

Policing Fantasy City

by

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Abstract

This study explores the creation and proliferation of urban entertainment destinations in two Vancouver neighbourhoods – Gastown and Granville Mall – and the effect that these spaces are having on the delivery of urban policing services. This analysis provides a basis for a critique of both the ‘broken windows’ thesis and consumer culture.

Urban entertainment destinations (UEDS) are sites that utilize forms of entertainment as a means of retailing goods and services. Unlike traditional notions of the city, site operators, and increasingly consumers, view these areas solely as spaces of consumption linked to pleasure. However, the marketing of many of these sites as pleasure spots is problematic for site operators because of the pre-existence of various forms of ‘urban blight’ that are commonly associated with the inner city.

In order to reduce, or eliminate, a number of ‘quality of life’ issues that plague retailers and consumers, such as panhandling, graffiti, squeegees, street youth, and so on, business improvement associations (BIAs), which function roughly as site operators, demand an increased police presence. To augment existing public policing programs in their areas, many BIAs are also contracting private security services to engage in ‘broken windows’-style policing in public spaces. Many of these services work cooperatively with public programs.

The thesis advances three propositions. First, urban entertainment destinations generate demands for both increased and diversified forms of policing. Second, these demands for policing can be traced to modern consumption patterns and the mass media. Third, these demands can translate into ‘policing’ practices that are not centered around

crime prevention or other strategies commonly associated with policing *per se*, but rather have more to do with creating and maintaining images of safety and 'risklessness' in sites frequented by consumers.

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Chapter I – Policing fantasy city

In his book *Fantasy City*, John Hannigan (1998) provides a detailed analysis of the growth of spaces of consumption within postindustrial cities. These spaces fuel consumption through linking commodities and services to entertainment. Hannigan terms these spaces 'fantasy cities', or 'urban entertainment destinations.' He points to the success of Disney as being pivotal in the development and proliferation of other sites which similarly mix elements of the fantastic - in the form of simulated spaces and 'consumable experiences'¹ - with retail goods and services.

Examples of this phenomenon abound. There is South Korea's Kyongju World Tradition Folk Village, Hong Kong's Ocean Park, or Canal City, a 1.4 billion dollar urban entertainment district in Japan (Hannigan 1998). There is even a Tokyo Disneyland and a Euro Disney. However, aside from Disney's parks, which mix technology, entertainment and retail to great financial success, no other place would seem to represent this form of postmodern development as well as Las Vegas. With its artificial lagoons, 'ancient' Roman shopping arcades, Venetian gondoliers, and Statue of Liberty, Las Vegas planners utilize fashionably fake themed attractions as a means of luring spenders to support a billion dollar a year casino and tourism industry (Hannigan 1998).

The new consumer society

The development and proliferation of the fantasy city concept is symptomatic of larger changes occurring in society. These changes reflect the rise of a new type of consumerism. Although, as Slater (1997) contends, consumerism is not of recent origin, clearly there is something different currently taking place. In discussing this difference, Slater (ibid: 174) states that consumption is no longer based primarily on mass-produced

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standardized goods, but rather on the “specialized production of goods more specifically tailored for and targeted on precise consumer groups who are defined by lifestyles rather than by broad demographic variables like class, gender or age².”

Mirroring the larger marketplace, fantasy city and its constituent parts offer customized, or ‘canned’, experiences for individuals within particular lifestyle groups. And, just as the larger market place is becoming increasingly fragmented due to the desire of advertisers to target pre-selected groups of consumers (Turow 1997), so fantasy city is itself becoming increasingly fractured through attempts at drawing particular market niches.

The new consumer society isn’t just about dividing up populations into market segments, it is also about fundamental changes in social relationships. According to Lasch (1984: 27) mass consumption “tend[s] to discourage initiative and self-reliance and to promote dependence, passivity, and a spectatorial state of mind both at work and at play”. This can be evidenced in how we relate to brand logos. As Lasn (1999: xiii) explains, for many of us the brand has displaced other traditional forms of culture: “Our stories, once passed from one generation to the next by parents, neighbors and teachers, are now told by distant corporations with “something to sell as well as to tell.”

The new consumerism is also about the creation and exploitation of individual crises in relation to questions of identity (Slater 1997). For example, the teen angst experienced during the search for identity becomes fodder for commercials which offer not only a solution to the question of ‘who am I?’, but a multiplicity of solutions intensify and exacerbate the anxiety surrounding this search. These solutions are tied to brands:

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“Brand X is not a product but a way of life, an attitude, a set of values, a look, an idea” (Klein 2000: 23).

As both Klein (2000) and Lasn (1999) note, another feature of the new consumer society is that it is not only the consumer who is consuming; the purveyors of a variety of goods and services are also consuming - consuming culture. This consumption, which Klein (2000) describes as a search for ‘cool-ness’ or ‘hip-ness’, leads to those images that are popular or are associated with particular qualities or characteristics that we admire, being appropriated and used to sell a variety of items that are not intrinsically ‘hip’.

The new urban reality

Hannigan (1998) and others (Crawford 1992; Goldberger 1996; Ley 1996) have identified a new urban reality that is not only connected to new forms of postindustrial consumption, but also to changing social patterns driven by urban re-development. The rise of the new urban environment as a post-modern hyper-reality (Hannigan 1998) can be traced to attempts by urban areas to compete with suburban malls for retail business through one of two strategies: the development of unique shopping experiences such as public markets (Levine 1989); and, the importation of many of the aspects of the ultimate in simulated postmodern environments - the suburban mall. The effect of the latter has been, as Goldberger (1996: 138) notes, “a kind of blurring of traditional differences between the city and suburb”. The effect of the former has been the creation of sites where cultural themes that had been successful elsewhere have been appropriated and duplicated (Hannigan 1998). Still other urban redevelopment projects simply exploit historical neighbourhood associations (Jones 1991). In some cases, as occurred with

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Vancouver's Gastown, historical associations are 'sanitized'. In others, for example Las Vegas, cultural and historical associations are manufactured outright (Eco 1986).

