

**RACIAL STATES OF CONCERN:
JURIDICAL PUBLICS AND THE LOCALIZATION OF RACE IN
VANCOUVER AND CHICAGO**

by

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ABSTRACT

In post-industrial cities, race mediates the administration of law, shaping how certain behaviors, places, and populations are regulated by state and public actors. Yet, race does not have a single juridical guise across these cities, having acquired multiple forms across urban spaces in different regional and national contexts. This dissertation examines how racial relations of power are recreated through localized discourses of crime that govern minority groups in two urban centres: African American populations in Chicago and South Asian populations in Vancouver. Through a comparative analysis of legal and media texts published on each of these populations, I illuminate the disparate racial logics, sentiments and practices that mutate through these cities' divergent histories of urbanization, industrialization, and empire.

The historical, social and political differences between Chicago and Vancouver pose methodological problems for comparisons intent on causal explanation. To consider the mutability of race across geography and population, I formulate an “awkward” mode of comparison that offers new insights into how race is materialized through the unique socio-historical conditions of urban centres. This awkward comparison reveals how racial knowledges of blackness travel across regional and national contexts, shaping how African American *and* South Asian populations are intelligible to legal and public actors. By examining how the homes of these populations are subject to racial practices of scrutiny and surveillance, this dissertation also highlights the gendered configurations of the family that warrant the racial exercise of law. Finally, this dissertation considers the public inquiries into police torture in Chicago and the Air India Bombing in Vancouver to illustrate how the inaction of state officials can manifest racial conditions of violence. Through each aspect of this comparison, this dissertation demonstrates how public concerns about crime can extend and intensify the racial force of law.

PREFACE

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, B. Buffam.

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DEDICATION

For Meghan Toal, the best (and funniest) person I know.

CHAPTER ONE- RACIAL STATES OF CONCERN: JURIDICAL PUBLICS AND THE LOCALIZATION OF RACE

PUBLIC FIGURES OF DANGER

Chicago's Lincoln Park 'Marauders'

Over two weeks in the summer of 2009, the North Side Chicago neighborhoods of Lakeview and Lincoln Park were besieged by a series of late night muggings. Although muggings are hardly anomalous in these neighborhoods, their recurrence in the midnight hours, when local bars are being vacated of their largely white, middle class clientele, attracted the attention of area residents and civic authorities alike. In local news, the muggers earned the mantle of "The Lincoln Park Marauders". After the fourth mugging, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) released a composite sketch of one mugger that showed a young black man wearing diamond studded earrings (see Figure 1.1 below).

Figure 1.1. Composite Sketch of One Lincoln Park Marauder



For nearly two weeks copies of the police sketch circulated rapidly through local media outlets, appearing on the front page of *The Chicago Sun-Times* as well as on community safety flyers that blanketed entire city blocks.

With the circulation of this sketch, the likenesses of the suspect became a subject of public deliberation and debate. On virtual news forums, readers complained that the composite sketch was not descriptive enough to distinguish this suspect from the other black faces that saturate local crime news. Others engaged the image as a symptom of the city's changing political climate, as one reader remarked:

I find it interesting that the sketch looks like Barack Obama. If Chicago wasn't such a liberal socialist paradise and had conceal and carry allowances this type of thing wouldn't happen (Chicago Tribune Reader A 2009).

For nearly thirty years, the City of Chicago effectively outlawed the possession of handguns within city limits. In 2010, the United States Supreme Court declared the ban unconstitutional. Like the reader above, many Chicago residents blamed the ban and its "liberal" political architects for high rates of local gun violence in the city, arguing that civilians had been rendered unable to protect themselves against the growing threat of crime. This reader engaged a resemblance between the sketch and the President of the United States as a platform to critique the "liberal" state's incapacity to maintain law and order.

Following the release of the composite sketch, police located a person of interest in the muggings, whom they identified publicly as a member of a West Side Chicago gang. The circulation of this profile generated a number of public concerns. Most notably, it raised anxieties that the muggings were somehow a portent of the city's descent into legal anomie, marked by the implosion of the geographic boundaries that had once divided the city into white and black areas with vastly different rates of violent crime. On virtual news

forums, readers concocted a number of scenarios to explain the troubling geography of these muggings:

This is the direct result of tearing down the CHA projects. Landowners are now renting out apartments to section 8 people to generate secure income and this is what we have to deal with now. These people are now walking around our hood and the crime rate has increased. We can't profile them, just become another victim (Chicago Breaking News Reader A).

It's big news when the HUD urban terrorists prey in high income neighborhoods but this is an every day thing now in all of Chicagoland now that HUD has dispersed the urban terrorists from the projects (Chicago Breaking News Reader B).

To these readers, the muggings represented an incursion of crime into otherwise safe areas of the city, a change they attributed to the dispersion of public housing from the inner city. Since the early 1990s, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) has organized the mass relocation of its clients from inner city housing projects, like the notorious 'Cabrini-Green' and 'Robert Taylor Holmes' complexes, to mixed-income public housing located throughout the city, a process that has been administered by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of their Section 8 Housing Voucher Program (Hunt 2009). When these readers use self-evident invectives like 'section 8 people' and 'HUD urban terrorists', they trade on established vernacular associations between public housing, criminality, and blackness.

Even as the muggings came to symbolize the ubiquity of crime in Chicago, some readers condemned the amount of attention that had been devoted to these incidents. In an editorial for *The Chicago Tribune*, staff writer John Kass (2009) notes that:

[violent crime] happens in other neighborhoods. But in other neighborhoods, unfortunately, this wouldn't lead the local newscasts. It would be police blotter stuff, next to the motor vehicle break-ins and petty thefts and bleak, one-paragraph accounts of murder (A13).

While public attention had become fixated on the muggings, more than a dozen people were murdered in neighborhoods on the West and South sides of the city. As with most local stories related to crime, public interest in the muggings dissipated as a semblance of safety and order returned to the area. By late September, local news was saturated with stories about the city's bid for the 2016 Olympics and the fatal beating of a teenager outside a South Side high school. While there have been very few stories generated about the muggings since, there remain residues of how these incidents have reconstituted the feelings of (in)security that govern the city.

Bindy Johal: Vancouver's 'Indo-Canadian' Gangster

In August 2011, a short video was uploaded to YouTube that replayed a confrontational exchange between Vancouver news reporters and local gangster Bindy Johal, which happened weeks before Johal was murdered in December 1998 (CBC News Clip 2012). First appearing as part of a television news broadcast, the video clip shows Johal addressing a group of rival cocaine dealers, proclaiming, "I just want these guys to know, you got another thing coming, bitch! I'm still around" (see Figure 1.2 on p.5). In the four years before his murder, Johal had been a regular presence on local news broadcasts

for his public conflicts with rival drug organizations; his role in targeted gang shootings; and his repeated evasion of criminal charges, which became international tabloid fodder when investigators discovered that one of his co-defendants was having a sexual relationship with juror Gillian Guess¹ during their murder trial.

Figure 1.2. Still of Bindy Johal from CBC News



Over the last five years, different versions of this video clip have been uploaded to YouTube, each time prompting heated debate about exactly how Johal's public presence irrevocably changed Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community. Some viewers insisted that his violent bravado fomented negative sentiment about Sikh and Punjabi men, prompting declarations that "Johal just gave brown guys a bad name" (Youtube Viewer 2011 A).

¹As details of their affair became public, Guess became a tabloid celebrity before being convicted of obstructing justice. She was eventually convicted of obstruction of justice and sentenced to 18 months in prison.

Even more viewers of this video remembered Johal as a heroic figure whose public personae contravened stereotypes of Indian men as pliant, ‘model’ minorities, expressing some of the following sentiments:

he made all the white folks bow down to us [...]. can’t ask for nothing more than that. RESPECT (Youtube Viewer B 2011).

May this guy rest in piece. If it weren’t for him white guys would still be pushing us around. Straight sher punjabi;) (Youtube Viewer C 2011).

[...] back in the 90’s indo-canadians used to get spat on and other bad things just because they were a minority and ‘immigrants’, Bindy did not like what was happening there for he stepped for the punjabi/indo-Canadian community and showed all these white crackers such as urself, that we are capable of standing our ground and we wont take shit from u. That is what we proud of [...] (Youtube Viewer D 2011).

To these viewers Johal had emboldened a minority community that had otherwise endured racist derision and violence at the hands of the white Canadian majority. In a recent documentary about Indo-Canadian gangs, a former associate of Johal’s also suggested that his public personae helped mollify the discrimination faced by Indo-Canadian youth, explaining that:

We got it everyday – Hindu! Pakhi! This and that. That’s the mix that Bindy came out of. And he used his name unapologetically. You can’t get more Punjabi than that. Bindy! Bindy Johal? He was larger than life.

He became a legend. And we thought at least white folks ain't going to fuck with us anymore (as cited in Amar 2009).

Whether or not he is regarded to be a public enemy or folk antihero, Bindy Johal's public personae entered the figure of the Indo-Canadian gangster into the collective consciousness of Vancouver. By 2006, this discursive figure had reached such a level of visibility that a poll of Vancouver residents found as follows: of the 65% of respondents who felt that a specific 'ethnic group was more responsible for crime in the city', 56% identified 'Indian/East Indians' as the group that is most responsible for crime in Vancouver (Bridge and Fowlie 2006). That residents of no other Canadian city identified this group as the principal threats to public safety² is indicative of how the Indo-Canadian gangster remained a specifically localized figure of public concern. More than ten years after Johal's death, he remains synonymous with the 'problem' of Indo-Canadian gangs and local gang violence more generally. His murder on a crowded dance floor at a downtown nightclub in 1998 continues to be cited and connected to recent gang shootings, associating the figure of the Indo-Canadian gangster with the spectacle of consumption and urban nightlife in Vancouver.

The Racial Grammars of Crime

Here, we have two public figures of danger that circulated across two different cities through distinctive conditions of intelligibility. In Chicago, the Lincoln Park muggers appeared against the eroding boundaries of the neighborhood that had, at one time, promised to insulate its inhabitants from the dangers of urban living. Across modern

² While cities in Eastern Canada and Ontario identified 'Afro American/Black' as the 'racial-ethnic' group primarily responsible for crime, residents of Victoria, Calgary and Edmonton identified 'Asian/Oriental' in these terms. Only residents of Winnipeg identified 'First Nations/Native' as the most criminogenic group (Bridge and Fowlie 2006).

American cities, neighborhoods materialize through distinct visions of spatial and moral order as they engender different relations of civic cohesion and exclusion (Carr 2006, Wilson and Taub 2008). As their boundaries are superimposed upon shifting geographies of segregation, Chicago neighborhoods also act as axes of racial differentiation, distinguishing (white)³ areas of commerce and civility from (black) zones of crime and indigence (Leavitt and Venkatesh 2000, Wacquant 2008). Hailed as ‘marauders’, the Lincoln Park muggers were primarily understood and policed in terms of their movements across these boundaries, however real or imagined that mobility might have been. Through the hurried circulation of the police sketch shown above, the composite black visage of the mugger became an allegory for the growing instability of the city’s legal and political orders, which, for different readers, are symbolized by the political ascendance of Barack Obama or the purported desegregation of the city’s public housing stock. In this episode of public concern, race did not serve as a biological or socially constructed quality of the muggers’ bodies, but, rather as the specific configuration of relations that generated different sensations of spatial proximity and moral distance between black and white bodies, places, and populations.

In Vancouver, Bindy Johal was not identifiable in terms of a specific space or neighborhood, but, rather as part of an ethnically specified “community” or “population”. Liberal political discourses typically configure ethnic communities as a function of elective filiations that emanate from some shared sense of cultural commonality (Bannerji 1999, Pavlich 1996). Yet, insofar as Vancouver’s Indo-Canadian community was forged amidst the everyday experiences of harassment, discrimination, and violence referenced by the

³ I place these racial designations in brackets to signify that, even as their whiteness is not articulated explicitly, readers engage about these spaces through this shared understanding.

YouTube viewers, the relations that constitute this population are at once an artifact and locus of racial differentiation, which recreate Indo-Canadians as a demographic, cultural, and political minority. In attaining notoriety, the vocal and video image of Johal transformed the political conditions under which the Indo-Canadian community exists by entering a new racial figure into the local lexicon of crime and danger. Just as Johal's virtual presence positioned young South Asian men as sources of fear and concern, his criminality became intelligible through caricatured formulations of "Indo-Canadian" culture. In this context, racial systems of classification reconstitute the South Asian population of Vancouver as an object of juridical knowledge and action that can be governed through their fabricated cultural commonalities.

When read against each other, these episodes raise a number of questions about the force of race: how do discourses of crime and criminality function as modalities of racism? How is crime imagined and circulated through local formulations of race⁴ and racism? How do these local racisms engender different relations of power and force between a variety of social actors, spaces, and practices? To address these questions, this dissertation examines how racisms govern two local populations through public discourses of crime and criminality: the African American population of Chicago and the South Asian population of Vancouver. By documenting these divergent racial relations of power in distinct local and national contexts, this dissertation will investigate the multiple forms that

⁴ As I explain later in this introduction, I use the term race to denote a relation of power that creates hierarchical or 'unequal' relations of force between people, places, populations, and objects by virtue of fabricated differences, which may be biological, phenotypical, cultural, aesthetic, or historical (see Goldberg 2001, Hesse 2007, Mawani 2009 and Stoler 1995 for similar formulations of race) Following from this definition of race, I use the term 'racism' to refer to specific configurations of race that create the conditions for its perpetuation and reproduction.

race acquires in and through discourses of crime that permeate the public realms of post-industrial cities.

In the episodes detailed above, racisms not only differed in terms of the socio-spatial forms they acquired in each city, but also in terms of the discursive limits that govern how race is discussed and articulated in the public realm. Whereas the YouTube viewers invoked manifestly ‘racial’ terminology in their debates about Bindy Johal, referring to ‘white folk’ and the ‘punjabi/indo-Canadian community’ in oppositional terms, Chicago readers used more racially coded language that conjures images of black criminality through signifiers like ‘HUD urban terrorists’ and ‘section 8 people’. Rather than compare these local racisms in order to offer a causal explanation of their socio-historical emergence, I attend to how race emerges as a relation of force through such disparate localized conditions of intelligibility and political action. Through this detailed juxtaposition, which facilitates what I am calling an ‘awkward comparison’, this project will pluralize our understanding of how racisms organize the dynamic, shifting relations of contemporary urban spaces. While this awkward comparison could be used to document racisms in any number of post-industrialized cities, Chicago and Vancouver have made for compelling pivots of comparison because of what this analysis reveals about the force of race in each locality that is otherwise obfuscated in studies of race and racism. By comparing racisms in Chicago with those in Vancouver, I illuminate how practices of violence and segregation acquire their racial force and form through conditions of empire and coloniality, a fact that is occluded by their usual national scale of analysis. Conversely, this comparison will help reveal the racisms that govern Vancouver’s Indo-Canadian population, which are ordinarily dismissed as a function of ethnicity, cultural difference, or

ethno-centrism. In revealing each of these aspects of localized racisms, this comparative analysis reveals the deeper local and supranational dynamics of racial relations of power across different sociohistorical contexts.

Recent critical theories of race show how this relation of power has formed and mutated through the disparate global trajectories of empire, which are not reducible to the scale of the nation-state (da Silva 2007, Goldberg 2009, Hesse 2004). Building on this literature, my awkward comparison is designed to illuminate the disparate and concrete forms that race acquires in cities divergent histories industrialization and urbanization, without losing sight of their origins in divergent conditions of coloniality. Following Jean and John Comaroff (2003), I have kept my analytics of comparison flexible to track the racial force of law across these sites without obscuring the singularity of the racisms that work there. By pursuing this mode of analysis, that favors juxtaposition over dialectic explanation, this dissertation aims to convey the contextual mutability of race as a modality of power, its capacity to change through and reorganize the relations of force in a given locality (see da Silva 2007, Mawani 2012A, Stoler 2002 for similar formulations of race and racism).

Across post-industrial cities, racisms are often reproduced and transformed through changing public concerns about crime (Mirchandani and Chan 2002, Simon 2007, Zukin 1996). This dissertation tracks how these ‘juridical’ sentiments form and change through the public circulation of different texts about crime and the administration of law. In undertaking this research, I focused my data generation and analysis on textually, orally, and visually mediated discourses of crime and criminality, broadly conceiving of texts as artifacts and agents of different epistemic practices and affective relations. In each of the

episodes detailed above, the racial figures of danger circulated through different kinds of texts, the specific forms of which shaped the public engagements they facilitated. On the one hand, readers engaged with the generic composite sketch of the Lincoln Park mugger as *yet another* symptom of the crime that threatens to overwhelm the city, circulated rapidly only as this otherwise anonymous danger captivated the attention of concerned residents. On the one other hand, the audio-visual clip of Bindy Johal continues to circulate as viewers debate his ongoing effects on Vancouver's South Asian population, such that his individual notoriety was the basis for the racial public engagements with this figure of danger. In this dissertation I attend to how the different socio-historical contexts of each city create the conditions for these divergent forms of public engagements about crime. By analyzing the public forms of these juridical relations, this dissertation demonstrates how racisms materialize through specific conditions of visibility, political commonality, and affectivity, analytics that I will explain in more detail in the next section of this introduction.

The remainder of this chapter details the theoretical and methodological foundations of this research. First, I situate this project in the existing literature on the political dimensions of the public sphere, which is borne of a critical engagement with the work of social theorist Jürgen Habermas (1991). Second, after explaining exactly how race is a relation of power that originated in conditions of coloniality (Hesse 2011), I describe how race acquires idiomatically urban forms in colonial and post-industrial cities, before explicating the localized racisms in Vancouver and Chicago in Chapter One. Next, to clarify the methodology driving this research, I detail the agents of textual production from which I gathered my data as well as my rationale for selecting these specific sources.

Finally, I conclude the chapter by setting out the chapters to follow, along with the contributions and limitations of this research.

JURIDICAL PUBLICITIES

A public can be said to consist of any group of social actors that forms, dissipates, and, under certain political conditions, reemerges through the reflexive circulation of texts (Warner 2002: 10-12). These exchanges are reflexive insofar as texts circulate reciprocally between their authors and readers, and not simply via the unidirectional process from producer to consumer that is characteristic of most mass media (Habermas 1991). Whereas most media analyses conceive of texts as bearers of social and political meaning, I approach texts as the axes of complex, dynamic configurations of public sentiments, actors, and places, which emerge from the convergence of different political logics and practices (Berlant 2008). By attending to the political trajectories of the texts from which these relations of publicity emerge, I illustrate how texts can describe, create, and allegorize different relations of power (Warner 2002). In situating texts in these dynamic relations of force, I am indebted to the work of Stuart Hall (1980), who does not suggest that these artifacts exist independent of the human actors who assign them meaning through different practices of textual production, circulation, and consumption. At different points in the dissertation, I attend to the multiple, occasionally divergent ways in which readers interpret, decode, and refract the discursive logics of the texts by virtue of their position in different relations of power.

Recent research on publics and the public sphere not only attends to the contents and contexts of textual production through which publics emerge but also to the infrastructural conditions under which texts are disseminated (Lee and Lipuma 2002, Warner 1990).

Apparatuses of textual production differ in their capacity to facilitate ongoing discursive engagement, both in terms of the quantity and quality of texts they generate as well as in terms of the speed and spatial extent of their circulation. According to Warner (2002), a public's capacity for political action and mobilization varies according to the punctuality of its discursive engagements. By this logic, publics that engage in frequent discursive intercourse have the potential to be mobilized because matters of concern are regularly brought to the attention of its readers. Amidst concern about the Lincoln Park muggers, the infrastructural capacities of daily commercial newspapers made it possible to rapidly spread the sketch across the city, establishing channels of textual circulation through which readers could regularly engage with updates about the case and potentially act on their concerns about public safety.

Throughout this dissertation I explicate the character and force of “juridical forms of publicity”, a term I have coined to signify a specific kind or genre of public relation that materializes through discursive engagements about crime and the administration of law. Like their literary counterparts, different discursive public genres create a certain “aesthetic structure of affective expectation” (Berlant 2008: ix) between readers and the texts they consume and produce. That is, juridical publicities are at once shaped by the discursive forms that crime assumes in relations of textual exchange as well as by readers' expectations of those forms. Following the work of Stuart Hall (Hall et al 1978), cultural studies scholars have documented how the discursive forms of crime are a function of the patterns that characterize its representation in popular culture and news media, shaping the specific ways that crime is signified, sensed, and understood (Simon 2007, Valverde 2006, Wallace 2009, Young 1996). By stressing the affective and aesthetic dimensions of these

exchanges, I show how readers' textual engagements with crime are modulated by different kinds of anticipation, certainty, pleasure, and dissonance. In their circulation between social actors, texts about crime not only command a specific interpellative force, engendering certain forms of political actions, but also move between their readers with a particular cadence or punctuality, as news of crime is typically produced, consumed, and acted upon at certain temporal intervals (Hall et al 1978, Valverde 2006, Wallace 2009).

In formulating the concept of juridical publicity, I build on three trajectories of critical engagement with Jürgen Habermas' (1991) seminal formulation of the public sphere. These trajectories address and revise (1) his analytical distinction between the public sphere and institutions of the state; (2) his inattention to the modes of valuation that determine what issues become fodder for discursive contestation and the temporalities of their engagement; as well as (3) the assumption of a disembodied actor as the subject of the public sphere.

The Public Sphere and the State

In his iconic study, Habermas (1991) tracks the genesis and eventual demise of the bourgeois public sphere. For Habermas (1991), the late 18th century public sphere was historically novel insofar as it brought together "a body of private persons assembled to discuss matters of public concern or common interest" (58). When public spheres first emerged in Europe, the opinions formulated through their discursive engagements commanded a kind of critical agency over otherwise absolutist states, which were, in principle, held to some measure of accountability by this unprecedented exercise of reason. Through this political relation, publics could engage state authorities in a debate "over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of

commodity exchange and social labor” (Habermas 1991: 27). Because the public sphere emerged through this critical engagement with the state and its different relations of ruling, Habermas insists on an analytical distinction between the public sphere and the institutional apparatuses of the state (Warner 2002: 38). In making such a topographical distinction about the political realm, which is explored in more detail by Coole (2000), law can be easily equated with its institutional variants, a force that exists above and apart from the discursive engagements of the public sphere.

Critical responses to Habermas’ work have shown how the birth of this bourgeois public sphere coincided with the innovation of a new mode of political power that, in principle, is premised on the consent of those it rules (Ryan 1993, Warner 2002). According to these critiques, the processes of deliberation that constitute the public sphere actually function as a “mask of domination” (Fraser 1993: 119), the recognition of which complicates a strict a distinction between the state and the public sphere insofar as electorates are enjoined in their own self-governance. Although my dissertation builds on these insights, I did not design this research to prove whether publicity functions as either a mechanism of liberatory critique *or* as an agent of domination and subjugation. Instead, my dissertation examines how the meanings and sentiments fomented by the circulation of texts about crime produce certain kinds of relations between legal, state, and public actors. In this vein I show how the sentiments and desires that suffuse juridical publicities enjoin readers in relations that extend the force of law across time and space. For instance, as concerns intensified about the Lincoln Park muggings, readers participated in practices of juridical observation and surveillance as they watched for (black) people who resembled the police sketch, extending the racial force of law across the neighborhood. Through my

analyses in each chapter, I will show how law works through institutional state apparatuses as well as public iterations of cultural desire, concern, and anxiety.

Recent research on the politics of crime control typically construes public sentiments about crime as a mere epiphenomenon of political manoeuvring and state manipulation, implying that these sentiments necessarily succeed and validate specific political agendas. Sociologist Katherine Beckett (1999) concludes that, “public opinion has traditionally followed rather than led political mobilizations” (96). Of course, the logics and sentiments that animate these modes of publicity often serve conservative, ‘undemocratic’ political ends (Caldeira 2000, Young 1996). In this project, I track how the dynamic trajectories of these juridical sentiments exceed the bounds of instrumental political mobilization insofar as they are irreducible to the tangible agendas of legal and political authorities. The kinds of fear, anger, and uncertainty that mediate public engagements about crime engender less predictable, often politically fractious forms of socio-political action. When public actors are enlisted in the vigilant surveillance and governance of urban spaces, if only in the virtual domain, the affective intensity of their interventions in the political domain can complicate and undermine the rational, bureaucratic management of the city, which is often the goal of legal and civic authorities (Blomley 2003, Valverde 2003).

Public Commonalities

According to Habermas (1991), the public sphere maintains its political authority because the discursive engagements it facilitates recurrently figure as a pivot of commonality for people with diverse, often competing political interests. In cities organized by mass media, processes of discursive mediation and affective valuation determine exactly what events, places, and phenomena *become* public as well as *how*

common they appear to readers. By analyzing the press surrounding Clarence Thomas' confirmation hearings,⁵ Fraser (1992) illustrates how racial and gendered relations of power subjected Anita Hill to more scrutinizing forms of publicity than Thomas, who was better able to dictate what aspects of his life were to remain private. In light of these differential forms of scrutiny, Fraser (1992) explains that:

the way the struggle unfolded depended at every point on who had the power to successfully and authoritatively define where the line between the public and private would be drawn. It depended on who had the power to police and defend that boundary. It depended as well on who had the power to police and defend that boundary (596).

Through this analysis, Fraser (1992) illustrates how publicity is a dynamic, mutable force of sociality that transform certain events, actors, and places into axes of visibility and commonality for a variety of readers. In Chicago, texts about the Lincoln Park muggings circulated so rapidly, not because of the imminent danger of violence they posed to city residents, but because of how the area where these attacks occurred is valued as a place of safety and security by a broad spate of public and political actors. Likewise, the publicity of Indo-Canadian gang shootings in Vancouver varied according to the location of the shooting, their proximity to white bystanders, and their implication in "gang wars" that threaten the juridical order of the city. To build on the existing literature about publics, I track how public engagements about crime are shaped by racial attributions of commonality between social actors, determinations of similarity or affinity judged

⁵ In 1989, President George H.W. Bush nominated Clarence Thomas for an open seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. When news broke that Thomas had sexually harassed his former employee Anita Hill, the confirmation hearings became a public spectacle across the United State, subjecting each of their sexual histories to different amounts of debate, gossip, and scrutiny (Fraser 1992).

according to some shared biological, cultural, or aesthetic difference. As I explore throughout this dissertation, these racial commonalities affect the extent and temporality of an event's circulation in the public sphere as well as the intensities of readers' textual engagements about crime (Buffam 2009).

As crime is subject to different processes of discursive engagement and contestation, juridical publics acquire a distinctly biopolitical force that modulates the exercise of law. Biopolitical modes of governance, which affect the political management of life, differentiate between populations whose lives are protected and cultivated and those who are abandoned and left to die, an idea to which I will return later in this introduction (Foucault 2003, Mawani 2009, Stoler 1995). Through this dissertation I illustrate how juridical publics affect the biopolitical valuation of life as racial attributions of commonality determine what crime is circulated across time and space, the temporality and extent of its circulation, and the ways in which violence is memorialized and politicized by different state officials and public actors.

Reason and the Public Sphere

According to Habermas (1991) and his interlocutors, publics and public spheres are formed and maintained through some mode of discursive engagement, the most recognizable idioms of which are debate, dialogue, and deliberation (Eley 1993, Warner 2002). Exactly what topics are discussed and contested vary across contexts, but they become the axis of these engagements because they are of concern to the social actors involved. For Habermas (1991), these states of concern are a function of conscious, rational engagement through which actors practice a kind of semantic dialogue or debate, all with the intent of isolating a common public opinion (Fraser 1990). In this formulation of the

public sphere, a disembodied rational subject acts as the pivot of discursive engagement. According to the liberal political imaginary of this institution, participants in the public sphere should bracket all personal and private matters in their deliberations, acting in a relation of negativity to themselves (Lee 1993). The maintenance of a properly open and accessible public sphere requires excluding all traces of status inequality from its discursive engagements (Fraser 1992).

Many of the critical responses to Habermas' work have taken issue with his formulation of a disembodied, impersonal subject as the axis of public engagement (Berlant 2008, Warner 2002, Fraser 1990). The public engagements of social movements have often contested axes of inequality by publicly rearticulating the discursive bases of their subjugation rather than to merely negate or sublimate them in the public sphere (Lee 1993). An arena of dialogue unblemished by inequality actually serves to mask and reinforce the distinctions between participants in the public sphere (Fraser 1990). Through this research I document how racial relations of power continue to shape how texts are consumed and circulated by social actors who are differently positioned across urban spaces.

To conceive of public actors as agents of rationality overlooks the multiple ways in which texts act on and through their readers, what Lee (1993) describes as the "embodied sensibilities of self-realization [that are] characteristic of a modern, consumerist mass-mediated public sphere" (85). The recent non-representational turn in cultural theory has amply demonstrated that texts enfold readers in different relations of affect, feeling, and desire that exceed the plane of conscious rationality, which has typically been the focus of political and sociological analyses (Thrift 2008, Clough 2007, Massumi 2000). Building on

this literature, I show that juridical publics are not only bound together by instrumentalist concerns about crime, such as its tangible economic and physical costs, but also by more diffuse sentiments and affective states of concern, which color these relations with different modulations of desire, uncertainty, and apprehension. In the next section of this chapter I explain how these affective and instrumental states of concern are both a condition and consequence of localized racisms. First, I consider in more detail how juridical publicities form and extend their bounds through the production and modulation of these states of concern.

The parameters of publics constantly change and mutate as readers are drawn in by or grow disinterested in specific textual exchanges (Warner 2002). During their everyday routines and movements through the city, people are hailed and engaged by a multiplicity of texts about crime. These encounters range from momentary glimpses of newspaper headlines visible on public transit or in commercial newspaper dispensers, to the routinized consumption of television nightly news stories, to quotidian encounters with vernacular urban media, such as protest flyers, posters and graffiti. According to Warner (2002), the nominal attention of readers is all that is necessary for their participation in a given public, however momentary their engagement might be. Given how texts are circulated throughout the multiple and overlapping geographies of the city, it is imperative to attend to the dynamic, unpredictable ways in which publics form, dissipate and re-emerge through the variegated relations of textual exchange in Chicago and Vancouver.

THE RACIAL ORGANIZATION OF URBAN SPACE

Defining Race and Racisms

Race is a relation of power that creates specific uneven, hierarchical arrangements of people, capital, places, and populations (Hesse 2004, Mawani 2009, Stoler 1995). To conceive of race as a relation departs from prevailing sociological understandings that, despite their qualifications to the contrary, continue to make race a property of bodies and cultures. Even most sociologists that stress how racial difference is socially constructed typically make the object of racisms (i.e. 'skin color, the 'body' or occasionally 'culture') their point of origin (Hesse 2004), a habit that occludes the relations of power and force that (re)create its specific conditions of emergence (see Goldberg 2009 for a similar critique of prevailing sociological approaches to race).

In using this definition of race, I situate my dissertation in the literature that critically appropriates Michel Foucault's writings to theorize connections between power, race, and the biopolitical (Gilroy 2000, Mawani 2009, Stoler 1995). According to Foucault (1990), power is not simply a set of political institutions, nor is it equivalent to a substance that can be possessed by a group of people; rather, as he explains in *The History of Sexuality: Volume I*, power should be understood as

the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms strengthens or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another;

and, lastly, as the stages in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus (Foucault 1990: 72).

Following this reformulation of power, I situate race in the multiple relations of force that constitute a given field or realm of social relations. Insofar as power is also irreducible to its usual guise as a negative force that limits or represses specific political opportunities (Foucault 2003), my dissertation tracks the generative force of race across divergent socio-historical contexts, its capacity to produce different subject positions, geographies of inclusion and segregation, and relations of vulnerability to violence.

Foucault's writings on sexuality and security also track the genesis of a new mode of power he terms 'biopolitics', which he characterized as a revision of the sovereign power to "take life or let live" to the power to "foster life or disallow it to the point of death" (136). As they dovetailed with emergent disciplinary modes of power, biopolitical regimes work to maximize the vitality of the populations they govern through, "an acquisition of power over man insofar as man is a living being" (Foucault 2003: 239). By Foucault's estimation, the biopolitical is a technology of rule that,

tries to control the series of random events that occur in a living mass, a technology which tries to predict the probability of those events [...]. This is a technology which aims to establish a sort of homeostasis, not by training individuals, but by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal threats (243).

Through this "massifying" form of power, which governs at the scale of the population rather than the individual, state racisms constitute the "internal threats" to which Foucault

refers in this passage. In these fields of biopolitical intervention, state racisms act as a kind of caesura that differentiates those populations whose lives must be protected and cultivated from those that can be exposed or subject to violence and death (Foucault 2003, Foucault 1990). In this formulation, state racisms constitute “every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing to death, increasing the risk of death for some people or political death, expulsion, rejection” (Foucault 2003: 245).

Critical race and postcolonial theorists have debated the merits of Foucault’s analytics of biopolitics and the validity of his historical genealogy of racism. Foremost amongst these critiques is the recognition, credited to Stoler (1995), that imperial formations are conspicuously absent from his accounts of 18th and 19th century formations of state power. Even though Foucault (2003) acknowledges that “racism first develops with colonization, or in other words, with colonizing genocide” (257), his work, when extrapolated to theorize the global trajectories of race, has obfuscated the imperial circuits of power through which state racisms acquired their force (Mawani 2009, Mbembe 2001). What I take from these writings is not a formulation of racism that is tied to singular historical conditions of emergence or to discursive analytics of blood and biology; rather I use this theory of biopolitics to explicate how racisms create relations of vulnerability to violence by creating certain arrangements people, places, and capital. In this vein, I illustrate how public discourses of crime and criminality serve as technologies of state racisms as they shape how crime is understood, policed, and distributed across the city (Keith 2005, Wacquant 2001); whose deaths are memorialized and subject to the visible administration of law (Buffam 2009, Grewal 2005); as well as the kinds of sentiments,

feelings, and affects that animate the public circulation of crime (Caldeira 2000, Zukin 1996).

In academic and vernacular contexts, race and racism are analytical *and* evaluative categories insofar as they are used to describe and denounce relations of power and inequality (Gilroy 2000, Goldberg 2009, Razack 2002). While this dissertation was designed to critique and disengage habituated ways of thinking racially about crime, I do not intend to suggest that racism is necessarily an individual moral failing. Rather, the principal goal of this project is to identify the multiple institutional, supra-individual forms that race acquires across different urban spaces. Biology is ordinarily conceived as the principal or sole grammar of these racisms (Miles 1992). Yet, as both Goldberg (2001) and Hesse (2007) illustrate, the iterations of difference through which populations are governed have never been reducible to strictly biological or genetic logics. In *The Racial State*, Goldberg (2001) distinguishes naturalist state racisms, which differentiate populations according to natural, immutable differences, from historicist state racisms, which differentiate populations according to cultural and historical differences that, in principle, can be overcome through the “appropriate” exposure to civilizing forces. Thus, while the concept of racism was formulated to repudiate the naturalist racial ideologies of National Socialism (Hesse 2004), I use the term to denote various political relations of ruling that order and rank phenomena according to a variety of criteria: phenotypical, aesthetic, cultural, religious, genetic, and historical (Hesse 2007, Stoler 1995). Throughout the dissertation I use the term ‘racism(s)’ to denote the apparatuses of power that create the conditions through which race materializes in a given locality.

