially diverse urban centres), where new residents have expressed racist, anti-immigrant and anti-Asian motivations for leaving Vancouver to move to Kelowna (Aguiar et al., 2005).

Kelowna's real estate market is one of the most expensive in the country and there is a serious shortage of affordable rental housing (Teixeira, 2009). Scholars have documented how this economic climate and housing crisis negatively impacts immigrant newcomers, Aboriginal people, lower-income people, post-secondary students and recent university graduates in Kelowna (Lewis, 2009; Talbott, 2012; Teixeira, 2009). This research also reveals the discriminatory and prejudiced attitudes of landlords based on renters' racial and ethnic background (Lewis, 2009; Teixeira, 2009). As a result of the wide gap between low wages, limited employment options, the high cost of living and limited affordable housing in the city, more people are moving into poverty and there is an increase in homelessness (Talbott, 2012; Teixeira, 2009).

In their research on Kelowna, Luis Aguiar, Patricia Tomic and Ricardo Trumper (2005) argue that the city is being constructed and produced as a certain kind of space, for a certain kind of people. Their research illustrates how the city is being produced as a white, bourgeois, heterosexual space. They maintain that since the 1980s the city has been going through a process of being re-imagined through four overlapping discourses: as an "all-year playground — a resort town," an ideal retirement location, a site for the high tech industry and as a place of whiteness. They argue that Kelowna is being formed around notions of safety, familiarity and sameness, which are associated with whiteness. As they describe, the history of the Okanagan since colonization has been about making space white and today this marking of white space is communicated through publicity, promotions, media and rhetoric of place marketing of Kelowna (Aguiar et al., 2005, p. 131).

These dominant discourses not only associate the qualities of safety, familiarity and sameness with whiteness but with heterosexuality as well, where promotional literature (such as tourism, real estate, and professional employment recruitment) almost exclusively shows white heterosexual couples, frequently with their children (Aguiar et al., 2005, p. 132). Employment recruitment discourses (for example those of the University of British Columbia Okanagan and local medical clinics) reproduce this imaginative geography of Kelowna as a safe place and a great place to raise a family (Bahbahani, 2008) with narratives of white professionals describing how their families "fit in nicely here" (e.g. see University of British Columbia Okanagan Television, 2009). The normative social category of "the family" in these discourses is naturalized and constructed as white, middle-class and heterosexual.

Imagine Kelowna

Figure 1. "Imagine Kelowna". Site Design by Think. Marketing Inc.

The photo in Figure 1 appeared in 2008 as the main promotional photo on a website for an urban development proposal for downtown Kelowna, entitled *Imagine*

Kelowna. The website encouraged citizens to support the plan stating it would "enhance the identity of the downtown" and "enhance Kelowna's identity nationally and internationally" (Imagine Kelowna, 2008). It aimed to address and remove "the negative influences of the downtown" and encouraged citizens to "support the changing face of downtown Kelowna". The people in the photo were some of the "Faces of *Imagine Kelowna* Gallery." The larger gallery included profiles and photos of Kelowna citizens, all of whom were white, and who were business owners, architects, retirees, real estate developers and agents, heterosexual couples with children, university students and former politicians. The representation of these bodies as the "imagined" and "changing face" of Kelowna highlights an absent presence — an unnamed Other that is relied on to produce and give meaning to dominant subjects. Aboriginal people, homeless people, queer youth, and people with mental health and substance misuse issues are some of the absent presences that are evoked through the *Imagine Kelowna* campaign. In recent years there has been a discourse of risk and degeneracy that shows up in local media discourses that positions these bodies as polluting the space of the city's downtown core (Aguiar, McKinnon & Sookraj, 2010). Through this geography of absence and presence, Kelowna is explicitly imagined and (re)constructed as a white, bourgeois and heterosexual space.

I include this as a contemporary example of the imaginative geographies of Kelowna – a concept developed by Edward Said (1978). These imaginative geographies work as power-laden representations of space that are also connected to identity-making practices (Gregory, 1995). The *Imagine Kelowna* campaign illustrates the process of making dominant subjects in the space of the city. Dominant subjects come to know and imagine themselves through the production of the Other and through socio-spatial

processes of exclusion (Razack, 2002; Sibley, 1995). These imaginative geographies of

Kelowna construct particular bodies and social groups as abnormal, degenerate, abject

and "out of place." This campaign also illustrates the relationship between place-making

across relational and nested scales, such as locally (the downtown), nationally and

globally.

The city of Kelowna is known for its recent urban clean-up campaigns and

gentrification aimed at purifying public spaces, what could be called "whitening

practices" to refer to the process of making space white (Nelson, 2008; Razack, 2002). In

recent years the city installed surveillance cameras, increased policing of the downtown

city park and began a process of criminalizing homeless people with a RCMP plan to

confiscate shopping carts from the homeless (BCGEU, 2005; Radwanski, 2001).

Discourses of urban revitalization and change in cities are also usually tied to hidden

social cleansing agendas and moral panics emerging from racialized, sexualized and

classed constructions of difference (Sibley, 1995, p. 42). Moral panics express beliefs

about belonging and not belonging, about spaces, and anxieties of transgressing normalcy

(p. 43). In Kelowna, the downtown core represents a contested space where anxieties

about abnormalcy in the city are expressed and where the normative hegemonic citizenry

of Kelowna has rallied around notions of safety to support these clean-up campaigns and

place-marketing strategies to "enhance Kelowna's identity nationally and internationally"

(Imagine Kelowna, 2008). As Benedict Anderson (1991) reminds us, it is always

important to question what kind of nation (and international) community is being

imagined. These spatial identity-making practices are relational. As Harsha Walia and

Dave Diewart (2012) argue: "The processes of neoliberal urbanism that fuel this kind of

gentrification are rooted in the colonial doctrines of discovery and Terra Nullius[71] as well as more modernized forms of transnational globalization" (p. 1). The *Imagine Kelowna* campaign highlights the specific characteristics the city of Kelowna imagines itself to embody and how belonging in Kelowna is constructed through a white bourgeois and heteronormative spatial narrative. I will return to these questions later but now turn to a discussion of some of the discourses surrounding Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in 1996 and 1997.

Lesbian and Gay Pride Parades

Lesbian and gay pride parades commemorate the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City, often suggested as a defining moment in the history of the gay and lesbian liberation and civil rights movement (Johnston, 2005).[72] The first commemorative street demonstration took place in 1970 in NYC. Toronto followed in 1972 with their first Gay Pride week, including a march and rally (Pride Toronto, 2012). In British Columbia, the first "Gay Unity Parade" took place in Vancouver, nearly a decade later in 1981 (Christopher, 2007).

There is a growing body of research in geography on lesbian and gay pride parades (Johnston, 2005; Markwell & Waitt, 2009; Browne, 2007; Brickell, 2000). Most research has focused on lesbian and gay pride parades within large metropolitan cities such as Rome, Toronto, Brighton, and Auckland — significantly different contexts than the

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[71] The doctrine of Terra Nullius refers to "land belonging to no-one" – the idea that Australia or Canada was empty and uninhabited (Morten-Robinson, 2004; Razack, 2002).
[72] Three days of rioting, first began on June 27, 1969 when patrons challenged a police raid of a gay bar called the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village in New York City. Christina Hanhardt (2008) notes that significant political contexts are frequently omitted in the story of Stonewall, such as the fact that this event was part of an on-going struggle against police harassment and violence towards LGBTQ people.

geographically isolated and non-metropolitan hinterland city of Kelowna in the Interior of British Columbia. While pride parades initially began as political protests and marches, more recently they have been socially produced as tourist spaces that simultaneously "queer" the streets and produce a space where neoliberal sexual citizenship is performed (Johnston, 2005). As I describe below, Kelowna's 1996-1997 pride day was not a tourist space or constructed around practices of consumption, but was initially created as a space for the celebration of "sexual identities and communities that do not conform to heterosexual norms" (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v. City of Kelowna, 2000, p. 6).