The importation of themed 'experiences', in combination with aspects of the suburban mall, to urban streets, is paradoxical. The paradox is that such sites, and the historical or cultural associations which they attempt to evoke, are contrived. Indeed, they stand as exemplars of Baudrillard's (1994) concept of "simulacra", serialized copies of objects that never existed. And yet, according to retail consultant Ian Thomas, retailers and consumers see street shopping as offering a "more real" experience (Mackie 1997: B6).

The move from traditional suburban malls to main street shopping has resulted in the development of a very lucrative trend (Lagerfeld 1995; Mackie 1997). This trend has been brought about as a result of efforts by retailers to capitalize on "practical lessons [learned] in the psychology of commerce" (Lagerfeld 1995: 110). Retailers consciously draw on our reaction to elements in the environment and our unconscious association of goods with social interaction and status hierarchies. For example, part of the success of urban shopping, according to retailer Thomas, lies in the fact that "[p]eople are social animals and do want to go out, and shopping is seen to be very much a mainstream activity for socializing" (Mackie 1997: B6). Retailers capitalize on this knowledge by sponsoring events that act as both an initial draw for consumers, and simultaneously reinforce the idea that their private or quasi-private retail zone is a public space.

Historically, questions involving whether granite benches will encourage unwanted users, or whether trees and planters will detract from storefronts, have not been a significant concern of urban planners. This is because planners and architects have

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tended “to see streets and sidewalks strictly as a civic realm” – a realm in which traditional conceptions of sociability have been promoted (Lagerfeld 1995: 110). However, the new urban reality is increasingly geared toward a new mode of sociability, one that is intrinsically linked to consumption and consumption-oriented past-times.

And yet, the inner-city remains a typically chaotic social space encompassing both dynamic systems as well as static structures (Ley 1991; Goldberger 1996; Hannigan 1998). Goldberger (1996:138) refers to this chaos as ‘disorganization’, and suggests that it is this characteristic that contributes directly to the unique vibrancy of the urban landscape. However, as Ley (1991:323) points out, disorganization is also associated, both in urban sociology and in the popular imagination, with social pathology: poverty, delinquency, mental illness, crime, family-breakdown, and addiction. “The white middle-class imagination, absent from any first-hand knowledge of inner-city conditions, magnifies the perceived threat through a demonological lens” (Davis 1992: 224). Thus, in order for urban entertainment destinations to succeed financially, there is a strong incentive placed on business and government interests to dispel fears associated with urban spaces.

Urban policing

One means of dispelling fears associated with urban life is careful monitoring and control of space. Increasingly, signs of urban crime and decay are being managed through environmental design (Ericson and Haggerty 1997; Kelling and Coles 1996). Cities such as Washington, New York and San Francisco address urban problems by utilizing ideas associated with Wilson and Kelling’s (1982) ‘broken windows’ theory. This theory proposes that environmental cues signaling neglect and decay, such as graffiti, boarded

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windows, and broken lights, are criminogenic. This is because these physical cues not only contribute to perceptions of the relative risk of criminal victimization in an area, but also advertise to would-be criminals that this is an area with few social controls. Wilson and Kelling argue that by addressing the cues that contribute to these perceptions, crime in an area can be reduced. The reduction occurs as the space becomes re-populated by non-offenders (increasing 'natural' surveillance), and the deterrent effect produced in potential offenders who interpret well-kept neighbourhoods as being subject to forms of social control. Kelling and Coles (1996) also approvingly note programs in the U.S. where security guards are deployed by business interests to perform public beat patrol and to routinely ask the homeless to 'move along'. Private security is portrayed as an obvious extension of the 'broken windows' theory – using policing as a means of increasing perceptions of safety while regulating the behaviour of the 'disorderly'.

In short, the main premise behind these and similar ideas (e.g. Reiss 1987 and Ellickson 1996) is that we can achieve 'the good' – meaning a vision of the good life in public space - if we can control our physical environments and behaviour that does not conform to normative values associated with 'etiquette', 'decorum' or 'civility'. Of course, what such proponents fail to adequately address is that their conception of what constitutes 'the good' is neither universal, nor devoid of class-rootedness. Indeed, what they are advocating is a means by which middle-class values, which are increasingly becoming 'consumer-class' values, can be privileged in public spaces. Often these values are being imposed in neighbourhoods that have been traditionally occupied by those who hold different values.

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There are many other criticisms that can, and have been, directed at this theory and programs derived from it. I will limit myself to three. First, as Davis (1992), Harcourt (1998) and Lianos and Douglas (2000) note, 'broken windows' style-policing explicitly targets the most disadvantaged in society, with the result that the marginalized are pushed even further to the periphery. This is because, as Lianos and Douglas (2000: 273) point out, the process of "‘rehabilitating’ inner city spaces," in order to permit groups to "reclaim space as managed territory where safety is guaranteed", involves "erasing the *signs* of peripheral excluded cultures" (italics mine). Second, 'broken windows' deals with surface issues only. The underlying causes of crime, those embedded deeply in our social structures, are not addressed, and therefore crime and disorder can never truly be affected by such measures alone (Burke 1998). Third, the theory creates categories of 'order' and 'disorder' that collapse upon close scrutiny. As Harcourt (1998) notes, the fixation with a meaning of order that focuses narrowly on aesthetics, cleanliness, and sobriety, minimizes other offences that may have significant personal and economic impacts, and ignores the fact that so-called 'disorder' crimes are often committed by those of middle or upper-class standing³. The theory thus recasts traditional class-based divisions by creating a model purporting to show how crime in neighbourhoods is generated and re-generated almost exclusively by those of the lower class – the squeegees, the panhandlers, and so on.