In conceiving of cultural and historical differences as axes of racial differentiation, I follow Goldberg (1993) in complicating the traditional social scientific distinction between race and ethnicity, whereby the latter refers to an affiliation between people based on a shared sense of culture, history, or ancestry. With this project, I am principally concerned with the modes of power that configure culture as a substance or property of people(s) that enfold them in unequal relations of force and subjection. At different points in the dissertation I draw on postcolonial scholarship to explicate racial formulations of culture, especially their centrality to imperial apparatuses of knowledge production (Bhabha 1994, Chakrabarty 2007, Said 1990). While most postcolonial scholarship does not explicitly refer to ‘race’ as such, it has been instrumental in documenting the dynamic imbrications of law, culture, and capital from which racial relations of force have materialized (da Silva 2007, Hesse 2007, Stoler 1995).

Racial States of Concern

In cities transformed by regimes of settler colonialism⁶, race is evident in the construction and ruination of urban built environments (Davis 2006, Zukin 1996); the differentiation of urban landscapes into zonal areas (Wacquant 2008); and the distribution of capital, violence and vitality across these spaces (Nast 2000). Although the segregation of northern American cities is now treated as the model of urban racial geographies (Wacquant 2008), others situate the genesis of these socio-spatial regimes in the machinations of the colonial city (Fanon 1968, Goldberg 1993, Mawani 2009). The urbanization of settler and administrative colonies created constellations of material, symbolic, and affective boundaries that differently segregated the settler and native,

⁶ This is phrased to include cities that once served as settler colonies as well as those that became imperial metropolises, like London and Paris, which have been recreated by their centrality in networks of empire (Keith 2005).

colonizer and colonized, and white and black bodies. These boundaries have varied in their force and permeability, particularly as the vacillations of imperial capital created varied relations of proximity and intimacy between differently racialized bodies and populations (Mawani 2009, Keith 2005, Davis 2006).

Colonial authorities created vast apparatuses of knowledge production to preserve and entrench these racial relations of rule (Mawani 2009, Dirks 2001). Through these apparatuses authorities have sought to learn and cement racial truths about the subject populations they govern (Bhabha 1994). Yet, racial modes of identification have never achieved epistemic closure. As Gandhi (2006) explains, the desire “for secure psychic quarantine is always complicated by a perennial osmosis through which colonizer and colonized mutate unawares but inexorably into each other in the countless hybrid and interstitial sites of imperial antagonism” (3). Throughout this dissertation I attend to how this ambivalence structures the racial circulation of texts about crime, engendering relations of instability, anxiety, and desire that were especially palpable with the Lincoln Park muggings.

Apparatuses of segregation govern urban spaces, intensifying the bureaucratic rationalization of city space innovated in 19th century Europe (Goldberg 1993). Indigenous peoples that inhabited urbanizing spaces were dispossessed of their territory as legal title was consolidated to swaths of land peripheral to the city, a racial geography that was recreated and formalized in South Africa through the passage of the Group Areas Act in 1950 (Goldberg 1993, Jacobs 1996, Mawani 2003). In settler cities, ethnic enclaves were also created to house migrant bodies in spaces apart from the growing white population,⁷

⁷ Here I use the term ‘(im)migrant’ to refer to a mutable discursive category that envelops different bodies and groups according to the racial milieu in which it is invoked.

particularly as these groups were construed as an existential and biopolitical threat to the vitality of the properly civilized, ‘white’, ‘European’ population (Mawani 2009, Jacobs 1996, Anderson 1991).

During the early twentieth century, black ghettos emerged across the American industrial belt, (re)creating an abjected population as servile labor for the burgeoning manufacturing industry (Wacquant 2008, Nast 2000). These socio-spatial formations of race, of which there are a plethora of global variants, transformed urban landscapes into clusters of typologized racial zones (‘ghettos’, ‘skid rows’, ‘Chinatowns’, ‘suburbs’) (Razack 2002, Anderson 1991). The boundaries of these spaces are crafted through legal technologies of public health (Mawani 2003, Goldberg 1993), urban planning (Davis 2006, Zukin 1996), and crime control (Herbert and Brown 2006, Kemple and Huey 2005). Racial relations of power are emergent from the differential distribution of crime, violence and death across the city. In this dissertation, I examine the biopolitical force and dimensions of these racial geographies of crime. In so doing, I pay particular attention to the multiple, occasionally divergent ways in which these geographies are made public as well as how racisms are produced through the differential processes of circulation and valuation to which life is subject to state racisms. These relations of publicity are constitutive of the “racial states of concern” that are a principal focus of this dissertation.

I understand racial states of concern as the affective conditions of desire, anxiety, and uncertainty that create and modulate relations between residents of urban spaces. Texts about crime interpellate and catalyze these states of concern as they circulate across the city, soliciting certain ways of engaging and acting on the phenomenal forms of crime. Through their textual circulation, the Lincoln Park muggings incited feelings of anxiety,

uncertainty, and dread that were enfolded into the public relations that compose urban spaces. In light of my earlier formulation of biopolitics, we can understand the racial force of these states of concern in a number of ways. On the one hand, they are emergent from racial arrangements of spaces, populations, and capital that affect the differential distribution of crime across the city. Certain events, people, and places only figure as the axis or object of these concerns because of their positioning in these racial geographies of crime, which condition the pace, extent, duration, and intensity of their circulation. On the other hand, these states of concern recreate and intensify certain ways of sensing, spatializing, and acting on crime, engendering the specifically racial modes of scrutiny that will be the focus of Chapter Four.

To excavate these states of concern, I attend to how race is emergent from and generative of the affective, psychic dimensions of cities. Although these ‘non-representational’ dimensions of urban life have been mostly neglected until the recent ‘affective turn’ in cultural theory (Thrift 2008), early sociological accounts of the city gesture to an idiomatically *urban* ‘state of mind’, one that vacillates between poles of defensive indifference and reserved hostility (Mawani 2012A, Simmel 1971, Park and Burgess 1925). Recent work in cultural geography has similarly shown the city to exist as a “roiling maelstrom of affect” (Thrift 2008: 8) that is reproduced through political modulations of fear, anxiety, affection, and misanthropy (Shields 2011, Pile 2005). In this project I examine how apparatuses of textual production and circulation work on and through the differentiated geographies of affect and sentiment, which shape how readers engage with the racial discourses of criminality in each city. Accordingly, my dissertation

will illustrate how the phenomenal forms of crime mediate the dimensions of these non-representational geographies of race.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

In the next chapter I explain how I have undertaken the awkward comparison that forms the backbone of this dissertation as well as its capacity to illuminate the mutability of race as a relation of power. Here, I specify exactly how I generated the data that was analyzed through this awkward comparison. To document the public forms of race in Vancouver and Chicago, I have focused my research on legal, media, and vernacular texts that are generated through the apparatuses of textual production that form mediascapes in each city. In *Modernity at Large*, Appadurai (1996) formulates the concept of mediascape to reveal two interrelated facets of textual production: “(1) the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information [...] (2) and the images of the world created by these media” (35). In this formulation, the semiotic contents of texts, as well as the lifeworlds they project, are inextricable from the material practices through which they are distributed and circulated to readers across a variety of social and geopolitical contexts. While Appadurai (1996) stresses the transnational scale of these mediascapes, I attend to apparatuses of textual production that traverse and reconstitute relations of publicity in Vancouver and Chicago, illuminating distinctly localized mediascapes in each region.

In each city, these mediascapes act as principal agents of localized racisms, as the texts they produce command the capacity to describe, create, and allegorize different relations of power and sociality. Throughout this dissertation I have approached texts as ‘material’⁸ artefacts of variable truth practices and affective relations, focusing my data

⁸Here I understand material to mean the discernible and evident traces created through practices of textual production, traces that can be ‘read’ or ‘consumed’ sometime in the future (Warner 1990). While virtual

collection on visually and orally mediated discourses of crime and criminality. To effectively detail how race is emergent from these mediascapes, my dissertation attends to the discursive content(s) and context(s) of textual production as well as the socio-political conditions of their dissemination, describing the different speed, duration and extent of their circulation (Lee and Lipuma 2002, Warner 2002).

Each chapter identifies the specific sources of data I used to detail the public force of race. While most of the texts I collected were published between 2000 and 2010, the temporal parameters of my data collection were dictated by the historical trajectory of the discourses I analyzed, which, in certain instances, required me to locate texts published as early as 1984. To identify the textual mediums that are formative of these regimes, I immersed myself in the mediascapes and public realms of each city. I used my time living in Vancouver and Chicago to acquire a better sense of the concrete ways in which texts circulate between readers as well as the duration and extent of specific public concerns about crime. In an earlier iteration of this project I also tried to document the public forms of race through observational research methods, inhabiting public spaces across each city to identify how race structures everyday relations of contact and disassociation between strangers. While the data generated from this research differed too much from what I produced during my textual analysis, my experiences in these public spaces provided me with a better sense of the divergent habits and geographies of race that are formative of the public realms in each city.

Four commercial daily newspapers published in each city served as the primary source of data for this research: *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Province*, *The Chicago Tribune*,

news mediums are not typically thought of as ‘material’, I include them in this data set because the texts they circulate have the same relative permanence, accessibility, and visibility.

and *The Chicago Sun-Times*. By virtue of their daily circulation and expansive readership (see Table 1.1 below for exact circulation numbers), these newspapers act as principal mediums of publicity in each city. Each of these newspapers also publishes virtual and print editions of their publications. From their print editions I gathered various news stories, editorials, photographs, maps, cartoons, and letters to the editor. Most of these texts were located by combing over back issues of these newspapers published between 2000 and 2009, which were archived on microfiche in local libraries in each city; this method of data generation allowed me to situate texts in the specific historical and political contexts of their production and circulation I found a small fraction of other texts through Boolean searches on print media databases.

Table 1.1 Circulation Numbers for Daily Commercial Newspapers⁹		
Newspaper	Daily Circulation	Saturday Circulation
Chicago Sun-Times	470 548	268 418
Chicago Tribune	414 930	321 190
The Province	144 537	157 525
The Vancouver Sun	156 183	184 483

The virtual infrastructures of these newspapers also figure prominently in local mediascapes. From their websites I collected many of the same types of texts listed above as well as data from virtual ‘comment’ forums and web interfaces, the most notable of which are interactive crime maps. These virtual agents of textual production facilitate forms of public engagement that differ from those generated by the circulation of print newspapers. Foremost among these differences are the kinds of reflexivity and response

⁹ These circulation statistics were compiled by the Alliance Audited Media (2010).

that are made possible by the different materiality of these mediums. ‘Letters to the Editor’ printed in daily newspapers have long been touted as a form of reflexive civic engagement between readers and media producers, even though the letters that appear in these papers have been chosen and revised for publications by staff. The technological infrastructure of virtual comment and discussion forums facilitate more direct and continuous forms of engagement between readers, even with the limits of intercourse imposed by some site administrators. According to Warner (2002), the continuous temporality of the internet differentiates its practices of circulation from the punctual forms of circulation that have been characteristic of the public sphere, leading him to conclude that “at the time of this writing Web discourse has very little of the citational field that would allow us to speak of it as discourse unfolding through time” (97). Advancements in the technological infrastructures of virtual news forums have facilitated these citational practices, transforming the nature of public engagements that are possible through the internet. Throughout this dissertation, I take care to examine how the materiality of these different mediums shapes the temporality, character, and tone of public engagements they foment and facilitate.

In addition to these daily newspapers, I have generated data from a variety of other print news media, which differ in the temporality and scale of their circulation. These include local print newspapers with weekly circulations, such as *The Chicago Reader* and *The Georgia Straight*, as well as daily newspapers with national and global readerships, including *The National Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *The New York Times*. From these sources I gathered texts directly related to issues of race and crime that I located through Boolean searches, or because they were cited by other texts that I had already collected.

Books and magazine articles also served as a valuable source of data. Magazines with local and national readerships have published texts about crime in each city that figure prominently in their localized mediascapes. Although texts published in national magazines are not subject to the same local conditions of intelligibility, their circulation shapes how crime is intelligible in each city, warranting their inclusion in my data set. I have also analyzed a number of books, both fictional (*Daaku* and *Londonstani*) and non-fictional (*Gang Leader for a Day* and *Vancouver Special*), that examine crime and criminality in Vancouver and Chicago. While readers engage with fictional texts differently than the news texts I have discussed thus far, these texts still shape public discourses of crime in each city.

I have also gathered and analyzed texts produced by virtual and cinematic mediums of textual production. Virtual weblogs and community discussion forums play an increasingly substantial role in local mediascapes. In Chapter Three I draw heavily on texts circulated through a Chicago neighborhood weblog to illuminate the racial modes of identification that govern gentrifying areas of the city. I also drew data from discussion forums that cater to different Sikh and South Asian publics, in Vancouver, Canada, and across the globe. According to Axel (2001), virtual forums like these have played an influential role in reformulating the political engagements of the Sikh diaspora. In 2009, Vancouver filmmakers made two documentaries about the ‘problem’ of Indo-Canadian gangs: *A Warrior’s Religion* and *Warrior Boyz*. Screened locally on public access television, as well as at local and international film festivals, these films have shaped public knowledges of the Indo-Canadian gangster.

Finally, I have collected and analyzed texts authored by state and legal actors that shape the public forms of race in each city. These texts include civic by-laws passed to combat the public presence of gangs on Chicago streets and sentencing decisions that pertain to gang violence. In Chapter Five, I engage most extensively with this genre of texts when I analyze how state bodies make public the racial force of their institutional practices. Here, I generate data from a variety of texts produced in relation to two public inquiries into allegations of state misconduct: the Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182; and the multiple investigations into charges that Chicago police officers committed torture under the command of Jon Burge. Each of these inquiries has generated a wealth of texts, including expert witness reports; media primers; as well as the final reports penned by the actors who headed each investigation. Although the juridical authority of these texts makes them distinct from the others I analyze in this research, they offer critical insights into the way race and racism are understood and publicly articulated by state actors in these mediums of accountability.

OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The remainder of the dissertation is organized into four chapters, followed by a conclusion that clarifies exactly how this project contributes to our understanding of the public forms of race and crime in contemporary Vancouver and Chicago, as well as the circulating logics and continuities between these localities. In **Chapter Two** I provide the historical and methodological context for my juxtaposition of these two localized regimes of race. Upon specifying the intent and analytic basis of this ‘awkward’ comparison, this chapter details the thick socio-historical contexts through which race materializes in each

city, clarifying exactly how I conceive of the process through which race localizes in these two cities.

Each of the next three chapters explores how race organizes the public dimensions of distinct political realms in Chicago and Vancouver: public space, the domestic sphere, and apparatuses of the state. By centering the chapters on these different political realms, I illustrate the multiple juridical forms that race acquires within and across localities.

Chapter Three, “Public Sightings”, focuses on nightclubs in Vancouver and sidewalks and street corners in Chicago, examining the racial modes of identification that organize public spaces subject to urban restructuring. By explicating the specific racial logics and structures of feeling that govern the visibility of public spaces, this chapter documents the concrete relations of force that materialize through the public circulation of texts about crime. In both cases, these modes of identification position certain private actors – “neighbors”, “property owners” and “business owners” – as critical nodes in the racial governance of urban spaces. In **Chapter Four**, “Private Homes, Public Housing”, I illustrate how the domestic spaces of certain minority populations are intelligible as agents of crime and criminality in the broader public sphere. By attending to the discursive visibility of the Indo-Canadian home and Chicago public housing, this chapter illuminates the racial relations of scrutiny, speculation and desire that organize the public spheres of each city.

Finally, **Chapter Five**, “Public Inquiries”, considers the different, often contradictory ways in which state institutions publicize their racial force. Here, I document the racial relations of accountability that organize two state sponsored investigations into the misconduct of officials in Vancouver and Chicago: (1) *The Commission of Inquiry into the*

Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182, which confronted the systemic racisms that mitigated the Canadian government's handling of the bombing and its investigation; and (2) the Special State Attorney's investigation into allegations that Chicago police officers participated in the systematic torture of African American suspects. Through my analysis of these texts, I illustrate how the modes of publicity that govern these inquiries limit recognition of the racial force of the state's institutions. In the **Conclusion**, I discuss exactly what this juxtapositional analysis of race in Chicago and Vancouver contributes to our collective understanding of its mutability across different socio-historical contexts, particularly as race materializes through localized discourses of crime and criminality. Upon taking stock of this project's limitations, the conclusion flags directions for future research on the connections between race, law and publicity in urban spaces.

CHAPTER ONE – AN AWKWARD COMPARISON? THE SINGULARITY OF LOCAL RACISMS

THE POLYMORPHOUS WORKINGS OF RACE

Polymorphism, noun:

the condition of occurring in several different forms;

biology the occurrence of different forms among the members of a population or colony, or in the life cycle of an individual organism,

genetics the presence of genetic variation within a population, upon which natural selection can operate,

computing a feature of a programming language that allows s routines to use variables of different types at different times

(Online English Dictionary 2013).

Race is best conceived as a *polymorphous* relation of power. Not merely a biological or socio-cultural quality of bodies, race is a dynamic, shifting relation of force that ranks and orders people according to a variety of fabricated differences (Hesse 2007, Mawani 2009, Stoler 1995). To think of this relation as polymorphous, as “occurring in several different forms” (Oxford English Dictionary 2013), departs from habituated social scientific ways of understanding and documenting race. In sociological studies of racism in Canada and the US, the nation is ordinarily conceived as *the* geopolitical scale through

which racial relations of power acquires their ‘exclusionary’ force (Mackey 2002, Razack 2002, Thobani 2008). By the logics of this prevailing perspective, race is that which *excludes* people from the symbolic space of the nation (da Silva 2007). While the urban dimensions of race have been extensively documented by American sociologists, particularly as they organize the African American ghetto, these racisms are ordinarily viewed as a proxy or extension of a national racial imaginary. More specifically, Chicago’s geographies of segregation are often positioned as paradigmatic of American racisms (Wacquant 2008), obscuring what is unique about the modes of socio-spatial differentiation there. If race is indeed polymorphic, this fixation on the national scale of racisms obscures how this relation of power forms through a variety of spatial and geopolitical scales (ex. ‘the global’ and ‘the urban’), the parameters of which have been constituted and reworked through the global trajectories of empire (Bhabha 1994, Mignolo 2011). A comparative analysis that is not tethered to a single geopolitical scale can offer unique insights into how racisms operate through local and transnational formations of power. Moreover, most social science research, however critical, typically configures race as a figment of ideology that can be transcended by unveiling the real(ity) that exists beyond its illusory formulations.¹⁰ As I illustrate throughout this dissertation, the polymorphous workings of race demand attention to its multiple, often divergent valences, which may be discursive, material, psychic, affective and ideological (Goldberg 2009, Hesse 2007, Mawani 2009, Saldhana 2006).

In his latest book *The Threat of Race*, David T. Goldberg (2009) stresses that, to document these different valences of race, we must pay careful attention to the local and

¹⁰ In this work, ideology is likened to a dream, from which one can be awakened through the acquisition of knowledge, rather than the discursive formulations of ideology advanced by theorists such as Althusser (2001).

regional circumstances of its (re)production. Thus, studies of race and racism must situate their relations of force in the context of their specific conditions of emergence, which he terms “racial regionalizations” (36). Heeding Goldberg’s admonition, this dissertation documents the competing, divergent, and polymorphous effects of racisms in relation to the “thick contexts of the different if related geopolitical regions in which they are embedded, the specific conditions of which concretize the notion of race representing them” (Goldberg 2006: 322).

While Goldberg (2009) speaks of ‘racial regionalizations’, I have centered my analysis on localized racisms that are characterized by specific semiotic logics, discursive practices, and affective intensities. As idiomatically local modes of governance, these racisms shape the relations of force that exist between different phenomena in particular localities (Mawani, 2009, Stoler 1995). Rather than understand locality as a function of space and scale, which would lead to its conflation with the city or the neighborhood, I follow Appadurai (1996) in conceiving of a locality as a “complex phenomenal quality, constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of context” (Appadurai 1996: 179). By conceiving of localities in these relational terms, I explicate the juridical forms of racisms as they materialize through each city’s mediums of publicity, determinations of spatial and moral proximity, and experiences of cultural and political commonality.

In this chapter I provide the historical context and methodological rationales necessary to juxtapose and compare localized racisms in Vancouver and Chicago. The next section of the chapter details the methodological strategies I employed to document and convey the specificity of these localized racisms. These strategies include an ‘awkward

comparison’ of how racisms animate the public trajectories of crime in each city as well as a rigorously anecdotal mode of writing that juxtaposes the thick sociohistorical contexts through which racial logics and practices materialize. The bulk of this chapter details the sociohistorical conditions of racisms in each locality, illustrating how contemporary modes of racism are at once an artifact and mutation of colonial apparatuses of power. Given the different colonial histories of Canada and the US, and their specific geographic configurations, a comparison across cities in each of these national contexts will provide especially fruitful insights into how racial relations of power emerge from the different trajectories of empire. In the third section, I detail the socio-political processes that positioned ‘the neighborhood’ as a principal axis of race in Chicago. The final section of the chapter examines the racial relations of force that have constituted the South Asian population of Vancouver as an ‘Indo-Canadian community’. In sketching these divergent trajectories of racialization, I illustrate how attention to the dynamics of slavery and segregation in Chicago and sovereignty and settlement in Vancouver can illuminate the deep dynamics of race across regional and national contexts.

THE ANALYTICS OF AN AWKWARD COMPARISON

The recent renaissance in comparative sociological research has provided invaluable insights into the disparate and often divergent local conditions of contemporary processes of globalization, countering abstract theories untethered to specific contexts (see Burawoy 2000, Chun 2009, Lamont and Thavenot 2002). By rigorously comparing different social and geopolitical spaces, research guided by this methodological ethos of comparison has generated knowledges of the unique sociohistorical contours of each research site. At a more basic level, comparative analyses offer social scientists new ways of understanding

and reframing the sites they study (Go 2008). Typically these comparative methodologies are also designed to facilitate causal explanations of the idiomatic differences between these sites, identifying the divergent ways in which a certain global process materializes in each localized context (Burawoy 2000). For instance, Julian Go (2008) employs this method of comparative analysis in his historical research on the formation of imperial elite classes in the American colonies of Puerto Rico and the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century. For Go (2008), these sites exhibit a strategic isomorphism in their common histories of colonization by Spain and the United States. In his analysis, the similar cultural grammars of imperialism apparent in these sites serve as the basis for comparing important differences between their imperial regimes. In studies of this kind, these divergences are the focal points of analysis to isolate and explain certain mechanisms of causation (Lamont and Thavenot 2002).

The racisms that have localized in Chicago and Vancouver lack the strategic isomorphism¹¹ that often anchors comparative methodologies: they have formed through divergent histories of settler colonialism, racism, and spatialization; are differently situated in global movements of people, commodities and capital; are not geographically proximate and do not share topographical similarities; and are shaped by markedly different scales of textual production and circulation. Rather than bracket or work around these differences, I track the force of race across these divergent sociohistorical circumstances. Through this mode of analysis, my dissertation offers invaluable insight into the multiple racial relations of power that organize post-industrial cities, while also advancing our understanding of

¹¹ By strategic isomorphism I mean the combination of similarities and differences that facilitate a casual explanation of the social phenomena in question.

each locality's conditions of racialization from their current standings in the existing literatures on race and empire.

Sociologists have provided an extensive archive of information about the racial geographies that govern the lives of African Americans in Chicago (Carr 2006, Nast 2000, Wacquant 2008, Wilson and Taub 2008). While much of this literature effectively situates the formation of these boundaries in the historical circumstances of the American city, it gives little sense of how these racisms converge with as well as diverge from more global apparatuses of race and empire. Despite recent work to the contrary (Hesse 2011, Singh 2005), the fabricated singularity of the American nation-state often obfuscates how its unique racial relations of power have been forged through global trajectories of empire (Hesse 2004). Conversely, what little contemporary research examines the subjugation of Vancouver's South Asian population ignores and occludes the racial logics and practices that shape the cultural and political engagements of this minority group, despite the fact that postcolonial scholars have illustrated how circuits of empire were formative of this diasporic population (Axel 2001, Ballantyne 2006, Mawani 2012B).

By comparing how these relations of power materialize through discourses of crime in each locality, this dissertation unsettles the fabricated singularity of American regimes of race, particularly as I reveal their emergence from and transformation of the imperial institution of transatlantic slavery (Gilroy 1995, Hesse 2011). In addition to foregrounding the oft-neglected coloniality of Chicago's racisms, my comparative analysis illustrates that these modes of power must also be situated within the singular historical context of the city, highlighting what is unique and not simply paradigmatic about its conditions of racialization. I chose to analyze these racisms, which govern differently racialized

populations, to reveal the mutability of racial logics and sentiments across geopolitical sites and populations. As I illustrate in Chapter Three, this comparison reveals exactly how race travels through American discourses of crime and blackness.

Faced with the disparities of these localities, I have developed a mode of comparison that is uniquely suited to detailing how racisms acquire their disparate forms through localized apparatuses of power. Whereas most comparative methodologies offer valuable explanations through the careful dialectical analysis of each site's particularities, my dissertation fixates on the concrete particularities of these racisms. To convey this specificity, I juxtapose the discursive logics, spatial boundaries, and modulated sentiments that are formative of these racial regimes, practicing what I have termed a specifically 'awkward comparison'. In each chapter, I ground this unconventional form of comparison in analogous technologies of racism that I observed at work in both contexts: the racial ontologies of danger that organize public spaces; the racial modes of scrutiny that pathologize the domestic spaces of minority populations; and the racial accountabilities that allow state actors to disassociate from the biopolitical force of each of their institutions. Through my comparative analysis, I illustrate how these technologies of racism acquire different spatial, epistemic, and relational forms through each locality's relations of power and force.

To be awkward, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (2013), is to be "lacking skill or dexterity", "not easy to handle or deal with", and "lacking the right proportions, size or harmony of parts". While these qualities may appear as challenges for comparative methodologies intent on strictly causal explanations or systematic accounts, they are a methodological virtue for research intent on detailing the specific relations of

force that constitute localized racisms. Akin to the mode of translation proposed by Rey Chow (1995), this awkward comparison conveys the ‘stubborn singularity’ of each locality, which would be occluded by a comparison that synthesizes these differences into a ‘skilfully’ constructed causal narrative.¹²

To maintain the ‘awkwardness’ of this comparison I have used anecdotes as a method of conveying the specificity of each regime of race. Even though anecdotes are habitually used for narrative and illustrative purposes in sociological writing, their methodological value is often denigrated by social scientists because of their limited validity and reliability. In these epistemologies, the anecdote is opposed to theoretical and methodological rigor as these terms are understood in terms of diametrical oppositions: “humorous vs. serious, short vs. grand, trivial vs. overarching, specific vs. general” (Gallop 2002: 2). Because of the specificity of their subject matter, anecdotes are able to illuminate and refract the uncanny singularity of social and political processes (Gallop 2002), while also conveying the discursive logics and affective registers that structure everyday life (Stewart 2008).

I also maintain the awkwardness of this comparison to highlight the ‘disharmony’ between racisms in Vancouver and Chicago. On the one hand, the ghettoization of African Americans is often treated as the paradigmatic instantiation of contemporary racisms in public and academic discourses (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999, Hesse 2004). Indeed, as I explain in the next chapter, racial knowledges of blackness mediate concerns about Indo-Canadian gangs in Vancouver. Because of the long and storied tradition of urban sociology in Chicago, the city’s multiple geographies of segregation have been thoroughly

¹² To theorize this mode of translation, Chow (1995) reimagines the intent of Walter Benjamin’s (1968) oft-analyzed essay “The Task of the Translator”.

documented, particularly at the scale of the neighborhood (Carr 2006, Pattillo 2007, Wacquant 2008, Wilson and Taub 2008). As this regime of race has come to dictate the intelligibility of racisms beyond its context, race has become identifiable in terms of overt geographies of segregation; naturalist racial logics, which constitute differences as immutable biological qualities (Goldberg 2001); and divergent rates of crime and imprisonment. On the other hand, the racial governance of Vancouver's South Asian population has received very scant attention in the social sciences and the broader public sphere, as these racial relations of force are either characterized as 'ethnocentrism' or depoliticized as a function of 'cultural difference'.

These discrepancies in the intelligibility of race in each locality have shaped my comparison in two important ways. By juxtaposing how race materializes through the thick sociohistorical context of each city, I have guarded against a comparative analysis that would merely liken the racial governance of Indo-Canadians to the more familiar regimes of race in Chicago as a way of balancing the unevenness of this comparison. In fact, I have avoided presenting either of these regimes in terms that are dictated by how recognizable they are as 'racial' or 'racist' in the liberal democratic imaginary, which identifies race as a function of biological distinction, phenotypical contrast, or ideological excess (Hesse 2004, Miles 1992). Because race in Chicago has been the subject of far more academic research than in Vancouver, the existing research about each of these regimes is uneven in their empirical detail and theoretical focus. In order to make original contributions to the literatures on race in Vancouver and Chicago, I have centered each chapter on two distinct cases that reveal how race materializes through similar technologies of differentiation in a given political sphere of the city, even as they acquire distinct forms through each locality.

A comparison that synthesizes these regimes into a single analytical narrative would either replicate existing arguments about race and space in Chicago or neglect the analysis of fundamental aspects of Vancouver's unique racial regimes.

RACIAL NEIGHBORHOODS: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION OF CHICAGO

The neighborhood has a storied place in the cultural and political imaginaries of American cities (Ahmed 2000, Carr 2006). As both a geopolitical scale and cultural site of urban associations, the neighborhood assumes different forms of spatial and moral proximity between its residents. In these formulations, the neighbor is one with whom we share residential space as well as some sense of cultural, political, and moral commonality (Ahmed 2000). Sociologists have treated the neighborhood as the principal locus of race in modern American cities, positioning its boundaries as the point from which different geographies of segregation originate and extend across the city (Wacquant 2008, Wilson and Taub 2008). The analytic of exclusion that is privileged in these accounts configure race and racisms in terms of some measure of distance from a spatial, psychic, and interpersonal boundary, often without attending to the modes of subjection and differentiation through which geographies of race acquire their force and traction (da Silva 2007).

In approaching the neighborhood as a principal site of racial division in Chicago, this dissertation analyzes the idiomatic modes of identification and scrutiny through which the neighborhood acquires its racial force and forms, drawing attention to how central slavery and segregation are to the dynamics of racialization at work in this context (Wacquant 2001). This section of the dissertation details exactly how the neighborhood emerged as a locus of race in Chicago through processes of intra-national migration, the

segregation and decimation public housing, and the rapid de-industrialization of the city's economy, all of which serves as necessary historical backdrop for the remaining chapters. Although this is also a history of white settler colonialism, it is both distinct from as well as connected to the history of South Asian migration to Canada as it is recounted later in this chapter.

Slavery, Segregation and the Black Belt of Chicago

Disagreements abound about the precise causal relation between race, empire, and the institution of Atlantic slavery. In his genealogy of American institutions of racism, Wacquant (2001) insists that the idea of race emerged from the 'color-coded' institution of slavery, mediating contradictions between the humanist rhetoric of American democracy and the violent 'unfreedom' upon which this legal regime was premised. For Wacquant (2001) and many of his sociological interlocutors, the idea of race that was eventually codified into scientific knowledge emerged as an ideological warrant for slavery, justifying the treatment of African populations as a natural extension of their inherent bestiality. In this historical narrative, race is envisioned as a uniquely American invention that has since spread to other geopolitical contexts.

Hesse (2007), on the other hand, suggests that slavery was born of the socio-political relations of force he calls 'race'. For Hesse (2007) and other critical theorists of empire (see Mignolo 2011, Robinson 1995), race is an artifact of the colonial encounter, one that sanctioned the political, legal, and cultural conditions that secured the bondage of black and African peoples. With this different political genealogy, race not only has a much longer history as a mode of power, one that precedes the semantic label or signifier of 'race', but also plays a fundamental role in the genesis of Western modernity (Gilroy 1995,

Mignolo 2001). While Chicago did not emerge as an urban metropolis until after the abolition of slavery, the technologies of power that facilitated the continuation of slavery had dramatic effects on the ontological and historical trajectories of race in this locality, gesturing to the enduring consequences of empire in American cultural politics (Gilroy 2000).

Critical theories of race have effectively detailed how ‘blackness’ has functioned as the dialectical obverse of whiteness and European civility as well as its point of negation (Fanon 1968, Mbembe 2001). Even before racial sciences postulated the biological inferiority of African natives, colonial apparatuses of governance categorized and distributed black bodies in terms of their fabricated bestiality, absence of divine grace, and incapacity for intellectual development (Goldberg 2001, Hesse 2004). Under the American institution of slavery, this racial imaginary acquired legal force as black people were consigned to objecthood as the property of white Americans, affording them the same legal status as livestock (Hesse 2011). Even after the abolition of slavery and the passage of Civil Rights in America, these discursive logics have continued to dictate the ontological standing of black, African, and African American populations, albeit through different discursive logics and practices (Singh 2005). Under these conditions of intelligibility, the social and political presence of American Americans is tethered to the historicity of blackness and its valences of negativity in the imperial regimes of Western Modernity (Fanon 1968, Mignolo 2011). While the dimensions of this historicity are analyzed in subsequent chapters, particularly as it affects discourses of crime and criminality, here I discuss how the abolition of slavery affected the historical trajectories of racialization in Chicago.

Like other cities in the American Midwest, the city of Chicago formed in the wake of colonial wars against the region's indigenous peoples that effectively decimated their populations (Cronin 1991). After the genocidal violence of the Northwest Indian Wars, the Potawatomi peoples were forced to treaty their land for an American military settlement on Lake Michigan, the first in a series of actions that would rid the area of any indigenous presence. As part of the War of 1812, the Potawatomi people mounted a siege of the fort that convinced American authorities to forcibly displace all indigenous peoples from the surrounding territory, thereby securing the conditions for colonial settlement. In the civic imaginary, the eventual birth of Chicago from this act of 'barbaric' aggression has become an allegory for the triumph of Western civilization over the repressive forces of nature.¹³ By the 1880s, Chicago's nodal position in transcontinental networks of commodity circulation transformed the city into a burgeoning metropolis, making it a prime destination for the populations of formerly enslaved African Americans that were fleeing the South en masse (Cronin 1991).