Kelowna's Lesbian and Gay Pride Day

In June of 1996 — fifteen years after Vancouver's first Pride Day — lesbian and gay citizens in Kelowna organized their first Pride Day parade.[73] The organizers requested and received a city proclamation from Kelowna's Mayor James Stuart, which sparked controversy and objections from many conservative heterosexual citizens and politicians who argued it created divisions in the community. The *Capital News* stated that Mayor Stuart said he was sorry he signed the proclamation "because of the many complaints it has generated to city hall" (Waters, 1996). Yet pride organizers identified the "hostile, attacking, aggressive…objections" as evidence of the need for the parade (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v. City of Kelowna, 2000; Waters, 1996) and saw the mayor's proclamation as a message to gays and lesbians that they were welcome in the city, where many had up until now felt fearful and unwelcome.

A year later in 1997, the new Mayor Walter Gray refused to include the word

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[73] It is significant to note that Kelowna - a mid-sized city, in a somewhat geographically isolated area of Canada – was having it's first Pride parade at this time in 1996.

"pride" and instead issued a proclamation for "Lesbian and Gay Day." This is when the coalition filed a complaint with a British Columbia Human Rights Commission with Tribunal hearings in 1999. Evidence was given by a number of people including expert witness Dr. Becki Ross (Women's Studies and Sociology professor at the University of British Columbia), and by local gays and lesbians who spoke of the homophobia, violence and fear they experienced living in Kelowna (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v. City of Kelowna, 2000, p. 8) with one witness stating: "Kelowna is not a safe city for gay and lesbian people" (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v. City of Kelowna, 2000, p. 8). They also spoke of the negative impact of the mayor's decision and the positive value of Pride Day in educating the heterosexual community and providing examples of "out and proud" gays and lesbians as role models for others who are closeted and afraid. The tribunal report re-stated Dr. Ross's submission that,

> Lesbian and Gay Pride Days serve several functions, which include providing a safe public space for the celebration of sexual identities and communities that do not conform to heterosexual norms, providing an opportunity for queers to talk about being queer, for enhancing racial, cultural and gender diversity, for providing an opportunity to effect social change within the local context, and for providing parents, families and friends of queer people to show their commitment to public acceptance of homosexuality. (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v. City of Kelowna, 2000, p. 6)

In her final ruling in 2000, the tribunal chair restated evidence from Dr. Ross that: "Mayor Gray communicated a message of intolerance by 'eliminating the one word that has been so central to the queer struggle for liberation' the effect of which was to 're-

inscribe the legacy of shame and intolerance attached to homosexuality'" (Okanagan

Rainbow Coalition v City of Kelowna, 2000, p. 20). While the tribunal chair recognized

its value, she did not grant the request from the coalition to issue an order for a

proclamation, instead issuing an order that the Mayor cease all discriminatory conduct

and treat all requests for proclamations in the same way. Mayor Gray's response was to

cease issuing city proclamations of any kind for the next six years.[74]

Heterosexualization of Space

Within the geography of sexuality literature, scholars have highlighted the way

public space is actively produced as heterosexual through the construction of

heterosexuality as a universal taken-for-granted norm and homosexuality as the out of

place Other (Bell & Valentine, 1995; Brickell, 2000; Duncan, 1996; Valentine, 1996).

They have shown how the process of heterosexualizing public space occurs through

various subtle and overt tactics – such as physical exclusion, moral disapproval, stares,

verbal harassment, threats or use of violence, as well as the performance and policing of

heteronormative gender identities. They have argued that these tactics construct straight

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[74] From 2006-2011 Kelowna Mayor Sharon Shepherd reinstated issuing city proclamations, interestingly proclaiming both Lesbian and Gay Pride Week and Right to Life week. Mayor Shepherd was defeated by Mayor Walter Gray in the 2011 municipal election. At the time of completing this dissertation, Mayor Gray signed a proclamation in May 2012 naming August 12-19, 2012 Pride Week in Kelowna and LGBTQ organizers confirmed that the Pride Flag will fly over city hall during this time (Waters, 2012). In an interview with CBC Radio, Gray stated that he consulted city council before agreeing to sign the proclamation but he also said that his views, and the views of Canadians, have changed since the legalization of same-sex marriage (CBC, 2012). Interestingly Gray spoke hopefully of the opportunity for "tourism opportunities" associated with Kelowna's Pride Day. In this interview, he continued to draw on racialized discourses of tolerance and respectability positioning the former gay and lesbian activists with the Okanagan Rainbow Coalition as "a different breed" of people than the current members of the Pride Committee who he described as "decent" and "gentlemen." These recent moves draw attention to the interlocking processes of neoliberalism, globalization and tourism, white supremacy, imperialism, and homonormativity. Given the timing of this development, a full analysis of this CBC interview and other media surrounding the 2012 Pride Day celebrations is beyond the scope of my dissertation research, however I will pursue this in a follow-up study.

space as normal space and contribute to feelings of being out of place or not belonging for non-heterosexual and gender non-conforming people.

David Bell and Gill Valentine (1995) have argued that the heterosexing of space is a performative act that is "naturalized through repetition and destabilized by the mere presence of invisibilised sexualities" (p. 18). They state that "the presence of queer bodies in particular locations forces people to realize…that the space around them…the city streets, the malls and the motels have been produced as heterosexual, heterosexist and heteronormative" (p. 18). They contend that subversive or deconstructive spatial tactics such as gay pride parades or kissing in public, can fracture and rupture a seamless space, in other words "queering the space," thereby confronting and contesting the production of public space as heteronormative (see also: Duncan, 1996; Johnston, 2005). In this way, pride marches can be seen to challenge the production of "everyday" public spaces as heterosexual (Johnston, 2005; Valentine, 1996). As Linda Johnston (2005) notes, "not only do the parades 'queer' the streets, however; they also foreground the problematic position of 'private' bodies in public spaces" (p. 8)

However numerous scholars have critiqued this notion of queer space conceptualized as one of "heterosexual domination and homosexual resistance" pointing out the way it relies on and reproduces a problematic heterosexual/homosexual binary and privileges sexuality over an interlocking framework that examines the simultaneity of race, class, gender, sexuality and ability in space. As well, spatial tactics can have multiple meanings given that spaces and identities interlock in complex and hierarchical ways. As I have discussed throughout this dissertation, lesbian and gay spaces (or in some cases "LGBTQ" spaces) are not inherently anti-normative. Contesting heterosexual

space is not necessarily queer. Homonormative spatial tactics often rely on and reproduce white, middle-class and neoliberal norms. The queered public space that is created through these strategies often represents the experiences and values of hegemonic queer identities and thus may exclude queer people of colour and Indigenous queers, bisexual and transgender people, queer people with disabilities and/or those living in poverty or who are working-class (Riggs, 2006). While I am interested in the heteronormative production of space, I challenge the liberal idea that heteronormativity is operating in isolation from other normative spatial practices. As I argue further in this chapter, hetero and homonormative spatial tactics function simultaneously with white colonial and middle-class spatial arrangements and practices. I now turn to a discussion of media accounts of the contestations to heterosexualized space in Kelowna surrounding pride day.

Media Discourses

The media is a central site of inquiry in decoding discourses of power and domination (Jiwani, 2006). Media discourses inform the public imagination and present and promote a hegemonic view of social reality and the hierarchical social relations within it (Brickell, 2000; Jiwani, 2006). As Yasmin Jiwani (2006) points out, representations in the nation's media are also "indicative of how that nation perceives itself and the groups within it" and as such, "represents a symbolic image of the nation" (p. 37).