As a policing philosophy, the ideas found in 'broken windows' are clearly gaining ground among North American police departments. This is undoubtedly because many of its promises – decreased police commitment to order maintenance issues through increased community involvement - are similar to those offered by the community

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policing model which was enthusiastically adopted by departments across North America in the 80s and 90s. Saunders (1999), in a study of community policing in Boston, looked at the application of this model in the field. In particular, he examined the gap between the promise of community policing and the actual practice. He found that the Boston program failed to address even the most basic criticisms offered of the department. The police were no more accountable to the public than previously, nor was policing made more equitable. Similarly, mechanisms for solving community problems or for determining local needs were not implemented. This led Saunders to conclude that critiques of community policing that label it as a "triumph of style over substance" are well-founded because "community policing is primarily concerned with producing certain appearances that police hope will win back the political support of selected communities" (ibid: 461, 463). As will become apparent later on, this too is a criticism that can be directed at broken window policing with its near-exclusive focus on aesthetic concerns.

Loader (1999) similarly views community policing as largely rhetorical, but suggests that it is part of the rhetoric of consumerism. There is "a discursive representation of the police as deliverers of a professional service (rather than a force) and of 'the public' as 'consumers' of that service" (ibid: 376). That police agencies should embrace consumer rhetoric is seen to be paradoxical in that the promotion of the police as service providers is occurring at the same time that policing agencies are attempting to reduce the number of public services that they perform, and to shift some of the responsibility for crime prevention back onto the citizenry (ibid).

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Garland (1996) suggests that the apparent willingness of public agencies to divest themselves of some of the responsibilities that they formerly included within their mandates may be seen as the result of a recognition of the capacity limits of the state and its systems. He terms this process a "responsibilization strategy" and defines it as "involv[ing] the central government seeking to act upon crime not in a direct fashion through state agencies (police, courts, prisons, social work, etc.) but instead by acting indirectly, seeking to activate action on the part of non-state agencies and organizations" (Garland 1996: 452). Garland (1996: 447) cites several means by which the state encourages citizen participation in crime prevention, but perhaps what is singularly motivating for citizens is an underlying "sense of the failure of criminal justice agencies, and a more limited sense of the state's powers to regulate conduct and prohibit deviance."

There has clearly been a growth in non-public policing and crime prevention measures. Spitzer and Scull (1992) note the phenomenal growth of private security, which they suggest results from the overwhelming demands placed upon the police to meet citizen needs, demands which leave only a small portion of police resources available for responding to what are perceived to be low-level threats to property. Others, notably Shearing and Stenning (1992), attribute the rise of private security to the emergence of mass property, which includes both private and quasi-public spaces such as shopping malls and market sites. They suggest that reliance on private security by the private sector occurs for two reasons: "public police [have] traditionally been confined to publicly owned property ... [and] those who own and control mass private property have commonly preferred to retain and exercise their traditional right to preserve order on their own property and to maintain control over the policing of it" (ibid: 527). Regardless, the

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use of private security is seen to be, to some extent, predicated on the belief that the public police have failed to sufficiently meet the needs of citizens with means to employ their own security.

Loader (1999) sees the increasing commodification of policing services as resulting in a fragmentation of public policing, with a possibility of serious impairment to the public police mandate. As will become evident during the examination of aspects of private-public policing programs in the sites studied here, Stenson (1993) appears to be closer to the mark when he suggests that the public police will resist a reduction of their role through increased alliances with private sector groups, alliances that may have the effect of instituting dual or triple tiered levels of policing based on the economic means of consumers of policing services.

Providing 'riskless risk' in fantasy city

In *Fantasy City*, one of Hannigan's (1998: 71) principal theses is that theme parks and entertainment sites are directly linked to the middle classes' historical pursuit of entertainment in the form of 'riskless-risk': "[t]he 'riskless risk' so evident in the themed environments of Fantasy City is part of a wider trend in which foreign cultures and domestic subcultures are appropriated, disemboweled and then marketed as safe, sanitized versions of the original." As Hannigan (1998: 71) notes of the consumers of experience who seek spaces that have been replicated and rendered 'safer', "[f]ew, if any, among the clientele for these attractions have the desire to embrace the actual risks posed by inner-city life, any more than Disney World patrons want to encounter the dangers of a genuine jungle cruise with its disease-bearing mosquitoes and monsoon floods". Unfortunately, what is missing from Hannigan's account is a more thorough examination

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of strategies employed by site operators to provide 'safety', or the perception of safety, for consumers.

Others, notably Shearing and Stenning (1984), Parenti (1999) and Davis (1999), provide some information on the means by which urban and other entertainment spaces are rendered 'safer' for patrons. Shearing and Stenning (1984) have looked at the use of private forms of discipline in Disney World, and demonstrated the high degree of control which Disney World exerts over its patrons in order to regulate behaviour, thus reducing opportunities for 'disorder'. These forms range from attractive physical barriers and signs which control access to areas, to ever-present employees who guide patrons, correcting them when they behave contrary to Disney's rules. However, because these instruments of discipline also serve aesthetic, entertainment, and other functions, control is both pervasive and largely undetected by patrons. As Shearing and Stenning (1984: 344) note, "a critical consequence of this process of embedding control in other structures is that control becomes consensual."