Between 1890 and 1920, the Great Migrations radically multiplied the African American population of Chicago, which grew from 36 000 people to more than 328 000 (Goldberg 2001). This mass exodus from the American South was instigated by a number of economic and political factors, each of which was connected to slavery's abolition and the subsequent era of Reconstruction. On the one hand, the implosion of the region's cotton industry, which had to continue without bonded labor, pushed many African Americans to cities in the North to find employment in its burgeoning manufacturing and industrial sectors (Wacquant 2001). On the other hand, many African Americans migrated north to

¹³ The Battle of Fort Dearborn is so central to civic lore that it is the first event commemorated on the city's flag by one of five stars.

escape the new forms of racial regulation and violence that emerged in the wake of abolition (Gilroy 1995). Just as Jim Crow laws circumscribed the political entitlements of African Americans, successive waves of revanchist racial sentiments (re)configured black bodies as objects of extralegal violence, buoyed by the rise of the Ku Klux Klan as a quasi-legitimate political entity (Goldberg 2001). After abolition, lynchings became public spectacles, staged in plain view and circulated through photographs and postcards. As a mechanism of racial power, lynchings worked to recreate the relations of force and subjection that had been codified under slavery (Hesse 2011).

In Chicago, African Americans were quickly circumscribed to the South Side of the city, which was home to the city's stockyards and meatpacking industries (Cronin 1991). Around the turn of the century, they became entrenched in territorial conflicts with Irish immigrants who had inhabited the area since the mid-19th century. These tensions came to a head in 1919 when the murder of a black teenager on a segregated public beach¹⁴ sparked a citywide race riot that lasted thirteen days, becoming the most lethal episode in the Red Summer that saw similar race riots across American cities (Hagedorn 2008). The different forms of violence¹⁵ that proliferated during the riots materialized the emergent boundaries of the ghetto that formed the city's 'Black Belt'. Transgression of these boundaries, however rare, engendered public and state practices of surveillance, harassment, and violence (Wacquant 2001). Racial anxieties about the perverse and animalistic sexuality of black men played a formative role in creating and modulating the boundaries of these early geographies of segregation (Nast 2000). Amidst the circulation of phantasmic scenarios of

¹⁴ While Chicago was not governed by the same formalized system of segregation as cities in the American South, public beaches on Lake Michigan were divided into 'white' and 'black' areas.

¹⁵ Criminologist John Hagedorn (2008) traces the 'drive-by shooting' as a specific form of violence to the 1919 Chicago Race Riot, when groups of white residents drove to the South Side to shoot at black bodies inhabiting public spaces.

black men raping white women, blackness was (re)constituted as an immediate and existential threat that had to be contained in order to preserve the juridical and biological order of the city (Goldberg 1993).

In this political climate of segregation, the Black Belt became a space of containment for the masses of African Americans arriving in Chicago, further burdening the area's already beleaguered infrastructure (Hunt 2009). Without an appropriate housing stock to serve this burgeoning population, the Black Belt soon became a popular target of urban reformers concerned about the indigence and blight it might spread across the city (Hirsch 1998). By the interwar eras, city officials responded to concerns about blight and poverty by funding a new stock of public housing that was to be at least partially insulated from the competitive pricing of the private housing market, which, according to reformers, had left vast numbers of people, especially African Americans, without appropriate shelter (Hunt 2009).

Urban planners eventually built these public housing projects atop the recently demolished 'slums' in the city's Black Belt. Proposals to erect projects beyond the boundaries of the ghetto were met with vociferous resistance from politicians and neighborhood improvement groups (Hunt 2009). Public pressures to minimize the cost of these projects, inflamed by anti-socialist rhetoric, led planners to design modernist high rise buildings that could maximize the number of tenants in a single complex. From the 1940s onward, housing projects like Henry Horner Homes, Robert Taylor Homes, and Cabrini towered over the segregated, biopolitical landscapes of the city (Hirsch 1998). As I explain later in this chapter, the circumstances of their creation doomed these housing projects to become infamous as spaces of crime and indigence, sparking the mass emigration of white

residents to the suburban periphery of Chicago (Leavitt and Venkatesh 2000, Wilson and Taub 2008).

Buoyed by this growth in its population and geographic parameters, the Black Belt developed its own cultural and political infrastructure. Through this process of infrastructural duplication, racial geographies were entrenched that circumvented public encounters across the socio-spatial boundaries of the ghetto (Goldberg 2009). While the industrial and manufacturing sectors served as the main source of employment for the Black Belt's residents, the institutional encasement of the South Side gave rise to a social division of labor that enables some measure of class diversity within the Black Belt (Wacquant 2001). In the neighborhood of Bronzeville, African American lawyers, doctors, and businessman formed a black middle class (Pattillo 2007). Even as the Black Belt was heavily stigmatized in the broader civic imagination, it was still a locus of economic, cultural, and political change in the city and nation at large. Because of its ambivalent legacy, Wacquant (2001) likens the Black Belt of this era to a kind of communal ghetto that insulated its residents from the discrimination they encountered beyond its boundaries even as they were sequestered to function as a supply of exploited labor for the nearby manufacturing sector.

Gentrification and the Deindustrialized Ghetto

As early as the 1930s, the South Side of Chicago was a key nodal point in the black public spheres that were instrumental in the evolution of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements (Singh 2005). After World War II, equal access to housing in Northern Industrial cities became a rallying point for these movements, whose assertive mass mobilization drove national desegregation campaigns (Goldberg 2009, Singh 2005). With

the landmark legal decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 and the eventual passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, the pressure applied by these movements helped institutionalize a political rhetoric that was, at least *prima facie*, anti-racist in that it outlawed any overtly discriminatory treatment of racial and ethnic minorities by state actors and institutions. The ascendancy of the Civil Rights paradigm of discrimination has made racism intelligible as a function of overt state action, disguising a variety of racial regimes that are (re)produced through (1) the private sector, (2) ‘civil society’, as well as through (3) the inaction of state actors, a point that I discuss in Chapter Five (da Silva 2009, Goldberg 2009, Hesse 2004).

Sociologists identify the early 1970s as a turning point in the forms of segregation that were anchored by the neighborhood as a distinct socio-spatial formation (Hunt 2009, Wacquant 2001). Amidst the civil unrest of this era, riots sparked by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X had major economic and political repercussions for these geographies of race. Cowed by union demands and urban unrest, many businesses in the industrial sector moved their factories to suburban and overseas locations, often with the promise of tax benefits and non-unionized labor (Wacquant 2001). In each of these new locations, the manufacturing businesses were also free of the spectre of black criminality and disorder that came to define the prevailing public image of the American inner city (Hagedorn 2008).

With the gradual departure of the city’s industrial sector, the Black Belt lost the principal source of work for its residents. As middle class residents fled the South Side for safer black suburban neighborhoods, the remaining population of the Black Belt faced high rates of unemployment; by 2000, 20% of North Lawndale residents were unemployed,

while half were on some form of public aid (Wacquant 2008). Through these socio-economic changes to the South Side, class segregation has been superimposed upon shifting patterns of racial segregation, creating a new type of institutionalized space that Loic Wacquant (2001) has termed the 'hyper ghetto'.

The evacuation of industrial and manufacturing capital from the Black Belt had dramatic effects on the public housing stock that had been heavily concentrated in the area. In the immediate wake of their construction, the high rise public housing complexes were burdened by infrastructural inadequacies caused by poor urban planning and inadequate funding (Hunt 2009). By the 1970s, growing resentment towards recipients of public housing, fuelled by emergent neoliberal criticisms of the welfare state, helped magnify the institutional neglect of these complexes. The steady deterioration of these complexes mirrored the decaying built environment of neighborhoods that had been destroyed during civil rights unrest. Even as less funding was put into the upkeep of these housing complexes, more residents became dependent on public housing in the face of soaring unemployment rates (Wacquant 2008).

In the absence of other opportunities, informal, typically illicit economies of drugs, sex, and violence proliferated in these complexes, often under the direction of street gangs. While public housing complexes became notorious as zones of unrelenting crime and disorder, sociologists have shown how these spaces evolved their own unique social and economic orders that mitigated and, in some instances, magnified their economic and legal insecurity (Levitt and Venkatesh 2000). In the mid-1990s, the growing antipathy for the welfare state prompted a sea change in the national ethos of public housing away from vast agglomerations of residents in inner city high rise complexes to mixed-income housing

distributed across the city. Over the last fifteen years, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) has demolished the majority of the buildings that composed notorious housing projects, opening up vast swaths of real estate for the city centre's gentrification and redevelopment (Hunt 2009).

In the wake of the city's deindustrialization, retail and finance capital eventually supplanted manufacturing as its source of economic vitality (Sassen 2001). After decades of public avoidance and institutional neglect, the city centre of Chicago acquired renewed importance in these new urban economies (Lloyd 2006). The gradual inflation of real estate prices in areas near the city's downtown pressed minority populations to move to neighborhoods in the South and Southwest peripheries of Chicago (Hagedorn 2008). On the North and West sides of the city, neighborhoods inhabited by Latino and African American populations became artistic enclaves, which, in turn, paved the way for the more intensive economic and political transformations of these areas (Lloyd 2006). Through these processes of gentrification, Chicago has undergone an extensive demographic inversion since the 1960s, as abjected black and Latino populations have been pushed to the suburbs while white capital reclaims the city centre from the inchoate threat of crime (Venkatesh 2008).

The enduring association of inner city spaces with blackness, crime, and danger has engendered landscapes of intensive surveillance and insecurity at the fault lines of gentrifying areas of the city. As I illustrate in Chapter Three, CCTV cameras, private security guards, and other technologies of crime control have been mobilized to create, maintain and extend the spatial and moral boundaries of the neighborhood. These assemblages of surveillance (re)situate black and Latino bodies in racial relations of force,

observation, and displacement (Hagedorn 2008, Herbert and Brown 2006). The public realms of gentrifying neighborhoods now serve as mediums of political concerns, fears, and anxieties about crime, which are projected onto a variety of people, places, and objects (Rai 2011).

Neighborhoods differently situated in these geographies of race have vastly different rates of violent crime. An average of the murder rates for each neighborhood in 2007 and 2008 reveal these patterns of segregation: predominantly white Chicago Community Areas (CCA) in the Northwest suburbs and on the North Side of the city centre had murder rates between 0 and 10 per 100 000 people; gentrifying CCA's and others that bordered more ghettoized areas of the city had murder rates between 10 and 30 per 100 000 people; and predominantly African American and Latino neighborhoods on West, Southwest and South Sides of the City had murder rates between 30 and 80 per 100 000, with Washington Park having the highest murder rate of 73.31 per 100 000.¹⁶ These geographic disparities in murder rates illuminate the biopolitical dimensions of localized regimes of race, as processes of segregation create radically different life expectancies for white, black and Latino residents of the city (Hagedorn 2008, Wacquant 2008).

RACIAL POPULATIONS: VANCOUVER'S INDO-CANADIAN COMMUNITY

Communities are commonly conceived as realms of voluntary associations that exist beyond the political machinations of the state (Pavlich 1996, Rose 1999). In Canadian cities, ethnic and immigrant communities are often framed in these terms, implying that the

¹⁶ Using crime statistics from the Chicago Police Department and the 2000 National Census, I calculated these neighborhood murder rates by creating an average of the number of murders in 2007 and 2008, which I divided by the neighborhood's total number of residents multiplied by 100 000. I averaged the number of murders over these two years to account for anomalous incidents in neighborhoods with historically low crime rates. I chose to calculate the rates per 100 000 to create more easily presentable and comparable statistics.

relations that compose these populations are a consequence of elective affinity and filiation (Bannerji 1999, Razack 2002). This idea of community, which originates from Latin and Indo-European words for ‘common’ (Pavlich 1996), presupposes that its members are bound together by some form of commonality that precedes and exceeds the realms of social and political organization. Across the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, racisms configure caricatured formulations of culture as the basis of commonality for the area’s Indo-Canadian community, disguising the relations of force that constitute this population as an object of racism.

This section of the dissertation explicates the racial logics and practices that have constituted this population as an ‘ethnic’ or ‘immigrant’ community, which, according to this imaginary, is bound together by common cultural mentalities and dispositions. Here, I track how these modes of racial rule and governance form through a dialectical convergence of (1) the regional dictates of settler colonialism and multicultural democracy with (2) the global circuits of migration and racial knowledge production, which have structured the movements of Sikh, Punjabi, and South Asian populations across a variety of regional and national contexts (Ballantyne 2006). By illuminating how these community relations are a function of racial governance, I work against the prevailing tendency to treat ‘ethnicity’ as an aspect of culture that is ontologically distinct from racial relations of power (Hesse 2007). Whereas the force of slavery and segregation were stressed in the histories of racism in Chicago, here I attend to the colonial dynamics of sovereignty and settlement in localized racisms. By juxtaposing the relations of force they create, this chapter pluralizes the prevailing analytical vocabulary through which contemporary racisms are identified and explained.

Imperial Trajectories of Knowledge and Migration

In Vancouver, local regimes of race have emerged from varied processes of colonial displacement, spatial segregation, and state regulated migration (Barman 2007, Anderson 1991). Like other settler colonies, Vancouver was born of the dispossession of indigenous territory, which colonial authorities seized by declaring the land uninhabited by the standards of European law (Blomley 2003, Harris 2003). Propelled by the burgeoning resource economy of the region, Vancouver became a key nodal point in imperial networks of frontier capital (Barman 2007). As processes of urbanization attracted migrant labor to the region, concerns about the health and vitality of the emergent Canadian nation guided racial apparatuses of the state, which circumscribed the civic and political lives of ‘migrant’ Asian populations (Mawani 2009, Razack 2002).

In 1907, these biopolitical anxieties sparked a citywide riot in which the homes, businesses, and bodies of Asian migrants became the target of racial violence (Mawani 2012, Barman 2007). Federal immigration officials used this episode of violence to escalate the legal regulation of immigration from China, India, and Japan, which already required Chinese migrants to pay a Head Tax to gain entry to Canada (Anderson 1991). Foremost among these changes was an order-in-council passed in 1908 that required migrants arriving to Pacific ports to arrive by way of a continuous journey, effectively banning all migration from the Indian subcontinent (Nayar 2004). It is these practices of state regulation that have *created* Chinese and Indian populations as political and demographic minorities (Mawani 2009). Recent scholarship has troubled the colonial imaginary that classifies these populations as ‘minority’ immigrants by premising citizenship on a racial temporality of presence and arrival that differentiates ‘native’, ‘settler’, and ‘migrant’

populations (Razack 2002, Thobani 2008). Yet, too often, such critiques can effectively reinforce these categorical distinctions as they obfuscate the divergent regimes of race that have governed different ‘migrant’ populations.

Until these restrictive immigration policies were lifted in the 1950s, the vast majority of South Asian migrants to Vancouver identified themselves as ‘Punjabi’ or ‘Punjabi Sikh’ (Nayar 2004).¹⁷ While South Asian migrants did not arrive in Vancouver until the early 1900s, Sikh and Punjabi migrants had travelled in imperial circuits of movement since the British Empire’s conquest of Punjab in 1849. Recent scholarship on the British Empire illustrates how these circuits of movement, which facilitated the coordinated circulation of people, goods, and knowledges over expansive distances, were essential to its economic and political vitality (Axel 2001, Burton 1998). After the formation of the British Raj, the populations of Punjab were enmeshed in state apparatuses of commerce, law, and war that multiplied and accelerated migration within and beyond the Indian subcontinent, drawing Sikh and Punjabi migrants to Australia, South East Asia, and North America (Ballantyne 2006, Mandair 2009).

These imperial state formations were animated by racial regimes of knowledge production that not only differentiated between subject and ruling populations (i.e. “Indian” and “European”, “Oriental” and “Occidental”) but also *between* subject Indian populations as well (i.e. “Muslim”, “Sikh”, and “Hindu”). Postcolonial and subaltern scholars have amply demonstrated how the British Raj materialized ‘racial’ distinctions between European colonial officials and the Indian populations they governed. These distinctions served as the basis of administrative regimes of empire that seized land for the extraction of

¹⁷ I stress that these migrants identified as ‘Punjabi’ as many migrants lived in other British colonies before settling in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

raw materials (Bhabha 1994, Chakrabarty 2002, Said 1990). As the emergent field of racial sciences established a common genetic origin for certain ‘European’ and ‘Indian’ populations (Baum 2006), state apparatuses did not mobilize biological differences as the basis of racial rule in the subcontinent, even as phenotypic markers were the basis of vernacular distinctions and exclusions in the quotidian spaces of empire (Cole 2002, Goldberg 2001). Instead, the apparent historical and political immaturity of Indian culture was the grounds for imperial rule, making it the burden of Europeans to guide ‘uncivilized’ populations into civilized modernity (Chakrabarty 2002). Relegated to a different trajectory of history, to which McClintock (1996) refers as “anachronistic space” (40), Indian populations were deemed incapable of practicing modern forms of democratic rule, warranting the creation and continuation of imperial state apparatuses (Goldberg 2001). British colonial officials employed racial technologies of governance to transform the cultural and political habits of the native populations, all with the promise of acculturating them to Western civility (Chakrabarty 2002).

As part of this imperial project, colonial authorities generated vast archives of knowledge to differentiate Indian populations according to imputed ethnic and religious distinctions (Cohn 1996, Dirks 2001). Through the work of European philosophers, demographers, missionaries, and ethnographers, what are now known as Indic religions (‘Islam’, ‘Hinduism’, and ‘Sikhism’) were transformed to resemble Judeo Christian, ‘ontotheological’ formulations of religion. Each of these religions entered colonial matrixes of knowledge production as an ontological lack or absence relative to the modernized religions with which they were compared, a relation that is commonly recreated in

contemporary debates about religion, secularity, and the public sphere (Mandair 2009, Bhabha 1994).

Under these conditions of intelligibility, *Sikhi* was translated from an everyday cultural practice into a metaphysical aspect of identity that is fixed to the personhood of its practitioners, creating the epistemic conditions for people to be identified or identify themselves as *Sikhs* (Mandair 2009). At this historical juncture, Sikhism was reconstituted through its repeated comparison with Hinduism, as British administrators and reformers stressed that the polytheism of Hinduism represented an obstacle to modernization (Ballantyne 2006). As Sikhs acquired positions of prominence in the British Raj, particularly as police and military officers, their visibility symbolized the capacity of the British Empire to quell, domesticate, and civilize ‘native’ opposition (Cohn 1996). Despite the political capital they acquired in colonial state apparatuses, Sikh men were governed by official knowledges that stressed their excessive martiality, making them figures of desire and danger in the British imperial imagination (Axel 2001). In their movements within and beyond the subcontinent, Sikhs remained subject to the ambivalent address of historicist racisms that repeatedly denied their entrance to modernity, even in the face of promises about their inclusion in the British Empire.

At the turn of the century, Vancouver’s South Asian population first formed amidst a broader, global migration of young Punjabi men who sought work in overseas resource economies, much of the income from which was returned to families as remittances (Ballantyne 2006). According to Ballantyne (2006), these early movements of people and capital were critical in forming the cultural identities and political infrastructures that facilitated the emergence of Sikh and South Asian diasporic public cultures. In the Lower

Mainland, their labor was primarily deployed in lumber camps and sawmills, while some migrants also worked in salmon canneries, agricultural production, and railway construction (Nayar 2004).

As the South Asian population of Vancouver grew rapidly, emergent regimes of race segregated these residents to zonal areas of the city, first near the lumber mills in the area where Kitsilano would form and then in the South East area of Vancouver still known as 'Little India' (Indra 1979). While these spaces existed on a different scale than Chinatown, they offered residents temporary reprieve from the harassment and discrimination experienced by Indian migrants elsewhere in the city, the precise details of which have not been thoroughly documented. Like other Sikh communities in Australia and the United States, this neighborhood included a Gurdwara that anchored the cultural and political engagements of its residents (Nayar 2008). Gurdwaras typically function as primary nodes in emerging diasporic networks, which accelerated the momentum of anti-colonial political movements (Axel 2001, Mandair 2009). In British Columbia, the emergence of a series of local newspapers that advocated self-rule in India led officials in Britain and India to regard the Sikh population of the area as potentially dangerous and insurrectionary (Ballantyne 2006).

The intensifying racial regulation of migration radically transformed Vancouver's emerging South Asian population. Without overt immigration restrictions, Canada's 'Indian' population grew from 300 to 5185 between 1903 and 1908. After the passage of the continuous journey clause, only 101 immigrants were allowed to enter Canada from India between 1909 and 1913, a pace that slowed even more between 1914 and 1918 when only one Indian migrant came to Canada (Nayar 2004). In 1914, the continuous journey

clause was invoked to deny entry to the passengers of the *Komagata Maru*, a Japanese steamship chartered from Hong Kong carrying 376 Punjabi migrants. As immigration officials sought a legal basis for this exclusion, the ship's passengers were forced to remain aboard the ship for two months before all but 22 of the passengers were forced to 'return' to India. There, 19 passengers were killed in a riot after colonial officials sought to arrest those implicated in the anti-colonial Ghadar party. The ship's exclusion has become a defining event in public and academic narratives of Canadian racism, especially as the spectacle of their exclusion symbolized the racial force of national and imperial sovereignty (Nayar 2004, Grace and Helms 1999). In her recent work on the *Komagata Maru*, Mawani (2012) unsettles this paradigm of national exclusion by showing how the ship's trajectories of movement were formative of new temporalities and landscapes of law, which shaped the direction of global anticolonial struggles.

Postcolonial Political Engagements

Indian Independence and the subsequent partition of Punjab in 1947 ushered in a new era of mobility for Sikh and Punjabi populations (Axel 2001, Ballantyne 2006). Although the Canadian government repealed laws that explicitly excluded immigrants on the basis of their country of origin, until the 1960's only a select number of South Asian migrants came to Vancouver through family sponsorship and migrant labor programs designed to attract 'skilled' white collar workers (Indra 1979). Vancouver's South Asian community only began to grow substantially after the Trudeau government passed the multiculturalism policy in 1971 as it created the legal conditions for a broader array of immigrants to enter Canada (Nayar 2008).

During the 1970s Sikh nationalist groups escalated their political agitation for a sovereign Sikh nation-state known as Khalistan (Ballantyne 2006). While these groups linked their vision of Khalistan to demands for national sovereignty articulated during partition, the idea of homeland that animated these struggles was forged through diasporic experiences of displacement (Axel 2001). Beginning in the 1980's, images of Sikh bodies that had been tortured by Indian police and military officers were circulated via mail and the internet. By projecting an ever-present threat of violence onto the political futures of Sikhism, these images helped radicalize the political engagements of the diaspora (Axel 2001). In 1984, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi responded to the threat of Sikh militarism by ordering a military siege of the Golden Temple of Amritsar, which resulted in the deaths of 83 military personnel and 492 militia members (Nayar 2004). Across the global Sikh diaspora, news of the siege multiplied membership and participation in Khalistani nationalist groups, while also accelerating a new wave of migration to Vancouver and other enclaves in Australia and the United Kingdom (Jacobs 1996, Nayar 2008). Amidst this new phase of mobility, a new category of migrants labelled as "Overseas Indians" gained an unprecedented economic and cultural influence on local and national politics in India (Appadurai 1996, Axel 2001).

Less than a year after the siege, Air India Flight 182 was bombed en route to Bombay from Montreal, killing all 329 passengers on board. Investigators eventually attributed the bombing to Sikh nationalist groups working out of the Lower Mainland, where the explosives had originated as part of a retaliatory attack against the Indian state. Canadian law enforcement officials have been unable to successfully prosecute the principal architects of the bombing. While Inderjit Singh Reyat was convicted of manslaughter in

1991 for the actual construction of the bomb, Ajaib Bagri and Ripudiman Singh Malik were both acquitted of murder charges in 2005 after the most expensive criminal trial in Canadian history (Bolan 2006A). In Chapter Five, I explain exactly how state racism circumscribed the law's capacity to effectively prevent and prosecute the bombing. Here, it is worth considering how public and legal responses to the bombing subjected the South Asian population of Vancouver to varied levels of state and public scrutiny, even as publics across Canada typically disassociated from the bombing as a national tragedy (Failler 20010).

In these local conditions of visibility, the turbaned Sikh male has come to metonymize the Sikh community and the local Indo-Canadian community more generally. These modes of representation rehearse colonial epistemologies that occlude the political presence of Sikh women while fabricating the misrecognition of different South Asian populations (Grewal 2006). Amidst the investigation into the Air India plot, news stories imprecisely implicated local Sikh institutions in the bombings, casting suspicion on the diasporic cultural engagements that are routed through Gurdwaras, private schools and credit unions. By the late 1990's, highly publicized conflicts about the leadership of local Gurdwaras, which manifested as a disagreement about the use of tables and chairs in *langar*, further magnified the perception that Sikhism was out of sync with the secular ethos of Canadian law. In 1998, these concerns were once again enflamed after the assassination of Tara Singh Hayer, the publisher of the local *Indo-Canadian Times* paper who had also been shot and paralyzed ten years earlier. Investigators believed that Hayer had been targeted for his vocal opposition to the use of violence in the struggle for Sikh self-determination (Bolan 2006A). Fifteen years after his murder, the Crown has not

charged anyone with Hayer's murder, recreating discursive cleavages between the South Asian population(s) and mainstream public media.

Beginning in the early 1990s, young South Asian men were also increasingly implicated in local economies of drugs and violence. According to law enforcement, groups known as 'Indo-Canadian gangs' first formed in the late 1980s as offshoots of local Chinese gangs that import and distribute cocaine. In the hierarchies of local organized crime envisioned by criminologists, Indo-Canadian gangs are typically positioned in the middle tier of this hierarchy between more entrenched organizations that coordinate the transnational distribution of drugs, such as the Hells Angels, and youth street gangs that lack the same level of organization and scale in their illegal activities (Gordon 2000).

Indo-Canadian gangs first gained local notoriety in 1994 after Ron and Jimmy Dosanjh were murdered by a rival group of cocaine dealers that included Bindy Johal and Peter Gill. After a costly criminal trial that exonerated Johal, Gill and their co-defendants of the murders, investigators discovered that Gill had carried out an illicit affair with juror Gillian Guess, who eventually made international tabloid headlines after she was convicted of obstructing justice in 1998. That same year, a series of targeted shootings in public spaces, culminating in the murder of Bindy Johal inside a crowded downtown nightclub, marked young South Asian men as potential threats to public safety. Since Johal's murder, concern about Indo-Canadian gangs has waxed and waned with spikes in the number of targeted shootings that involved young South Asian men, whether they are identified as victims or offenders. By 2006, the Indo-Canadian gangster had become so inextricably associated with local violence in Vancouver that a poll found that its residents blamed 'East

Indians/Indo-Canadians' for crime more than any other minority group (Bridge and Fowlie 2006).

In 2009, the city was stage to its most fatal gang war. Police have attributed the violence to a conflict over the supply of cocaine waged between a number of different local gangs: the Hells Angels; the Buttar Gang, Independent Soldiers and Sanghera Crime Group, all which are regarded as 'Indo-Canadian gangs'; the United Nations, a putatively 'multi-ethnic gang'; and the Red Scorpions, which became notorious for its affiliation with Jarrod, Jamie, and Jonathan Bacon (Bolan 2009). During this prolonged episode of violence, the Bacon Brothers became local celebrities as the press regularly reported on their daily activities, criminal or otherwise. Because they grew up in the middle class neighborhood of Abbotsford, public and legal discourses fixated on the implausibility of three white suburban brothers becoming involved in illicit urban economies, which were otherwise associated with minority populations. The growing publicity of white and multiethnic gangs decentred the prevailing racial imaginary of organized crime, complicating the racial explanations of criminality I analyze throughout the dissertation. That these gangs formed in suburban areas populated by Chinese and South Asian populations, such as Surrey, Richmond, and Abbotsford, has inspired racial fantasies that whiteness is being imperilled by cultural values and populations that are exogenous to the Canadian nation (Johal 2007).

These growing anxieties about the racial perversion of suburban life have intersected with the changing geographies of Indian migrant settlement in Metro Vancouver. While South Vancouver has long served as the principal residential zone of the city's South Asian residents, anchored by the Ross Street Temple built in the early 1970s, by the mid-1980s

most of this population was moving to Delta and Surrey, suburban municipalities proximate to the primary resource sectors that have served as a base of Indian migrant labor (Nayar 2004). These demographic transformations in the historically white working class city of Surrey spurred neo-traditionalist campaigns to erase the public presence of Indian, Sikh or South Asian ‘culture’. The principal focus of these campaigns was the regulation of the area’s built environment in a manner that suited the vision of a white nuclear family (Johal 2007, Mitchell 2006). Just as observers have bemoaned the waning importance of South Vancouver as a place of political influence for the South Asian diaspora, Surrey has been reconstituted as a periphratic space, one that is “in the city but not of the city” as it is characterized by dislocation and displacement (Johal 2007: 181). By 2011 South Asian residents made up 30.7% of Surrey’s population while representing only 6% of Vancouver’s total population¹⁸ (Frost 2010).

Since the 9/11 attacks on the United States, the bounds of Vancouver’s South Asian population have been shaped by the intensification of the War on Terror. Concerns about the porosity of national borders spawned new apparatuses of security that militarized immigration in and outside of North America (Mountz 2011, Puar 2007). Mobilizing Orientalist discourses, these new apparatuses of security have reconstituted Islam as an existential threat to Western civilization (Razack 2007). Under these conditions of intelligibility, “Muslim looking people” have been subject to intensive legal and public scrutiny by public actors, law enforcement, and border personnel, prompting some Sikh populations to publicly distinguish themselves from Muslims (Grewal 2006, Manalansan 2005, Puar 2007). Across Canada, the affective tenor(s) of the War on Terror has

¹⁸ In 2006 Census Canada did not published statistics about minority groups in Census Metropolitan Areas like Vancouver, focusing its data generation on migrant statistics (Frost 2010).

repositioned the Air India Bombings as national tragedies in the collective historical imaginary (Seshia 2012). In Vancouver, these new apparatuses of security have also extended the growing precarity of migrant labor in Vancouver under conditions of neoliberal globalization, particularly in the agricultural and health care sectors. Amidst these conditions of economic and political marginalization, more horizontal networks of filiation and dependence have developed and mutated within the region's Indo-Canadian community.

CONCLUSION: IMPERIAL ASYMMETRIES AND THE ART OF COMPARISON

Race is undeniably a categorical relation of power, but it is one that has assumed a seemingly infinite number of guises through the regional and global trajectories of empire (da Silva 2007, Goldberg 1993, Winant 2001). As in most post-industrial cities, discourses of crime and criminality in Chicago and Vancouver have become modalities of race through which bodies, places, and populations are ordered and organized (Herbert and Brown 2006, Simon 2007). Yet, as I illuminate in the chapters that follow, these juridical discourses assume different material, psychic, and symbolic forms through the localized conditions of each city. The partial histories of localized racisms I have sketched in this chapter are meant to provide a historical backdrop against which to identify the divergent logics, sentiments, and practices of race that I analyze in the remainder of the dissertation. While my method of analysis was designed to convey the singularity of these localized racisms, I have centered each chapter on a technology of differentiation that is apparent in both Chicago and Vancouver: the racial modes of identification that govern public spaces; the racial modes of scrutiny that mediate the public presence of domestic realms; and the racial modes of accountability that organized official public inquiries. By juxtaposing how

these technologies work in each city, I am able to track how racial relations of power work through different sociohistorical contexts.

By highlighting these distinct histories of dispossession, migration, and urbanization, this chapter has brought attention to the asymmetries of empire: the extent to which colonial conditions of race have maintained their force and vitality, not through uniform political logics and practices, but through their capacity to mutate and reorganize the imminent relations of force that exist in a given context (Mawani 2009, Stoler 1995). What an awkward comparison of these two cities illuminates is the need to pluralize the analytics of critical race analysis beyond the usual focus on slavery and segregation, which are evident in the case of Chicago, to include the dynamics of racial sovereignty and settlement that I have foregrounded in the case of Vancouver. The remainder of this dissertation pursues an awkward comparison of these divergent localized racisms by tracking the divergences in their governing logics, sentiments, and practices, without stressing their emergence from similar socio-political circumstances. Consequently, the awkward comparison I develop in the remaining chapters is more like an ‘art’ than it is a ‘science’, insofar as its practice will vary across the situations and contexts it is used to analyze and compare.

CHAPTER THREE- PUBLIC SIGHTINGS: RACE AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF DANGER IN THE RESTRUCTURING OF URBAN SPACES

INTRODUCTION: RACIAL URBAN DANGERS

The heterogeneity and anonymity that typifies urban sociality has long bred concern about the uncertainties of modern city life (Thrift 2008). In urban spaces organized by racial geographies of segregation, these relations of uncertainty are tempered and modulated by modes of identification that make people and places intelligible in terms of their potential for violence and criminality (Mawani 2009, Goldberg 1993). The neoliberal restructuring of cities has given new life and form to these modes of identification as historically segregated populations have been placed in new relations of spatial and psychic proximity (Hagedorn 2008). A number of sociologists and geographers have suggested that racial discourses of danger saturate the symbolic economies that organize these emergent geographies of the city, transforming their intelligibility to facilitate their habitation by middle class consumers who associate the ‘inner city’ with danger and decay (Herbert and Brown 2006, Zukin 1996). Although it gestures to the effects of these modes of visibility, this body of research provides little insight into the means by which race is recreated as a relation of power through the everyday practices of identification that sustain these symbolic economies.¹⁹

To address this gap in the existing literature, this chapter documents how racial modes of identification are produced and transformed through the daily circulation of texts about crime in Chicago and Vancouver. In my analysis of each city, I attend to how these technologies of differentiation materialize specific ways of perceiving and acting upon

¹⁹In this research race is afforded an ontological existence independent of these practices of identification and the apparatuses of power they sustain.

urban landscapes and the relations they imply between different people, objects, and the spaces where they are observed. With regard to Chicago, I document the racial modes of identification that govern the intelligibility of public space in a gentrifying neighborhood, wherein black bodies are routinely enmeshed in processes of observation, surveillance, and displacement. In the section on Vancouver, I illuminate the modes of identification that shape how the Indo-Canadian gangster has become intelligible as a threat to public security, particularly to the nocturnal economy of bars and nightclubs in the city's Central Business District.

Recently, critical theorists of race have cautioned against treating the phenotypical appearance of bodies as the sole or even principal axis of racialization, a habit that reduces race to a (socially constructed) quality of bodies (Hesse 2004: 36). Rather than ignore how visibility figures as a modality of racial differentiation, this chapter illustrates how race is recreated through practices of identification that acquire their form and focus from the localized hierarchical arrangements of bodies, places, and objects. Following Judith Butler (1993), who considers how visibility is not simply an effect of direct perception, I illustrate how the visual fields that constitute these publics are "a racial formation, an episteme, hegemonic and forceful," which are "built upon layers of racial knowings and displaced unknowings" (123). By this I mean that my chapter does not focus on the black and brown bodies that are focal points of these modes of identification, but, rather, the discursive logics and sentiments that engage them as symptoms of danger. These modes of identification render certain bodies visible; shape how bodies, places, and objects are seen and acted upon; and determine how certain social actors are authorized to observe and react to danger in public spaces.