Contesting Heterosexual Space

The visibility of queer subjects in public spaces threatened the imagined homogenous (hetero)sexual citizenship of Kelowna and the normative production of urban space. City officials and journalists attempted to draw firmer boundaries in attempts to regulate the space. In one example from the 1996 Pride Day, the city's engineering department denied an application from the Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee for a permit to allow the parade to go down Bernard Avenue, the main street in Kelowna's downtown, citing concerns about "traffic flow over the Canada Day long weekend" and the low number of people anticipated to attend the parade (Waters, 1996). Pride day organizers argued that the city was showing discrimination by forcing it off the main street and onto a side street (Waters, 1996).

In another example contesting heteronormative space, organizers requested that a banner announcing Pride Week be erected in a prominent downtown area. While city staff complied with the request as per city policy, city councilor Ron Cannan protested and wanted it removed stating "as a Christian, it offended me" (Munro, 1998). Cannan also argued that the banner promoted a "lifestyle," and was quoted in the *Daily Courier* as saying: "Personal sexual preference is a personal matter and a public display is not necessary" (Munro, 1998). He also argued that it didn't fit the criteria for public banners — that it must be an event "that the majority of the population will participate in or be of general interest" (Munro, 1998).

These examples illustrate how homosexuality is only tolerable if it remains in private (Brickell, 2000). Daily repetitive public displays of personal heterosexual preference are not questioned and normalized but any displays of queer sexualities get

constructed as "public displays" and deemed problematic. As Chris Brickell (2000) notes: "An intolerable break of boundary is perceived to occur if lesbians and gay men attempt to occupy public spheres and spaces" (p. 165).

Normalcy – Respectable or Degenerate Homos?

A central theme in many of the editorials in the local newspapers is the construction of "gays" as promiscuous with an exhibitionist and degenerate lifestyle. One pointed out that "the lesbian and gay pride day activities will test this city's tolerance levels [and] will also test the gay community's sensitivity toward the rest of society" (in Stone, 2001, p. 72) It warned that "restraint [should] be shown by gays in bringing their lifestyle out into the open" (p. 72). Other scholars have shown that within new media discourses, heterosexual citizens who oppose pride days usually argue that participants in lesbian and gay pride days engage in exhibitionism and are flaunting or promoting a "homosexual lifestyle" (Brickell, 2000).

One article after the 1996 Kelowna parade, remarked that it had been surprisingly "peaceful" and that "there were no two-metre phallic symbols, no suggestive behaviour, no nudity. One man painted a pink triangle onto his bare chest while another skipped around in a bunny costume" (Godbout, 1996). While the article implies support for the lesbian and gay community by describing how participants were not displaying exhibitionist behaviour, it also produces the gay subject as vaguely fatuous, reinscribing the binaries of the respectable heterosexual/degenerate gay and the respectable /degenerate gay. There is also a discourse of normalcy that is both hetero and homonormative. The editor for the *Daily Courier* wrote that lesbian and gay pride day is

"an opportunity for a persecuted minority to walk down the street proclaiming their normalcy" (in Stone, 2001, p. 72).

In 1996 the *Kelowna Capital News* reported that a local individual "appealed directly to city council to ban the event, showing images of nearly naked men frolicking together on Toronto streets and predicting the same type of 'lewd' behaviour would take place on Kelowna streets if the parade was allowed to proceed" (Waters, 1999). Another editorial focused on comparing Kelowna's pride day with those in larger urban centres such as Toronto and Vancouver, warning "what is acceptable in big cities 'won't automatically play well here'" (in Stone, 2001, p. 72).

These spatial narratives about Kelowna's identity illustrate how the city seeks to distinguish itself from the metropolis (Aguiar et al., 2005). They are also linked to the way Kelowna citizens imagine themselves as distinct and respectable in relation to those in the big city, where some people have migrated to Kelowna from the metropolis to get away from "difference" and imagine a homogenous social body not tainted by degeneracy, filth, crime, and perversion.

We can also see how some gays and lesbians and their allies mobilized a homonormative discourse of respectability. This can be seen in the following statement by one of the gay organizers – a disavowal of gender non-conformity in the gay/lesbian community in Kelowna: "participants will not 'confirm the stereotypes of effeminate men and women who look like guys'" (Waters, 1996). As well from some of their heterosexual allies, such as the minister of a local United Church who walked in the parade and argued that Mayor Gray should have issued the proclamation: "The event here in Kelowna has been quite respectable. The fear many people had [that there would be

exhibitionism] did not happen" (Keery, 2000). While these spatial tactics of resistance to heterosexual space may increase visibility in public space for some (normative) gay and lesbian subjects, others, such as gender non-conforming and trans people and others seen to be "undesirable" or "exhibitionists" such as the BDSM/leather/kink community, may be further marginalized by these normative discourses of respectability.

These examples highlight heteronormative media discourses about regulating queer bodies in public space, as well as homonormative discourses about respectable versus degenerate homosexual bodies. On the one hand queers are flaunting it and degenerate, and on the other, they/we can and should declare their "normalcy" with a focus on regulating gender norms (reproducing normative masculinities and femininities), taming homosexuality and emphasizing sameness with a homogeneous white middle-class heterosexual citizen as the hegemonic norm to be emulated. In the following sections, I further explore the racialized nature of these discourses of degeneracy and respectability and the way a discourse of tolerance functions to draw lines between civilized and uncivilized groups and places.

A Crisis of Dominance

If we look at the story of Kelowna's 1996-1997 Pride Day through a liberal gay and lesbian human rights lens, we see a story of discrimination and the moral regulation of the homosexual body. We see only the marginalized identity of these queer subjects. The whiteness of the gay and lesbian subject of these human rights discourses is unmarked. Here, I am highlighting the racialized dimensions of white queer activism, as well as racialized notions of gay-friendly and not-so-gay-friendly places. While

heteronormative space was contested, the racialized, gendered and classed space was not interrogated, thereby producing white homonormative space. If we are to better understand the processes through which these identifications operate, then we need to use interlocking theoretical tools and develop an analysis of racialization and colonial geographies in a white settler society.

A discourse of tolerance of gays and lesbians was mobilized by the local media and some heterosexuals (and interestingly in different ways by Mayor Gray himself) to bolster Kelowna's identity as a civilized and modern place of progress. I suggest that liberal gay rights rhetoric and discourses of normalcy, respectability and tolerance were used as *civilizing* discourses to whiten the city. Gays and lesbians relied on racialized discourses of respectability and civility to show that they were not degenerate Others and to secure a place in the city and the nation. As Sherene Razack and Mary Louise Fellows (1998) have argued, when a subordinate group achieves equality through a reliance on discourses of respectability, this ignores the interlocking relationships between heterosexism, racism, patriarchy and capitalism thereby securing their power.

I am interested in how this moment was also about white gay and lesbian citizenship and belonging in the Euro-Canadian nation. Discourses of citizenship and belonging in Canada produce a certain kind of national subject — a subject who is responsible, good and respectable — values and norms that are associated with the white middle-class heterosexual nuclear family. I argue that this was not only a "gay rights" political issue but also a politics of race and about making space white.

Building on Jasbir Puar's work (2007), I draw attention to the way a hegemonic gay and lesbian liberal human rights frame relies on normative frameworks that produce

racialized notions of tolerance — and of gay tolerant and not-so-gay tolerant spaces — and the way whiteness is reinscribed through these equality discourses.

Universal Lesbian and Gay Subject

A number of critical race queer scholars have demonstrated that liberal gay rights discourses that claim to be solely about sexuality and race-neutral, are actually politics of race (Barnard, 2004; Berube, 2001; Lenon, 2005; Puar, 2007; Riggs, 2006). I argue that we need to examine the way whiteness is embedded within the construction of gay and lesbian identity in these human rights discourses and how this identity is predicated upon the presence of unnamed racialized Others. There are a number of examples surrounding Kelowna's Pride Day, that illustrate the production of a white racial gay and lesbian subject.