What separates Disney's parks from other forms of fantasy city, and thus permits this high degree of control tied to pleasure, is that Disney Land and Disney World are privately owned, self-contained pieces of property outside of urban centres. The question of how to create order, and thus limit disorder, becomes significantly more problematic when the site of a fantasy space is within an urban centre. Owners of mass private property can erect barriers to exclude undesirables, install video surveillance anywhere on their site to monitor rule breaking, and use the threat of expulsion to gain compliance. While businesses may use some of these measures within the confines of their private property, they usually have limited control over the public spaces that abut their business.

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One solution, as Parenti (1999: 96) discusses in relation to New York's redevelopment of Times Square, is privately sponsored policing of public space.

Retail policing

Urban policing is being transformed in the context of downtown retail development as a result of private investment in policing of public space. Some essayists have touched upon this new form of policing (e.g. Davis 1990, 1992; Hannigan 1998; Bauman 1999; Parenti 1999); however, no one has linked the literatures of consumer culture, policing and urban geography, in order to explore the nature of UED policing, its genesis, and its influence on the urban landscape. This is an important omission that I seek to remedy in this thesis.

The link among these literatures is explored through an interconnecting thread: the cultural importance of signs. While the importance of signification is readily apparent in relation to consumerism, particularly with respect to branding and status consumption, the uses and meanings of signs are also of growing interest to police practitioners and urban planners. The adoption of Wilson and Kelling's (1982) 'broken windows' theory by police and retail groups offers a prime example. The paramount concern of 'broken windows' is signification – the regulation of signs of disorder. Symbols and meanings are also becoming a focus in the work of urban planners who seek to maximize the economic potential of a space by increasing aesthetic appeal while simultaneously reducing signs of urban blight that have come to mean crime and danger in the popular imagination. The increased importance of signs - particularly with respect to the relationship between popular aesthetic sensibilities, as defined by consumer culture, and crime prevention practices - will be analyzed. I offer here a simultaneous critique of both the 'broken

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windows' theory and modern consumer culture, and argue that the greatest effect that our preoccupation with 'signs', 'symbols', and marketable 'identities' has is to intensify class-based divisions within urban neighbourhoods. Ultimately, this leads to fractured, rather than stable and cohesive communities.

There have been several studies of 'broken windows' policing. Some utilize crime trend data (Harcourt 1998; Skogan 1990; Macallair and Taqi-eddin 1999), while others, notably Wilson and Kelling's (1982) original study, use an ethnographic approach. However, there remains a need for more fine-grained empirical research in this area. In particular, what has been lacking to date is research and analysis of how business improvement associations (BIAs), in co-operation with local government and public police, facilitate new forms of 'broken windows' style policing. Research is seen as an especially critical task because of the continuing growth of BIA-sponsored urban entertainment destinations. This gap in research is addressed here through an empirical study of two neighbourhoods within the city of Vancouver. The patterns revealed in these contexts are generalizable, since many of the programs and practices in Vancouver imitate those found in other North American, Asian and European cities.

Chapter two offers details on the research setting and methodology used. Here I describe the urban spaces studied, and the governance of those spaces by BIAs. In the third chapter, I analyze various forms of public and private policing that occur within the study areas, and I provide specific examples of the changing division of labour between public and private policing. Chapter four assesses levels of community support and resistance to the practices identified. There is also an analysis of wider trends in consumer market segmentation and the role that they play in determining policing

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practices. The fifth chapter ties the empirical to the theoretical through an analysis of the various programs and practices, and the claims that underpin their use. This analysis leads to three propositions. First, that a major concern of urban entertainment destination operators is control of the image that their spaces project. Second, that much of the policing occurring in Vancouver's urban entertainment destinations is not a response to actual crime, but is more properly thought of as related to this task of image management. Third, that the preoccupation of retailers and consumers with image is linked to market forces and the increasingly consumption oriented nature of our culture. Chapter six summarizes the main findings of the study.

Chapter II – Research setting and methodology

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology employed, and provide information on the structure and purposes of business improvement associations generally, with particular reference to the BIAs studied. The research settings are introduced, with notes provided on each site's historical, geographical, and social development.

Methodology

Forty-eight interviews with sixty subjects were conducted over several months. Some subjects were first identified as a result of a preliminary study of textual materials. Others were identified through the use of snowball sampling, or were approached in public areas. Subjects included members of community groups (6), public police personnel (9), community residents (2), outreach workers (2), private security guards or security representatives (11), business owners, managers, representatives (6), street youth (7), adult panhandlers (3), local area workers (2), street vendors (2), municipal personnel (2), and tourists (8). Although those interviewed have been identified as belonging to a particular group, many fall within multiple categories. For example, individuals identified here as street youth may also have spoken about their experiences as panhandlers or as area residents. This is also true of some business owners/managers, area workers, and community group members who are also local residents. In those situations where a role shift occurred during an interview, and the content of the interview is included here, I have identified the individual as belonging to the group that they were identifying with at that time.

The interview format was open-focused⁴; principally, because the nature of the questions necessarily changed from participant to participant in order to capture the

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beliefs, thoughts, and experiences of differently situated subjects more fully. Open-focused interviews allowed discussions to flow in a conversation-like manner. This fluidity was especially important for those subjects who may have been experiencing some anxiety during the interview. It also allowed me flexibility in asking questions.