As these relations materialize in Chicago and Vancouver, a variety of private and non-state actors are enlisted in the juridical reclamation of public spaces, especially those interpellated as ‘neighbors’, ‘business managers’, and ‘property owners’. While practices of surveillance are promoted as a way to assuage feelings of insecurity, the racial modes of identification that extend across time and space work to amplify feelings of fear, anxiety and paranoia as they circulate scenarios of danger and depravity across the psychic fabric of the city.²⁰ Following the work of Bhabha (1994) and Fanon (1968), I show how these racial practices of seeing and identification enjoin actors in relations of affect and desire that complicate and fracture the territorial force of law. Whereas Puar (2007) opposes the analytics of visibility and affect because the former abstracts vision from ‘real’ bodies, I illustrate how these modes of identification work on and through the material bodies of social actors.

The remainder of this chapter is organized into three primary sections. In the first section, I document the racial modes of identification that organize a Chicago weblog maintained by residents of Uptown, a neighborhood on the North Side of the city. Situated amidst more economically prosperous and racially uniform neighborhoods (see Table 1 on p. 74 for demographics about the neighborhood and the surrounding Chicago Community Areas), Uptown has experienced a recent influx of retail and real estate capital, especially from prospective home owners in search of affordable property (Rai 2011). The ongoing gentrification of the neighborhood has been slowed by the continued presence of a sizeable social service sector with a predominantly African American and Latino clientele,

²⁰ As Bhabha (1994) famously wrote, this attention to the ambivalent address of racism contradicts prevailing cognitive theories of race, which reduce it to a mere by-product of our desire to categorize information expediently.

Table 3.1 – Racial Demographics of Chicago Community Areas²¹					
Chicago Community Area	Median Income	Percentage of Population White	Percentage of Population Black	Percentage of Population Hispanic	Percentage of Population Other
Edgewater - North of Uptown	43 331	54.65	14.34	16.48	14.53
Lincoln Square -West of Uptown	57749	63.09	3.77	19.15	13.39
Uptown	40 324	51.63	20	14.2	14.16
Lakeview - South of Uptown	70 746	80.37	3.87	7.63	8.14

exaggerating tensions between (1) the putatively ‘liberal’ political establishment of the neighborhood and (2) property owners concerned about its safety and economic vitality. In 2007, one area resident responded to these tensions by creating a weblog where neighbors can share news about matters that concern the area. While readers frequently use the blog to announce different community events, its principal function is the dissemination of information about local crime and other dangers to neighborhood safety. Most commonly this information is circulated through the written accounts of blog readers; links to commercial news sites and other weblogs; and photographs of urban blight taken and shared by readers as evidence of crime in the area. By centering my analysis on these texts, I have been able to explicate the kinds of concern that interpellate and include area residents in the racial governance of public space and the kinds of visibility that subtend practices of racial identification.

The second section of this chapter details the racial logics that compel the juridical identification of the Indo-Canadian gangster in Vancouver, which first emerged as a

²¹ This demographic information is gathered from the 2010 U.S. Census.

figment of public and legal discourse in the late 1990s. Here, I attend to the epistemic conditions that make the Indo-Canadian gangster intelligible as an artefact of pathological desire, a figure whose identification with commodified blackness perverts his acculturation to “Western” or “Canadian” law. While imperial circuits of movement have long regulated South Asian populations in terms of their “blackness”, which acquired a variety of epistemic, racial values (Mohanram 1999), the knowledges of blackness I consider here have a distinct genesis in American institutions of racism and popular culture (see Goldberg 2009, Rose 1995). In Vancouver, the violence attributed to Indo-Canadian gangs has been construed as a symptom of this population’s *cultural* incapacity to comport and accommodate themselves to modern forms of civility.

Upon analyzing these historicist racial logics, I detail how the modes of identification they animate have converged on and reconstituted the nightclub as a space of racial observation and territoriality, wherein bodies are subject to processes of surveillance and governance. In Vancouver’s post-industrial urban economy, bars, nightclubs and other spaces of nocturnal consumption have emerged as complex sites of aesthetic production and consumption, which are organized by differentiated trajectories of affect and desire (Rigakos 2004, Boyd 2010). To explicate these relations of identification, I have analyzed a variety of media and legal texts about the public presence of Indo-Canadian gangs. While my section on Chicago focuses on a more geographically delimited data set, the relative nascence of the Indo-Canadian gangster as a figure of public concern requires that I track its circulation across a broader field of textual production.

In each of these cases, processes of urban restructuring have created unique imbrications of race and class inequality. In Chicago, the well-documented convergence of

economic and racial marginality has created the conditions for the identification of black bodies as symptoms of urban danger. For residents anxious about the economic vitality of their neighborhood, the association of blackness with poverty and urban decay necessitates their participation in the vigilant surveillance of public spaces, especially as the threat of crime impinges upon the enjoyment of their property. Although I explicitly distance my analysis of the Indo-Canadian gangster from ontologies of racism that assume it is merely an extension of class division, the practices of identification that target this figure of danger are often mobilized to create consumer spaces that are safe for habitation by white middle class consumers (Boyd 2010). By awkwardly comparing these different imbrications of race and class, this chapter illustrates how modes of racial identification acquire different spatial and visual forms through the divergent geographies of gentrification and displacement.

NEIGHBORLY DEMANDS: PROPERTY, PROPRIETY AND THE RACIAL IDENTIFICATION OF CRIME IN UPTOWN, CHICAGO

On the afternoon of July 28, 2010, 19 year old Aaron Carter, reputed to be a member of a local gang, was shot and killed in a residential area of Uptown. The circulation of this shooting through local news networks and neighborhood weblogs precipitated a series of public responses to neighborhood crime. The day after Carter's murder many area residents participated in a candlelight vigil at the site of the shooting, memorializing his death as yet another casualty of urban gun violence. Later that week, another group responded to this shooting by organizing a petition of the owners of a nearby mini-mall, who they felt were morally accountable for this violence (Uptown Residents and Citizens 2010). According to the 632 petitioners, the owners' failure to properly manage their property had led to "the loitering, gang activity and drug dealing that occurs daily on

the property,” which are cited as catalysts for Carter’s shooting (Uptown Residents and Citizens 2010). In signing the virtual petition, many petitioners addressed pleas to the property owners, imploring them to “quit harboring criminals”; to “please show your property some respect”; and to “please be good neighbors and help make your property safer!” (Anonymous Uptown Residents and Citizens 2010).

In the weeks after the petition was first formulated, readers of the blog *Uptown Update* occasionally circulated information about how well the property owners were complying with the petition, however vaguely it articulated their demands. Although readers initially noted improvements to the property, including the presence of a security guard during the operating hours of the mall’s businesses, readers eventually complained that youth were once again loitering around the mini-mall property. Two months after the shooting, one reader even posted a photograph of a young black man inhabiting the mall’s parking lot (Uptown Update 2010). On the blog, this image appears beside the following caption, submitted by the reader who took the photograph,

I noticed people in the UU comments mentioning the young gentleman with the red ball cap who flashes wads of money after “allegedly” finishing drug deals. I have seen him quite often near Wilson & Malden and Wilson & Magnolia. **The loitering in the Wilson Magnolia strip mall has returned.** From 4 pm till after 5pm, the boys were back and they were hard at work on their cell phones with their lookouts on the sidewalk in front of Subway (Uptown Update 2010A).

The circulation of this photograph incited debate amongst blog readers about how to most effectively deter ‘these’ youth from occupying public spaces around the neighborhood,

disagreements that are archived in the ‘Reader Comments’ forum of the blog. Upon seeing this image, one reader asked, “how about printing that pic of Mr. Redhat, print ‘known drug dealer’ on it in bold type and scattering copys all over the area?” (Uptown Update Reader 2010B). To this suggested course of action, another reader responded that,

I like the idea of posting pictures of drug dealers on the web. However I doubt that this is going to stop someone from selling. Pictures of people *buying* drugs however is the key. You want to stop people from coming here to buy drugs? Post pictures of them or car plates on the web and you will see how fast they stay away from the hood (Uptown Update Reader 2010C).

Although these readers disagreed about how to rid the neighborhood of the dangers signalled by this young man, both wanted to act on the sight of his black body in a manner that would extend and multiply its visibility for concerned neighbors, enabling a variety of juridical responses to the presence of crime in the area.

In these exchanges hosted by *Uptown Update*, readers frequently address each other as ‘neighbors’, acting as though their habitation of a specific urban area is the basis of their civic and political commonality. To suggest that these neighborly relations are a function of spatial proximity would assume that the blog caters to an already existing ‘constituency’ of neighbors that pre-exists the discursive address of its texts. Here, I document how blog readers are interpellated as neighbors, complete with moral and legal obligations to each other, through their engagement with the discursive logics and affective registers of texts related to crime in the area. By analyzing the texts that circulate through this blog, as well as their relation to broader changes in the civic governance of crime, I reveal how practices

of racial identification organize and animate the forms of publicity and moral proximity that suffuse restructuring urban spaces.

On *Uptown Update*, photographs of blighted objects and bodies play a crucial role in materializing these relations of identification. Through these practices of textual circulation, people are differently positioned as subjects of the three photographic ‘emotions’ or ‘intentions’ identified by Barthes (1988) in *Camera Obscura*: (1) the intention of ‘doing’ the photograph, which is specific to the camera operator; (2) the emotion felt by the spectator viewing or ‘looking’ at the photograph; and (3) the experience of ‘undergoing’ the photograph, which is experienced by the target of the camera. Whereas black bodies and objects figure as the ‘target’ or ‘referent’ of the photographs, Uptown neighbors engage each other as the creators and spectators of these images. In these practices of textual circulation, various relations of force differentiate those social actors who observe and act on the sight of danger from those whose bodies are looked at and acted upon as symptoms of juridical danger and decay. To document the dimensions of these relations, I detail the discursive associations that govern the intelligibility of the bodies and objects that appear in these photographs, which requires attention to the dynamic semiotic and ontological connections between the visible referent and the phantasmic images it conjures.

Black Bodies and Broken Windows: The Visual Field of Uptown Update

Since *Uptown Update* was created in 2007, its readers have produced and shared a variety of photographs through the blog, many of which feature signs of urban blight and decay visible against the built environment of the neighborhood. Although black bodies are often the focal points of many of these images, others center on objects that, to this group

of readers, signal the presence of crime in the area. Most commonly these images feature graffiti tags visible on apartment buildings; dumpsters overflowing with refuse; and sidewalks peppered with soda cans and liquor bottles. For many readers of the blog, the objects pictured in each photograph have acquired multiple symbolic associations that conjure inchoate images and scenes of danger. On the one hand, these objects are perceived as traces of some past illegal or indecent behavior: abandoned shopping carts signal the theft of private property; dumpsters overloaded with garbage signify the neglect of property owners; and graffiti tags index the wilful destruction of property as well as the presence of gangs in the neighborhood. To these same readers, each of the objects pictured also signals the *future* criminality that threatens to overwhelm the neighborhood should they remain ignored, a discursive logic that was popularized by the Broken Windows theory of crime and order.

Broken Windows policing was first formulated by the social scientists James Q Wilson and George K Kelling (1982) to advance a new method of maintaining legal order in urban neighborhoods. Fundamental to this new mode of urban governance was the idea that police officers and neighborhood residents must vigilantly react to and displace seemingly minor signs of disorder or face of having their area overwhelmed by more serious forms of criminal activity. Like theories advanced by environmental criminologists, Broken Windows policing posits that a neighborhood's built environment communicates messages to its inhabitants about the area's vulnerability to crime (Herbert and Brown 2006: 760). According to the many proponents of this theory, the persistence of objects like those pictured on *Uptown Update* suggests that a neighborhood has accepted a certain measure of disorder and incivility in its midst, attracting more serious crime to the area

(Wilson and Kelling 1982). Often credited with reducing crime rates in New York City during the mid-1990s, the tactics of Broken Windows policing have been touted and deployed by police departments, private security companies, and neighborhood watch groups across Canada and the United States, even as social scientists dispute the validity of its methods (Kemple and Huey 2005, Wacquant 2002).

On *Uptown Update*, the logics of Broken Windows policing mediate the visibility of objects that were circulated through photographs taken by its readers. Here, these objects are engaged as traces of the unpredictable “outsiders” whose presence, according to Wilson and Kelling (1982), poses a significant threat to the order of their neighborhood. While Wilson and Kelling (1982) differentiate “insiders” and “outsiders” in abstract, depoliticized terms, the geographic imaginary they deploy assumes an ability to visually distinguish between those who belong in a given neighborhood from those who do not (Herbert and Brown 2006). Insofar as these tactics of crime prevention have circulated amidst growing public anxiety about the instability of historic geographies of segregation, neighborhood groups on the North Side of Chicago typically act on the sight of blackness as a symptom of danger, signifying that a person is out of place in the juridical order of the neighborhood. In this context, the objects pictured on the blog also metonymize the presence of blackness in the neighborhood as spectral memories of white flight configure these objects as harbingers of the area’s *racial* future as well. In projecting these layered temporalities onto the urban landscape of the neighborhood, wherein the present is pregnant with dystopic possibilities, these modes of identification insinuate the need for urgent legal action to guard against the spectre of blackness.

Once uploaded to the blog, these images become the catalysts for campaigns to rid public spaces of urban decay. When readers are unable to address these symptoms of blight themselves, they often call the City's non-emergency services ('311') to clean graffiti off of residential buildings or issue fines to property owners who do not comply with civic sanitation regulations. Like the mini-mall owners referred to above, a variety of retail actors are also enlisted in these practices of identification, either at the urging of concerned neighbors or out of unease for the economic vitality of the area. When one reader uploaded a photograph of a shopping cart park secured to the sidewalk, another reader responded that, "anyone who sees [this shopping cart] should call. Next time I eat at Jimmy John's I'm going to tell them about it and ask that they should call too" (Uptown Update Reader 2007).²² Because its employees are optimally positioned to observe and report visible changes to public spaces, including the appearance of these Broken Windows, this Jimmy John's sandwich franchise is conceived as a strategic ally against the encroachment of urban blight into the neighborhood. Insofar as the pictured objects function as the pivot of these assemblages of surveillance, they command a racial force that is irreducible to their semantic, "ideological" association with black and Latino bodies. In these relations of identification, graffiti, litter and other broken windows exist as racial objects not only because of the meanings they signify but also because of the practices of displacement and territoriality in which they are enfolded.

Readers of *Uptown Update* also take and share photographs that purport to show black people engaged in various criminal or criminogenic behaviors. Although readers rarely make explicit reference to their blackness, in each image it is black bodies that figure

²² Aldi is a chain of grocery stores in the United States that is associated with working class consumers. On Uptown Update readers regularly complain of Aldi's presence in the neighborhood.

as the focal point of the photographer's gaze, which places them at the centre of the blog's visual field as well. Resembling other "post-racial" or color-blind modalities of racism (see Goldberg 2009), these modes of identification materialize racial relations of power without invoking its usual biological and phenotypical referents, deploying other connotative associations to affect practices of racial differentiation and governance. Through *Uptown Update*, readers view photographs of black men and women gathered in front of commercial storefronts; older black men resting on benches and sleeping in ATM drive-throughs; and young men inhabiting parking lots and street corners around the neighborhood. The vast majority of these images do *not* show criminal activity as it is occurring; in each image, the apparent inactivity of the black bodies pictured signals the probability of their past or eventual criminality. Just as the persistence of certain objects is now the measure of a neighborhood's tolerance of crime and incivility, the continued presence of black bodies in public spaces has become a symptom of an area's eroding juridical order. Here, the logics of Broken Windows theory are extrapolated to explain the public presence of black bodies, such that a neighborhood expresses its health and vitality by remaining vigilant against the incursion of blackness into its midst. Through these modes of identification, black bodies are afforded the same ontological standing as inanimate objects, recapitulating juridical typologies that have long denied human agency to racial subjects (Goldberg 1993).

Of course, these racial modes of identification have a long history in American cities, where they have functioned as a technology of socio-spatial segregation (Nast 2000, Wacquant 2008). With the neoliberal restructuring of urban spaces, these modes of identification acquired new epistemic and juridical forms. In 1992 the City of Chicago

passed a law, referred to as the Anti-Gang Ordinance that empowered the police to displace any group of people that, “remains in any place with no apparent purpose” (as cited in Levi 2009: 132). Like quality of life measures introduced across the US, the Anti-Gang Ordinance augmented the legal powers of police to help materialize a new moral, aesthetic order in restructuring urban spaces (Levi 2009).

Whereas quality of life measures target specific behaviors, the ambiguous wording of the Anti-Gang Ordinance afforded police the discretion to decide what constitutes ‘purposive’ behavior (Roberts 1999). Because of this ambiguity, the United States Supreme Court declared the ordinance unconstitutional. In its majority ruling, the Court even noted that it was curious that legislators targeted ‘unpurposive behavior’ given that gangs usually inhabit public spaces for very specific purposes, “either by an apparent purpose to publicize the gang’s dominance of a certain territory, thereby intimidating non-members, or by an equally apparent purpose to conceal ongoing commerce in illegal activities” (City of Chicago vs Morales 1999: 34). Before the Court’s ruling, police used the ordinance to issue more than 40 000 orders of dispersal and arrest, the majority of which targeted the city’s black and Latino residents (Roberts 1999). For Dorothy Roberts (1999), the creation of this ordinance is indicative of the “racialized division of Americans into the presumptively lawless whose liberties deserve little protection and presumptively law-abiding who are entitled to rule over them” (779-780). In addition to these legal ramifications, the ordinance helped create the racial conditions to engage the public presence of black and Latino bodies as a source of juridical instability, which demands the attention of police and concerned neighbors alike.

That area residents take photographs of blighted bodies and objects during their everyday movements through the neighborhood is suggestive of their participation in growing networks of surveillance that govern gentrifying urban spaces (Kemple and Huey 2005, Zukin 1996). Neighborhoods on the fault lines of these restructuring geographies have been blanketed with security cameras and other technologies of surveillance that are intended to cultivate feelings of safety amongst the new urban gentry (Hagedorn 2008). The proliferation of handheld photographic technologies, especially digital cell phone cameras, facilitates the inclusion of concerned neighbors into these assemblages of electronic surveillance, which increasingly consolidate the governing capacities of surveillant nodes distributed across the city. While Haggerty and Ericson (2000) document the new sophisticated practices of dataveillance that are facilitated by these forms of surveillance, here assemblages of neighbors, legal authorities and digital technologies coordinate the more intensive governance of urban space. To facilitate this governance, these public assemblages multiply the planes of sight through which black bodies are visible to juridically minded actors. Insofar as these publics affect the juridical identification of danger, they extend the racial force of law across the city, prying open its infinitesimal spaces to the juridical gaze of these actors.

These public relations of identification also materialize through the distinctive temporality of the textual engagements facilitated by the blog. On average, *Uptown Update* publishes three posts a day and each of these posts usually generates a series of comments within twelve hours of its original publication, especially if it features an image of blighted objects. Because of the abbreviated punctuality of the blog's exchanges, the texts circulated through *Uptown Update* command a specific political, interpellative force. According to

Michael Warner (2002), a public's capacity to organize and mobilize is closely tied to the temporality or regularity of its discursive engagements. With regard to *Uptown Update*, the frequency with which photographs and other texts are uploaded to the blog ensures that the topical concerns of these publics are returned to the attention of its readers, regenerating the discursive and affective conditions of their commonality.

As the spectators of these photographs and other texts, blog readers are confronted with images of black bodies and objects that saturate the virtual field of their neighborhood. Through these photographs, images of urban blight and racial danger are preserved indefinitely, regardless of how long a body or object remained in the space where it was pictured. Consequently, these discursive engagements extend the duration of associations between racial objects and the spaces where they are identified and pictured, magnifying the feelings of anxiety and uncertainty that animate the exchanges of the blog. In the typology of photographic positions formulated by Barthes (1998), which I introduced earlier, these black bodies figure as the "target" or "referent" of the photograph, which he likens to a simulacrum,

any eidolon emitted by the object, which I would like to call the *Spectrum* of the Photograph, because this word retains, through its root, a relation to "spectacle" and adds to it that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead (9).

In these terms, the black bodies visible in the blog's photographs can be understood as a spectacle that commands their vision and attention as well as a kind of spectre that inhabits and disrupts the neighborhood well beyond the duration of their physical presence there.

Public Interventions: Positive Loitering

In August 2009, an area resident filmed a night-time brawl that occurred between two groups of youth on a residential street in Uptown. Filmed from the vantage point of a third story condominium, the video makes tangible the relations of vertical distance that differentiate condominium owners from the black bodies that are pictured on the street. After the video circulated through local news and neighborhood blogs, including *Uptown Update*, area residents organized a series of “positive loitering” events at the street corner where the fight occurred. At positive loitering events, which originated in Chicago, neighbors gather in public spaces, forming what Rai (2011) calls “passive aggressive flash mobs” (67), to deter the presence of those who use the space for criminal or other disorderly activity. Like many other “neighborly” tactics of crime prevention, positive loitering is premised on the logics that underpin Oscar Newman’s theory of defensible space, which posts that concerned citizens can deter crime in a given area by modeling the kinds of lawful activity they want to occur there (Valverde 2006, Herbert and Brown 2006). That positive loitering has recurred at the site of the fight means that these events evoke the violence they intend to expel. Through its circulation alongside the photos of racial bodies and objects, this video lends blackness a certain measure of spectrality, ensuring its phantasmatic presence exceeds the materiality of observed objects.

On the North Side of Chicago, neighborhood groups have innovated their own distinctive modes of positive loitering that model different kinds of civility in public spaces. In Edgewater, the Chicago Community Area (CCA) immediately north of Uptown, positive loitering events resemble a block party, during which neighbors play board games, grill food, and consume children’s entertainment. “Instead of trying to deter negative

activity through fear and pressure,” one of the event organizers explained, “we’re trying to do it simply by filling that space with positive activity. It’s a more community-creating than community-dividing approach” (as cited in Malooley 2009). Positive loitering events in Uptown abide by the more divisive ethos as neighbors pointedly occupy public space with the express intent of deterring others who inhabit the space for illegal purposes. Following the circulation of the video referred to above, concerned residents organized a series of positing loitering events at the corner nearest the site of the fracas. There they gathered, with cell phones in hand, for two hours every Friday night until the onset of winter, often with signs that feature slogans like, “WE LIVE HERE. WE CALL POLICE.” According to one participant at these events, “when we’re here, people sitting there get up and leave we’re saying, ‘We’re in your face. We’re in your space. You don’t belong here. You have no right to be here” (as cited in Malooley 2009). While these forms of positive loitering have manifestly different rationales, both are “positive” insofar as they oppose the negativity ascribed to black bodies, which acquired material and affective valences as these publics acted on the presence of black bodies.

In her ethnography of positive loitering in Uptown, Candice Rai (2011) distances her economic analysis from Herbert and Brown’s (2006) conclusion that environmental theories of crime materialize a racial imaginary of the city. “While it is critically important to remember the fact that race and class inequity map onto each other quite starkly in Chicago,” writes Rai (2011), “I would argue Herbert and Brown’s focus on racism risks obscuring the systemic economic conditions underscoring the tensions in Uptown and is in danger of characterizing activists like the positive loiterers as racist or strictly concerned with property market values” (84). Here Rai (2011) mistakes an analysis of the racial logics

that animate processes of gentrification for judgement about the moral failings of the participants in this form of neighborhood watch. Although class concerns about property value shape the practice of these tactics of crime control, these groups of concerned neighbors are reconstituting the publicity of urban spaces as they materialize racial relations of belonging and entitlement that reposition the “responsible property owner” as the subject of law and security, one who must guard against signs of danger and decay.

In October 2010, the City of Chicago passed an ordinance to hold property owners accountable for “chronic illegal activity” that occurs on or within a certain distance of their property, formalizing legal parameters for these relations of entitlement and observation (Daley 2010). To be deemed in violation of this ordinance, a property must be the subject of three or more separate requests for police service within ninety days. Should a property violate the ordinance its owners become responsible for implementing a nuisance abatement plan, which may require them to hire and employ security personnel, provide more extensive sanitation services, or install security cameras and new lighting in designated common areas. Each of these tactics forces property owners to eliminate opportunities for crime through alterations to the built environment of their property, once again gesturing to the epistemic force of environmental criminology.

Under the terms of the ordinance, property owners are also responsible for public spaces that are proximate to their property, “within one city block or one thousand feet of the premises” (Daley 2010). With this stipulation, property owners are legally enjoined to participate in the juridical surveillance of public space and the racial identification of danger. In relaying the value of this ordinance, then Mayor Richard M. Daley explains that,

a small percentage of property owners habitually allow their property to be used for illegal activity or fail to take reasonable steps to prevent chronic illegal activity from occurring on their premises, which affects the *quality of life for neighbors*, decreases the value of surrounding properties and places an undue burden on the City's police and emergency service resources (Daley 2010, emphasis added).

For Daley (2010), the conduct of irresponsible property owners is a problem of law because the failure to remain vigilant against crime imperils the economic and existential vitality of neighborhoods. In acting to preserve "the quality of life for neighbors", the legal apparatus of the city has addressed the potential immorality of property owners as a source of biopolitical instability, insofar as the disassociation from their responsibilities as property owners allows crime to traverse the racial geographies of the city. Like the petition formulated by Uptown neighbors, this ordinance coordinates the racial governance of public space with the execution of private actors' legal responsibilities and moral obligations as property owners.

CONSUMER PROTECTIONS: COMMODITIES AND THE INDO-CANADIAN GANGSTER

One day's victim is another day's suspects in the world of gangs and guns, where, for these people, life just doesn't mean anything (Fanning as cited in Bolan and Bohn 2007).

On 07 February 1999, 19 year old Minh Doan Vu was shot and killed outside *Madison's* nightclub in downtown Vancouver, the second murder to take place outside the now-defunct club in as many months. The recurrence of this violence magnified prevailing concerns about the insecurity of downtown nightclubs, which had already been stirred by

the highly publicized murder of Bindy Johal on a crowded dance floor months before. Through its circulation across the city, Vu's murder became a symptom of the violence and disorder that was driving the public away from these consumer spaces, limiting their potential economic prosperity. In its initial coverage of the shooting, *The Vancouver Sun* featured a graphic that catalogued all of the violent incidents that occurred in and around downtown nightclubs in the 18 months before Vu's murder, including a shooting at "The Purple Onion Cabaret" in April 1998; a murder at "Pony's Cabaret" in May 1997; and a drive-by shooting in March 1998 that police linked to a fight that occurred earlier at "The Mars Club" (Skelton 1999).

The day after Vu's murder then Mayor of Vancouver, Phillip Owen, announced his intention to close *Madison's*, proclaiming to *The Province* that, "if people are taking firearms into nightclubs – now just a minute, that's bad management, council can cite bad management as a bylaw violation and revoke the club's license" (as cited in Papple 1999). Should this tactic fail, Owen explained, he was "prepared to have the club combed for fire, sprinkler, washroom, or exit-access violations" (as cited in Papple 1999). After this announcement, police determined that the club's management had followed proper protocol by ejecting Vu for fighting with the two men who were eventually convicted of his murder, Ken Nguyen and Gurmit Singh Dhak. Although this revelation absolved *Madison's* of any responsibility for the shooting, the Mayor's proclamation still conveys the urgency of assuring public safety in spaces frequented by a notoriously dangerous clientele.

Amidst the clamor for solutions to this insecurity, *The Vancouver Sun* publicized a security tactic employed by management at the Palladium nightclub where Bindy Johal was

murdered months before. At the urging of the club's floor staff, management elected to discontinue the weekly "R&B" theme that had been in effect the night Johal was shot (Skelton 1999). Although the acronym 'R&B' refers to the musical genre of 'Rhythm and Blues', it is commonly used to denote a variety of genres associated with African American performers, including hip-hop and soul (Rose 1995). According to the club's manager, these theme nights "had become popular among some Indo-Canadian gangsters," who, he explained, "would arrive early in the evening and fill up the club before other patrons would arrive" (as cited in Skelton 1999). In a statement to *The Sun*, a Vancouver Police Department (VPD) Inspector noted that, with the growth of Indo-Canadian gangs, their presence at bars and nightclubs had become a common sight, remarking that

the last couple of years has certainly seen a trend in this. It's been a real concern [...]. It's kind of trendy right now for these gangsters and wannabe gangsters to hang out in these clubs. [...] There's this kind of macho image and they don't want to back down in front of their friends and certainly not in front of the women that they bring to these clubs (as cited in Skelton 1999).

Since Vu's murder, more targeted shootings have occurred in and around downtown nightclubs and restaurants. Two of these shootings targeted Gurmit Singh Dhak, one of the men convicted of Vu's murder. This prompted a VPD officer to remark that, "one day's victim is another day's suspect in the world of gangs and guns, where, for these people, life just doesn't mean anything" (as cited in Bolan and Bohn 2007). As this disregard for life is projected onto the public presence of young South Asian men, community leaders and legal

authorities have struggled to understand the origins of this new figure of public danger: the Indo-Canadian gangster.

In the racial imaginaries of most Euro-American cities, South Asian populations are either invisible or are identifiable as “model minorities”, at once lauded and feared for their (excessive) work ethic (Puar 2007). Although the War on Terror has cast suspicion on South Asian populations that look Muslim (Grewal 2006), the phenomenon of “Desi” and “Indo-Canadian” gangs remains specific to a few urban areas in Canada and the United States: Northern California, New Jersey and Metro Vancouver (Puar 2007, Shankar 2006). In this section I detail the racial modes of identification that animate the sociogenesis of the Indo-Canadian gangster, the process by which it has emerged as a unique figment of public concern. Because racial tropes of American blackness typically mediate the publicity of this figure, as they did following Vu’s murder, I detail the racial analytics of comparison that govern the intelligibility of the Indo-Canadian gangster. Understood as a subject of consumerist excess, who becomes predisposed to violence through the “imitation” of blackness, the Indo-Canadian gangster enfolds South Asian bodies and populations in racial relations of observation and desire that converge on the post-fordist space of the nightclub. Just as object codes materialized relations of race through the public spaces of Uptown, luxury commodities command the surveillant optic of public and legal actors, configuring the aestheticized bodies of the Indo-Canadian gangster as a site of juridical intervention.

Boyz in the Burbz: Race and the Indo-Canadian Gangster

Vancouver has been deluged with gang violence. Almost none of it urban. We’ve become the only city on earth where the inner city is actually the safe zone, and the suburbs are the cul-de-sac murder fields.

Just a bunch of people angry that all their streets end in circles. They'd rather shoot their way through than turn around and go the long way to buy milk (Jy Harris as cited in Demers, 2010).

Since the early 1990s, the black, Afro-American gangster has become a globally recognizable figure in popular culture and critical social discourse, having circulated widely through gangster rap music and films about the African American ghetto (Hagedorn 2008, Sernhede 2000). In these mediums, the black gangster is intelligible as both an agent of violence as well as a survivor of abject poverty (Kennedy 2000). Even as this figure acts as a pivot of racial desire and disavowal, the black gangster has come to allegorize contemporary forms of racism, which are inextricably associated with the socio-economic conditions of the African American ghetto (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999). Under these conditions of intelligibility, gangs are understood as artifacts of racism provided that a group's racial subjection is an extension of their socio-economic inequality, rehearsing an ontology of racism that is foundational to sociological theories of crime.

With his formulation of strain theory, sociologist Robert Merton (1968) popularized the idea that, in modern consumer societies, crime is a function of the discrepancy between culturally prescribed goals and the "socially structured capacities" (138) to achieve them through legally sanctioned means. Of most pressing concern to Merton (1968) are those who adapt to this discrepancy by innovating unlawful ways to achieve these goals. Writing in the wake of American prohibition and its repeal in 1933, Merton (1938) identifies the public personae of Al Capone as emblematic of this form of criminal adaptation, as Capone was known to have employed extortion and violence to transcend the poverty of his immigrant upbringing (Valier 2001). Through its canonization in criminology, Merton's

theory has been adapted and extrapolated to explain the criminality of other marginalized populations, particularly young African American men living in ghettoized urban spaces. Under these epistemic conditions, the criminality of racialized populations is merely an epiphenomenon of class conflict and division, which limit and restrict their opportunities for economic success and self-realization.

In Vancouver, the Indo-Canadian gangster is recurrently identified as a subject of middle class privilege. Often the class privilege of young Indo-Canadian men is cited explicitly in public discourse. In a documentary about the problem of local Indo-Canadian gangs, Rob Rai, the director of a gang prevention program in the Surrey School District, remarked that:

[as Indo-Canadians], we are not carrying a historic risk factor of poverty within our community. In fact, it's difficult to understand how young people from the upper-middle class are able to get involved in this type of behavior. They don't have a lot of want or need for their basic physiological needs. The motivation must be something else (as cited in Amar 2009).

In Vancouver, young Indo-Canadian men are not subject to the same conditions of poverty and inequality as African American populations, whose economic immiseration figures as the implicit pivot of comparison in this explanation. These public discourses abstract the figure of the Indo-Canadian gangster from the heterogeneous class circumstances of the local South Asian population. By stressing the elevated class position of Indo-Canadian men, Rai identifies their criminality as an extension of their 'upper-middle class' economic privilege.

In other instances, the cultural privilege of young Indo-Canadian men is indirectly referenced through allusions to the suburbanity of Vancouver's gang violence. During a promotional interview about her documentary *Warrior Boyz*, director Baljit Sangra explained that,

This isn't *Boyz 'N the Hood*. [...] It's more boys in the suburbs. These are suburban people from a middle class background, mimicking what they see in popular culture. These kids know everything about Bloods and Crips and they're in suburban Vancouver (as cited in Wilson 2009).

Once again, the figure of the black gangster mediates the intelligibility of Indo-Canadian gangs. Here, cinematic images of South Central Los Angeles, circulated through films like *Boyz N the Hood* and *Menace II Society*, serve as a point of comedic juxtaposition to the suburban spaces that are associated with Indo-Canadian gangs. Whereas the gangsters in these films face the poverty and violence that saturate the African American ghetto, making their criminality an inevitability²³, the relative comfort that is associated with suburban life is incongruous with prevailing imaginaries of violent crime that occurs in post-industrial cities (Kennedy 2000).