Gay and lesbian equality discourses draw on a liberal equality paradigm (Lenon, 2005) relying on modernist, universalist and essentialist constructions of subjectivity that transcend social location. Race is something applied to non-white people and white people are not racially marked. This can be seen in the claim "we are just gay." Pride day in Kelowna was a spatialized politics largely focused on a single identity. One exception was the tribunal testimony of Dr. Becki Ross, who disrupted this with numerous references to the racial, cultural, gender, sexual, class and generational differences within queer communities (Okanagan Rainbow Coalition v City of Kelowna, 2000, p. 6). Other references to gays and lesbians in the media, the tribunal and pride day promotional materials rely on and reproduce a de-raced and de-classed gay and lesbian subject.

The use of racial analogies in gay and lesbian human rights campaigns is another discursive strategy that marks the lesbian/gay subject as white (Berube, 2001; Lenon, 2005; Riggs, 2006). In the case of Kelowna's pride day, the *National Post* quoted the lawyer for the Okanagan Rainbow Coalition as saying:

> The phrase [gay pride] is to the gay liberation movement what the phrase 'black is beautiful' is to the American civil rights movement…to take away the word pride is to succeed in taking pride away from gays and lesbians and to imply that it is not pride, but shame that should be associated with them. (Jimenez & Gillis, 1998, p. A3)

Comparisons and analogies to historical racial discrimination (in Canada the references are usually to the US civil rights movement) have become common rhetorical strategies in gay rights campaigns privileging sexuality and articulating a discourse of sameness — racist and homophobic discrimination are the same (Lenon, 2005; Riggs, 2011). These analogies do not address the interlocking nature of race and sexuality, thereby producing a sexual subject who occupies a place outside of race, and obscuring the ongoing and distinct nature of racist and colonial oppression (Berube, 2001; Lenon, 2005; Riggs, 2006).

Tolerance

Discourses of tolerance are prevalent in the media and the tribunal surrounding Pride Day, and focus on Kelowna's identity as a city. Many editorials and articles reveal moral anxieties about Kelowna's reputation for intolerance and whether Kelowna is more intolerant than other places. For example "Many gays and lesbians are scared to come out

into Kelowna's intolerance" (Waters, 1999). And yet another editorial after the 1996 pride day: "Kelowna did not show itself to be a hotbed of intolerance" (in Stone, 2001, p. 72). Others focused on Pride Day as a "tolerance test" for example, "Judgment day nigh for Kelowna's tolerance" and "[Pride day] activities will test this city's tolerance levels [and] will also test the gay community's sensitivity toward the rest of society" (p. 72).

Some gays and lesbians contested a discourse of tolerance stating they did not want to be tolerated but accepted. One organizer was reported as saying that "the coalition was never looking for tolerance. They wanted acceptance and affirmation and he says they didn't get it" (CBC News, 1999). Wendy Brown explains that "practices of tolerance are tacit acknowledgements that the Other remains politically outside a norm of citizenship, that the Other remains politically other, that it has not been fully integrated by a liberal discourse of equality" (p. 75). Interestingly, during the tribunal, Mayor Gray used a discourse of tolerance to describe himself while also testifying that he did not approve of homosexuality. *The Daily Courier* and the *CBC News* each reported on this, stating that "Kelowna's mayor says he wants to be known as a live and let live kind of guy…Gray told the tribunal today that he's tolerant…[he said he wanted] "to show that his character is one of tolerance and openness" (CBC News, 1999).

The master narrative of the nation is that Canada is a liberal and tolerant society (Thobani, 2007). Critical race scholars Sherene Razack (2002, 2008) and Sunera Thobani argue that the Canadian nation imagines itself to embody the characteristics of tolerance, benevolence, compassion, respectability, peacefulness and a commitment to diversity and multiculturalism (Thobani, 2007, p. 4). The (white) national subject is thus constructed as tolerant of cultural diversity where the (non-white) outsider is intolerant (Thobani, 2007,

p. 5). Similarly Ghassen Hage's work (2000) shows how practices of tolerance are popularly perceived to be examples of good (white) nationalism (p. 23).

Although queer bodies continue to be constructed as a threat in the public sphere (where the ideal and dominant public citizen is constructed as white, bourgeois, heterosexual and male), certain queer bodies are positioned as less threatening to the nation than others (Puar, 2006). Certain normative, privileged, responsibilized, domesticated queer bodies reinforce and legitimate rather than destabilize racialized, nationalist, colonialist projects (Thorpe, 2005; Puar, 2007; Riggs, 2006). If we are able to perform the subject position of the "good and normal queer" and act and look as the nation wants us to look (Riggs, 2006, p. 83) – responsible, respectable and civilized — we may be "the temporary recipients of the 'measures of benevolence' that are afforded by liberal discourses of multicultural tolerance and diversity" (Puar, 2007, p. xii; Riggs, 2006). Tolerance of certain gay and queer bodies then, can be part of a liberal white settler homonationalist project (Morgensen, 2010).[75]

This discourse of tolerance as a sign of Kelowna's civilized and sophisticated character shows up in media accounts surrounding pride day. A good example of this is an editorial in the *Daily Courier* titled "Gay Pride is a test of sophistication":

> If we want to view ourselves as a community that values human rights, that
> fosters individualism and tolerance, we have to be ready to accept
> homosexuality….it is more than an issue of simple tolerance, although a

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[75] Brown (2006) and Puar (2007) note that 9/11 marked a qualitative shift in the intensity and surge of homonationalist discourses and practices. Although I am examining discourses about Pride Day from an earlier time period, I argue that we can see the formations of a homonationalist discourse that relies on racialized and classed constructions of respectability and civility.

demonstration of that will go a long way toward defining us as a civilized

community. (in Stone, 2001, p. 68)

Here, human rights, individualism and tolerance are woven together to define Kelowna as

a civilized place. This discourse of "sophistication" is a racialized and classist discourse.

Rural working-class and poor whites, people of colour and Indigenous people are

frequently constructed as unsophisticated, backward, and outdated (see Jarosz and

Lawson, 2002). Here we can see how discourses of tolerance and sophistication work

together in an attempt to produce Kelowna as a white bourgeois normative space.

Another editorial stated that the 1996 parade had been "a fine example" of "the

innate peacefulness of Canadians and our world renowned reputation for tolerance" (in

Stone, 2001, p. 72). In this example, we see how "tolerating" lesbian and gay pride day

confirms the hegemonic identity narrative of Canada — where Canadians imagine

themselves as possessing the qualities of peacefulness and tolerance (Mackey, 2002).

Tolerance is a dominant discourse of liberalism, and as Ghassen Hage (2000) and

Wendy Brown (2006) argue, at this historical moment tolerance discourse is becoming

more pervasive. Brown challenges the taken-for-granted assumption that tolerance is

universal and impartial arguing instead it is a political discursive practice of

governmentality (p. 4) She argues that tolerance discourse depoliticizes, making histories

disappear and thus naturalizing social hierarchies. She explains that in the "modern"

West, tolerance also functions as a civilizational discourse positioning certain beliefs,

practices and subjects (in the West and elsewhere) as civilized and respectable and others

as barbaric and degenerate. Brown (2006, p. 8) argues that tolerance cannot be reduced to

liberalism but "is strongly shaped by the legacy of the colonial settler-native encounter as

well as the postcolonial encounter between white and indigenous, colonized, or expropriated peoples." Through this civilizational discourse, intolerance is produced as the "native" or "primitive response to difference" (p. 183). "If tolerance today is considered synonymous with the West, with liberal democracy, with Enlightenment, and with modernity, then tolerance is what distinguishes 'us' from 'them'" (p. 17). In this way, we can see the regulatory effects of tolerance as a discourse of citizenship as well (Brown, 2006).