All interviews were taped with the subject's consent. All subjects were guaranteed confidentiality. Two means were selected to facilitate this. First, identifying information was omitted during the transcription process or masked. Second, where quoted, subjects are identified as belonging to one of the generic categories, or are listed as an unnamed 'subject', 'respondent' or 'individual'. Some exceptions have been made where extra description does not compromise the identity of the subject.

Primary and secondary documents were gathered and analyzed in order to provide an understanding of some aspects of the political, economic and geographical nature of the city's downtown environs. Document sources varied and included both hard copy text and web-based materials.

Hard copy texts included: news articles from Canadian newspapers and magazines; materials from the City Archives and from community groups; BIA monthly newsletters and annual reports; provincial legislation and City by-laws; and, City Community Monitoring reports. Some materials were obtained from government bodies through Freedom of Information requests. This process included documents relating to the Carrall Street deployment centre and the Crime Alert Pager program from the Police Department, and information on private security from the Attorney General's office.

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Web-based information was obtained from various BIA associations, the Police Department, and the City online archives. Non-text based supplementary sources include the documentary 'Private Security, Public Places' (TKO 1998).

An introduction to BIAs

Provincial and state legislation allows municipalities to create non-profit business improvement associations, organizations with the mandate of improving a designated area (BCBIA 2000). New York, Ottawa, Washington DC and Philadelphia provide examples of cities that have such organizations.

In Vancouver, sections 233 of the *Municipal Act*⁵ and 456 of the *Vancouver Charter*⁶ give City Council the authority to create a BIA and to grant recoverable startup costs to potential BIAs (City of Vancouver 2000c). Designation of an area as a business improvement district (BID) is reviewable upon terms set by Council (City of Vancouver 2000c). Once Council's approval has been received, the BIA can develop and implement programs that better the area (BCBIA 2000). Such programs include: "[t]ree planting, street furniture, improved parking, flower boxes and street banners" (BCBIA 2000). The philosophy of the BIA movement is that "[t]he cumulative effect of BIA activities will attract and maintain customers, clients, and shoppers to the commercial area as well as attracting new business to the community" (BIABC 2000).

The costs of maintaining business improvements are generally met through the imposition of a special levy that is assessed by local government (BCBIA 2000). In Vancouver, the City's policy is to assess each property owner proportionate to their share of the total taxable value of their property within the BIA boundaries (City of Vancouver 1997). However, an amendment in 1998 permits Council to levy "a rate based on any

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factor determined by the Council”, and to levy rates differently “for different classes of business” (City of Vancouver 1998).

BIA annual budgets must be submitted to the City Council for approval each year, following BIA membership approval at a general meeting (City of Vancouver 2000c). Each April, Vancouver City Council advances money to the BIAs for operating costs (City of Vancouver 1997). The money is subsequently recovered at the time that annual property taxes are paid.

The selected research sites – Gastown and Granville Mall - are each designated BIDs. The Gastown Business Improvement Society (GBIS) operates within Gastown, and the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) is responsible for a significant portion of the downtown core.

Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association

The DVBIA was created by City Council in 1990. It encompasses approximately 90 blocks of the City’s core. These blocks include over 8,000 businesses comprising a mix of office, retail, and entertainment properties; this makes the DVBIA one of the largest business improvement districts in Canada (DVBIA 1999a).

The organization is made up of staff positions, an elected Board, and volunteer committees run by tenants and property owners. Staff positions include an Executive Director, a Director of Marketing and Communications, a Director of Crime Prevention Services, an Administrative Assistant, and an Office Assistant (DVBIA 2000b). There are five volunteer committees: Entertainment/Retail; Maintenance and Security; Marketing and Communications; Business Community Interests Committee (formerly Office Space Promotion); and, Transportation and Parking (DVBIA 1999a; 2000a).

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Through a series of partnerships with private agencies and the City, the DVBIA also indirectly employs other personnel such as The Downtown Clean Team - a group of young people hired to remove graffiti, posters, stickers, and other litter and debris from the City's streets (DVBIA 1999a). Security services are contracted to agencies that operate under the direction of the Director of Crime Prevention Services (DVBIA 2000a). The Director oversees a variety of programs including Citizens' Foot Patrol, Safety Fairs and Security Audits, organizes crime prevention lectures for member businesses, and serves as a liaison to the public police (DVBIA 2000c).

The DVBIA's budget for 2000-1 was \$1,800,000 (City of Vancouver 2000c), which represents a significant increase from the \$705,000 budgeted the year before (DVBIA 2000b). According to the City (2000c), projected expenditures for the year 2000-1 were estimated as follows:

Entertainment and Retail Development \$80,079
Marketing, Promotion and Access \$268,917
Maintenance and Security \$1,077,937
Research and Communications 137,000
Office Expenses and Administrative Costs 205,184
Contingency 48,883.

According to the DVBIA (2000b), \$835,000 of the increase in operating expenses over the previous year is due to the implementation of two new security programs: the Downtown Ambassadors and the Loss Prevention Officers.

Gastown Business Improvement Society

As early as 1979, Gastown re-developers and local businesses were lobbying both the City and the Province for the right to create an organization that would meet needs ranging from daily area maintenance to long-range planning and programming (Hartford 1993). They were unsuccessful until 1989, when the Gastown Business Improvement

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Society was created (Hartford 1993). The GBIS' role is to "maintain and market the residential, retail and commercial opportunities in Gastown" (Discover Gastown 2000). In this capacity, it represents the interests of 70 of the area's property owners and 400 businesses (Discover Gastown 2000).