In the epigraph of this section, Vancouver comedian Jy Harris describes these suburban spaces as "cul-de-sac murder fields," where there are "just a bunch of people angry that all their streets end in circles. They'd rather shoot their way through than turn around and go the long way to buy milk" (as cited in Demers 2010). With this description, Harris parodies the idea of suburban gangs by juxtaposing the racial image of gang

²³ Of course, the protagonist of the film *Boyz 'N the Hood* is the exception to this theme, as his climactic decision to forego participating in the revenge killing of a rival gangster allows him to escape the conditions of the ghetto and attend college elsewhere. In the film's narrative, it is his father's caring involvement in his life that allows him to avoid the same fate as his friends, reproducing an imaginary of the ghetto family form that I will analyze in Chapter Four.

violence with the caricatured features of the post-War suburb, which has been valued for its insulation from urbanity (Park 2011). Relative to urban ghettos, Harris and Sangra suggest, suburbs lack the conditions of immiseration necessary to generate ‘real’ urban violence. According to these logics, Indo-Canadian gangsters are engaging in a mere imitation of the black criminality they encounter in popular culture, recreating blackness as a source of authentic masculinity (Sernhede 2000, Kennedy 2000).

When construed as an imitation of blackness, Indo-Canadian criminality becomes a function of the misdirected consumer desires of young South Asian men. In public and legal discourses, young Indo-Canadian men signal their probable criminality through their consumption of luxury commodities, which are mediated by object codes that signify status and desire. During his interview for the documentary, *A Warrior's Religion*, Surrey MLA Dave Hayer casts suspicion on the apparent wealth displayed by Indo-Canadian youth, asking, “if sons and daughters are driving a \$50 000 car and they’re not working, where is the money coming from?” (as cited in Amar 2009). In the same documentary, sociologist Kamala Nayar draws on a similar imaginary when she notes that Indo-Canadian youth are now “enjoying the bling bling life without having accomplished much” (as cited in Amar 2009). In the vernacular of consumer culture, ‘bling’ has become a synonym for the conspicuous consumption of luxury commodities, which has acquired variable semantic valences in the identification of crime. Since the gangster first emerged as a figment of public consciousness in the 1920s, this figure has been associated with conspicuous consumption, as Capone’s lavish lifestyle symbolized his transgression of the economic limits that governed the lives of (Italian) immigrants (Valeir 1992). More recently, the prominence of bling in gangster rap suspends the racial hierarchy that ordinarily

circumscribes the economic opportunities of young African American men, recreating the gangster as a figure of desire and transgression (Sernhede 2000). As these object codes mediate the presence of the Indo-Canadian gangster, the circulation of this figure of danger activates racial relations of observation and desire.

Although these object codes have acquired specific local resonances, they constitute discourses of criminality in other urban and national contexts, as their centrality to the novel *Londonstani* (Malkani 2006) amply illustrates. The novel follows the immersion of four Desi youth into the criminal underworld of London, detailing the identity and lifestyle of a new social type: 'the desi rudeboy'. While 'rudeboys' are typically associated with the reggae and dancehall subcultures of Jamaica and the UK, the desi rudeboy is identified as a hybrid of Sikh and Afro-Caribbean cultural practices, which intersect through the conspicuous consumption of luxury commodities (Shankar 2006). In Malkani's narrative, it is these practices of consumption that initiate the four Desi protagonists into the criminal underworld as they fracture and interrupt the authority of traditional Sikh institutions that might otherwise allow these youth to abide by the law. According to one of the 'rude boy rules', which specify the 'essential' aspects of this lifestyle,

Having the blingest mobile fone in the house is a rudeboy's birthright.

Not just for style, but also cos fones were invented for rudeboys. They free you from you're mom an dad while also allowing your parents to keep tabs (Malkani 2006: 41).

In this formulation, the cellular phone serves as both an aesthetic extension of the Desi rudeboy's identity as well as an instrument of their criminogenesis. The spatial mobility facilitated by the cellular phone insulates the rudeboy from the disciplinary authority of the

Indian family, a narrative that, as I explain in Chapter Four, is reformulated to subject the Indo-Canadian home to racial scrutiny.

These racial object codes are especially evident in a scene of violence that introduced the principal characters of the novel. During this scene, Hardjit, the de facto leader of the group, beats a *gora* (“light skinned person”) who he has confronted for calling his friends “Pakis”. Between vivid descriptions of the assault, the narrative labors over the details of each luxury object visible on Hardjit’s body: his white gold chain, his Dolce and Gabanna vest, and his pristinely white Air Force One sneakers. At one point during the altercation, Hardjit pauses to taunt his aggressor, thrusting his chain in the gora’s face and yelling, “U like dis chain I got, white boy? Fucking five ounce white gold, innit. Call me a Paki again n I whip yo ass wid it!” (Malkani 2006: 4). In Malkani’s narrative, these symbols of status and desire are hybridized by aesthetic markers of Sikhism also visible on Hardjit’s body: a *kara*, the term for a metal bracelet worn by initiated Sikhs; his precisely groomed beard; and a piece of orange cloth tied around his wrist to signal his Sikh identity. To end this altercation, Hardjit fashions his kara into brass knuckles, which he uses to beat the gora into submission, lending the epistemic violence of hybridization a more literal, corporeal form. Like the modes of identification circulating in Vancouver, these object codes configure the Desi gangster as a figure of desire, transgression, and inauthenticity, whose criminality is a consequence of his incapacity to properly inhabit and actualize modern consumer identities.

In Vancouver, the turbaned Sikh body has acquired complex semantic and affective resonances in local modes of identification. Global systems of meaning configure the turban as a symbol of religious tradition, cultural recalcitrance, and patriarchal masculinity,

often serving as the masculine counterpoint to the veil in the colonial imaginary (Axel 2001, Puar 2007). After the Air India bombing localized the threat of Sikh terrorism in Vancouver, Sikh turbans became an especially potent signifier of fundamentalist danger, signifying a religious and political commitment that exceeds the secular bounds of the Canadian nation-state (Axel 2001). Since the intensification of the War on Terror, the turban has become even more saturated with phantasmic images of danger, acquiring a centripetal force in racial relations of visibility (Grewal 2005, Puar 2007). In Vancouver, the “unturbaned” or “deturbaned” Sikh body has also come to signify potential criminality because its absence signals their departure from cultural tradition and their subsequent immersion in criminal lifestyles. Following the murder of Davinder Singh, reputed to be the lieutenant of a local marijuana operation, news stories fixated on his deviation from traditional cultural practices; in an article published by IndoLink, journalist Francis Assisi (2004) circulated this narrative when he wrote that,

Davinder’s parents, who left Punjab in the early 1970s thought they knew their son. He was close to his family. He was also deeply attached to the Sikh religion, although he compromised a bit, occasionally shaving his beard. Six months ago, for the first time since childhood, he cut his hair. His parents told Davinder to visit his friends during the day, not at night. They suggested it might be better if he didn’t go to parties and nightclubs. They told him it was no good to be staying out late. It didn’t help.

Whereas the process of ‘deturbaning’ has functioned as a form of symbolic castration (Puar 2007), a kind of unveiling that recreates the scene of colonial surrender (Axel 2001), here

the absence of a turban or other corporeal markers of Sikhism signify criminality in racial modes of identification.

Bar Watched: Surveillance and Exclusion

In Vancouver, these racial modes of identification have converged on the post-industrial space of the nightclub. Over the last twenty years, bars, nightclubs and other consumer spaces have become pivotal sites of aesthetic production in urban economies centred on real estate, finance and consumer capital (Barnes and Hutton 2008, Boyd 2010). Because these spaces generate much of their surplus value by generating and modulating consumer desires, they also serve as focal points in public trajectories of visibility and observation (Rigakos 2004). The recurrence of Indo-Canadian gang shootings in and around Vancouver nightclubs has transformed these relations of observation into mediums of racial differentiation and identification. While these relations of observation organize the intelligibility of consumer spaces across the city, they have acquired specific juridical forms in the Granville Entertainment District (GED), a zonal area in downtown Vancouver, spanning seven city blocks, that contains a vast concentration of bars, dance clubs and other night-time commercial establishments (Boyle 2012).

While city council did not rezone the GED until the late 1990s, it was borne of the broader reorganization of Vancouver's Central Business District (CBD), which has been positioned as the principal hub of the city's post-industrial economy. In 1991, the passage of the city's Central Area Plan refashioned the CBD into a series of zonal clusters, each catering to different retail, tourist and recreational sectors (Barnes and Hutton 2008). As part of this rezoning, the city created a tiered system of liquor licensing that allows the venues in the GED to abide by different hours of operation and levels of noise control.

With these new regulations, the number of licensed seats in the GED increased six fold between 1997 and 2007 (Boyle 2012). The growing popularity of the area has created new problems for legal authorities and business owners confronted with escalating rates of public intoxication, assault, and gang activity.

To manage this threat of crime, concerned parties have employed different tactics and technologies of surveillance capable of differentiating law abiding consumers from social actors predisposed to violence. The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) has been instrumental in multiplying the human and technological agents of surveillance across this space. Private security guards employed by the DVBIA and individual businesses coordinate their daily patrols with police to displace signs of crime and disorder; while most of their interventions target symptoms of homelessness and public drug use, the presence of private security guards extends the visibility of law across public spaces (Boyle 2012). Like other centralized urban spaces, businesses in the GED have installed CCTV cameras to monitor activity inside their establishments as well as around their perimeter. These surveillance technologies have spread across the GED through the organizational efforts of the Bar Watch Program, a “non-profit advocacy program” intended to exclude the dangerous, criminal element from consumer spaces in the GED.

Businesses that participate in Bar Watch are required to install CCTV cameras at points of entry, where prospective patrons are required to have their identification scanned in order to gain access to the establishment. Using this technology, Bar Watch participants are able to collect, record, and share information about patrons that are disorderly or dangerous, which allow employees to create a “Familiarity Index” about their clientele.

While the Privacy Commissioner (2009) decreed that Bar Watch participants could not make customers consent to the data mining practiced by some bars, he affirmed that it was in the interest of public safety to use these technologies to restrict the entry of dangerous patrons. Using this technology, Bar Watch participants circulate profiles of customers with a history of violent behavior or suspected gang ties, who are either refused entry by bar staff or subject to removal by VPD officers. As an official partner in the Bar Watch Program, the VPD also updates participating businesses about potential patrons who are “known to police” for their affiliation with gangs. Through these practices of knowledge circulation, the process of isolating dangerous individuals as objects of law has been disarticulated from juridical apparatuses of the state to private actors who are enlisted in the identification of danger (BC Privacy Commissioner 2009). While these technologies of surveillance promise an objective and reliable way of identifying threats to public safety, their deployment requires legal authorities and bar employees to draw on unstable fields of cultural meaning in forming their attributions of ‘danger’ and ‘notoriety’.

Over the last ten years, growing numbers of young South Asian men have been refused entry to nightclubs on suspicion of their gang affiliations, often on the basis of their style of dress. In 2007, a number of nightclubs banned patrons from wearing certain brands of clothing synonymous with the ‘gang lifestyle’, brands that feature similar motifs of skulls, fire, and chains. With each of these aesthetic markers, their association with criminogenic blackness precludes their inclusion in the nightclub. When pressed about the morality of regulating customers’ appearance, the president of Vancouver’s Bar Watch Program asked, “do you risk putting your customer’s safety in jeopardy because you’ve chosen to let somebody in wearing that kind of clothing?” (as cited in Eustace 2007).

Through this tactic of surveillance, the aestheticized bodies of Indo-Canadian men are once again made into objects of juridical intervention, their intelligibility modulated by forms of desire and condemnation that are affectively fraught. The clothing ban made local news when a white car mechanic, who vehemently denied having any gang affiliations, was forced to turn his shirt inside out or be denied entry to a popular nightclub in the GED (Eustace 2007). Ordinarily, Bar Watch coordinates with the VPD when developing and deploying tactics of crime prevention, but, when asked about this clothing ban, a VPD inspector suggested that “[...] it’s a dangerous road to go down when you start identifying people simply by their clothing and setting them out because of that” (as cited in Eustace 2007). In response to criticisms that the ban unfairly targeted law-abiding consumers, the Bar Watch president remarked that, “if you’re just a pretender or a wannabe and you pretend to be a gangster, then I guess you’re going to suffer the indignation of being treated like one” (as cited in Eustace 2007).

CONCLUSION: RACE AND THE NEW AESTHETIC OF URBAN DANGER

In guarding against the racial spectre of crime, public and private actors have elaborated a new aesthetic of danger and security in post-industrial urban centres. To date, sociologists and geographers have effectively catalogued how this aesthetic of danger has manifested in securitized built environments that affect processes of racial exclusion and displacement (Davis 2006, Hagedorn 2008, Herbert and Brown 2006, Zukin 1996). In this chapter I have shown how racial modes of identification are actually generative of the multiple dimensions of public life in gentrified urban spaces, shaping the discursive logics, modes of perception, and emotional registers through which this aesthetic of danger materializes. While the practices of textual exchange in each city aspire to reflect the threat

of crime and danger as it “actually” exists in public spaces, the modes of perception they instantiate ultimately exaggerate the extent and proximity of crime, positioning discursive apparatuses of law as the pivot of public engagement.

By juxtaposing the local regimes of race that govern public spaces in each city, this chapter offers critical insight into the dynamic, contextually mutable modes of identification and classification that recreate the discursive reality of race. In each urban context, race establishes relations of ontological (dis)similarity, (dis)association, and (in)congruence between social phenomena. Contrary to most conceptualizations, I have shown that human bodies are not the only axis of racial differentiation, as racial modes of identification animate relations of force between a variety of actors, objects, and places. Whereas objects left in public spaces are engaged as traces of blackness, which must be expelled to maintain the order of the area, luxury commodities worn by young South Asian men are identified as symptoms of their criminality, warranting their exclusion from the consumer spaces of the city. That the Indo-Canadian gangster is primarily intelligible in relation to the black gangster, a figure that is identifiable as a victim of racism, is indicative of the metonymic dynamic of racialization, whereby phenomena acquire their meaning and significance by virtue of their repetition in racial relations of force. More importantly, my awkward comparison of these two localized racisms has allowed me to track the travels of blackness across geopolitical contexts as well as across differently racialized populations.

In both of these cases, the discursive codes of these objects tie the economic vitality of restructuring urban spaces to the vigilant, almost paranoid identification of danger, a process that has enlisted private actors in the racial governance of public space. Whether interpellated as “consumers”, “neighbors”, “business managers” or “property

owners”, these private actors extend the racial force of law as they participant in juridical networks of surveillance. Across these two sites, the scale of these public assemblages varies according to the relations of proximity and concern implied by the racial presence of crime in each city; whereas the nascence of the Indo-Canadian gangster has ensured its circulation in a broader field of publicity, engendering more diffuse juridical public engagements, the geographic specificity of the texts disseminated through *Uptown Update* have generated more tangible, localized publics. In each case, the racial presence of crime has compelled mutations in the topography of the liberal political sphere, exaggerating the indistinction between public space and private property (Blomley 2003). To extend this analysis, the next chapter explores how racial relations of publicity affect the discursive mutability of domestic spaces in each city.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRIVATE HOMES, PUBLIC HOUSING: LAW AND THE RACIAL MUTABILITY OF PRIVACY IN THE DOMESTIC SPHERE

DOMESTIC PROBLEMS AND THE CRIMINOLOGICAL IMAGINARY

Scientific and popular imaginaries of crime have long fixated on the domestic sphere as a source of juridical instability and disorder (Valverde 1991, Young 1996). As the nexus of “nature” and “nurture”, the point at which the influence of biology and culture intersect, the domestic sphere has been subject to intensive scrutiny by researchers and state officials concerned about its criminogenic effects on the broader social realm. The annals of criminology and other social sciences are replete with tropes of different familial pathologies: broken homes, welfare mothers, absentee fathers, and organized crime families, all of which are regarded as agents of crime and urban danger (Kelley 1997, Valier 2001, Valverde 2003). Amidst moral panics about these criminal figures, legal authorities and juridical publics engage the boundary that differentiates the public and private realms as a limit to law’s imperium, sentiments that conflict with historic liberal maxims that hold the sovereign integrity of the home as sacrosanct (Nelson 2002, Young 1996).

Across most post-industrial cities, local racisms help determine what domestic spaces are subject to these practices of public and legal scrutiny as well as the political sentiments that mediate their presence in the generalized public sphere. In this chapter I examine the racial modes of scrutiny and speculation that shape the public legibility of domestic spaces in Chicago and Vancouver. While I trade on the association between scrutiny and visibility, this chapter focuses on less singularly sensorial practices of speculation and surveillance, ones that transform the locus of speculation into objects of

racial fantasy, desire, and political action. My comparative analysis of each city details the racial logics and desires that affect how certain domestic spaces are pathologized, as their circulation through different textual mediums solicits feelings of pleasure, familiarity, and disgust among concerned readers. Rather than detail the norms and practices that structure the everyday relations of these domestic realms, this chapter reveals the discursive processes through which their interior spaces are publicly fabricated through different textual mediums.

In her critique of Habermas' explication of the public sphere, Fraser (1992) illustrates how different modalities of power shape the relations of visibility that compose this realm of discursive engagements. Different intersecting iterations of race, gender, and class determine what events, people, and places are the axes of these exchanges as well as the political interventions they sanction (Berlant 2008, Buffam 2009). These relations of power shape the discursive visibility of the domestic sphere. Just as those with economic and cultural capital are better able to insulate their private lives from scrutiny and surveillance, the domestic spaces of already marginalized groups are often fulcrums of public debate and legal intervention (Fraser 1992). In public exchanges about crime and urban danger, racisms determine what domestic spaces become the focal points of public and legal concern as well as the kinds of state action that address these sentiments. By explicating the discursive effects of these forms of scrutiny, this chapter illuminates exactly how race shapes the shifting boundaries between the public and domestic spheres, revealing the racial mutability of privacy across urban spaces.

To effectively explicate these racial forms of scrutiny, I have divided the remainder of this chapter into three sections. In the first section, I examine textual engagements with

the recently demolished high-rise housing projects in Chicago, which, for decades, had commanded public attention as spaces of crime and danger in the civic imaginary (Hirsch 1998, Wacquant 2008). The plan to demolish these complexes and relocate their residents, who exceeded 60 000 in 1998, has taken more than fifteen years to implement, prompting many residents and public policy critics to insist that government agencies have not fulfilled their obligations to find adequate housing for the displaced tenants (Hunt 2009, Venkatesh 2009). Amidst this overhaul of the city's housing stock, a variety of social actors have documented the minutiae of this transformation by publishing books, photographs, and news stories that publicize the changing lifeworlds of these pathologized spaces. This chapter details the racial logics and sentiments that structure accounts of this transformation, binding readers in juridical relations of scrutiny with the domestic realms of public housing complexes. I have focused my analysis on two types of texts that promise their readers immediate access to the private realms of public housing: (1) ethnographic monographs that document the quotidian realities of public housing from the perspectives of their inhabitants, and (2) urban blight photography that transforms the built environments of public housing into objects of aesthetic consumption.²⁴ To document the racial modes of scrutiny that are engendered by these texts, this chapter explicates the forms of pleasure, speculation, and condemnation that modulate public engagements with these housing complexes.

The second section examines how racial formulations of the Indo-Canadian home figure centrally in public engagements about local gang violence. By the late 1990s, the growing visibility of gang shootings attributed to young South Asian men sparked debates

²⁴ In this section I chose to analyze in more detail texts that were (1) widely advertised and circulated through local news media in Chicago and (2) commanded the modes of scrutiny that were typical of the textual genre in question

about the causes of this apparently new form of criminality, drawing a variety of explanations from public actors, legal authorities, and Indo-Canadian community leaders. While these explanations vary in their focus and content, they typically share a causal narrative that centres on the criminogenic influence of the Indo-Canadian home: a domestic space that, under these epistemic conditions, has remained culturally insulated from modern norms of civility, legality, and equality. I track the genesis of this causal narrative across different textual mediums: magazine exposés, letters to the editor, novels, social science monographs, and virtual discussion forums. By reconstituting the Indo-Canadian home as an agent of cultural inertia, these texts pry open the domestic spaces of Vancouver's South Asian population to the scrutinizing gaze of the law.

In each of these cases, the particular medium and discursive genre of the texts I analyze affect the racial modes of scrutiny they command with their readers. While the mediated forms of ghetto ethnographies and photography create different sensations of immediacy between their readers and the domestic realms they represent, both promise readers a kind of intimate or even voyeuristic access to private spaces that are otherwise pathologized in the public realm. Valued for their apparent authenticity, these texts are part of a broader cultural genre of media that circulates hyper-realistic representations of the African American ghetto as it actually exists (Kelley 1997, Kennedy 2000). The confessional literatures that have emerged to denounce the Indo-Canadian home as a site of gendered criminogenesis trade on a similar promise to reveal what is hidden to the public eye but which, by virtue of racial knowledges of 'Indo-Canadian culture', is already 'known' to be true by its publics of readers. By this I mean that the confessions acquire part of their epistemic force in accounts of Indo-Canadian gangs from confirming what readers

think and want to be true: the Punjabi home is replete with gendered inequities that are the source of criminality in the city. Each of these textual genres acquire their value by transcending the social and social boundaries that otherwise restrict the visibility of these domestic realms to ‘insiders’.

In both of these cases, racial relations of scrutiny foreground the patriarchal, often misogynistic value orientation of these domestic spaces, perverting the association of the domestic realm with femininity (Coole 2000). Just as concerns about ghettoized African American families trade on racial tropes of black masculinity, public engagements about Indo-Canadian criminality fixated on the apparently immutable androcentrism of Punjabi culture. By gesturing to the racial force of these sentiments, I do not want to deny or diminish the gendered relations of power that constitute each of the minoritized populations discussed here, nor will I provide a strictly “intersectional” analysis of how these relations of visibility affect women in minoritized communities. Rather, this chapter illustrates how regimes of race mobilize discourses of gender inequality to extend and intensify the juridical modes of scrutiny that converge on the domestic realms of racialized populations, whose anachronistic and androcentric dispositions are engaged as sites of legal intervention. Through this comparative analysis, I track how these modes of racial subjection gain traction through different gendered formations of the family.

THE SPECTACULAR DEMOLITION OF CHICAGO’S PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS

In September 2010, *The Chicago Tribune* featured a human-interest story about the ongoing demolition of the Cabrini-Green public housing projects (Schmich 2010). Built in the 1940s as part of a broader project of urban renewal, Cabrini-Green featured a series of row houses and high-rise buildings that housed upwards of 15 000 people, well beyond

their official capacity (Hunt 2009). After decades of institutional neglect, racial segregation, and intensifying poverty, the towers at Cabrini-Green became infamous as places of violent crime and decay, making the domestic lifeworlds of their inhabitants pivots of public scorn and scrutiny (Hirsch 1998, Wacquant 2008). Since the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) announced it would close Cabrini-Green, along with the city's other high-rise public housing complexes, news outlets across the city have circulated a variety of stories about their closure, most of which have been told from the vantage points of its residents.

In the human-interest story published by *The Tribune*, Cabrini-Green is primarily presented through the markedly ambivalent reflections of long-time resident Jamesetta Dixon, who remained in one of the few row houses that survived the demolition of the project. On the one hand, Dixon remembers Cabrini-Green as a breeding ground of violence and disorder, likening it to “a prison that existed under gang rule” where “half of the boys who were bad are dead or in jail” (as cited in Schmich 2010). It is this image of Cabrini-Green that is most familiar to readers, who have learned of this space through different mediums of popular culture, news articles about gang shootings, and more vernacular rumors and stories about crime that are passed between locals (Hunt 2009).

At the same time, Dixon's recollections of Cabrini-Green are modulated by a sense of attachment to the buildings as places of home, family, and community. Set against detailed descriptions of the towers' demolition and the relocation of its residents, Dixon's recollections conjure the domestic histories of Cabrini-Green as inchoate, almost spectral images of its residents' lived experiences there. In considering a future beyond this experience of Cabrini-Green, Dixon punctuated the ambivalent tone of her reflections when

she explained that, “we wished for change, and we got it. Now we’re understanding what it is to get along. And now it’s too late” (as cited in Schmich 2010). In this section I examine how the ambivalent, almost melancholic tone of these recollections saturates so many of the texts that circulated during the planned demolition of Chicago’s high-rise public housing stock. By emphasizing the ambivalent legacy of these housing projects, especially in the face of their residents’ dispersal across the city, these texts (re)open the domestic lifeworlds of their inhabitants to the scrutinizing gaze of local publics, who are positioned to evaluate and decide upon their juridical value for the city.

Ethnographic Intimacies and the Scrutiny of Everyday Life

Since the slum first emerged as a zone of the modern industrialized city, journalists, activists, and sociologists have immersed themselves in impoverished urban spaces to document the quotidian lives of their inhabitants (McLaughlin 2000, Wacquant 2002). Whether their intent was to study the empirical realities of urban poverty or agitate for social and political reform, these writers have offered different publics of readers intimate contact with the everyday experiences of poverty and immiseration that are associated with life in the modern metropolis (Kelley 1997, Kennedy 2000).

Beginning in the 1980s, elevated concerns about the pathologies of the post-industrial city prompted a growing number of writers to journey into “the African American” ghetto. Their objective was to document the lived realities of its inhabitants, typically in terms framed by debates about the apparent “culture of poverty” plaguing the urban underclass (Wacquant 2002). According to the culture of poverty thesis, the urban underclass is an artifact of this population’s pathological values and behaviors, which serve to perpetuate the conditions of their immiseration (Herbert and Brown 2006, Valverde

2006). This mode of understanding has spread through periodic moral panics about the welfare mother. A figment of racial knowledges that associate black women with sexual depravity and licentiousness, the welfare mother is a racial figure whose chronic indulgences pervert idealized visions of motherhood that are premised on care and self-sacrifice (Kelley 1997, Rose 1995). Whether or not ghetto ethnographies explicitly engage with the merits of this thesis, its prevalence – as a way of understanding urban poverty - has forced many authors to appropriate or critique its mode of explanation (Wacquant 2002).

This new genre of ghetto ethnography is primarily composed of books by journalists and sociologists, whose divergent professional training has shaped the specific kinds of knowledge generated by each of their texts. Because they abide by strict methodological protocols, sociologists usually distinguish the validity of their ethnographic research from more journalistic forays into the ghetto (Wacquant 2002). Although these epistemological differences shape the quality of knowledges they produce, as well as the public engagements they facilitate, both variants of this genre take their aesthetic cues from the New Journalism movement of the 1960s. Authors in this movement are known for fusing fictional narrative techniques with more traditional styles of news reporting (Kennedy 2000). While journalistic accounts of the post-industrial ghetto lack the methodological rigor of their sociological counterparts, they share stylistic commonalities that have a distinctly ethnographic sensibility. With this aesthetic sensibility the everyday is valorized as a site of political struggle and change (McLaughlin 2000). Circulating amidst the fetishization of the ghetto, which was discussed in the previous chapter, these

ethnographies promise readers intimate access to the quotidian dimensions of these otherwise foreign, pathologized spaces.

Written by Chicago print journalist Alex Kotlowitz, *There Are No Children Here* details the everyday lives of two African American boys as they grow up in Henry Horner Homes, a high rise public housing complex on the West Side of Chicago that was demolished in 2008. The book's publication in 1991 made it one of the first journalistic entries in the new genre of ghetto ethnography. Having become a *New York Times* bestseller, its circulation has been critical in manifesting the racial scrutiny of public housing. To recreate the textured reality of life in the ghetto, Kotlowitz (1991) spent three years shadowing the two brothers as they navigated the ubiquitous dangers of their everyday routines, which they confronted at school, around their neighborhood, as well as in their home. Like other ghetto ethnographies, the book's narrative labors over details of the neighborhood's physical decay, which symbolize the broader deterioration of the ghetto (Kennedy 2000). Without any place to insulate themselves from this crime and disorder, Kotlowitz (1991) concludes, the boys were unable to have a proper childhood, prompting their mother to muse that, "there are no children here. They've seen too much to be children" (23). Through his participants, Kotlowitz (1991) imagines childhood as a state of potentiality, one that is alloyed and perverted by their very presence in the ghetto. By returning to this trope throughout the book, Kotlowitz (1991) is able to track and project the boys' eventual descent into criminality.

The boys' home in Henry Horner Homes serves as a key battleground in the struggle for their legal and economic futures. In the wake of their father's departure from the family, the boys' mother, 'Lajoe' acted as the sole arbiter of care and discipline around

the home. In the book, the world inhabited by the boys is void of adult men capable of molding them into properly law abiding individuals. Because of this lack of father figures, Kotlowitz (1991) suggests, gang members function as surrogate father figures for neighborhood youth, configuring their criminality as a function of some displaced libidinal desires. According to critical race scholars, the relative dearth of two parent families in post-industrial ghettos is a direct consequence of racial regimes that segregate, degrade and imprison African American men (Goldberg 2001, Wacquant 2008). Yet, without the socio-historical context of this mutation in the family form, readers can only engage the boys' dismal futures as effects of their father's pathological masculinity, whose absence is framed by racial tropes of black male sexuality.

The ethnographic quality of the book's narrative gives readers a sense of intimate contact with the minutiae of familial engagements in the ghetto. To improve his access to the boys' routines at home, Kotlowitz (1991) tasks their mother with acting as his research assistant when he is unable to directly observe their interactions himself (Kennedy 2000). At certain points in the book, this methodological tactic allows his perspective to become indistinguishable from the mother's observations, creating a sense of immediate contact with the inner workings of their family. Once foregrounded, the interior, subjective world of the family becomes a fulcrum of public engagement and political commonality. For Kotlowitz (1991), this narrative strategy is intended to rescue the boys' mother from the prevailing association of black motherhood with indigence and perverse sexuality. Yet, the consistently ambivalent tone of this narrative, which wavers between the promise of the boys' futures and their envelopment by the inescapable dangers of the projects, ultimately (re)frames Lajoe as a reluctant medium of the ghetto's immiseration. Through Lajoe's

observations, the book opens the family's domestic realm to more intensive processes of juridical speculation and scrutiny, further extending the public gaze into their intimate interactions.

More recently, sociologist Sudhir Venkatesh (2008) penned a trade book, *Gang Leader for a Day* that details his ethnographic fieldwork with a gang that distributed crack cocaine in and around the towers of the Robert Taylor Homes, another notorious housing project that was located on Chicago's South Side. Having already established himself as a public intellectual with the publication of *Freakonomics*, which featured a chapter he wrote with the book's principal author Steven Levitt, Venkatesh (2008) details the project's unique socio-economic ecology to combat prevailing misconceptions of the ghetto, particularly the idea that urban poverty is a consequence of individual choice. Venkatesh (2008) uses his close relationship with the gang's leader, "JT", to access and explicate the horizontal networks of affiliation and reliance that have evolved amidst the institutional decay of the post-industrial ghetto.

According to Venkatesh (2008), the informal authority wielded by JT and other institutional actors, particularly one of the neighborhood's CHA employees, partially insulated the domestic realms of the project from the ravages of abject poverty. But even when mitigated by these networks of support, the daily routines of the housing project seem inextricable from the illicit economies of drugs and violence that JT personifies. However much Venkatesh (2008) tries to disassociate JT from the prevailing image of gangsters as predatory outlaws, the domestic lifeworlds to which his readers are exposed are still, by all appearances, disarticulated from the rule of law. Insofar as the project's actors are primarily positioned in relation to apparatuses of law, their practices are

intelligible through neoliberal registers of morality that limit recognition of the structural conditions of the ghetto's immiseration.

The socio-economic value of these networks is especially evident in the book's coda, which is ironically titled "The Stay Together Gang". Here, Venkatesh (2008) reunites with JT as he prepares for the closure of Robert Taylor Homes. The melancholic tone of this chapter is punctuated by his visit to JT's new home in the black middle class suburb of Calumet Heights, where he clearly lacks the political clout he commanded at Robert Taylor Homes. By moving to the suburbs, JT estranges himself from the authority he acquired in the project's unique social and spatial ecology, just as the relocation of the other residents extricated them from the networks of support they developed there. As the book's conclusion, this melancholic account of the project's dispersal frames these changes in terms of an absence of the order, security, and support once enjoyed by JT and the other residents.

For the book's local readers, this change in the ghetto's ecology symptomizes a broader upheaval in the geographic organization of the city, which has wrought the suburbanization of the crime and violence traditionally associated with the inner city. For local critics of the Plan for Transformation, the demolition of these notorious projects has presaged anxieties that its unlawful residents have been seamlessly incorporated into the broader body politic, particularly through mixed income housing programs (Hunt 2009). Venkatesh's ethnographic knowledges of the ghetto's distinct ecology become a portent of the city's juridical future should it be allowed to acquire traction elsewhere. In this light, the uncertainty that surrounds the demolition of projects like Robert Taylor Homes invites

further scrutiny of its domestic spaces to ascertain their potential for producing crime and disorder.

Photographic Distances and the Aesthetics of Urban Blight

Chicago's visual field has long been saturated with images of the city's public housing complexes (Hirsch 1998, Hunt 2008). During the 1940s the campaign for renewal of the city's Black Belt circulated photographs of the inhumane conditions of the city's slums. When juxtaposed with the modernist blueprints for high-rise public housing complexes, these images lent significant political momentum to the radical overhaul of the city's public housing stock (Lorch 2004). In the decade since the Chicago Housing Authority announced its plan to demolish this stock of high-rise complexes, images of these notorious housing projects have shaped the political narrative of their ongoing transformation. In this section I examine how a specific genre of urban photography, which prizes the aesthetic value of the city's blighted landscape, has shaped the dialectics of legibility through which public housing is visible across Chicago.

While this new genre lacks exact artistic parameters, it encompasses photographs with certain aesthetic commonalities: a focus on the deteriorating built environment of the city, typically presented in drab or faded color palettes, with few identifiable people visible in the images. Like other representations of the post-industrial ghetto circulated through film and music, this photography aspires to a form of hyper-realism that promises viewers unmediated access to the lifeworlds of its inhabitants (Kennedy 2000, Sernhede 2000). Much of the press surrounding this photography stresses that, even though its authors typically have formal training, their work emerged from their "lay" experiences of the city as sociologists, police officers, or former residents of the public housing complexes

(Malooley 2010). Yet, whereas the ethnographic gaze detailed earlier promises more immediate access to the lifeworlds of public housing, these photographs create distance between their viewer and the projects' inhabitants.

For instance, the images of photographer Ryan Flynn have featured prominently in local mediascapes about the closure of Cabrini-Green (Malooley 2010). After moving to the adjacent neighborhood of Old Town in 2005, Flynn began walking to and from Cabrini-Green to document its ongoing demolition, resulting in a time capture slideshow that visualizes the gradual destruction of the project's built environment. For Flynn, the materiality of the project's demolition has created new opportunities to recuperate and engage the complex familial lifeworlds that existed in these buildings, explaining that,

with the demolition, the veil has finally been torn back. After all these years of people being terrified of what goes on in these buildings, wrecking crews are revealing stuff like children's rooms with rainbow painted on the walls. You're seeing that these were actually family apartments, not just crack dens (as cited in Malooley 2010).