Drawing on Brown's (2006) insights I want to ask: what does tolerance discourse do? And "what kind of subject is thought to be capable of tolerance?" (p. 7). Accusations of Kelowna's intolerance towards gays and lesbians signaled anxieties about change and the city's identity as a modern, civilized and progressive place. These examples highlight how spatialized narratives about progress and modernity in cities are tied to whiteness and settler national identity. Ghassen Hage (2000) argues that discourses of tolerance secure white supremacy. In her analysis of the representation of immigrants, ethnic relations and racism in the Kelowna print media, Kamilla Bahbahani (2008) notes that the coverage is complex, assuming both that "Kelowna is already a tolerant and accepting community; while reflecting a lack of understanding of the complexity of race relations; and simultaneously offering pieces of information to appease racist fears" (p. 25). When evidence of racism or homophobia in Kelowna is made visible, discourses of Kelowna's tolerance for difference are invoked, reflecting anxieties about identity, power and space.

I now turn to a discussion of a discourse of belonging surrounding Kelowna's pride day to illustrate how identities, spaces and feelings of belonging are interconnected and multiscalar (Gorman-Murray, Waitt, & Gibson, 2008; Kern, 2005).

National Story of Belonging

Cultural geographers have illustrated that belonging is inherently spatial. As discussed earlier, much of the geography of sexualities literature has argued that the heterosexualization of space constructs gay, lesbian and queer bodies as "out of place" and "not belonging" in the public space of the street (Bell & Brickell, 2000; Johnson, 2005; Valentine 1995), and although this has been useful in foregrounding the heteronormative nature of most urban space, it has ignored the interlocking nature of race, class, gender, sexuality and ability thereby producing a universal gay/lesbian subject. Most of the literature on gay and lesbian belonging shows how heteronormativity produces geographies of exclusion and the various ways gays and lesbians negotiate belonging in this context — by contesting heterosexual public spaces (such as the way pride parades promote queer visibility and challenge heterosexualized space) as well as creating their own queer spaces (even if hidden as is the case with many queer spaces such as bars, bathhouses, or lesbian dinner clubs or potluck circuits). Similarly most of this literature presents a de-raced discussion of gay and lesbian belonging in local and national space, ignoring how these geographies of belonging are related hierarchically within and across local and national scales. The politics of belonging in city and national space are never outside of race. I want to highlight the contradictory and interlocking nature of white gay/lesbian belonging in Kelowna and the way belonging to the city is intimately related to belonging to the Euro-Canadian nation.

Colonial processes in Canada construct the city as the space of the white settler and subsequently as a space in which Indigenous people do not belong (Peters, 1998, p.

679). Aileen Morten-Robinson (2004) reminds us that non-Indigenous claims to belonging in white settler societies (such as Canada and Australia for example) have been predicated on the disavowal of colonial violence and the denial of racialized structural power relations. This can be seen through the legal doctrine of Terra Nullius, which continues to authorize a sense of belonging and rights for non-Indigenous settlers and the violent dispossession of Indigenous people.

Following Morten-Robinson (2004) and Damien Riggs (2006) I argue that discourses of queer rights, citizenship and belonging are frequently constructed in colonial nations upon the disavowal of Indigenous sovereignty and the construction of immigrants of colour as enemies of the nation (p. 76). Riggs notes that while the desire for acceptance and belonging by white gays and lesbians "represents a desire to live a life free of anti-queer violence, it also signifies a desire for acknowledgement within the [white] national imaginary" (p. 80). The cost of this he argues, is an investment in the terms for belonging as set by the nation, which terms are linked to various practice of empire, including the disavowal of colonial violence and denial of Indigenous sovereignty (p. 81).

In Kelowna then, and in other white settler societies, non-Indigenous queer rights claims must link the local and the national, the colonial history and colonial present, and must interrogate the interlocking politics and geographies of belonging and rights from our multiple positions of privilege and marginality.

Indigenous Rights to the City

Geographies of exclusion and absence function to erase Indigenous citizens from the space of Kelowna while maintaining white settlers' inherent rights to the city. Linda Peake and Brian Ray (2001) argue that geographies of absence and presence "invoke senses of the multiple belongings among people of colour in Canadian society" where a long history of racialized geography has attempted to erase people of colour from places, memory and the map (p. 180-183).

By highlighting a geography of absence, I want to make clear that Aboriginal bodies (and other racialized bodies) are not at all physically absent in the space of Kelowna. Indigenous people live in the city of Kelowna, on the lands of the Westbank First Nation reserves within the city limits and on the outskirts of the city. They continue to resist the on-going colonial violence and marginalization they experience in their territories. Despite this, there continues to be an active discursive and material process of erasure of Indigenous bodies from the city of Kelowna and an ongoing disavowal of colonial violence. Indigenous people in Kelowna have continually resisted colonial power and white supremacy in its many manifestations. I am examining how Indigenous citizens are erased from the official story of the city's making, and how this on-going colonialism functions in relation to other forms of exclusion and human rights struggles, such as those of white gays and lesbians in Kelowna.

On-going Settler Colonialism

Accounts of the Lesbian and Gay Pride Day case in the media or academic literature (Simms, 2002; Stone, 2001; Warner, 2002), or the human rights tribunal or

materials produced by the coalition do not reveal that other forms of social exclusion and citizenship struggles were taking place at the same time in Kelowna. This discursive representation of the struggles surrounding Pride Day functions to produce a settler colonial narrative about human rights and belonging in urban space. Examples from local media sources during the same time period as the other excerpts I have discussed (including some newspaper articles on the same page) represent the contestations that were taking place regarding Aboriginal treaty claims with the provincial and federal governments and Aboriginal rights to the city of Kelowna (e.g. Parmar, 1997; Seymour, 1997a; Seymour, 1997b). In these articles, Silyx Indigenous people are constructed as a threat to non-Indigenous people and to Kelowna city space. The local treaty claims are represented by the news media as threatening citing examples from a local ski club and representatives from the logging industry as some of the groups contesting Aboriginal treaty rights (e.g. Seymour, 1997a/b).

In 2005, Kelowna organized celebrations to mark the city's centennial. For this occasion the city commissioned work by various artists to represent and celebrate the city's history. One of these was a documentary video "untitled part 4: terra incognita" by artist Jayce Salloum (2005) with the Okanagan Nation, which tells the history of Kelowna from the perspective of the Syilx people who speak about the past and present colonial violence that was a part of the "settlement" and "founding" of Kelowna. At the last minute prior to the premiere screening of the video, the city refused to endorse or support the video stating it was "not celebratory enough" (Alternator Gallery, 2005; Intermedias, 2007). I include this recent example to illustrate the colonial geography of Kelowna and the on-going attempts to erase Indigenous people, their memory and the

reality of colonial violence from the city space and the story of the city's (and the nation's) making. This disavowal of genocide represents a central and dominant frame in white settler mythologies (Razack, 2002).

I raise these examples rather schematically to highlight the related and simultaneous contested geographies of belonging taking place in Kelowna and to emphasize the way white heterosexual and queer settler subjects are positioned in relation to and implicated in on-going colonial violence, the politics of Indigenous belonging to the city and questions of Indigenous sovereignty.

Summary

In this chapter I have sought to contribute to the literature on geographies of belonging and violence, and hetero/homo settler colonialism through a critical self-reflexive analysis of autoethnographic accounts, critical analysis of discourses within archival data surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Pride Day and a website for an urban development plan. I was motivated to examine these issues in part, to more deeply understand issues that arose through personal experiences facilitating LGBTQ anti-violence initiatives in Kelowna, and as a resident of the city of Kelowna.

In this interlocking examination of Kelowna's Pride Day I have attempted to show how discourses of tolerance, normalcy, respectability and civility produce an imaginative geography of Kelowna that secures the white heterosexual subject as normative and dominant. I have argued that the discourses surrounding Kelowna's 1996/97 pride day reveal a moral crisis not only for the heterosexual subject but also for the white settler national subject.