The structure of the organization is similar to that of other BIAs. There is an elected President and Board of Directors, and member-run committees such as the 'Safety and Security Committee'. There is also one staff position – the 'GBIS Manager'. However, because of its smaller size, the GBIS annual budget is significantly less than that of the neighbouring DVBIA. For the 2000-01 year the GBIS requested a recoverable grant of \$304,000 in order to meet the following expenditures:

Marketing, Promotion and Public Relations	\$78,000
Street Enhancement, Litter Removal, Safety and Security	\$134,000
Salaries, Fees and Operating Expenses	\$87,000
Contingency	\$5000 (City of Vancouver 2000c)

Research context

In selecting sites within Vancouver, I took care to choose spaces that exemplify differing stages of redevelopment. In order to better understand the nature of these sites, a condensed history is provided.

Granville Mall

Granville Street runs the entire length of the City from north (downtown core) to south (into the neighbouring municipality of Richmond). Within the northern end of the street are businesses, shops and restaurants including the Vancouver Stock Exchange and the Pacific Centre Mall. As pedestrians walk south, through what is termed 'the Mall', they move into an area filled with stores and services that cater primarily to the young and the hip. Here we find the Underground which offers dog collars and body piercing.

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the Beauty Bar where self-styled 'hipsters' can don pink afros and study themselves in mirrors, and a variety of 'hot' night clubs where young beautiful bodies line up to get inside.

In earlier years, Granville Street was a major site for shopping and entertainment. Photographs of the street taken at night in the 1940's and 1950's show it ablaze with lights as entertainment seekers enter the Vogue Movie Theatre, or wait outside the Orpheum Theatre or the Commodore Ballroom. However, with the mass exodus to the suburbs in the mid to late 1950s, Granville became increasingly deserted of shoppers and entertainment seekers. In order to attract lost revenues back into the area, the indoor underground Pacific Centre Mall opened on Granville Street in the early 1970s. Unfortunately, it had an unintended consequence that was detrimental for the purpose of reviving Granville: it pulled people off the street (Ward 1997).

In order to undo the damage caused by Pacific Centre, in 1974 City Council re-created a portion of Granville Street into a pedestrian mall (Ward 1997). According to critics, this resulted in the "worst planning blunder in the city's history and the root cause of the present malaise" (Ward 1997: C6). Rather than encouraging shoppers, they stayed away, and stores continued to go underground into Pacific Centre (Ward 1997). As a result, the area south of the central-most business core became 'rundown'. Business languished and the street was populated with sex stores, panhandlers, street kids, and other symbols commonly associated with 'urban blight'. In the 1990s, two forces of redevelopment began work on improving Granville. The City rezoned the area surrounding Granville in 1991 to facilitate building residential high-rises. And property owners, seeing signs of increased tourism in Vancouver as a whole, began to redevelop

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area businesses to attract tourist dollars to Granville. A number of hotels that had formerly offered SRO rooms were converted into tourist accommodations, leading to evictions of a number of the City's poor and elderly.

Some business owners along the Mall also sought to re-establish the area by re-creating its identity. Underlying this effort was a view of the Mall's problems as being linked to an undesirable image. As one developer explained, "The problem is its negative identity. It's created by some of these adult stores plus the arcades" (Ward 1996: D1). Briefly, the area became Theatre Row; however, when Granville's merchants joined the DVBIA in 1998 this gave way to the Great Granville concept (Gauthier 1998) which has now been replaced by the area's latest identity: The Entertainment District (TED). TED is an attempt by retailers to fuse the Mall's past with its present by evoking Granville's heyday as an entertainment destination through restoring nostalgic elements, such as the neon signs that run the length of the street, as well as by updating its image with a mix of funky and eclectic shops and services and a wide array of cabarets and pubs.

To achieve the transformation necessary, the City has commissioned a façade design concept for Granville Street, and removed a moratorium on liquor seats in the area (City of Vancouver 2000a). The DVBIA, in conjunction with the City, has been beautifying the area. Among other initiatives, the DVBIA has worked with shop owners on improving appearances, created the Downtown Clean Team to remove surface debris, and hung planters (DVBIA 1999b; 2000b). Colourful banners, which the DVBIA has hung from the 700 to 1300 blocks of Granville Street, "define The Entertainment District" (DVBIA 2000g).

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However, not all residents of the community accept the TED identity. When I asked a long-time resident of the area if the TED banners reflect the community as a whole, the response was an emphatic no. I posed the question of whether Granville is a community to a local street youth who similarly pointed out that the Mall is more than TED: "For some people this is their home, their street".

Gastown

Gastown is one of the neighbourhoods that make up the City's downtown. It is situated along the waterfront of Vancouver, wedged between the central business district and the Downtown Eastside (the City's poorest neighbourhood). Within the fourteen blocks that encompass Gastown are over one hundred street level retailers and service providers, including antique dealers, native art galleries, furniture stores and souvenir shops featuring Canadian kitsch and tacky T-shirts. The area also includes a variety of eateries, nightclubs and a microbrewery. Gastown is, however, a multi-use neighbourhood that also incorporates office space, privately owned condominium complexes, and social housing.

Gastown is the site on which the City of Vancouver was founded in 1867. Its name comes from one of the city's earliest entrepreneurs, Captain 'Gassy' Jack Deighton, who operated a saloon in the area to serve mill workers. For many years Gastown was a commercial and warehousing district, but, as the City expanded westwards, the area increasingly fell into disuse. By the 1950's Gastown formed part of the City's skid road.