By circulating artifacts of the project's different domestic histories, Flynn looks to counter the prevailing imaginary of public housing, which casts it as a space inhospitable to proper familial relations. Under these conditions of visibility, Flynn's photography acquires its aesthetic and political value by revealing the apparent discrepancy between the domestic lifeworlds that existed inside the housing complex and the outward appearance of their built environment, which has served as an ideological screen upon which racial fantasies of urban danger have been projected.

In Flynn's photography, the legibility of Cabrini-Green is mediated by his movements amidst the urban restructuring of the surrounding area, which has been rebranded as a "mixed-income neighborhood" as it attracts white capital investments (Hunt 2009). During the latter stages of the demolition, Flynn actually toured the interiors of some abandoned buildings in the project, having gained access to them through a local blogger whose relative was once a resident. Given this context, it is Flynn's presence as a bearer of gentrification that gives visual access to these fetishized spaces. In Flynn's photography, people only appear as part of the eroding landscape, their habitation of the area engaged as part of the same past symbolized by the projects' ruins.

People are also absent from the photography of Scott Fortino, a Chicago police officer whose images feature the worn built environments of state buildings. For instance, the photographs in his 2005 book, *Institutional*, feature a variety of empty, sterile spaces in courtrooms, juvenile detention facilities, and classrooms in inner city public schools. While this book remains his only published work, Fortino first gained local recognition for an exhibit entitled "the Doors of Cabrini-Green", for which he produced photographs of every apartment front door in a single project tower. For Fortino, the subtle variations in each door are suggestive of the different familial histories that unfolded in each unit, even as the closure of these doors trades on the spectators' desire to view and enter these otherwise unknowable spaces.

For Fortino, the built environment of Cabrini-Green acquired its aesthetic value in contradistinction to the lived realities for which it has become notorious. When asked to describe what it was about Cabrini-Green attracted his photographic gaze, he waxed poetic about the dissonance between the natural light and the bleak built environments of the

project, explaining that he can “walk into a housing project and be transported by the quality of the light. That’s what got me through seeing the other things –the things you associate with public housing; the way the light falls on the buildings” (as cited in Keller 1999). In this explanation, Fortino sees the aestheticization of the housing projects as a way to transcend their human realities. With these photographs, the spectator is denied the opportunity to connect with the domestic lifeworlds of Cabrini Green as the promise of intimate contact with these realities is foreclosed by the formal properties of the photograph.

In the work of each of these photographers, the spectators’ engagement with the housing projects is mediated by aesthetic or temporal distance, such that the lifeworlds of their inhabitants take on a spectral or transient quality. Through these photographs, the displaced domestic spaces of Chicago’s public housing projects become fodder for the same processes of ruination that have befallen the buildings’ material structures. The ethnographic accounts of these domestic spaces cultivate different relations of intimacy with the lived realities of their inhabitants. While each of these textual genres is premised on a certain voyeuristic access to these otherwise foreign, pathologized spaces, the ethnographic gaze deployed by the books’ authors creates a sense of immediacy with their quotidian routines. Despite these variations in the relations of intimacy they create, these texts engage the changing domestic realms of public housing as sites of cultural, political and aesthetic scrutiny.

CULTURAL EXPOSÉS: LAW AND THE RACIAL SCRUTINY OF THE INDO-CANADIAN HOME

In December 2002, *MacLean’s* published an exposé on the cultural origins of gang violence in Vancouver’s Indo-Canadian community. Written by local journalist Renu

Bakshi, the exposé promises an insider's perspective of how the Indo-Canadian home has bred this violence. According to Bakshi, the pathological structure of this familial space has fostered an attitude of gendered entitlement among young South Asian men. Because her article offered one of the first public explanations of this gang violence, it was instrumental in catalyzing debates about the criminogenic influence of "Punjabi" culture. In these debates, Bakshi became a lightning rod for competing public sentiments about the political implications of her exposé. While some readers accused Bakshi of betraying the Indo-Canadian community to the mainstream Canadian press, many others praised her for inciting critical dialogue about the problem of misogyny plaguing her community. For both sides of this debate, Bakshi's exposé functioned as a kind of cultural confession through which she, as a community insider, admitted and renounced the gendered inequalities that had been created by her culture.

In this section I examine how the circulation of Bakshi's exposé reconstituted the "Punjabi" or "Indo-Canadian" home as a locus of juridical scrutiny and speculation. To this end I detail the racial logics that animate her description of this familial structure, which it shares with other journalistic and social scientific explanations of gang violence. To this end I detail the racial logics that animate her description of this familial structure, which it shares with other journalistic and social scientific explanations of gang violence. Across these different descriptions of the Indo-Canadian family, certain oedipal family narratives recur that construe their domestic realms as crucibles of violence and criminality. The second part of this section approaches her confession as a technology of racial subjectification that affects her inclusion in the normative realm of Canadian law.

“Kings of the Castle”: The Anachronistic Structure of the Indo-Canadian Home

In racial formulations of “ethnic” or “immigrant” communities, religion and family are often configured as immodern institutions that bind populations to anachronistic values and traditions (Bannerji 1999). As agents of this kind of cultural inertia, these institutions are imagined as influences that immigrants must overcome to be “Canadian”, “Western”, or “modern” (Johal 2007). In her exposé, Bakshi (2002) reproduces this racial ontology as she explains the emergence of Indo-Canadian gangs as a distinctly cultural phenomenon, arguing that this form of criminality “can be traced to misguided religious beliefs and family’s traditional practices.” At no point in the article does Bakshi (2002) clarify exactly how religion creates these cultural values, employing the terms “Sikh”, “Punjabi”, and “Indo” interchangeably throughout her explanation. Instead, Bakshi (2002) repeatedly stresses the criminogenic influence of the Indo-Canadian family. In the most cited passage of her article, Bakshi (2002) describes how a violent mentality is born of its androcentric structure, writing that,

From the moment a Punjabi boy opens his eyes, his parents hand him the keys to the Porsche of life. From now on, his mother will ride in the backseat, literally and figuratively, putting her son ahead of the world. Her boy will have the privilege of eating a warm meal, without the chore of clearing the dishes alongside his sister. In a fit of childhood rage, he will kick and punch his mother, as his father and grandmother look on, taking great pride in their boy’s supposed courage. It is the same cycle in most Punjabi households.

All Indos, as we tend to call ourselves, have witnessed parents, grandparents and relatives mourn the birth of a girl, even today, while celebrating news that an heir to the throne is born. As Indos, we know too many sisters who were raised under a microscope of discipline and fear, burdened with the terror of defying their parents or shaming the family. All the while, their male counterparts are heralded as the Kings of the Castle, allowed free reign. “That’s my boy,” Dad will say, as the little guy steals a sip of his Johnny Walker Red Label (23).

Once again, the consumption of luxury commodities (“Porsches” and “Johnny Walker Red Label”) signifies the potential criminality of young Indo-Canadian men, recreating the racial modes of identification detailed in the previous chapter. Here, however, practices of luxury consumption are merely an expression of the indulgences afforded to males in this culturally modified familial structure.

Bakshi’s description of the Indo-Canadian home vacillates between its constitutive lacks - its lack of discipline, equality, and decorum - and its symptomatic excesses of violence, tradition, and masculinity. At the centre of this familial structure is the “Punjabi father” whose despotic authority is characterized using monarchical metaphors like “throne” and “kings of the castle”. In historicist regimes of race, this trope of the Oriental despot, who arbitrarily commands tradition over his subjects, has been deployed to fabricate ontological distinctions between “Asian” and “Western” cultures (Said 1979). As this figure is projected into the domestic realm of different populations, racial relations of rule are furnished with oedipal family narratives, which psychoanalytic theorists insist are embedded in the psychical structures of modern social life (Fanon 1968, Khanna 2003,

Nast 2000). In these narratives the father figure is responsible for entering the child or 'subject' into the social order by imposing the law on their desire(s), which must be restrained and sublated to participate in civilized society (Butler 2005).

According to the narrative that underlies Bakshi's exposé, the authority wielded by Indo-Canadian fathers renders them *culturally* incapable of executing this paternal function. Whereas daughters are subject to the excessive, occasionally sexualized authority of their fathers, sons are afforded the opportunity to indulge their desires as they are, "handed the keys to the Porsche of life" (Bakshi 2002). Without an appropriate father figure, Canadian apparatuses of law serve as a kind of surrogate paternal authority, which, according to Bakshi (2002) inspires "aggression and contempt for the law" (35). In this narrative young Indo-Canadian men can only be included in the modern juridical order through the violent force of law.

A similar pathological family structure also drives the narrative of the novel *Daaku*, meaning "thug" or "criminal" in Punjabi, that follows the criminal pursuits of a young Indo-Canadian gangster named Ruby (Dhaliwal 2006). Early in the book, Ruby's father is introduced as the primary authority figure in his family, over which he presides with violent unpredictability. After his parents separate during Ruby's early adolescence, his frail and permissive mother becomes the sole agent of order in their family home. Passively doting on her children, Ruby's mother is unable to effectively discipline Ruby, who she relates to through the provision of food. At one point during the novel, Ruby's mother brings a plate of roti and daal to his room, prompting him to reflect on his ideal relationship with women: "I like being taken care of. Actually I love being taken care of. The feeling of a woman tending to a man with her heart is one of the best feelings in the world. I guess

I'm still a baby inside" (Dhaliwal 2006: 102). In this familial narrative, Ruby's desired psycho-social development has been stunted by the excess of care provided by his mother, which is presented as an extension of the gender roles into which she has been passively acculturated.

Once Ruby reaches adolescence, his mother must work two jobs to support their family, creating a domestic realm that is free of discipline and order. The unsupervised space of Ruby's room is instrumental in his descent into criminality. Throughout the novel, Ruby uses his room to store his cache of weapons and body armor. When his mother is at home, he enters and exits the house from the window in his room to "party" with his friends or deal marijuana around town. Through this narrative, gaps in the physical architecture of the home mirror the lacks in the social structure of the family. When Ruby was sentenced to house arrest for assault and drug trafficking, a new juridical order is superimposed onto the otherwise lawless space of their home. Once again, his mother proves to be an ineffective arbiter of law as Ruby quickly returns to his business of selling marijuana out of his bedroom. Insofar as the book's marketing stressed author Ranj Dhaliwal's real world experience with Indo-Canadian gangs, its narrative promises readers intimate knowledge of the norms and habits that constitute the Punjabi home.

This narrative of the Indo-Canadian home assumes and projects an ontological distinction between the cultural values of "Indian" and "Canadian" families, which is also reproduced through social scientific knowledges of the "immigrant" home. In her monograph of Vancouver's Sikh diaspora, sociologist Kamala Nayar (2004) identifies generational cleavages that plague Sikh families. For Nayar (2004), these cleavages are a consequence of the divergent value orientations of "traditional" (Sikh-Punjabi) cultures and

“modern” (Canadian) societies a distinction she explicates using the sociological theories of Max Weber, Ferdinand Toennies, and Emile Durkheim. Whereas “traditional” first generation immigrants prize authority, duty, and familial honor (“izzat”), “modern” second and third generation immigrants are motivated by Western values of autonomy and self-actualization. Positing putatively Western forms of individuality as the ultimate telos of migration, this schema mobilizes a racial temporality that configures the cultural values and practices of Sikhs as part of an immodern orientation that can be shed through practices of modern acculturation (Chakrabarty 2002, Goldberg 2001)

When framing this trajectory of acculturation, Nayar (2004) draws on the “Hierarchy of Needs” conceptualized by psychologist Herbert Maslow, a theory that posits self-actualization as the pinnacle of human potential. With this capacity for self-assertion, Maslow stipulates, people are able to develop a capacity for “mutual respect and sensitivity toward others” (Nayar 2004: 45), a disposition that is befitting of a properly civil society. Nayar (2004) appropriates this theory to imply that traditional cultural values have rendered Indian parents incapable of raising properly individualized Canadians. According to Nayar (2004), the generational conflict within Sikh families has prompted increasing numbers of baptized Sikh youth to discard the five *kakars* in favor of a secular lifestyle. Although early Indian migrants shaved their beards and cut their hair to avoid harassment and discrimination, the contemporary practices of aesthetic conformity that Nayar (2004) documents are not an effect of racism. Rather, in her view, they are merely a consequence of an apolitical desire to “enter more easily the Western lifestyle” (54). Under these conditions of intelligibility, the norms and values of Indo-Canadian families serve as

instruments of cultural inertia that mitigate the desired assimilation of young South Asian men.

Cultural Confessions and the Repudiation of Indo-Canadian Values

Long after its first publication in 2002, Bakshi's exposé is still cited in public and policy debates about gang violence in Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community. By most accounts, her explanation of Indo-Canadian gang violence was the first to publicly blame Indo-Canadian cultural values for its recent proliferation. While some observers condemned Bakshi for subjecting the Indo-Canadian population to undue criticism and scrutiny, many politicians, community leaders, and public observers commended her for initiating a dialogue about the problems of gender inequality within "her" community. In a letter to the editor published by *MacLean's* immediately after the article's publication, one reader praised Bakshi for summoning the courage to admit that misogyny pervades the Indo-Canadian home, writing that "I'm very happy that someone in our community has come out and said what is blatantly obvious to those who analyze the environment in which East Indian males grow up" (Bains 2003). In these terms, which reflect a common way of responding to Bakshi's intervention, the act of writing and publicly disseminating her exposé is tantamount to a confession of the pathologies that have become endemic to the Indo-Canadian home. In this section I analyze the processes of racial subjectification that underlie this practice of cultural confession, through which Bakshi speaks on behalf of the Indo-Canadian community even as she sets herself apart from its cultural pathos.

In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1990) considers the evolution of the confession as a technology of modern power. Through its codification by the Christian church, the confession has become "one of the main rituals we rely on for the

production of truth” (Foucault 1990: 56). For Foucault (1990), the confession serves as an “incitement to discourse and to truth” (86) during which individuals plumb the depths of their secret, inner desires, the admission of which is supposed to act as a release from the grips of power and repression. But far from functioning as a modality of resistance, Foucault (1990) stipulates, the practice of confession remakes individuals into subjects of power capable of managing and acting on these once secret desires. Whereas this form of confession is a technology of individual subjectification, Bakshi’s exposé is akin to a cultural confession through which she publicly divulged the moral and political failings of her community.

In her article Bakshi speaks of the differential treatment endured by women in the Indo-Canadian home as a secret that has been collectively repressed by her community. By exposing the cultural pathos of the Indo-Canadian community, Bakshi’s exposé gives new force and form to the racial knowledges of Sikh and Punjabi culture that govern Vancouver’s South Asian population. The autobiographic quality of her confession lends epistemic weight to the idea that Punjabi culture is to blame for gang violence, affirming racial ontologies that posit its anachronistic orientation (Goldberg 2001, Johal 2007, Mandair 2009). Bakshi’s article has circulated so extensively in part by virtue of the distinctive way she documents the community’s cultural pathos from her position as a community insider. In dialogues about Vancouver gang violence, Bakshi’s identity as an Indo-Canadian woman has at least partially immunized her to accusations that her article is racist.

The circulation of Bakshi’s exposé precipitated similar confessions from Indo-Canadian readers of *MacLean’s*. In a letter to the magazine’s editor, one reader from

Toronto, Ontario professed that, “as a Sikh, I understand the background in which these boys are raised: free of responsibility, free of rebuke and with few role models” (Marwaha 2003). While another reader from Chicago disputed Bakshi’s “monolithic” characterization of Sikhism, he still conceded its androcentrism, divulging that, “yes, I was spoiled by my mom, and yes, I was privileged by a hyper-patriarchal culture. And, yes, there’s a huge problem going on, and a lot of people aiding through silence” (Boparai 2003). Like Bakshi’s exposé, these letters affirm Orientalist tropes of Indian masculinity as their authors place themselves within and beyond the purview of Indo-Canadian culture. By admitting the sins of the Indo-Canadian community, these confessors identify themselves as subjects of its anachronistic orientation, even as their moral condemnation effectively distinguishes their value orientation from Punjabi culture. It is Bakshi’s position within and apart from the Indo-Canadian community that gives her confession its racial force as a technology of knowledge and power, opening the Punjabi home to the scrutiny of legal and public actors.

Bakshi’s supporters commended her exposé for initiating a public dialogue about the gender inequities that *still* structure the immigrant home. By their logic, Bakshi’s confession functioned as an instrument of democratic publicity insofar as its circulation subjected the cultural norms of the Indo-Canadian home to discursive contestation. According to the liberal democratic imaginary of the public sphere (Fraser 1990), these processes of discursive contestation can affect positive social change within marginalized communities by redirecting cultural and monetary resources toward a particular issue, in this case the anachronistic gender politics of the Indo-Canadian home. Under these conditions of intelligibility, the publicity engendered by Bakshi’s confession is expected to

modernize the gendered norms and values of the Indo-Canadian family, entering it into the temporal field of Western law. As Bakshi's confession subjects Indo-Canadian culture to juridical judgment and scrutiny, Vancouver's public sphere acts as a medium of historicist racisms that differentiate and distinguish populations according to their cultural capacities to inhabit modernity, racial regimes that also shape public concerns about domestic violence in the Indo-Canadian community (Goldberg 2001).

On 12 November 2006, a young South Asian woman named Navreet Waraich was murdered by her husband in the basement suite they shared in South Surrey. Her death was the third violent incident in as many weeks to be attributed to domestic violence in the Indo-Canadian community. In the days following Waraich's murder, newspaper readers, law enforcement officials, and community leaders publicly attributed this "epidemic" to the cultural inertia of the Indo-Canadian home. After one reader of *The Vancouver Sun* stressed the "inability of Sikh religious practices to adapt to the new environment in Canada" (Deol 2006), another reader responded that the "root of the problem does not lie with the Sikh religion, which was ahead of its time in promoting gender equality, but rather aspects of the patriarchal Punjabi culture that are instilled at home" (Patrola 2006). Even as these readers disagree about the exact mechanism through which cultural norms are transmitted, their confessions about the Indo-Canadian home engage it as the principal cause of domestic violence.

At a media scrum with local reporters, then Attorney General Wally Oppal condemned the veil of secrecy surrounding domestic violence within the Indo-Canadian community, for which he often serves as a public representative. According to Oppal, the cultural obsession with familial reputation has limited the potential institutional responses

to domestic violence, explaining that this is a “horrible social problem and criminal problem that our community has done nothing about. We have simply closed our eyes” (as cited in Bolan 2006B). As the Attorney General, Oppal demanded more intensive legal intervention into the cultural relations that constitute the Indo-Canadian home.

After Waraich’s murder, Radio India, which plays a prominent role in the cultural and political life of Vancouver’s Indian diaspora, broadcasted calls to action against domestic violence from its listeners, one of whom pleaded to the community, “why are we all asleep? [...] we must wake up and save our mothers!” (as cited in Bolan 2006B). Later that week, the radio station organized an emergency public forum to address the surge of violence within the Indo-Canadian community. During the forum, participants advanced a number of different, often competing explanations of this pattern of domestic violence, some of which centered on the cultural pathologies of the Indo-Canadian home while others blamed the RCMP for neglecting this problem. Yet, however varied these explanations were, the public forum was framed to solicit confessions from its participants about the cultural foundations of domestic violence, encouraging people from the Indo-Canadian community to divulge and critique their own complicity in perpetuating the androcentric values of ‘their’ culture. In this context, the emergency forum acts as a technology of juridical publicity through which its participants refashion themselves as modern subjects of law as they denounce the anachronistic trappings of their culture.

Like Bakshi’s exposé, the confessions that surfaced in the wake of Waraich’s murder reconstituted the Indo-Canadian home as a locus of juridical scrutiny and racial subjectification. In analyzing the racial logics that structure public engagements about domestic violence, I do not want to minimize the severity of the gendered violence

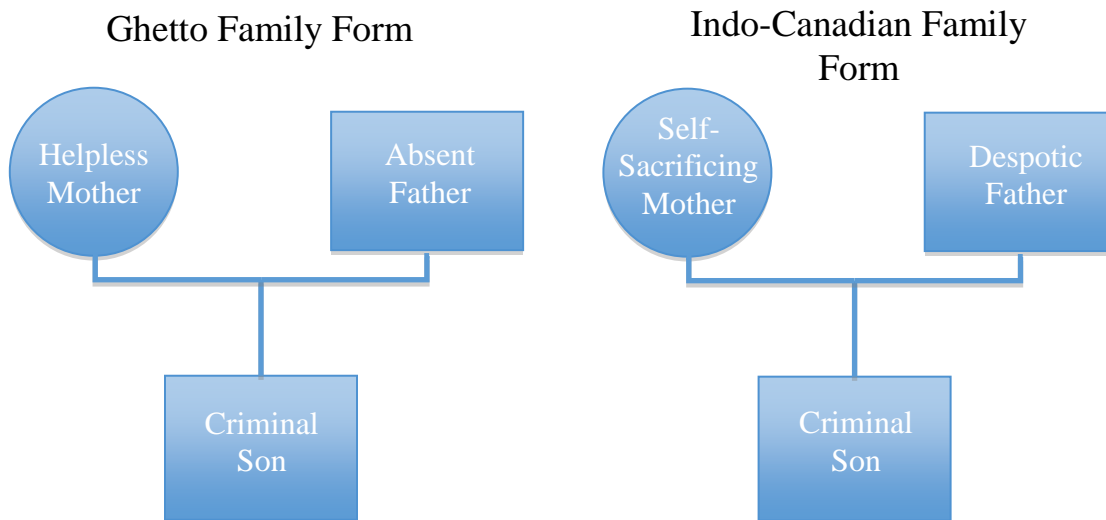
experienced in Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community, nor do I deny the force of gendered relations of power that make women vulnerable to violence. Rather, to document the racial dynamics of public dialogues about Indo-Canadian violence, this chapter shows how the cultural confession has become a technology of subjectification that promises inclusion in the realm of modern Canadian civility through the repudiation of Indian cultural values.

CONCLUSION: THE RACIAL PRECARIETY OF THE DOMESTIC SPHERE

In the liberal democratic political imaginary, the domestic realm has long been denigrated relative to the public sphere (Coole 2000, Eley 1993). Mobilizing classical Greek distinctions between the *polis* and *oikos*, the prevailing logics of this imaginary devalue the domestic realm as a site of particularity, impermanence, and bodily necessity, qualities that stand in stark contrast to the public sphere's association with universality and transcendence. Whereas the public realm has been the purview of those who have the time and rights to engage in politics, the household has been the site of "production and reproduction, the place of slaves and women" (Coole 2000: 345). In the texts I have analyzed in this chapter, the political marginality has been configured as a source of vulnerability for society at large insofar as it is vulnerable to the social and cultural inadequacies of different minoritized populations.

The racial modes of scrutiny at work in Chicago and Vancouver posit differently gendered configurations of the family as agents of criminogenesis. In Figure 4.1. on p. 137 I provide a diagram of these different family structures as they are formulated in the texts analyzed in this chapter. By visualizing these discursive family formations in terms of a conventional Genogram, which tracks the passage of hereditary properties through familial

Figure 4.1 – Familial Pathologies²⁵



Generations, we can observe certain convergences in how they explain the violent criminality of young racialized men. In each these family formations, fathers are assumed to have the responsibility of entering their sons into the modern legal order. The modes of scrutiny I have explicated in this chapter suggest that the fathers in each of these family forms are incapable of performing this function, either by virtue of their absence from the home or by virtue of their despotic presence there.

Conversely, women are only allocated the subject position of the mother who lacks the agentic capacities to enter their children into the social and legal orders of the city. While there are a variety of racial tropes that differently characterize black women and mothers, the two most apparent in the texts I analyzed here stress their incapacity to transcend the immiseration of the ghetto, either because of their own individual failings or

²⁵ Following the conventions of a Genogram I have represented males with rectangles and women with circles.

because they remain imprisoned by their socio-economic circumstances. Conversely, in the confessional literatures about the Indo-Canadian home, the mother has taken on her subservient role in the family through self-sacrifice and acquiesce to the putatively androcentric norms of Punjabi culture. Unlike mothers in the ghetto family form, the Indo-Canadian mother is able to transcend their subject position by publicly renouncing the pathologies of their domestic realm. Here, the logics of racial historicism (Goldberg 2001: 34) configure the cultural values of the Indo-Canadian home as differences that can be overcome through “modern”, “Canadian” practices of criticism and confession. These logics differ from those that configure the subject position of the African American mother as a prisoner of their circumstance, transposing naturalist racial logics that stress the immutability of difference onto the social structural position of black women.

Through the different texts I have analyzed here, readers are able to consume and imagine the differently gendered configurations of the home as sources of juridical insecurity, engaging the boundary between the private and public spheres as a limit to law’s reach. Insofar as the texts’ authors allow readers to transcend that limit, either because they have gained access to these spaces or are “insiders” themselves, these texts trade on a racial desire to know and understand these otherwise inscrutable spaces. Through my awkward comparison, I have revealed the different ways in which this boundary is made racially mutable as domestic spaces are pathologized and subject to practices of speculation, surveillance, and scrutiny.

CHAPTER FIVE- PUBLIC INQUIRIES: LAW AND THE RACIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF STATE ACTORS

POST-RACIAL STATE ACCOUNTABILITIES

Contemporary regimes of race are characterized by new conditions of public visibility and identification (Goldberg 2009). As racism is recast as an effect of individual morality and illiberal state formations, a person or institution identified as “racist” is assumed to suffer from some moral or ideological failing (Hesse 2004: 13-15). With the passage of Civil Rights legislation in the US and multicultural state policies in Canada, anti-racist rhetoric has been institutionalized in a manner that makes racism an aspect of political rule for which states and state actors can be accountable, either to the law or the generalized public sphere. But as state racisms have mutated from their familiar, recognizable forms, these relations of accountability are governed by increasingly complex, often contradictory modes of visibility that elide the racial force of the liberal democratic state (Hesse 2011, 155-157).

This chapter documents how such political forms of visibility organize a specific medium of state accountability: the public inquiry. Although this institution has assumed a variety of forms across the multiple contexts in which it is employed, its principal function is the provision of a transparent and methodical investigation into the conduct of state actors and institutions, usually in the face of concern about the efficacy and legality of the state. Here I analyze the modes of accountability that govern two public inquiries, each of which has considered how agents of the state failed to protect the minority populations they govern from acts of political violence: (1) in 2006, the Illinois Special State’s Attorney Investigation of Jon Burge was commissioned to determine whether city officials actively or inadvertently facilitated the torture of African American suspects from 1972 to 1991;

and (2) *The Commission of Inquiry into the Bombing of Air India Flight 182*, which formed in 2006 to determine why Canadian state officials were unable to prevent and successfully prosecute the bombings that killed 331 people in 1985. While these inquiries were undertaken at different levels of government and took distinct public and institutional forms, both were forced to consider how the conduct of state actors rendered minority populations racially vulnerable to violence. In each of these cases, it was the speed and urgency of the state's responses to violence that engendered its distinctly biopolitical conditions, wherein the political relation of race is recreated as a temporal gap, lag, or 'caesura' in the conduct of state actors. Because both inquiries grappled with the state's complicity in acts of violence, I examine how these institutions manifest distinctly *racial accountabilities*.

Liberal democratic imaginaries of the public sphere stipulate that state actors should be made publicly available to answer for their political conduct, "to give account" of their actions (Roach 1995). Throughout the inquiries analyzed here, racial relations of force dictate exactly *how* state institutions are made to answer for the conduct of its actors. These differentiated relations of accountability are evident in how each inquiry was undertaken as well as in how state institutions responded to violence directed at the populations they govern. To explicate the racial force of the inquiry, I approach accountability as both (1) a process through which the conduct of state actors is made transparent to the generalized public sphere, creating a certain state of 'answerability'; as well as (b) the capacity of state actors to explain their conduct in a credible manner, what Richard Ericson (1995) refer to as a certain measure of "account ability" (136-138). In both of the inquiries considered here, the account ability of state actors is delimited by the manner in which the racial force

of their actions is understood and explained. To illuminate these racial account abilities, I detail exactly how race and racism are made intelligible by each of these public inquiries and the experts they solicit for knowledge.

PUBLIC INQUIRIES AT WORK: AIR INDIA AND JON BURGE

In Chicago, the Special Prosecutors' inquiry was formed in 2002 when the chief criminal judge for the Cook County Courts appointed Edward Egan to the position of Special Prosecutor. Egan was appointed to determine whether charges could be brought against city employees for their roles in the systematic torture of suspects at the Area 2 precinct of the Chicago Police Department (CPD), which was said to have occurred under the supervision of CPD Commander Jon Burge. In the most widely publicized case of torture, Andrew Wilson had been convicted of murdering two police officers in 1982, killings he confessed to under the duress of prolonged torture at the Area 2 precinct. While the Illinois Supreme Court overturned Wilson's conviction because the State could not adequately explain how Wilson sustained certain injuries while in custody, he was convicted again in 1988 without the Prosecution tendering the confession as evidence of his guilt. As news of this torture became public in the early 1990s, the CPD's Office of Professional Standards (OPS) conducted an investigation into the extent of torture at Area 2. The confidential Goldston Report (1992) produced by the OPS investigation concluded that "the preponderance of the evidence is that abuse did occur and that it was systematic" (27).

While Burge was suspended from duty in 1991 and fired two years later, another decade passed before the Special Prosecutors were tasked with discerning whether Burge and other city officials were legally culpable for the systematic torture that occurred at

Area 2. In the American legal system, Special Prosecutors are appointed as legal investigators when State's Attorneys encounter some conflict of interest in the execution of their professional responsibilities. As "neutral", "objective" investigators, Special Prosecutors are deployed as instruments of institutional transparency and accountability. In their report, published in 2006, the Special Prosecutors concluded that, despite a wealth of evidence implicating city officials in a conspiracy to cover-up the practices of torture, the existing statutes of limitations prohibit the prosecution of any party other than Jon Burge (Egan and Boyle 2010), who was eventually convicted of perjury and the obstruction of justice in 2010 for testimonies he gave during civil suits filed against him by torture victims.

To document the forms of accountability that organize the state's investigation into this torture, I have gathered and analyzed a variety of texts produced for and about the Special Prosecutors' investigation, including their multi-volume final report; previous inquiries and legal cases cited in their report; as well as public responses to their report authored by different media actors and special interest groups. Although the State of Illinois has since established the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission, which will pursue all complaints of torture submitted before 2014, I focus my analysis on the Special Prosecutors' report because it is the first systematic, public inquiry into the state's complicity in torture at Area 2, which, as I will explain later, shaped the political conditions under which its knowledges were circulated and consumed.

Formed by order of the Canadian Federal government in 2006, the Air India inquiry was tasked with determining exactly how Canadian state officials failed to prevent and prosecute the bombing of Air India Flight 182. On June 23, 1985, this plane was bombed

en route to Delhi from Montreal, killing all 329 people on board, the majority of who were South Asian Canadian citizens (Failler 2009). Later that day another bomb connected to the same plot was accidentally detonated at Tokyo's Narita International Airport, where it killed two baggage handlers. Canadian investigators eventually linked the bombing to Sikh nationalist groups based in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, where the bombing was planned as retaliation against the Indian state for its siege of the Golden Temple in Amritsar the previous year. Authorities did not charge anyone with these murders until sixteen years after the bombing, when, in 2001, both Ajaib Singh Bagri and Ripudiman Singh Malik were charged with murders of which they were eventually acquitted after the most expensive criminal trial in Canadian history. Since the late 1980s, families of the bombing victims had called for a systematic investigation of the Canadian state's mishandling of the investigation, demands that went unanswered until 2006 when the Federal government ordered a public inquiry into the government's handling of the bombing (Major 2010).

In its final report, released in 2010, the Air India inquiry concluded that a "cascade of errors" by government officials was to blame for the state's inability to prevent and successfully prosecute the bombing (Major 2010: 33). In addition to its forensic functions, the inquiry was tasked with advising the government on a series of policy problems related to national security: how best to improve aviation security; how to circumvent the funding of terrorist groups; as well as how to provide more effective witness protection in terrorism cases, given that newspaper publisher Tara Singh Hayer was murdered in 1998 after agreeing to testify for the Crown (Bolan 2006A). Although the final report acknowledged how the organizational culture of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and

the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) contributed to the state's failures, it excluded from consideration how systemic racism created the conditions for this misconduct, even though some victims lobbied to have this topic addressed in the inquiry (Failler 2009). To illuminate the racial accountabilities that governed this institution, I analyze a variety of media and legal texts produced for the inquiry, including the Commissioner's Final Report, communiques published to advise the victims' families about the inquiry's proceedings, videos of the Inquiry hearings catalogued on the website of the Canadian Public Affairs Channel (CPAC), and daily media coverage of the Inquiry by Vancouver's commercial daily newspapers.

The remainder of this chapter is organized into four principal sections. In the first section I build on socio-legal research that conceives of the inquiry as a technology of governance, one that is employed by state actors to manage crises of law and sovereignty (Mongia 2003, Mawani 2009, Roach 1995, Valverde 2006). But, whereas this literature primarily attends to the inquiry as a mechanism of juridical knowledge production, I illustrate how inquiries are employed to modulate public sentiment about the state and its legal appendages through "accounting" procedures that manage the visibility and transparency of the state. The next two sections detail the racial modes of accountability that govern and organize each inquiry, explicating the specific ways in which these juridical bodies reveal and obscure the relations of force from which acts of violence emerge. In the final section of the chapter, I consider how these racial modes of accountability are formative of the bio-political fields through which neoliberal states exercise their racial force.

THE JURIDICAL FUNCTIONS OF PUBLIC INQUIRIES

Public inquiries command significant political capital for liberal democratic states whose authority is premised upon their accountability to a generalized public sphere (Roach 1995). Executive and judicial branches of government commission these temporary fact-finding institutions to investigate allegations that state actors have conducted themselves ineffectively or illegally. By offering detailed accounts of *exactly* how state actors conducted themselves in a given situation, public inquiries help manage negative public sentiment about the state. In this regard, public inquiries typically acquire their juridical value by functioning as both instruments of knowledge production, which adjudicate and authenticate certain “truths”, as well as mediums of public desire that modulate and assuage sentiments about the state through their spectacular undertaking (Mongia 2003).