It seems important to restate here that I am not suggesting that LGBTQ people do not experience violence or its threat in Kelowna (and elsewhere in Canada) nor am I suggesting that we should not advocate, lobby or seek formal legal remedies in response to heteronormative, homophobic and transphobic actions, nor that Pride Days are unnecessary.[76] I am deeply concerned about the pervasive homo and transphobic violence and heteronormative spatial exclusions in Kelowna and other communities and want to continue to organize against these, although *not* in isolation from other forms of violence, such as past and on-going colonial and racial violence, and violence against people living in poverty for example. White queers are often so focused on our place on the margins and the "heterosexist violence that we encounter in our lives that we fail to examine our location within racialized hierarchies" (Riggs, 2006, p. 68).

When white queers speak of our right to place, our right to belong, our right to feel welcome, our right to walk down the street free from violence, we must integrate an interlocking analysis so that we do not frame claims for sexual justice in ways that (re)produce racial and class hierarchies and perpetuate colonial violence. Although my focus here has been on issues of Indigenous sovereignty, we must also examine how queer rights and anti-violence discourses and campaigns position non-Indigenous queer people of colour and address questions of accountability to all racialized communities. My analysis highlights the need to address the problematic effects of universalist discourses in queer rights and anti-violence organizing and examine how certain rights gained not only come at the expense of racialized others, but may require racialized

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[76] It is not my intention to minimize the significance of this political and legal struggle for human rights, nor to minimize the damage done by Mayor Gray's homophobia and heternormative practices. My goal is to make visible the relationships between different struggles for rights, to raise questions for critical reflection and disrupt normative discourses and geographies about anti-LGBTQ violence and human rights strategies.

formations for their success (Lenon, 2008). This research contributes to on-going interdisciplinary conversations about how various kinds of rights claims expose and produce a range of normative assumptions about space, place, safety and belonging.

By bringing together critical geography and anti-colonial interlocking feminist theories, my research shows how a single frame or single identity analysis misses what sustains and produces the systems of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy. To understand the contested geographies of belonging in white settler societies, we need to employ an anti-colonial and interlocking analysis of oppression, violence and space. To practice this interlocking politic from an anti-colonial queer perspective requires that we re-think the terms for belonging in a heteropatriarchal white settler society, taking the fact of Indigenous sovereignty and on-going colonial violence as our starting points (Riggs, 2006).

In the following (and final) chapter, I offer concluding comments on the key themes addressed in this dissertation and implications for future research and practice.

Chapter Eight:
Conclusion, Contributions and Implications

Decolonization involves thinking oneself out of the space of domination…This "thinking out" of colonization happens only through action and reflection, through praxis. After all social transformation cannot remain at the level of ideas, it must engage practice (Alexander & Mohanty, 1997, p. xxviii).

Summary Of The Study

This research critically examines the explanatory frameworks in anti-violence strategies in queer communities, with a focus on community educational initiatives in British Columbia. Using an interlocking spatial approach informed by anti-colonial, feminist and queer theories, I examine the way LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence discourses both reproduce and resist normative conceptualizations of violence and space, and hegemonic organizing strategies and politics within social movements. The analysis presented explores these over-arching research questions: What are the stories that queer anti-violence organizers tell about the violence in our lives? What do these stories do? What, and whom do they make im/possible or in/visible, and how do they do this? What stories are told about place and space and what kinds of understandings of violence are made possible or erased through these imagined geographies (Said, 1978)? What strategies exist for resisting normative narratives and frameworks?

I explore these questions through an interlocking analysis of discourses combined with autoethnographic accounts, in three separate but thematically-linked case studies as described in the methodology. The additional analytical questions that underpin the research in each of the case studies are as follows:

Case study 1) What are the spatial metaphors in dominant feminist and lesbian/queer anti-violence educational discourses and what are their effects? How do conceptualizations of public and private spaces, influence our understandings of violence and the pedagogical strategies we develop? What is the relationship between white normativity and the public/private dichotomy in lesbian/queer feminist anti-violence discourses?

Case study 2) How do queer feminist anti-violence organizers reproduce and/or resist normative frameworks, such as heteronormative, neoliberal and white settler colonial discourses and practices?

Case study 3) What are the discourses surrounding Kelowna's 1996-1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day? What can this discourse analysis tell us about how geographies of violence and belonging in LGBTQ communities, are linked to the violence of colonialism and nation-building in a white settler society such as Canada? How is the city of Kelowna produced as a white heteronormative and bourgeois space? How are queer anti-violence and human rights movements related to other social and political movements such as those for Indigenous rights and sovereignty in Canada?

I initiated this study to examine more deeply some of the persistent problems and tensions that I had experienced in my work in LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence organizing. I wanted to critically reflect on my work to understand the complex and contradictory effects of queer and feminist anti-violence discourses and the way normative conceptions of violence, identity and space are contested and (re)produced in a neoliberal and white settler colonial context. A key entry point of my analysis has been the discursive production of normalcy — such as the normalcy of colonial violence

against Indigenous people, white normativity, heteronormativity, homonormativity, neoliberal normativity, and normative geographies. I interrogated how these normative discourses and practices influence which subjectivities and bodies are intelligible, and which forms of violence are made in/visible. I have explored this through an examination of the way interlocking power relations are spatialized.

I have analyzed discourses in various texts in each case study such as anti-violence curricula, pamphlets and booklets, interview and focus group transcripts, archival data in the form of print and web-based news articles, a website for an urban development proposal, and a report from a BC human rights tribunal. I have also employed a critically reflexive feminist framework to reflect on both my experiences as a white middle-class queer activist and educator within LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence movements, and my research practice in this study. Through this, I have embraced an "uncomfortable autoethnographic sensibility" as part of my research strategy. In this examination I have drawn attention to the relationship between conceptual frameworks, hegemonic subjectivities, socio-spatial power relations and pedagogical practices within queer and feminist anti-violence movements.

I have applied an anti-colonial queer framework to my analysis of texts to trouble the "common sense" categories that are relied on within feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence movements. Through my analysis I have destabilized a number of taken-for-granted, and problematic binary categories, such as "public vs. private," "domestic/partner violence vs. hate crimes," "anti-LGBTQ violence vs. colonial violence," and "healthy vs. unhealthy citizens." This deconstructive approach has shown how these dichotomies produce various fragmentations and exclusions that are racialized,

classed, gendered, heteronormative, cisnormative and homonormative. It has also revealed some counter-hegemonic discourses, for example those that challenge neoliberal individualist and normalizing discourses about queer sexual desire in the Safe Choices curriculum as discussed in Chapter Six. By attending to the way power operates in multiple ways, I have made visible some of the contradictory effects of reverse discourses where subjects resist regulatory practices.

In this study, I specifically focused on examples from the community work I've done — primarily in the area of IPV in queer women's lives as well as violence against LGBTQ people. The examples discussed in the three case studies illustrate some of the dilemmas and problems that continue to surface in LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence organizing. As the title of my dissertation suggests, these problems have to do with the denial of different forms of violence and the related erasure of certain bodies from the official stories that we tell in our organizing work. I looked at a number of exclusions taking place within LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence movements — including the exclusion of trans and working-class queer experiences of violence — but I focused specifically on racialized exclusions and the marginalization of LGBTQ people of colour and Indigenous people. My research reveals the persistent whiteness and racism within these anti-violence movements and the on-going exclusion of colonial and racial violence from our organizing frames. This includes the refusal to recognize white settler colonial violence as a pervasive and ongoing reality in Canada and one that conditions and shapes LGBTQ and feminist social movements. This is often accomplished through normalizing rhetorical strategies that naturalize the violence and the spaces within which it occurs.