In the mid-1960's plans were in progress to bulldoze Gastown (Gastown Rehabilitation Project 1977). Ley (1996) states that initially preservation of the area as a heritage site began as a grass-roots movement of small businesses and counter-culture

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groups who resisted the City's plans to turn the district into a freeway. The freeway project was eventually abandoned in the face of public outcry over the destruction of the heritage buildings occupying the space. In 1969, the Gastown Rehabilitation Project, a partnership between a wide range of business and community interests and various levels of government, was formed in order to rescue the site. The City coordinated a five-year restoration program involving investment, renovations and re-zoning. Public sector investment consisted primarily of capital expenditures in the form of improvements to public lands and necessary zoning and by-law changes, with the private sector investing heavily in renovations of heritage buildings (*ibid.*). In 1971, the provincial government designated Gastown a heritage area. This is Gastown's primary identity, and it is this identity that forms the basis of its tourist trade.

Geographer David Ley (1996: 238) has noted what he terms "the postmodern face of Gastown" – a face that he suggests is attributable to a "public intervention" that resulted in "spontaneity increasingly becoming staged" so as to make the site a prime tourist destination. Ley (1996: 238) states that "as early as 1973 and the beautification schemes, an architectural historian saw the new Water Street landscape as made in the image of Disney."

It is an imperfect copy of Disney, however, as Gastown cannot completely rid itself of its historic past as embodied in the presence of many of its 'unsanitary' elements: the poor, the mentally ill, the addicted, panhandlers and other long-time low-income residents who inhabit the area and the nearby Downtown Eastside. Thus a palpable tension exists, as businesses and recently-arrived, higher-income residents struggle to maintain their newer, more elegant image of 'historical' Gastown, they are met with

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resistance by community groups and their clienteles who perceive this new vision as not including them. The result is a fractured community. As one area resident stated unequivocally, "The neighbourhood is ... kind of a disgusting parody of a neighbourhood".

Chapter III – Public and private policing in fantasy city

In the previous chapter I briefly discussed the neighbourhoods of Granville Mall and Gastown. In this chapter I will provide further information on these areas through an examination of how they are policed. In particular, I will be focusing on both public and private policing, and the increasing role that BIA-sponsored policing programs are playing in these spaces. Along with increased policing of aesthetic concerns in these areas, the division of labour between public and private policing is changing.

The public police in urban Vancouver

For policing purposes, the city is divided into four districts. Of particular interest here are Districts One and Two.

District One encompasses most of Vancouver's inner urban core. It is sub-divided into four policing areas: Waterfront, the West End, North False Creek and Granville Downtown South (City of Vancouver 2000d). Officers in this district patrol on bicycles or in squad cars, or are assigned as liaison officers to a 'Community Policing Centre' (CPC) – a neighbourhood policing office. In Vancouver, CPCs are administered by a volunteer citizen advisory council in conjunction with the area District's management team (City of Vancouver 2000d). There are several CPCs within District One, including Granville, Waterfront, and Davie (City of Vancouver 2000d).

The Granville Downtown South CPC is located on the Mall. The office is staffed with a paid volunteer coordinator and several volunteers. The centre operates a number of programs, many of which are directed primarily at disorder prevention through the reduction of forms of 'nuisance'. For example, there is Bar Watch, a program in which bar and club operators work with the police in order to minimize problems associated

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with liquor license seats, and the Vending/Busker/Window-Washer Enforcement Program aimed at removing "illegal and/or problematic street vendors and buskers and dealing with street window washers", among others (City of Vancouver 2000d).

District Two encompasses Gastown and the more easterly sections of Vancouver, including the Downtown Eastside, Strathcona/Chinatown, Grandview-Woodland and Hastings-Sunrise areas (City of Vancouver 2000d). There are approximately two hundred police officers assigned to patrol this district on foot or in squad cars. Officers may also be assigned to one of the area's CPCs, which include Grandview-Woodlands, Strathcona, and Gastown.

The smaller Gastown CPC is staffed with two full-time officers, a paid volunteer coordinator and volunteers. The Gastown CPC runs fewer programs than its Granville Mall counterpart, including a Citizen's Foot Patrol, BlockWatch, and BarWatch programs. And, as will be discussed later on, Gastown CPC's officers also provide informal support to local private security who engage in disorder prevention activities in the neighbourhood.

Private security

As of April 14, 2000 there were 6,363 licensed security patrol personnel in the province of British Columbia compared to 4,762 in 1994 (Attorney General 2000). This figure represents an increase of approximately 33% in just over a five-year period, signifying the rapid growth of this industry in B.C. (Attorney General 2000).

A large number of businesses within both of the BIDs studied utilize the services of licensed and unlicensed private security. Licensed personnel include armed guards and individuals engaged in patrol work who are regulated through the *Private Investigators*

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*and Security Act*⁷. This Act gives authority to the Security Programs Division of the Ministry of the provincial Attorney General, which administers the granting and holding of security professional licenses. Among unlicensed security, businesses employ 'in house' retail loss prevention staff, and 'bouncers' or door staff.

Both the DVBIA and the GBIS utilize licensed private security services, although they do so in qualitatively different ways than other business interests. The following sub-sections explore the use of these services.