To date socio-legal scholarship has primarily conceived of the inquiry as both a form and technology of juridical knowledge production (Comaroff 2001, Mawani 2009, Mongia 2003, Roach 1995, Valverde 2003). In his essay “Truth and Juridical Forms”, Foucault (2002) details the genesis of the inquiry as a juridical technique of governance employed by states to authenticate and transmit “truths”. While Foucault (2002) is concerned with a more generalized method of investigation than the public inquiry, which he suggests is fundamental to modern state apparatuses, his analysis illustrates how the truths generated by bureaucratic procedures are engaged as authoritative accounts of reality. Yet, insofar as these truths are forged in epistemic fields delimited by administrative mandates and prevailing political concerns, inquiries ultimately fabricate the objects of knowledge they aspire to describe and document (Mawani 2009, Mongia 2003). Because inquiries are

typically tasked with generating knowledges that can inform state practices and policies, they have also become a principal means by which the bureaucratic logics of law are materialized through state action (Mawani 2008, Comaroff 2001). To maintain its utility as an instrument of liberal governance, the inquiry has evolved a variety of tactics to obscure and erase its effects on the political landscape it interrogates, helping preserve its regime of impartiality (Mongia 2003).

Although the inquiry has developed various epistemic techniques of evaluation and adjudication (Mongia 2003), witness testimonies function as the principal axis of knowledge production in *public* inquiries. Of course, public inquiries also compile and analyze a variety of textual records and government documents, but these juridical institutions focus their epistemic and material resources on soliciting the testimonies of “witnesses”, those social actors who have been deemed “apt to know” (Foucault 2002: 23). Typically these actors are called to proffer knowledges before the inquiry because they were witness to a given event or because they possess the professional expertise necessary to provide insight into some phenomena germane to their investigation. Through the accounting practices deployed by public inquiries, witness testimonies have acquired the principal epistemic weight in the recollection and explanation of given events. The final reports of both inquiries analyzed here position witness testimonies as the narrative cipher through which the conduct of state officials is recreated.

Beyond their epistemic value for the inquiry, these testimonies also acted as the public interface of the Air India Inquiry, circulating through live broadcasts of inquiry proceedings on the Canadian Public Affairs Channel (CPAC) and daily summaries of the inquiry published by Canadian news agencies. Although witnesses were not questioned

publicly during the Special Prosecutors' inquiry, their testimonies are prominent in news coverage of the investigation as well as in critical reactions to its limitations (see People's Law Office et al 2007). Given that witness testimonies are so central to the inquiry as a form of knowledge production, it is important to consider the discursive processes through which certain actors are granted the capacity to know and profess their knowledge before the inquiry, even as others are discounted as valid subjects of legal knowledge. In this vein, the next two sections of this chapter explain how these processes of epistemic valuation are fundamental to the forms of 'racial account ability' (Ericson 1995:35-37) that are generated by each inquiry.

As quasi-judicial institutions of the state, public inquiries command different forms and measures of legal authority across the political jurisdictions in which they are employed. In the United States, the sole task of Special Prosecutors is to determine whether criminal charges should be filed against individual state actors accused of wrongdoing (Egan and Boyle 2006). Although the State's Attorney is the ultimate arbiter of these charges, the public and economic scale of these investigations lends their recommendations a certain juridical force, one that is idiomatic of public inquiries. In Canada, public inquiries are strictly fact-finding apparatuses that have no direct legal bearing on the proceedings of criminal law, nor are government actors necessarily bound to implement the policy recommendations generated by a specific public inquiry (Major 2010). Like the Special Prosecutors' investigations, these inquiries acquire their juridical force from the publicity and visibility of their undertaking, which is evident in how public and legal actors characterize the symbolic function of each inquiry.

The prevailing imaginary of the inquiry stipulates that it facilitates the greater accountability of state institutions by opening their inner workings to the scrutinizing gaze of the public sphere (Roach 1995: 269-271). In the final report for the Air India Inquiry, the Commissioner waxed eloquent about maintaining an inquiry that is open to the public, writing that,

Openness and transparency are hallmarks of legal proceedings in our system of justice. Exposure to public scrutiny is unquestionably the most effective tool in achieving accountability for those whose actions are being examined and in public confidence in the process and resulting decision (Major 2010: 243).

According to this formulation, the public inquiry acts as a juridical supplement to the liberal democratic public sphere insofar as it subjects the conduct of state actors to scrutiny and debate under legally codified parameters. By linking public confidence in the state to the transparency of its institutions, Major (2010) suggests that inquiries also act on and modulate public sentiment about the state, typically to regenerate confidence in its efficacy and legality.

The press that surrounded the Special Prosecutors' investigation also stressed the political value of its public visibility. An editorial first published by *The Chicago Sun-Times*, and eventually reprinted in the Special Prosecutors' report, explains that,

in making the decision [to appoint a Special Prosecutor], Biebel must have seen that, to restore public confidence, there needed to be an aggressive, outside inquiry into whether Burge and his men applied electric shock, suffocation and other torture techniques to scores of

young African American men in police custody (as cited Egan and Boyle 2006: 123).

Once again, inquiries derive their political value from their capacity to shape public sentiment about the state. In light of these sentiments, I approach the public inquiry as a regenerative tactic of sovereignty that provides “legitimacy for the rule of law and offer[s] a guarantor for the representational claims of state power” (Butler 2005: 52). This imaginary of the public inquiry is governed by the liberal political maxims that (1) the public gaze for which the inquiry is performed is transparent, disembodied, and politically neutral (Fraser 1992); as well as the idea that (2) publicity serves as a vessel of critical democratic agency, binding states to the populations they govern through relations of accountability (Habermas 1991, Warner 2002). In the subsequent sections of this chapter I illustrate how institutional transparency is a discursive effect of the technologies of mediation that work to create sensations of immediacy.

In Canada, the transparency of public inquiries has been radically delimited by the introduction of National Security Claims (NSC) that allow state institutions to withhold information if its release could endanger “national security”. These claims were first institutionalized in *The Commission of Inquiry into the Actions of Canadian Officials in Relation to Maher Arar*, which was held between 2004 and 2005 to determine how complicit the state was in Arar’s extraordinary rendition to Syria where he was subjected to torture. During the Arar Inquiry, counsel for CSIS and RCMP had these NSCs added to the institutional lexicon of public inquiries when concerns about the imprecise threat of Islamic terrorism allowed state officials to withhold potentially incriminating information from the public (Major 2010). When NSCs are recognized by the Commissioner, the information in

question may be redacted from the evidence submitted to the inquiry, entered into the hearings via an *in camera* hearing, or entirely withheld from the public. In this context, the inchoate threat of terror has transformed the racial lines of visibility that constitute this juridical institution; yet, the introduction of these NSCs should be understood as an extension of how the inquiry's public gaze is filtered and refracted through the juridical imperative of the inquiry. For the public inquiry to effectively mobilize and regenerate public sentiments about the state, public recognition of its racial force must be repressed, refracted, and disavowed. Far from being transparent, the public gaze manifested through the inquiry affects the differential circulation and scrutiny of certain forms of knowledge, expertise, and recollection.

Liberal democratic states have long employed the inquiry to address the apparent limits of law and other crises in state sovereignty, including the state's lack of knowledge regarding a particular problem or phenomenon (Mongia 2003); its inability to govern a vulnerable or problematic population (Mawani 2008); and its incapacity to manage an apparent breakdown in social order (Valverde 2003). In each case, inquiries generate knowledges to transcend and overcome these gaps in the juridical field of intervention, a process that regenerates and extends the force of law. Specifically public inquiries are employed to address juridical crises of a different kind: diminutions of public confidence in the efficacy or legality of the state. To maintain their efficacy within liberal democratic state formations, the institutions implicated in each inquiry must appear to create equal conditions of opportunity for their citizenry. According to this imaginary, the state should only intervene to neutrally arbitrate between otherwise autonomous individualism. Under these political conditions of visibility, the accusation that state actors affect the

racialization of the populations they govern threatens to undermine the legitimacy of liberal democratic states.

LEGAL UNCERTAINTIES: RACE AND THE LEGIBILITY OF TORTURE IN THE ILLINOIS' SPECIAL PROSECUTORS' REPORT

On 22 February 1982, the Superintendent of Chicago Police received a letter from the director of Cermak Prison Health Services, Dr. John Raba that described his medical examination of Andrew Wilson, who had been brought there following his arrest for the murders of two Chicago police officers. In the letter, Raba catalogues the injuries that were visible on Wilson's body, which he claimed to have incurred while in police custody:

"multiple bruises, swellings and abrasions on his feet and head," as well as "blisters on his right thigh, right cheek and anterior chest" (as cited in Egan and Boyle 2006: 127).

According to Raba's letter, Wilson also accused police officers of administering electric shocks to his gums, lips, and genitals. In concluding the letter, Raba advises the Superintendent that "there must be a thorough investigation of this alleged brutality" (as cited in Egan and Boyle 2006: 127).

More than 20 years after the letter was written and circulated between state actors, it figured centrally in the Special Prosecutors' account of how city officials facilitated the systematic torture of suspects at Area 2. Since the early 1970s, the Chicago Police Department had received numerous complaints that officers at Area 2 were torturing African American suspects, but it was only with the circulation of Raba's letter that 'reliable' evidence of this practice was committed to the textual record of the city. To explain why this letter is so central to the Special Prosecutor's report, I show how its evidentiary form assured it a certain epistemic value in the public inquiry, one it acquired in contradistinction to the testimonies of the torture victims.

Beyond its value as evidence of Wilson's injuries, the letter has also served as proof that Brzeczek failed to properly act on Raba's allegation of torture. In his depositions with the Special Prosecutors, Brzeczek recounted that he had forwarded Raba's letter to the State's Attorney, future Mayor Richard M. Daley, who he asked for "direction as to how the department should proceed in the investigation" (as cited in Egan and Boyle 2006: 127). When Daley did not respond to Raba's request for assistance, Brzeczek did not make any other attempts to investigate these allegations, despite acknowledging to the Special Prosecutors that the letter convinced him of their veracity. In the next section of this chapter, I examine how this documented inaction serves as a focal point of critique for the Special Prosecutors, gesturing to the modes of accountability that govern the conduct of actors in this local state apparatus. Yet, as I explain below, the Special Prosecutors conceive of Brzeczek, like they do other state actors, in a manner that abstracts their conduct from the racial apparatuses of the state that organize and subtend their institutional practices.

Before detailing these racial accountabilities, I must first explain exactly how the practices of torture connected to Burge constitute a form of racial state action. Critics of Burge and his officers typically identify these practices of torture as racist because each incident of violence manifested the prejudicial attitudes of white police officers toward African American suspects (see People's Law Office et al 2007). Accordingly, the frequency with which officers uttered racial epithets during their interrogations is often cited as evidence of racism. At different points during these interrogations, officers under Burge's command threatened to hang a suspect "like they had other niggers" (174), while telling another that they would "blow his black brains out" (as cited in Egan and Boyle

2006: 110). While these incidents reveal the kinds of racial animosity that animated this violence, I show that, to understand the racial conditions of this torture, its recurrence must be situated in the institutionalized relations of force that allowed black bodies to remain objects of state violence. As I explain in the next section of this chapter, the inaction of state officials, who knew that black suspects were systematically tortured under the supervision of Burge, (re)created a juridical field in which racial violence was allowed to continue and intensify.

In conceiving of this torture as a racial practice, it is worth noting that Burge learned the specific techniques of torture while serving as a military police interrogator during the Vietnam War. Here he learned and “practiced” the methods of torture on the abjected bodies of Vietnamese prisoners, prompting him to name the device he used to electrocute suspects “The Gook Box” (Egan and Boyle 2006: 33). That Burge develops his tactics of torture in these circumstances of war is suggestive of the variegated conditions of state power under which these forms of violence emerge and mutate.

Individualized Culpabilities and the Delegation of Duty

We now have the spectacle of a Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, a lawyer, who received and believed evidence that a prisoner had been brutalized by the Superintendent’s subordinates; that that prisoner had confessed; that those subordinates had testified under oath on a motion to suppress and before a jury and he had to believe, they testified perjurally; that the prisoner had been sentenced to death and that that Superintendent still remained silent. For twenty years. More egregiously, he kept Burge in command of Violent Crimes at Area 2 as

long as he remained Superintendent (Egan and Boyle 2006: 193 as underline in the original).

As the Superintendent of Chicago Police in 1982, Richard Brzeczek was in a unique organizational position to act on the allegations that Andrew Wilson was tortured while in custody at Area 2. In his capacity as Superintendent, Brzeczek was responsible for overseeing how Burge executed his supervisory duties in the Violent Crime Section of Area 2, while also serving as the official interface between the public, the CPD, and other arms of the city's state apparatus. Because of his position, Brzeczek had what the Special Prosecutors referred to as a "non-delegatable duty" to investigate Wilson's allegations of torture, an obligation that was not absolved by his request for assistance from the State's Attorney (Egan and Boyle 2006: 183). Yet, despite his certainty that suspects were being tortured, Brzeczek did not conduct any further investigations into the interrogation practices of Burge and the officers under his command. Under Brzeczek, Burge maintained his supervisory position at Area 2 until his dismissal from the CPD in 1993, during which time (at least) twenty more African American suspects were subjected to torture. Through these institutionalized practices of neglect, Brzeczek formalized a field of juridical intervention that was effectively disarticulated from the rule of law, wherein African American suspects figured as objects of racial violence.

In the narrative constructed by the Special Prosecutors, this racial field of law originated from the individual decisions made by Brzeczek. For the Special Prosecutors, the folly of his conduct was best exemplified by a tactic he employed during the frenzied search for information about the murders of the two police officers, the event that incited the torture of Andrew Wilson. During the investigation, Brzeczek became aware of

concerns in the African American community that black suspects were being mistreated by Chicago police officers. To assuage these sentiments, Brzeczek called a meeting of his black command personnel to enlist their help in managing the frustration building in the city's African American communities. During this meeting, Brzeczek instructed the black command staff to reassure community leaders that Chicago police officers maintain a strict adherence to the law, while insisting that they also "lay down the law to the police officers [under their command] to re-emphasize the Department's policy on the proper treatment of arrestees" (Egan and Boyle 2006: 191).

The Special Prosecutors are understandably critical of this response, especially given that Brzeczek "did not call in the 75 to 80 members of the white command personnel and give them the same mandate" (Egan and Boyle 2006: 342). Through this management tactic, black command personnel were made solely responsible for addressing the racial use of force by other officers, despite the fact that no black police officers had been implicated in the practice or supervision of torture. Brzeczek further complicated the already (psychically) fraught position of African American police officers who, during their depositions with the Special Prosecutors, spoke of having to hear rumors and chatter of the racial violence meted by their colleagues. By tethering the problem of police torture to black state actors, Brzeczek recreated a distinct juridical field of action for Burge and the detectives he supervised, one that is racially insulated from the rule of law.

In their report, the Special Prosecutors concluded that Brzeczek's dubious handling of these allegations "presents a picture of someone who was not showing the public he meant 'business' and was not right over 'Operations'" (Egan and Boyle 2006: 222). Throughout their final report, the Special Prosecutors demonstrated concern for how the

Superintendent's conduct appeared to the public. By focusing on the potential publicity of his state conduct, the Special Prosecutors constituted the racial force of this torture as a problem to be managed in the field of public opinion and perception, rather than addressing this violence as a racial relation of power that emanates from the institutionalized conduct of state actors. In his meeting with black command personnel, Brzeczek practiced a similar form of accountability when he instructed these officers to manage community sentiments about police misconduct, without addressing the state actors actually implicated in the practice of torture. By focusing his response on the sentiments of the African American community specifically, Brzeczek (re)constituted torture as a problem that concerned a minoritized public, which is governed as ontologically distinct from the generalized public sphere.

In Chicago, African American political institutions and public spheres emerged and evolved as a function of racial segregation, a process that engendered the institutional encasement of ghettoized populations (Gilroy 2000, Wacquant 2001). Given that police were often instrumental in creating and reinforcing the boundaries of ghettoization, leaders in these institutions were often tasked with advocating on behalf of African American victims of police violence as they worked to hold the state accountable for its violent conduct (Conroy 2001). It was these organizations that were instrumental in advocating for an independent inquiry into the practice of torture at Area 2 (Conroy 2001). In this context, Brzeczek was coordinating his response through existing channels of communication when he instructed command personnel to fallaciously assure community leaders that Chicago police officers were abiding by the rule of law. Rather, a racial relation of accountability was reproduced through the manner in which police torture circulates as a problem that only

concerns the African American population of Chicago, as evidenced by the virtual absence of news coverage of the issue until the early 1990s (Conroy 2001).

By the late 1980s, Wilson's allegations of torture had been heard in a number of criminal trials, without inciting any substantial media attention or public concern, independent of the vernacular rumors and knowledges that circulated across the city's African American communities (Conroy 2001). In 1990 *The Chicago Reader* published the first extensive account of Wilson's case, circulating details of the shootings that led to his torture; bibliographic information about Burge's military service and his eventual enlistment in the Chicago Police Department; and details of the specific forms of torture Wilson endured in police custody (Conroy 1990). While the article was a catalyst for an internal investigation in the CPD, which became known as the Goldston Report, its publication failed to incite extensive or prolonged public concern about the racial violence practiced by local police, beyond pressure from the human rights groups and African American community organizations that have historically mobilized against racism and police abuse as a "special interest" case. Because the article generated little public response in the immediate wake of its publication, even *The Chicago Reader* waited four years before it commissioned additional stories about torture at Area 2 (Conroy 2001). While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to track the varied trajectories of this story, the pronounced lag of its circulation in the city's generalized public sphere suggests that, contrary to the conclusions of the Special Prosecutors, the racial field of violence did not originate with the individual conduct of Brzeczek.

Nine months after the Special Prosecutors submitted their report to the City, a group of legal advocates, academics, and human rights organizations, headed by the People's

Law Office (PLO), published a report cataloguing the failures of the Special Prosecutors' Report (People's Law Office et al 2007). The authors of the PLO report conclude that, by focusing their investigation on discrediting Brzeczek, the Special Prosecutors failed to utilize his knowledge of the evidence supporting Wilson's allegations to establish the roles that were played by other actors in the city's administration. While Brzeczek was aggressively questioned by the Special Prosecutors, there is no evidence that Daley, Devine, or Byrne were questioned until after the Special Prosecutors announced their investigation was nearly complete.

According to a Circuit Court Judge, who reviewed transcripts of this compulsory deposition, "the statement taken by the Special Prosecutor from Daley contains little useful information. It consists almost entirely of recitations of leading questions posed by Egan and Boyle prefaced by long factual [statements]" (as cited in People's Law Office et al 2007: 34). The PLO report concludes that, in focusing so much blame on Brzeczek, the Special Prosecutors effectively shielded the city's political establishment from scrutiny. According to the Special Prosecutors' report, "the actions of the State's Attorney's Office and the CPD do not redound to their credit and reflect a bit of slippage in the State's Attorney's Office" (Egan and Boyle 2006: 182). During Daley's tenure as the State's Attorney, more than 50 cases of torture arose for which his Assistant State's Attorneys obtained confessions of guilt. In collecting these confessions as evidence, the Attorneys necessarily ignored protocols that (a) required them to ask if a confession had been voluntarily obtained and (b) obligated them to remain vigilant for evidence of police coercion. "Without the participation of Daley and Devine as silent accomplices," the PLO

report concludes, “the torture at Areas 2 and 3 could not have continued” (People’s Law Office et al 2007: 54).

In the PLO report, Daley supplants Brzeczek as the focal point of critique and institutional accountability. Having served as the Mayor of Chicago from 1989 to 2011, he symbolizes the political establishment of the city that managed to evade accountability for their mishandling of the torture allegations. Daley makes an especially potent target of critique for his vocalized incredulity toward the inquiries into torture. In 1992 Daley received a report from the CPD’s Office of Professional Standards that concluded his subordinates were engaging in “systematic torture and abuse” for more than a decade (Office of Professional Standards 1992); his sole public response was to condemn the methodologies of the OPS as politically suspect. During his 2006 re-election campaign, Daley offered a contrite public apology for not properly responding to Dr. Raba’s letter, accepting some measure of responsibility for the continuation of torture at Area 2. At a press conference two years later, which was called after Burge was charged with perjury, Daley changed his stance when he was asked if he felt accountable for Burge being able to maintain his position, explaining that, “I just don’t [feel responsible]...I was State’s Attorney. I had 700, 800 prosecutors under me. It would be like [holding] you [accountable] for some of the headlines you write about me. I don’t hold you accountable...You can’t hold me responsible” (as cited in People’s Law Office et al 2007: 14). When pressed further by reporters, he responded sarcastically, “Okay, I apologize to everybody [for] whatever happened to anybody in the city of Chicago in the past, I apologize” (as cited in People’s Law Office et al 2007: 14). With this response, Daley disassociates himself from the repercussions of his well-documented inaction, which had

ultimately helped reproduce the racial field of violence forged by Burge and his officers. But, like the Special Prosecutors, the PLO's myopic focus on the culpability of a singular political actor obfuscates the institutional conditions of the state's inaction. By fixating on the individual etiology of this violence, the Special Prosecutors and the PLO report reproduce forms of accountability that extend the juridical field in which African Americans are *systematically* disarticulated from the rule of law.

Race and the Forensic Identification of Torture

State practices of torture are implicated in complex configurations of law, politics, and knowledge production. On the one hand, practitioners of torture employ different knowledges to coordinate the exercise of pain and domination over their victims (Scarry 2003). Just as knowledges of human anatomy are utilized to modulate the pain administered to victims' bodies, practitioners of culture draw on knowledges of cultural norms to maximize the potential humiliation and degradation of their victims. This is clear in Iraq, where the American military utilized Orientalist knowledges of "Islamic culture" to torture prisoners at Abu Ghraib (Lingis 2006). On the other hand, the secrecy that governs the practice of torture in most modern state forms has bred techniques of torture intended to minimize the traces they leave on the human body (Axel 2001, Conroy 2001). To counter these state practices of secrecy, medical experts, and human rights organizations have also innovated knowledges of the human body to aid in the forensic identification of torture by studying its material and psychological traces, shaping the dialectics of visibility under which torture operates (Scarry 2003). Throughout the Special Prosecutors' investigation, these apparatuses of knowledge production shaped how torture was legible as an effect of racial state action, ultimately shaping the forms of accountability generated by this public

inquiry. In this section I explain how the forensic gaze mobilized through the inquiry engenders these forms of accountability by subjecting evidence to racial attributions of credibility and verification.

The forensic gaze is a historically conditioned optic of law that gives epistemic priority to physical “trace” evidence, such as fingerprints and wiretap records, over witness testimony in practices of criminal identification and explanation (Valverde 2003). Whereas witness testimony is considered to be vulnerable to subjective bias and the fallibility of human recollection, the forensic gaze posits that the material form of trace evidence facilitates objective, reliable interpretation, giving law the guise of a more rigorous, scientific enterprise (Young 1996). Under these regimes of knowledge production, objects can only “speak” and acquire their evidentiary value through the testimonies of human experts. Throughout the Special Prosecutors’ investigation, a specifically racial formulation of this forensic gaze mediated the value assigned to evidence that had been presented as proof that officers at Area 2 were engaged in torture.

In their report, the Special Prosecutors explain that, “the final decision in this case, like all the other cases, depends on our determination of the credibility of the accuser” (Egan and Boyle 2006: 234). Frequently their judgments about witness credibility were guided by concerns about the accuser’s criminality; a criminal record of any kind became the basis for impeaching the validity of their accusations. Take the Special Prosecutors’ rationale for not substantiating the allegations of David Bates and Gregory Banks, both of who confessed to murder under the duress of torture in 1983. While the Special Prosecutors noted minor inconsistencies across their dispositions, which were given over a span of ten years, their principal concern was how the apparent criminality of each accuser would cast

doubt on the veracity of their testimony in a jury trial (Egan and Boyle 2006). Yet, in describing the basis of their uncertainty about Bates' and Banks' allegations, the Special Prosecutors were unable to disassociate their criminality from their blackness, even noting that "Banks would be a poor witness. He is a 41 year old black male whose recollection of the events is bad [and] has an extensive criminal record" (Egan and Boyle 2006: 346). But, rather than directly dismiss the validity of their accusations, the Special Prosecutors concluded that a jury would fixate on the black criminality of the accusers, casting doubt and uncertainty on any legal evidence they proffered of their torture. These epistemic conditions fabricated a racial field of violence in which African Americans are objects of legal force with differential redress to the rule of law.

Under the forensic gaze mobilized by the Special Prosecutors, the black bodies of the accusers act as the primary evidence that torture occurred at Area 2. During their depositions with the Special Prosecutors, medical and human rights experts tendered their interpretations of the physical scars visible on the accusers' bodies, which these experts had either examined in person or through photographs taken by their defense counsel immediately after the torture occurred. According to these experts, some victims displayed signs of subdural hematomas that are "consistent with a blow or beating to the head" (37); others had bruising around their heads that reflect open handed blows to the ear, which is evidence of a common police practice referred to as "ear cupping" (89); and others had bruises on their upper thighs that indicated repeated blow to the groin (Egan and Boyle 2006: 75). In the epistemic practices employed by the Special Prosecutors, it is these expert knowledges that made torture legible for the legal gaze of this inquiry, allaying the doubt and uncertainty that mediated the reception of the accusers' testimonies. These conditions

of intelligibility (re)position the black bodies of the accusers as the locus of juridical scrutiny and speculation, recapitulating racial epistemologies that disavow the agentic capacities of African Americans. During the different legal hearings for Andrew Wilson's case, photographs of the burn marks on his body circulated publicly through the local press, extending the racial relations of visibility manifested by the Special Prosecutors. Through these forms of epistemic deduction and communication, the accusers are consigned to a mode of racial objecthood in which their bodies are prioritized for their evidentiary value above their subjective recollections.

While the forensic gaze values material evidence above subjective testimony, it did not fix the meanings assigned to the physiological traces of torture visible on the accusers' bodies. During all the legal proceedings for Andrew Wilson's case, counsel for the city, William Kunkle, tried to discredit the allegations of torture by offering different explanations of the documented scars on Wilson's body. First, during Wilson's criminal trial, Kunkle, who was the lead prosecutor in the case, speculated that Wilson had made the scars himself with a "roach clip", a metallic object commonly used to smoke marijuana cigarettes. Second, during the first civil rights case initiated against Burge and the City, Kunkle changed tactics by soliciting the expert testimony of Dr. Raymond Warpeha, Director of the Burn Centre at the Loyola Medical Centre. Having analyzed photographs of Wilson's body, Warpeha concluded that the scars looked more like friction abrasions than burn marks, which, according to Kunkle, had been sustained during the course of Wilson's arrest. Seven years later, during Burge's Police Board hearing, Kunkle contradicted this explanation when he solicited the testimony of a different burn expert who confirmed that Wilson's scars were induced by extreme heat, but claimed that they were inflicted by the

wagon men who transported Wilson between police precincts on the day of his arrest. Finally, for the second civil rights trial, Kunkle called on a jail house informant who testified that, while in custody, Wilson admitted to inflicting the wounds on himself in order to have his confession invalidated.

In offering these competing explanations of Wilson's scars, Kunkle was fulfilling his professional obligation to his client, providing as persuasive a defense as possible within the specified legal and ethical bounds. Yet, each of his tactics of dissuasion trades on racial perceptions of Wilson's intransigent criminality, raising concerns about his ability to manipulate the expert explanations of his injuries. Through these competing accounts, Wilson's body became a site of racial speculation upon which Kunkle projected phantasmic scenarios of Wilson's danger, duplicity, and self-mutilation. While Kunkle's explanations did not always persuade the judges, their articulation across these legal proceedings extended and, in certain instances, intensified the racial field of knowledge under which torture has been made intelligible. Whereas the Special Prosecutors relied on official, scientific knowledges to elucidate the source of Wilson's injuries, Kunkle obfuscated their origins by emphasizing Wilson's racial inscrutability, thereby circumventing any sense of epistemological certainty about the torture allegations.

In analyzing the dialectical movements through which torture is ordinarily made visible, Brian Keith Axel (2001) suggests that "torture resists the privacy of its enactment [as] survivors provide testimonies and medical evidence, rumors act as witnesses, disappearances speak through absence and abandoned corpses display the scars of transgression" (139). In their final report, the forensic gaze employed by the Special Prosecutors worked to combat the particular veil of secrecy under which officers at Area 2

torture have practiced torture, even as its occurrence was known by some African American populations and accepted by some city officials. Yet, as I have explained thus far in this chapter, the epistemic conditions under which traces of torture are intelligible work to cloud and mystify these state practices of racial violence. By positioning the torture victims as objects of law, who lacked the capacity to act as its subjects, this public inquiry has engendered distinctly racial modes of state accountability that recreate differential access to its technologies of protection and redress.

INSTITUTIONAL INACTIONS AND THE INTRACTABILITY OF RACISM IN THE AIR INDIA INQUIRY

The ghost or the apparition is one form by which something lost, or barely visible, or seemingly not there to our supposedly well-trained eyes, makes itself known or apparent to us, in its own way of course (Gordon 2008: 8).

In November 2007, counsel for the Air India Inquiry solicited the testimony of Ujjal Dosanjh, a lawyer, community activist, and former Premier of British Columbia, who was assaulted in 1986 for his public opposition to Sikh militancy in the Lower Mainland. Dosanjh was one in a series of witnesses culled from Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community to describe the "climate of fear and terror" (Dosanjh as cited in CPAC 2007A) that loomed over the city after the bombing. During his testimony, Dosanjh relayed how this atmosphere of insecurity was magnified by the feeling that racism had somehow shaped Canadian responses to the bombing, at which point the Commissioner, John Major, interjected to remark that, "a matter that's hung over the inquiry like Banquo's ghost [is] the view, expressed by various people at various times that, had Air India been Air Canada, the reactions of Canadians would have been different" (as cited in CPAC 2007A).

Although neither Dosanjh nor Major addressed the meaning of this literary allusion, its invocation by the Commissioner gestures to the complex ways in which racism was discussed during the inquiry.

In the months before Dosanjh addressed the inquiry, other witnesses referred to similar perceptions, apparently common across Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community, that racism had somehow affected official Canadian responses to the bombing. As he did with Dosanjh, Major pressed these witnesses to recall specific instances when "prejudice" was evident in the actions of state officials, at which point each witness described racism as a figment of their individual "feelings" and "perceptions". In this context, I read the Commissioner's allusion to Banquo's ghost as a way of conveying how racism continually returns before the inquiry in the guise of intangible, almost spectral perceptions of Indo-Canadian witnesses.

As Avery Gordon (2008) suggests in the epigraph above, ghosts and spectres have long been prized as allegories for the virtual dimensions of social and political life, those aspects of reality that are real but not actual, effectual despite their immateriality (Shields 2002: 3). Later in this chapter I explain how the immateriality of the racisms identified during the inquiry precipitated their relegation to the de-politicized realm of individual perception and subjective experience, allowing the Commissioner to conclude that racism was not an important factor in the Canadian state's handling of the Air India bombing. By detailing the epistemologies of race that facilitate the misrecognition of its effects, I show again, albeit in a very different context, how the public inquiry affects the racial 'accountability' of state actors.

Like the spectre of Hamlet's father, Banquo's ghost has become a colloquial allegory for that which persists or returns in the face of overt repression and denial (Biber 2007: 112, Gordon 2008: 8). The ghost of Banquo appears to Macbeth during a feast held to celebrate his ascent to the throne of Scotland, which he usurped by murdering the king he had served faithfully. After learning of the prophecy that Banquo will sire a long line of kings, Macbeth also orders the murders of Banquo and his family to secure his title and political authority. For Macbeth, the ghost of Banquo serves as a traumatic reminder of that which must be absent for his authority to remain legitimate. When read in this literary context, the Commissioner's allusion positions racism as an irrepressible limit to the governing logics of the inquiry as Canadian apparatuses of law occlude the racial force of their authority. Below, I analyze the epistemic processes through which this spectre of racism is exorcised from the public gaze of the inquiry.

Expert Accusations and the Sociological Identification of Racism

In the voluminous final report generated by *The Air India Inquiry*, the topic of racism is only considered in a single subsection of the first volume, written to refute the suggestion that "racism" is a useful analytic for understanding Canadian responses to the bombings. According to the Commissioner,

the term "racism" is not helpful for purposes of understanding the Government response. "Racism" carries with it so many connotations of bigotry and intolerance that even the most careful definition that purports to focus on effects rather than on intent ends up generating a great deal more heat than light. This was amply illustrated on the hearing date devoted to the evidence regarding this issue (Major 2010: 39).

In this passage, the Commissioner rejects racism as an analytic for understanding Canadian responses to the bombing, but not because it lacks validity in explaining the conduct of state actors. Later in this section of the final report, the Commissioner noted as follows:

While the Commission does not feel the term “racism” is helpful, it is also understandable that the callous attitude by the Government of Canada to the families of the victims might lead them to wonder whether a similar response would have been forthcoming had the overwhelming majority of the victims of the bombing been Canadians who were white (Major 2010: 39-40).

Rather, as he explains above, the Commissioner does not examine racism as a factor in the bombing because of the meanings that are conjured by its public utterance. According to Major (2010), the term “racism” has acquired such potentially illiberal connotations that its semantic valences overshadow any explanatory value it commands, generating “a great deal more heat than light”. As racism never appears in the report outside of quotation marks, these “connotations of bigotry and intolerance” are effectively quarantined from the surrounding text.

On the hearing date referred to by the Commissioner, sociologist Sherene Razack had been questioned about a report she submitted to the inquiry that concluded systemic racism had circumscribed Canadian responses to the bombing. Because Razack’s expertise on race and racism was considered beyond the pale of the inquiry’s mandates, The Family Interest Party (FIP), a smaller group of victims’ families who articulated more explicitly political demands during the inquiry, had commissioned her report. Earlier in the inquiry’s proceedings the FIP had campaigned to have “systemic racism” included in the

inquiry's mandate; as "members of a racialized minority group", counsel for the FIP argued, the victims' families were denied their entitlements as Canadian citizens when the bombing was "relegated to a distant past" through its association with "some obscure sectarian issues in Canada" (Anand as cited in CPAC 2007B).

In her report, Razack (2007) substantiated these allegations when she concluded that, because the victims were not perceived as "real" Canadians, apparatuses of law and security had not prioritized detailed intelligence forewarning of the bombing. Of course, law enforcement and security personnel had not been unaware of the activities of Sikh nationalist groups; just as CSIS had conducted physical and electronic surveillance of principal suspects in the bomb plot, the RCMP and Vancouver Police Department (VPD) had received intelligence, of varying specificity, that forewarned of an attack against symbols of the Indian state. Instead, the lack of urgency surrounding the governance of Sikh terrorism made apparatuses of law systematically incapable of effectively responding to this violence. Given these institutional gaps in the field of legal intervention, I conceive of the bombing as a biopolitical event insofar as it occurred amidst a juridical indifference to the threat of violence against a racially constituted population, a point to which I will return later in this section.