So what does my analysis of the data presented, tell us about the official or dominant stories that queer anti-violence organizers use, and how they are secured? In other words, how do these stories come to be told and accepted? The dominant stories as revealed in my research are organized around a number of key ideas:

• Private and public spaces are often seen to be separate and fixed. While the violence that occurs in these spaces may be understood as somewhat connected in some cases, the organizing strategies position them as separate and the strategies to respond to the violence as distinct, separate and unconnected. Violence in lesbian relationships is conceptualized as something that takes place in the home or in private. Intimate relationships are privatized — positioned as outside of the wider social and spatial contexts, or only within contexts of heterosexism. This narrative allows a focus on certain forms of violence, bodies and spaces thereby conceptually erasing others.

• Violence in lesbian relationships is understood as primarily a problem that occurs within a context of heterosexism and homophobia, and in some cases (within feminist discourses) patriarchy. The social context of violence is conceptualized as "out there" and detached from white lesbians.

• A de-raced, de-classed universal gay and lesbian subject is the centre figure.

• Colonial and racial violence is positioned as "off topic" within LGBTQ anti-violence organizing (both within IPV and anti-LGBTQ violence initiatives). When it is made visible or included, there are usually efforts to explain that it is out of place and does not belong. Racialized LGBTQ people and Two-Spirit people's experiences of violence are consequently positioned as not belonging in LGBTQ anti-violence organizing frameworks or spaces. This is frequently accomplished through spatial narratives and

boundary markings that position colonial and racial violence (and the bodies on which the violence is enacted) as "out of place."

- Contradictory narratives appear in a healthy queer relationships curriculum. These narratives both resist and (re)produce hegemonic normative discourses such as: generic and universalist models of identity; neoliberal discourses of expert knowledge, professionalization, and self-help; and individualism and narrow approaches to responding to violence. Counter-hegemonic narratives appear that promote: relational, communitarian and social contexts; non-normative sexual identities and practices for queer women; and intersectional and anti-oppression language.

- Intersectional and anti-oppression discourses appear in some cases in contradictory ways: complicating generic and universal de-raced and de-classed constructions of identity but also reproducing whiteness, through narratives of benevolence and racial innocence (e.g. "we're good nonracist feminists" and "benevolent helpers to women of colour and Aboriginal women").

- De-raced and de-classed narratives of LGBTQ belonging/exclusion and safety/violence in space ignore how these are relational within and across local and national scales and rely and reproduce white middle-class homonormativity.

- Contested and contradictory narratives about normalcy, tolerance, and respectability show up in media and lesbian/gay activist discourses about Kelowna's Lesbian and Gay Pride Day. Liberal gay rights rhetorical strategies and narratives about tolerance were used to construct Kelowna's identity as a civilized place of progress. Some gay and lesbian activists produce counter-narratives stating they do not want to be tolerated. The rightful citizen of the city is constructed as heterosexual white and bourgeois. Certain

respectable and normative gays and lesbians are permitted to enjoy citizenship in the city and the nation. Tolerating lesbian and gay pride day confirms the hegemonic identity narrative of the Canadian nation, where Canadians imagine themselves as possessing the qualities of peacefulness and tolerance. Accusations of Kelowna's intolerance towards gays and lesbians signaled anxieties about the city's identity as a modern, civilized and progressive place. Narratives about progress, modernity, respectability, normalcy and civility in cities are whitening practices that secure white settler national identity.

My analysis reveals a multiplicity of discursive elements within the stories told, that are complex, contradictory and unstable (Foucault, 1978). Racist, colonial, heteronormative, classist, and cisnormative discourses and practices are simultaneously reproduced and resisted. The evidence of resistance and contradiction suggests that many LGBTQ anti-violence organizers possess an intellectual understanding of some of the problems with normative, de-raced and de-classed frameworks and attempt to shift them, albeit to varying degrees and with contradictory effects. Despite the interruptions and challenges to normative framings, my analysis shows that many of the rhetorical strategies surrounding LGBTQ anti-violence organizing, simultaneously rely on and reproduce white settler normativity.

Contributions and Implications

My research is part of a burgeoning field of interdisciplinary studies that embraces an anti-colonial queer and spatial framework. A central theme in my research is the way white homonormativity and white settler homonationalism are produced through

normative and neoliberal representations of violence, health, rights and belonging within LGBTQ and feminist anti-violence and rights discourses. The research offers a critique of the on-going violence of colonialism in white settler societies and the everyday acts of white supremacist thought and practice (hooks, 2003) that operate within feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence movements. An anti-colonial queer approach recognizes feminist and queer organizations as complex sites of colonial encounters (drawing on Bunjun, 2011).

Through a textual analysis of discourses, I have explored how racialized and colonial violence is frequently erased within queer anti-violence pedagogical and human rights discourses. My research reveals that this is often accomplished through the framing of this violence, and the bodies on which it is perpetrated, as "off topic" "not belonging" or "outside the frame of reference." Positioning colonial violence as outside the category of "domestic violence," "anti-LGBTQ violence" or "hate crimes," produces of a regime of truth, a discursive, material and spatial tactic of white supremacy. As numerous scholars have demonstrated, this form of expulsion from ideological, material and geographic space is a racialized and colonial act of violence (Jiwani, 2006; Monture-Angus, 1995; Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). In the case of hegemonic feminist and queer anti-violence discourses, this move renders the violence against, and the bodies of queer and trans people of colour and Indigenous and Two-Spirit people an impossibility within the dominant imaginary. The findings of my research suggest that hegemonic white feminist and white LGBTQ anti-violence movements are sites where colonial violence is obscured. By constructing the violence on Indigenous women's bodies as "outside the frame of reference" within an anti-hate crimes organizing committee or "not belonging"

at a lesbian domestic violence workshop, or racist and colonial violence as "off topic" in an LGBTQ anti-violence roundtable forum, white anti-violence activists, queers, feminists and policy-makers are complicit in the colonial violence of expulsion that functions to assert their/our rightful place as owners of the land.

This framework also seeks to queer whiteness — to render it abnormal, to name it and make it visible in order to challenge it (Riggs, 2010). While queering whiteness within anti-violence movements is important, it is an insufficient strategy on its own for transforming racialized discourses and politics within the context of on-going settler colonialism and empire building. Some critical scholars have questioned research strategies that focus on the dominant group. While I have examined strategies to address violence in the lives of sexual and gender non-conforming people who are marginalized within the contexts of heteropatriarchy, my attention has been on critiquing whiteness within feminist and queer movements. How can we study whiteness without re-centering white dominance? While I recognize the inherent dangers in re-centering white privilege and dominance (which I have discussed specifically in Chapters Six and Seven), I have chosen to critically study white racial formations within LGBTQ and feminist movements, in an effort to "generate greater cultural awareness of the way white supremacist thinking operates in our daily lives" in order to unlearn these practices of racial domination, and work towards decolonizing our minds, spaces and practices (hooks, 2003, p. 40). My research points to the need for future work that examines the relationship between white supremacy and subject formation in queer and feminist spaces. This work can further explicate the narratives that dominant groups use to justify their sense of belonging and rights in space.

I acknowledge that these are not new issues for Indigenous people or people of colour, for as Sarah Ahmed (2004) points out, "whiteness is only invisible for those who inhabit it." (p. 1) It is crucial that critical whiteness scholarship moves beyond simply naming white supremacy, racism or making whiteness visible to white people. While this may be a necessary starting point, it cannot be the end goal. As I discussed in Chapter Six, Ahmed's (2004) analysis of critical whiteness studies shows how this process is complicated, where declarations of being "critical" (as in critical whiteness) or "anti" (as in anti-racism) can function to reproduce white privilege and secure white supremacy (Ahmed, 2004). Despite the declared intention to do the opposite, these moments of critique often position white "anti-racist" subjects as innocent, while still benefiting from, and being complicit in practices of white supremacy. Ahmed (2004) argues that "the task for white subjects would be to stay implicated in what they critique, but in turning towards their role and responsibility in these histories of racism, as histories of this present, to turn away from themselves, and towards others" (p. 59).