Because of scheduling conflicts, Razack's report was going to be received by the Commissioner without the public testimony that usually accompanies the submission of evidence during the inquiry. Upon reading the report, counsel for the Attorney General of Canada, Barney Brucker, insisted that he be given an opportunity to cross-examine Razack, citing his concern that the report, which is "argumentative in the extreme", is now "going to form part of the public record [and] I think it is dangerous and unfair to leave it hanging

out there the way it is” (as cited in Failler 2009: 159). In suggesting that Razack’s conclusions are “dangerous”, Brucker gestures to the inflammatory meanings and associations that accusations of “racism” conjure in the Canadian public sphere. To appease Brucker, an additional hearing was scheduled to provide him the opportunity to question Razack about the report.

Before the hearing, Brucker demanded that Razack provide documentation of her claims beyond those required of other expert witnesses, prompting FIP counsel to note the irony of “the Canadian governments’ response to an assertion of systematic discrimination is to treat their expert report differently” (Anand as cited in Bolan 2007). In her testimony Razack explained that Canada, like other nation states borne of settler colonialism, is beholden to racial mythologies that valorize whiteness and generate ‘racialized’ assumptions about immigrants of color. According to Razack, these racialized assumptions are embedded in institutions of the state. To avoid vilifying state officials, Razack took care to emphasize that these racial logics did not materialize through the malicious or even conscious intent of individual actors, but, rather, through their reproduction in institutional structures. These systematic racisms affected how Canadian state officials interpreted intelligence from Indian authorities; the urgency with which the threat of terror was managed by intelligence analysts and law enforcement officers; and the tenor of official responses to the bombing, exemplified by the absence of any symbolic gestures of grief for the victims’ families.

During his cross-examination of Razack, Brucker employed a number of rhetorical tactics to discredit her testimony, suggesting that she had been only supplied a select fraction of documents by FIP counsel, that she had concluded racism was a factor before

analyzing the evidence, and that her commitment to anti-racist activism compromised the validity of her findings. At one point during the interrogation, Brucker quoted conclusions from Razack's other research on Palestine, the War on Terror, and Canadian peacekeeping missions in Somalia, contemptuously pausing on the sociological nomenclature used to describe the putatively 'colonial' relations at play in each of these cases (CPAC 2008). Brucker also noted that, during her 2006 address to the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Razack had likened refugee camps in Palestine to Nazi concentration camps, without offering her the opportunity to clarify the basis or context of this comparison. Relative to the manifestly illiberal connotations of these racial regimes, the conduct of Canadian state actors is not identifiable as racial in the public gaze of the inquiry. By cataloguing her accusations of racism, Brucker casts Razack as a paranoid, over-reaching academic whose knowledges are shaped more by her racial "bias" and positionality than by her scientific expertise. This has been a common strategy to denounce the significance of race in Canada. According to Thobani (2003), the dissemination of critical knowledges of race often instigates processes of disavowal that invalidate their authors as legitimate agents of knowledge production, particularly when they can be branded as 'treacherous' or 'ungrateful' immigrants.

To be clear, the knowledges generated by Razack did not contradict the evidence already provided to the Commissioner, which amply demonstrated that Canadian security officials had effectively disregarded the threat posed by Sikh nationalists. In his final report, the Commissioner even concluded that "there was more than enough disparate pieces of information that, had they been assembled in one place, it would have not only pointed to the nature of the threat, but would have provided corroboration of that threat"

(Major 2010: 90). Three weeks before the bombing, the RCMP received intelligence from the Air India airline that warned of a plot to bomb one of its flights later that month by hiding an explosive device in passengers' checked baggage. According to documents received by the Commissioner during the inquiry, the RCMP did not forward this information to CSIS or any other institution responsible for national security, nor did it act to implement the security measures recommended by Air India in its intelligence package (Major 2010).

What distinguishes Razack's report from this other evidence is the explanation she offers for the institutional failures. During her testimony Razack suggested that the RCMP downplayed the significance of Air India's intelligence because they believed the airline was exaggerating the threat to obtain free security measures, an insinuation she suggests is weighted with Orientalist logics about the cunning, duplicitous dispositions of Indian officials (CPAC 2008). Other witnesses attributed these errors to the dysfunctional networks of communication that existed between CSIS and RCMP, which were partly explained away by the relative nascence of CSIS as an institution unto itself.²⁶ When the RCMP received other intelligence forewarning of a bomb threat from the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), it was not forwarded to CSIS or RCMP headquarters, which the Commissioner cited as evidence that the RCMP was not acting prejudicially toward the Air India airline.

These institutionally sanctioned explanations do not account for the way racial attributions of "danger" mitigated the effective and expedient circulation of intelligence about Sikh terrorism. The day before the bombing physical surveillance was removed from

²⁶ Before CSIS was created in 1984, a branch of the RCMP was responsible for collecting and analyzing intelligence related to Canadian national security (Bolan 2006A).

the suspected architect of the bombing, Talwinder Singh Parmar, so that CSIS could trail a Cold War target whose presence was believed to represent a more serious and immediate threat to 'Canadian security' (Major 2010). Whereas the Cold War target posed an existential threat to Canadian life, the threat of Sikh terrorism was constituted as a danger to a minoritized segment of the population, mitigating the urgency and speed with which this intelligence was processed.

In stressing the relative neglect of Sikh threats of violence, I am not suggesting that the South Asian population should have been subject to more intensive apparatuses of surveillance and knowledge production. Rather, I am gesturing to these racial myopias in the juridical field of Canadian security as evidence of the processes by which institutions of the Canadian state make South Asian life vulnerable to violence and death. When confronted with evidence of these systemic racisms, the Commissioner disavowed their significance by misrecognizing racism as an expression of ill will, manifesting explanations that limit the state's accountability to its field of racial violence.

Immigrant Informants and the Subjective Experience of Racism

During the second phase of the inquiry, the Commission called a series of witnesses from Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community to speak about the experience of living through the Air India bombing and its beleaguered investigation. This slate of witnesses included community leader Gian Singh Sandu, president of the World Sikh Organization at the time of the bombing; MLA Dave Hayer, whose father was allegedly murdered for agreeing to testify about Ajaib Bagri's participation in the bomb plot; and Ujjal Dosanjh, whom I identified earlier as a community activist turned politician. In Vancouver's public sphere, Dosanjh and Hayer have become public representatives of a moderate vision of the

Sikh and Indo-Canadian communities, having engaged in protracted discursive contests about the secular boundaries that should govern Canadian civil society. Insofar as both men have been made visible in relation to personal experiences with fundamentalist violence, moderate Sikhism is positioned as the most desirable and properly juridical mode of accommodating religion to Canadian social spaces.

During their testimonies for the Air India Inquiry, both men were also vaguely critical of the state's indifference to the threat of Sikh terrorism, even as their status as "model immigrants" casts the racial subjection of Indo-Canadians as a consequence of their cultural insularity. During the proceedings, inquiry counsel questioned Dave Hayer and his wife Isabelle Martinez Hayer about the assassination of his father, the publisher of the local newspaper *Indo-Canadian Times*, Tara Singh Hayer. In 1988, Singh Hayer survived an earlier assassination attempt that left him paralyzed. A decade later he was murdered in his garage while under the protection of the RCMP. While observers speculated that Hayer was targeted for his public opposition to militant Sikh nationalism, Singh Hayer was to appear as a state witness in the criminal trial of the two Air India suspects, as he claims to have overheard Bagri boasting of his participation in the bombing years earlier. During their testimonies before the inquiry, Hayer and Hayer-Martinez suggested that the second, fatal shooting occurred, despite police protection, because legal actors had been systemically incapable of understanding the threat to Hayer's life. According to Martinez-Hayer, the RCMP was too quick to conclude their investigation of the first assassination attempt when they credited it to a lone teenage assailant, ignoring what they considered to be evidence of his ties to Sikh nationalist groups.

During his appearance before the inquiry, Hayer also suggested that his father's murder occurred because police failed to effectively act on threats to his life. Two years before his murder, Singh Hayer received an anonymous letter taunting him about the first shooting, goading, "well done for you, how happy you must be making such fun for Sikhs. Sometimes I think what a big mistake he just left you handicapped. [...] Well, that's ok, there is delay but not darkness at god's house" (as cited in CPAC 2007B). Following their analysis of the letter, officers with the RCMP told Singh Hayer they could not take any protective action because it did not contain any overtly threatening statements. Concluding that police "were very dismissive" about threats to his father's life, Dave Hayer suggested that, "unless someone has a gun and is ready to shoot you, it's not a threat [but] if you know the picture [and] the culture, you can say this is a threat" (as cited in CPAC 2007B). Because police lacked knowledge of the political tensions within the city's Indo-Canadian community, Hayer-Martinez explained, there was "deep frustration that police didn't seem to understand what the community was going through. [...] [They] didn't really take the issue as seriously as they should have. [They] didn't seem to make enough effort to understand the community dynamic" (CPAC 2007B). In their testimonies, these witnesses reveal how limits in the juridical field of knowledge are emergent from the racial homogeneity of Canadian legal institutions, a conclusion that was supported by much of the evidence heard during the inquiry.

At the time of the bombing, there were very few intelligence analysts or law enforcement officers with a substantial knowledge of Indian politics or the ability to understand and translate Punjabi. Some CSIS officers responsible for surveilling Sikh nationalist organizations had even mistook the name of the organization "the Babbar

Khalsa” for the “Barbara Khalsa”. Within CSIS, the lack of Punjabi speaking officers created an enormous backlog of unprocessed wiretapped conversations between primary suspects in the bombing case, which were erased before they could be entered as evidence in the criminal trials of Bagri and Malik. Before their destruction, the wiretaps were shipped to CSIS headquarters in Ottawa where they were assigned to the agency’s only Punjabi translator. Because of the agency’s racial uniformity, and the lack of priority assigned to the translations, critical intelligence about the bombing languished away unprocessed by this security apparatus of the state. That it took CSIS several months to even approve the wiretap application, despite having intelligence that the organizations posed some kind of imminent threat, is further evidence of the lack of urgency regarding the threat of Sikh terrorism and its effects on the South Asian population.

The uniformity of the state apparatus also manifested in officers’ inability to distinguish between the turbaned Sikh men who were their primary targets of investigation. On more than one occasion, CSIS and RCMP officers misrecognized suspects during their surveillance patrols. Before the bombing, a surveillance team had followed Parmar to Vancouver Island, where he and Inderjit Singh Reyat tested an explosive device in the woods around the Cowichan Valley. During their reconnaissance, RCMP officers misidentified one of their accomplices as Parmar’s son, whom they later discovered had been on the Mainland at the time. Because of this misrecognition, investigators missed a critical opportunity to identify a conspirator in the bombing, whose identity still remains unknown to investigators (Major 2010).

During his inquiry testimony, Ujjal Dosanjh explained that, despite the best efforts of individual police officers, state legal apparatuses remained systematically incapable of

understanding and responding to the violence targeting the Indo-Canadian community. Like Hayer and Hayer-Martinez, Dosanjh attributed this limit in the juridical field to the homogeneity of the police force; its lack of knowledge of Sikh political and cultural issues; and the institutional neglect of this “immigrant population”. He came closest to naming these failures as racism when he suggested that they were caused by the perception that violence was merely an outcome of ‘tribal rivalries’ between Indian nationals. “If and I some Indo-Canadian disagree on some issue,” Dosanjh explained, “outside people say ‘there must be some tribal rivalries here [...] [But] if two white guys stand up and argue vociferously, well that’s a difference of opinion” (as cited in CPAC 2007A). With this explanation, Dosanjh illustrates how historicist modes of state racism (Goldberg 2001) affix South Asian populations to caricatured formulations of Indian culture, which are consigned to pre-modern, “tribal” spaces apart from the present.

Upon hearing this testimony, counsel for the Attorney General asked if this view was empirically verifiable, to which Dosanjh responded that, although he had no empirical data to verify this conclusion, it reflected a *feeling* that was in broad circulation across the Indo-Canadian community. By the epistemic logics of the inquiry, this inability to identify the exact point at which race acquires its force allowed state actors to disavow its effects on their institutional practices. Once again, the existence of race is displaced onto the standpoint of its victims or, as Brucker quipped, condescendingly, onto a kind of inchoate “atmosphere” (as cited in CPAC 2007).

During his testimony, Dosanjh repeatedly stressed the dangers of immigrants not properly integrating into the Canadian social fabric. By his account, ethnic communities exert a kind of “centrifugal” or “gravitational” pull on new immigrants, circumventing their

effective acclimatization to “Canadian values” (CPAC 2007A). On a number of occasions, counsel for the Commission returned to the problem posed by the apparent insularity of Indo-Canadian communities. At the prodding of the Commissioner and counsel for the Attorney General, Dosanjh attributed this cultural inertia of Sikh and other Indo-Canadian immigrants to a perversion of the multicultural ethos. In this vein, Dosanjh explained that, “multiculturalism is not, in my mind, a license to transplant yourself from Dosanjh, Kalan – my village in India – to Vancouver holus-bolus without any change” (as cited in CPAC 2007A). For Dosanjh, the political correctness that now attends multiculturalism has circumvented criticism of “un-Canadian” cultural practices because public officials fear they will be accused of racism.

To mitigate the isolation that breeds violent diasporic subjectivities, Dosanjh advocated the creation of mandatory classes for new immigrants in which they could be exposed to Canadian values, which he vaguely defined as ‘tolerance’ and ‘respect for others’. According to Dosanjh, “we as a society will not flourish unless we teach and respect our core values [...] Some of these people who run rampant on the streets of Vancouver and threatened everybody in sight that disagreed with them, didn’t pick up those values here” (as cited in CPAC 2007A). The racial logics of these classes fetishize “Indian culture” as a symptom of uncivilized difference, mirroring those that animated the practices of confession that were analyzed in Chapter Four. In these formulations of “Canadian culture”, the violence directed at South Asian populations is a force exogenous to the Canadian state apparatus, figuring as an artifact of their failure to properly accommodate to its modern values of civility.

CONCLUSION: THE BANALITY OF STATE RACISMS

In her iconic book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Hannah Arendt (2006) considers the legal and philosophical implications of Eichmann's trial for the crimes he committed while acting as the Transportation Minister for the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question". As the Transportation Minister, Eichmann was responsible for coordinating the mass deportation of Jewish people across Eastern Europe to ghettos and extermination camps. What gave particular pause to Arendt was the idea that Eichmann had not advanced these state machineries of genocide because he harbored malicious intent or anti-Semitic sentiments toward its targets, but rather, because he had failed to properly *think* about the political consequences of his conduct, the monstrosity of which had become accepted and routinized through the daily performance of this conduct (Butler 2012). Through these bureaucratic state apparatuses, Arendt (2006) concludes, juridical fields of violence and extermination are reproduced and extended without the genocidal "will" or "intentions" of state actors.

Contrary to prevailing ontologies of race, state racisms routinely produce relations of power and force that are irreducible to overtly "ideological" articulations of difference, as the racial force of state institutions is often disarticulated from individual reflective thought. In both of the cases discussed in this chapter, minoritized populations became racially vulnerable to political violence through the *inaction* of state actors, such that race is both a condition and consequence of this temporal lag in state action. This chapter has illustrated how public inquiries that were formed to reveal the institutional causes of these forms of violence actually work to obscure and distort the juridical force of race. By analyzing how race is intelligible in each of these inquiries, I have shown how these

institutions extended the conditions of this racial violence as they manipulate the discrepancy between prevailing “liberal” ontologies of race, which conceive of racism as an effect of overtly, ideological actions, and the institutional apparatuses that (re)produce these relations of force. Under these epistemic conditions, the forms of accountability produced by these juridical institutions facilitate racial modes of governance that make certain bodies and populations vulnerable to violence and ultimately, death.

CHAPTER SIX– CONCLUSION: LAW AND THE CONTEXTUAL MUTABILITY OF RACE

RACE AND THE CRIMINOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

Discourses of crime and criminality saturate the public realms of post-industrial cities (Herbert and Brown 2006, Zukin 1996). As they project different visions of order, danger, and morality onto segregated urban landscapes, these discourses shape the political logics, sentiments, and practices that mediate how crime is made intelligible in the public sphere: the types of criminal activity that command public attention, the minority populations that are blamed for its recurrence, as well as the folk and social scientific theories that circulate to explain its occurrence (Valverde 2003, Young 1996). Relatedly, these imaginaries of law and order materialize various social practices that affect how crime is governed and distributed across the city, including the use of media to produce, consume, and debate news of crime; the tactics of surveillance and observation that are deployed to identify and prevent crime; as well as the practices of legal intervention that shape whether crime is apprehended and how it is prosecuted by state actors.

By commanding new revanchist forms of urban sociality, if only in virtual public spheres, these discursive practices also extend and intensify geographies of racial segregation that have acquired new affective and visual forms amidst processes of neoliberal restructuring. Yet, as I have illustrated in each chapter of this dissertation, the various permutations of these discourses acquire their force and forms through the socio-historical conditions of the city in which they materialize. For instance, Chapter Three detailed how targeted “gang” shootings in each city resonated through different configurations of moral and spatial proximity, which exceed the bounds of their material geographies. Conversely, the practices of surveillance and governance they solicit assume

divergent spatial and juridical forms through the different human actors and technologies that are mobilized to address the threat of danger. Because the dimensions of these juridical discourses are so specific to each city, I made them the focal points of my analysis to explicate the distinctly local force of race in post-industrial cities.

Of course, the racial force of law has been a preoccupation of sociologists, historians, and criminologists alike, who have collectively generated a wealth of knowledge about the criminalization of minority populations (Razack 2002, Wacquant 2002). To contribute to this growing body of literature I have approached race, not as a quality of bodies or cultures, but as a relation of power. By extricating race from its usual sociological status as an independent variable or epiphenomenal effect of class, this approach does not make minority populations the focal points of analysis. Instead, my dissertation has showed that race is at once a condition and effect of these juridical discourses, acquiring multiple psychic, material, and ideological forms across localities differently affected by relations of settler coloniality. Chapter Three illustrates that, even though race was not the sole determinant of the relations of visibility that govern restructuring urban spaces, recent processes of gentrification have manifested the socio-spatial conditions to engage black and brown bodies as symptoms of urban danger, just as the racial identification of danger compels practices of displacement and surveillance that extend the gentrification of the city. The technologies of subjectification I analyze in Chapter Four demanded a similar analysis of the polymorphous workings of race. Just as the forms of scrutiny they compel trade on the division of the domestic sphere into gendered subject positions, these modes of speculation are mediated by racial logics and sentiments that engage domestic spaces as sources of juridical instability.

To realize the analytical possibilities of this relational understanding of race, I have shown that localized racisms mediate how crime is understood and explained by a variety of public and legal actors, explicating the logics, sentiments, and fantasies that sustain the racial exercise of law. While prevailing neoliberal epistemologies frame criminal behavior as a consequence of rational choice or free will (see Rose 1999 for a theoretical explanation of this transformation), the racisms detailed in this dissertation posit that certain minority populations lack the capacity to properly exercise their will according to the dictates of putatively ‘modern’ norms of civility and propriety. Whereas the cultural values of Indo-Canadians are construed as an obstacle to their lawful integration into modern consumer society, the racial objecthood into which black bodies are consigned by Broken Windows theory posits that these actors are pulled toward criminality. Mediated by the moral vocabularies of law, the public presence of each of these populations is a locus of racial sentiment(s) and concern(s). By conceiving of race as a set of ideas and practices, I have detailed the hierarchical arrangements of bodies, places, and sentiments that materialize through the racial practices of law, which, in each local context, makes certain populations vulnerable to acts of criminal and political violence. In this context, an understanding of race as an ideological illusion is inadequate to explain the vastly different rates of homicide experienced by young African American men in Chicago, as it would be to explain the racial field of state action that created the conditions of the Air India bombing. As I illustrated through this dissertation, only a relational ontology of race is capable of fully explicating its multiple juridical guises and effects.

RACE AND THE POLITICAL REALMS OF THE CITY

Beyond my focus on the racial force of law, this dissertation makes critical contributions to social scientific understandings of race by centering each chapter on a particular realm of the political as it is differentiated in the liberal democratic imaginary: public space, the domestic sphere, and institutional apparatuses of the state. In the existing literature on race, sociologists and geographers have effectively illustrated that racial iterations of difference are foundational to the new aesthetic of danger that looms over post-industrial urban spaces (Davis 2006, Herbert and Brown 2006, Zukin 1996). Building on this research, Chapter Three of this dissertation details the specific racial logics and associations that constitute this aesthetic of danger in areas undergoing urban restructuring in Chicago and Vancouver. Far from creating a uniform aesthetic, racial modes of identification trade on localized codes for danger that establish discursive associations between different people, objects, and the places where they are sighted. In each of these cities, the circulation of these modes of identification enjoins different actors in practices of surveillance and political action according to their feelings of concern about the danger(s) in question. My awkward comparison of these different modes of identification not only unsettles prevailing American ontologies of racism, which construe race as an effect of economic marginality, but also the divergent dynamics of class through which racisms can organize public space(s).

Chapter Four considered how the domestic realms of minority populations also serve as loci of localized racisms. To date sociologists and critical theorists of race have primarily examined the home as the axis of residential segregation or as the cradle of nation building projects (Carr 2006, Ikebuchi 2013, Mackey 2002). This dissertation has

shown that domestic spaces also figure centrally in complex circuits of racial scrutiny that enjoin publics through different modulations of pleasure, concern, and condemnation. Through the awkward comparison staged in this chapter, I illustrate how racisms acquire variable measures of semiotic and affective force by projecting differently gendered formulations of the domestic sphere as the cause of crime, particularly violent criminality committed by young men. In each of these gendered formations of the family, African American and Indo-Canadian women are allocated the subjects position of “the mother”, which is primarily intelligible through racial tropes that belabor their incapacity to raise properly juridical young men. By attending to how these modes of scrutiny vary across the ethnographic books, photography, and confessional literatures that are the focus of my analysis, I illustrate how these texts serve as technologies of subjectification that engage publics in practices of racial speculation and judgment about the domestic pathologies of minority populations. Through this analysis I show how racial relations of desire work to reconstitute the shifting, often mutable boundary between the private and public spheres.

The last chapter of my dissertation intervenes in ongoing debates about the political visibility of race and racism in contemporary national and global orders, which recognize that “racism” is itself a political concept with a specific historical trajectory of formulation (Golberg 2009, Hesse 2004, Jiwani 2006). To contribute to this literature, I considered how apparatuses of the liberal democratic state grapple with their culpability for (re)producing racisms in the face of their public commitment to formal equality for the populations they govern. Having approached the public inquiry as a medium through which state actors negotiate their accountability to the public, I highlighted the disparity between the systemic racisms at the center of each investigation and the liberal ontologies of racism that state

actors deploy to disavow its role in their field of political action. In both of the inquiries analyzed in this chapter, the knowledges proffered by witnesses were afforded different measures of epistemic weight in reconstructing the racial force of state action. Whereas African American torture victims were rendered incapable of witnessing the violence to which they were subject, the effects of racisms were only recognized during the Air India Inquiry as an aspect of the individual experiences of Indo-Canadians. Finally, the awkward comparison practiced in this chapter reveals how the institutional inaction of state actors can create the racial conditions for violence, disengaging from the idea that racism is only connected to overtly ideological behaviors.

Each of these chapters also offers new insights into the different, pivotal roles that texts play in the racial relations of force that organize the political realms of urban spaces. Through their discursive engagements about local crime, public actors generate and consume texts that recreate and transform the conditions of its racial intelligibility. When these public exchanges engender practices of surveillance, displacement, and exclusion, texts become axis points in urban networks of racial governance. In analyzing the racial forms of scrutiny at work in each locality, this dissertation has also shown how various types and genres of texts -including exposés, ethnographies, and photographs- solicit different sentiments from their publics of readers. In these instances, texts function as instruments and repositories of racial emotions, feelings, and affects. Finally, my analysis of public inquiries illustrates how texts figure centrally in the neoliberal relations of accountability that govern state actors and institutions through demands for institutional transparency. In these conditions of political visibility, texts that form the paper trail of

bureaucratic state actors have acquired significant epistemic weight in attempts to hold state institutions accountable for the mistakes and injustices they perpetuate.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

This dissertation also contributes to the growing literature on race by formulating a new “awkward” mode of comparison that is capable of documenting its disparate localized forms as well as its generalizable patterns. Having been generated through this more experimental mode of comparison, the findings of my dissertation cannot be easily generalized to other geopolitical contexts without consideration of their own unique conditions of racialization. To remain cognizant of the various sociohistorical differences between Chicago and Vancouver, I have employed flexible analytics of comparison to track the force of race across the political realms of each city. In a number of instances during the research process, the flexibility of these analytics required me to make methodological and aesthetic decisions about the most effective way to convey the singularity of each mode of racism. The anecdotal mode of writing I have employed has helped maximize the transparency of my methodology and analysis by conveying the specific logics, sentiments, and practices that extend the force in a given situation. Given these limitations, my dissertation does not offer a theory of exactly how race acquires its forms in a given locality; rather what it provides is a mode of analysis that is capable of revealing how race’s mutability is formative of singular regimes of power and governance in a particular local sociohistorical context.

The majority of the texts I gathered and analyzed for this dissertation were in broad public circulation in each city. While this methodological focus helped me to explicate the racial discourses of crime that served as pivots of public visibility and commonality, I have

not been able to track how race forms through the more variegated dimensions of each city's public spheres, which include a variety of counterpublics that often work to politicize and contest the force of law through discursive engagements that are not necessarily evident in the generalized public sphere (Berlant 2008, Warner 2002). Like most other major American cities, Chicago has developed a host of institutions and mediums of textual production that, for almost a century, has functioned as a black public sphere through which actors advance a variety of cultural interests and political concerns, most often with the intent to disrupt processes of racialization (Singh 2005). As a primary nodal point in Sikh and other South Asian diasporas, Vancouver is the site of Punjabi and English language media that produced for different South Asian and Indo-Canadian publics. Because I focused on more widely circulating discourses of crime, my dissertation has not necessarily captured local racisms in all of their political and sociohistorical depth and complexity. Without more extensive research of how these modalities of power shape the everyday practices of social actors, my dissertation lacks the ethnographic texture and empirical detail possessed by other research on the urban iterations of racism (Wacquant 2008, Wilson and Taub 2008).

Although my awkward comparison attended to the disparate conditions of racism in Vancouver and Chicago, I still routed my analysis through certain technologies of differentiation that were common to both sites. To maintain this thematic parity between racisms there, I had to bracket certain lines of inquiry that appeared during my research, a number of which have inspired my program for future research. In Chicago, public frustrations about the limits of law have inspired extensive networks of collaboration and political action between city residents that are concerned about the apparent ubiquity of

crime in the city. While neighborhoods across Vancouver have different institutionalized mechanisms of community crime control, Chicago residents routinely expressed desires to engage in more radical acts of vigilantism, which often engendered different practices of textual circulation and political action. From my preliminary observations, phantom (black) aggressors were typically the source and object of these public engagements. Without an analogous phenomenon to analyze in Vancouver, I chose not to explore the political dimensions of these vigilante desires beyond my analysis of the *Uptown Update* blog in Chapter Three. As part of my future research, I want to examine how vigilantism has acquired new racial, cultural and virtual forms amidst the neoliberal restructuring of the American city, using Midwestern cities differently affected by processes of deindustrialization and depopulation as the contexts for this research.

Over the last thirty years, neoliberal discourses of secularity have increasingly shaped the civic presence and practices of Vancouver's Sikh and South Asian diasporas (Buffam 2013). In Chapter Three I considered how bodily markers of Sikhism are foregrounded in racial modes of identification, reformulating historic knowledges of the turban and its significance for colonial modes of ruling. Beyond this analysis, my comparative methodology foreclosed the possibility of a more extensive exploration of how secularity has become a modality of race and racism. In my future research I plan to address this limitation by examining how law has mediated the changing putatively 'secular' boundaries between religion, politics, and the public sphere in the Lower Mainland of BC since the 1980s, during which time there has been a series of important legal decisions related to the validity of Khalsa financial institutions; the membership of local Sikh temples; and allegations of slander concerning participation in Sikh terrorist

organizations. As part of this project, I will also consider how state apparatuses of security play a role in the racisms that govern Vancouver's South Asian population. While reading documents written and submitted for the Air India Inquiry, I noticed that state actors charged with amassing and analyzing intelligence about Sikh nationalist groups had fabricated extensive apparatuses of surveillance to monitor their activities. Because I did not find evidence that African American populations in Chicago were being regulated by comparable apparatuses of state security, I was unable to fully explore how these state institutions extended or intensified the biopolitical vulnerability of this population.

In detailing the racisms that have localized in Vancouver, I also encountered glaring absences in the historiography of the region's South Asian population. Little, if any contemporary research has examined the processes of civic and political marginalization that shaped the lives of this group between 1914, when the *Komagata Maru* was forced to leave Canada, and 1974, when Operation Bluestar radicalized parts of the region's Sikh diaspora (see Indra 1979 as an exception to these gaps). Without this research, my analysis of racisms in Vancouver lacks the historical depth and detail that I was able to summon in my account of Chicago, which benefited from the wealth of sociological research that has situated contemporary racial politics in relation to historic institutions of slavery and segregation (Wacquant 2001). Of course, the disparity between these literatures was part of my justification for formulating an awkward mode of comparison to avoid rendering race in Vancouver intelligible in terms of the more familiar, recognizable racisms that have localized in Chicago. To rectify this gap in the literature on Vancouver, one of my next research projects will examine how South Asian residents of the Lower Mainland experienced and mediated their civic insecurity between 1945 and 1975, a period that saw a

variety of changes to the political entitlements of Indian ‘immigrants’. With this research project, I will be able to excavate the sociohistorical conditions of the political violence and regimes of law that are documented in this dissertation.

REVISITING THE VALUE OF AWKWARD COMPARISONS

Despite these limitations, the awkward comparison I have advanced in this dissertation provides critical insights into what I have been calling the mutability of racial relations of power. To date, critical studies of race that attend to its supra-national, global trajectories have either detailed racisms as isolated objects of analysis (see Goldberg 2009, Winant 2001) or synthesized the different racial modes of governance into a unified explanatory framework of race’s phenomenal origins (see Wacquant 2008). While each of these approaches have advanced our understanding of how race shapes the socio-political dimensions of specific cities, regions, and nation-states, the modes of abstraction and comparison they deploy limit the sites that can be examined and the phenomena that can be analyzed. The mode of comparison I have practiced in this dissertation highlights the singularity of its pivots of analysis, the extent to which its discursive logics, and practices must be situated in their local conditions of emergence. Such insights could also be gleaned by studying a single context of racism, but a comparative analysis reframes exactly what phenomena are unique to a context and what are symptomatic of broader regional, national, and global processes of racialization. Through this analysis I have illustrated the contextual mutability of racial relations of power, their capacity to acquire traction through and reorganize political conditions of a given locality. In so doing this dissertation unsettles the feasibility of formulating a model of racism that is untethered to the thick sociohistorical

contexts of its emergence. Studies of racism must necessarily contend with racisms in their plurality.

This dissertation could have focused entirely on the juridical racisms that have localized in Chicago or Vancouver. An explanation of the public dimensions that race has acquired amidst processes of urban restructuring in Chicago could have sustained an entire research project, just as the racial regulation of Vancouver's South Asian population is a subject of research unto itself. Through this dissertation I have shown that a comparative analysis, however "awkward", is able to illuminate otherwise latent, hidden, or neglected dimensions of these localized relations of racial power. Of course, the method of analysis I have advanced in this dissertation could also be used to compare racisms in other localities with divergent histories of colonialism, urbanization, and (de)industrialization. The racial discourses of criminality at the centre of this dissertation have acquired traction in post-industrial cities with histories of settler colonialism. While such comparisons would differ in the discursive logics, sentiments, and practices they explicate, they could nonetheless offer insights into the contextual mutability of racial relations of power.

Chicago and Vancouver have made such compelling sites of comparison because the singularity of their relations of power reveal the deeper local and transnational dynamics of law, racism, and urbanization. Through this comparison, I have been able to illuminate the oft-neglected imperial foundations of Chicago's racial relations of power by illustrating that, even though they acquire divergent epistemic, spatial, and affective forms, they work through similar technologies of rule and differentiation, which anchored the juxtapositions of each chapter. By showing these continuities in terms of the thick sociohistorical context of each city, my analysis has unsettled the practice of treating

American racisms as an ideal typical model of these relations of power. Relatedly, my focus on the local scale of racisms illustrates what is unique and singular about Chicago as a site of power, complicating the tendency to treat or study it as a proxy or paradigmatic site of American modes of racial exclusion (da Silva 2007).

Conversely, the dynamics of colonial sovereignty and settlement that have shaped Vancouver's South Asian population foreground dynamics of racialization that are typically obscured in the literature on race and racism. Because Indo-Canadians are so rarely characterized through explicitly biological notions of difference, the racial relations of power that constitute this population are often ignored or de-politicized. My comparison of Chicago and Vancouver illustrates that, even as they materialize through distinct socio-historical circumstances, these otherwise distinct relations of power work through similar technologies of racialization, namely ontologies of danger, modes of scrutiny, and relations of accountability that framed each chapter. Through this analysis, I have demonstrated the racial force and form of these relations of power. Here, the local scale of my analysis was essential to documenting discourses of crime and criminality as the figure of the Indo-Canadian gangster is not an object of public concern elsewhere in Canada, nor have discourses of Sikh terrorism been as visible in other Canadian cities.

Racial relations of power continue to form through and organize the public and private realms of post-industrial cities. Contrary to proclamations that racisms are an aberrant vestige of the past, which will wither away with time and education, discourses of law and criminality remain potent axes of differentiation, division, and exclusion. While rates of violent crime in Canada and the United States remain well below their historic

climax in the early 1990s²⁷ (Simon 2007, Valverde 2006), racial concerns about its proliferation have manifested public spaces that are saturated with technologies of security and surveillance (Davis 2006, Kemple and Huey 2005); geographies of vulnerability to violence and death (Goldberg 2009); and historic rates of incarceration that are differentially experienced by minority groups (Razack 2002, Wacquant 2008). Insofar as the discursive apparatuses of law remain tethered to different logics and practices of racial differentiation, these processes of subjugation and exclusion will remain unabated, especially as they intersect with intensifying income inequality (Hagedorn 2008).

Through my awkward comparison I have opened up new ways of understanding and tracking these racial relations of power across different regional and national contexts. By disengaging from the idea that racism is only reproduced through overt ideas and actions perpetuated by individuals, this dissertation has illustrated how racisms are produced through the social and practices of a variety of public and state actors. More importantly, the pivots of my awkward comparison have allowed me to illustrate the colonial conditions of more recognizably racial formations in Chicago and the racial force of more recognizably (post)colonial formations in Vancouver. By maintaining this dimension of my comparison, my dissertation can offer critical insights into the deeper dynamics of racisms in their plurality of forms and formations.

²⁷ While a 2012 National Victimization survey conducted in the United States found that violent crime rates had increased slightly over the last two years, they remain well below rates from the fifteen years prior (United States Department of Justice 2012).

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