I argue that feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence movements must critically engage with the historical and contemporary spatiality of empire and the on-going violence that is produced through this. We must re-think race- and class-neutral explanatory frameworks and organizing strategies including those that draw on homonationalist imaginative geographies of belonging and safety. This means being vigilant about the way certain respectable and domesticated queer bodies support, reinforce and legitimate white settler nationalist projects (Morgensen, 2011; Puar, 2006). We have to be willing to continually ask if our violence prevention/intervention, health promotion, and safety

initiatives prop up or destabilize white settler, bourgeois and hetero/homonationalist agendas (regardless of how well-intentioned they may be).

An interlocking spatial framework for addressing violence in the lives of LGBTQ people must focus on decolonization/anti-colonial strategies that interrupt and displace the spatial logics of white supremacy and that promote Indigenous sovereignty, coalition building, and practices of accountability. Given that white supremacy operates through multiple logics, our politics of accountability requires that we examine the interlocking nature of these logics and the related complicities, not only focusing on how we are oppressed (Razack, 1998, 2008; Smith, 2010a). The pedagogical dimension of decolonization demands not only critical reflection but also the transformation of socio-spatial relations of domination. This requires that "we 'unnaturalize' the geographical stories in which the effects of racialization are left out or normalized" (Kobayashi & Peake, 1994, p. 166).

This approach demands an explicit commitment to a process of decolonization and accountability to Indigenous people struggling against a white settler nation-state. It requires that non-Indigenous people examine what it means to occupy Indigenous land and to examine what our complicities and responsibilities are. This means keeping an eye on the past and present violence of colonialism, and challenging the idea that colonialism is an event of the past, and a problem that is relevant only to Aboriginal people. Decolonizing Canada begins by acknowledging land theft and dispossession (Lawrence, 2002). In a white settler society such as Canada, we cannot truly be anti-violence if we are not anti-colonial. This means not only examining how we are invested and complicit with colonial nation-building practices within feminist and queer organizations, but how

we can keep shifting our analytical frameworks and our violence prevention/intervention strategies in ways that challenge colonial and white supremacist practices in their everyday manifestations. This begins with learning what these practices look like, but must include an examination of how we are using the language of diversity, healthy relationships, and even intersectional or interlocking analytics in ways that keep racialized, gendered, and classed forms of normativity intact (drawing on Ward, 2008).

The findings from my research urge us to unsettle normalizing geographies and examine the relational nature of spaces of violence. As I discussed in Chapter Six, this requires that we queer the spaces of violence — to deconstruct the spatial metaphors within anti-violence discourses, in order to think outside of colonial white settler, bourgeois, hetero and homonormative notions of home, family, city and nation. As I have shown in this study, many activists and scholars are thinking about how to develop a deeper analysis of the relationship between space and violence. Some have suggested that mapping experiences of violence can provide new insights not only into the places of violence, but the multiplicity and relationality of these experiences of violence and the spaces within which they occur. I argue that theorizing the socio-economic and spatial contexts of violence merely as "background features" or as a "backdrop" of violence is insufficient. In her summary of this critical race feminist critique, Yasmin Jiwani (2006) states "these social forces – far from remaining as background features – interlock so the construction of identity is itself contingent on the particular nexus of interlocking factors operative in a given context" (p. 16). Most specifically, an interlocking spatial analysis of violence involves examining how these geographies of safety/violence,

belonging/(un)belonging and privilege/marginalization are related and dependent upon one another and what the spaces of violence produce.

Feminist and LGBTQ anti-violence initiatives and agencies must expand their definitions of safety and violence and create strategies that reflect these expanded and more complex understandings of violence. For example, in their research with queer women survivors of IPV, the Queer Asian Women's program at the Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco found that "safety did not revolve around physical safety but rather the safety violated by racism, homophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments" (Chung & Lee, 2002, p. 10). "Women said they would rather stay in an abusive relationship that validates who she is culturally or sexually than place themselves in a vulnerable situation with an agency that does not validate who she is" (p. 16). They recommend that agencies must "address oppression within your agency. Be accountable for all the ways in which power and control play out in your organization. Eradicating oppressive dynamics from services creates safety for your clients" (p. 20).

As I argued in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, addressing state and interpersonal violence simultaneously means working on grassroots political issues that are not typically defined by white and middle-class queers as "queer anti-violence issues." For example, organizing around issues such as struggles for Indigenous sovereignty and land rights, police brutality, the prison industrial complex,[77] racial profiling within the criminal legal system, the dismantling of social welfare programs, affordable housing and homelessness, racist child welfare or immigration policies, and war, to name a few. It also means critically examining the problems with anti-violence strategies that prioritize

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[77] Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) is a term developed by Critical Resistance (2012) "to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social, and political problems."

partnerships with the police, instead of monitoring police harassment and violence, and ensuring police accountability and community safety, such as the "Cop Watch" programs organized by low-income Aboriginal residents in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside or by LGBTQ youth of colour with FIERCE! in New York City, for example (FIERCE, 2012; Pablo, 2012).

A key direction for future work is coalition and alliance building with activists working for social, economic and spatial justice in multiple contexts. Queer anti-violence movements need to examine the barriers to building and sustaining effective coalitions that address racial, sexual, gender, and economic justice.

My research stresses the importance of further examination of the relationship between neoliberalism and LGBTQ/feminist anti-violence, health and social movements. Violence in the lives of LGBTQ people must be critiqued and responded to with attention to the racialized neoliberal context in Canada (drawing on Billies et al., 2009). This means deepening our understanding of the connections between neoliberalism, poverty, white settler colonialism, and the increasing criminalization of people of colour, Indigenous people, low-income people and LGBTQ people. Our future organizing and research strategies must reflect this interlocking analysis of multiple forms of violence in the lives of LGBTQ people. However we do not necessarily have the analytical and political tools to do this work. As Lisa Duggan (2012) argues, queer activists on the left need to become fully literate in economic policy. We need to increase our capacity to understand and critique economic policies, neoliberalism and its impact on LGBTQ communities as well as how these policies and practices are tied to white supremacist heteronormative nationalist practices.

We also need to create approaches that challenge the professionalization, depoliticization and cooptation of anti-violence work and that recognize the limitations of state funding on our work in a neoliberal and white settler society. In Chapter Six, I looked at the way limited resources and excessive state monitoring of a "Healthy Queer Relationships" program by a "progressive health promotion fund," significantly impacted our capacity to shift narrow approaches and increase our grassroots community organizing efforts. An uncritical reliance on state funding can contribute to increased surveillance of social movements, thus constraining our ability to challenge racist, classist and (hetero)sexist and neoliberal state policies and processes of bureaucratization. As I argued earlier, it also means working on grassroots political issues that are not typically defined by white and middle-class queers and feminists as "queer anti-violence issues" and challenging professional norms that perpetuate race and class-based inequities. This calls us to pay greater attention to what qualities constitute the ideal healthy citizen in health promotion discourses within a neoliberal framework. We must examine how existing health promotion policies (including those that incorporate queer subjects), both produce and reinforce hetero/homonormative neoliberal formulations of the healthy citizen that are deeply racialized and classed.

Inspired by the anti-colonial scholarship and activism of Indigenous feminists, Two-Spirit activists and queers and feminists of colour, this research highlights the need to address decolonization as a fundamental aspect of feminist and queer anti-violence movements. We must foreground not only how and why this is necessary for queer and feminist anti-violence politics, but also what gets in our way of sustaining this anti-normative and anti-colonial praxis.

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