Granville Mall - the Downtown Ambassadors

In the Spring of 2000, the DVBIA announced with some fanfare that it had revamped its Downtown Ambassadors (DAs)⁸ program. The program originated in 1994 when the DVBIA hired a group of post-secondary students to operate information booths and to patrol the BID each summer (DVBIA 1998). Aside from assisting area visitors and merchants by providing general information and directions, their primary duties included "[liaising] with the community police officers and offices ... documenting any graffiti, aggressive panhandlers or removing any illegally posted bills within the DVBIA boundaries" (DVBIA 1998: 3). As one former Ambassador proudly stated in the BIA's newsletter, "... it is our role to ensure that the tourist's and local's impressions of the city are positive" (DVBIA 1998: 4).

The new program replaced the part-time students with 16 full-time Alliance Security (of the Inter Tech Group) patrol persons on foot and bike patrols. Patrols now operate within the 90 block BID from 7:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily on a year-round basis (DVBIA 2000b). The contracting of private security services to fulfill the Ambassador function clearly represents a change in the direction of the program. In its literature the

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DVBIA makes this change of focus to crime and disorder prevention, explicit by stating in that "all other goals ... are subservient to the ultimate ambition of public safety and security" (DVBIA 2000b: 5). This change is also reflected in the adoption of 'broken windows'-style policing. In its 1996/97 Annual Report, the DVBIA acknowledges the influence of 'broken windows' on its crime prevention programs. Included is a discussion of a visit to Vancouver by George Kelling, sponsored by the Association: "this past spring, a powerful metaphor ['broken windows'] was impressed upon the minds of many prominent members of the business community, civic officials, police ... a philosophical message that became one of the highlights of the DVBIA's year" (DVBIA 1997)⁹.

Despite the fact that the Ambassadors program is clearly dedicated to crime and disorder prevention and its members are employed by a private security firm and are provincially licensed as security patrol, the DVBIA is careful not to characterize the Ambassadors program as a private security program but rather as a tourism and hospitality service. One subject spoke directly to this issue: "I think the Association's been careful not to conceptualize the Ambassadors program as a security force." It was also noted that police interviewees avoided referring to the Ambassadors as private security. One officer looked increasingly uncomfortable when the question of the Ambassadors as private security arose, and attempted to re-define their role by emphasizing the tourism aspects of their duties. This discomfort is likely due to the fact that the regulatory functions that the Ambassadors perform are embedded in a carefully marketed guise: that of the friendly tourist service. To openly contradict this guise is to call into question the functions that they serve in the public sphere and the role of the police and City Hall in facilitating those functions.

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Ambassadors are immediately recognizable to observers as a result of the vivid, distinguishing uniforms they wear and the trademark logo on their backs which reads in reflective white block letters: DOWNTOWN AMBASSADORS. They are garbed in varying uniforms of red and black. Differing styles of uniforms are related to differing functions and weather conditions. Ambassadors also carry radios for remote contact, notepads for recording observances, and first aid packs.

The primary advantage of this vivid clothing is its ability to stand out in a crowd. This benefits not only tourists and shopkeepers who may be seeking assistance, but is also intended to function as a crime deterrent. In the vernacular of 'broken windows', the clothing assists in signaling to would-be offenders that the space is being observed. As one police officer suggested, "as ugly as the uniform is, they are visible. And if you have a perception that somebody's watching, that affects behaviour."

Among the duties that Ambassadors are expected to perform is to be "eyes and ears' monitoring problems related to safety, security, cleanliness, graffiti, panhandling and illegal vending" (DVBIA 2000b: 5). The 'eyes and ears' concept is a recurring theme, although one that is employed cautiously. For instance, one senior officer initially responded to a question on ways in which public police work with private security by replying: "I've got a bunch of eyes and ears walking down Granville Street, in the DVBIA area, phoning the police when they see problems." However, he later reacted defensively to a question on whether Ambassadors may be at risk as a result of performing solo patrols at night in the downtown core. The response, spoken with noticeable exasperation, was: "This eyes and ears stuff seems to always creep to the front, but they're supposed to approach a tourist and offer them assistance."

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Aside from those duties that are directly related to crime prevention, the Ambassadors also engage in order maintenance activities by either demanding that those defined as the 'disorderly' – panhandlers, squeegees and other street persons - desist from certain behaviours, or by asking them to 'move along'. According to the DVBLA's own statistics they are particularly successful at this second task: in the period from May 15, 2000 – March 31, 2001, the Ambassadors had "6,911 interactions with street persons"¹⁰ ... achieving a 90 per cent compliance rate to 'move along' when requested" (DVBLA 2001a: 5). In 'broken windows' terms, such activities are seen as important because, as Wilson and Kelling (1982: 34) posit, there is a direct link between order maintenance in the form of 'managing panhandlers' and crime prevention: "the unchecked panhandler is, in effect, the first broken window." Thus, the presence of panhandlers signifies a neighbourhood with few social controls, one that will offer little resistance to would-be criminals (ibid.).

Part of the Ambassadors' mandate is to ensure that any such messages are countered, both through their physical presence and through actions directed at the 'disorderly'. For example, street youth and outreach workers informed me that Ambassadors, armed with the knowledge of the existence of the City's anti-panhandling by-law¹¹, and the right of property owners to remove people from their property, routinely tell panhandlers and street youth to move along. Property rights, for example, are enforced in dealing with panhandlers in public space who are touching a wall belonging to a property owner. This contact is used as justification to order them to move along. They also 'order' the 'disorderly' by telling panhandlers and others who are sitting on the street to stand up, or to remove their personal property from public sidewalks¹².

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The creeping nature of the Ambassadors mandate' is made obvious when one considers that these are activities more commonly seen as the responsibility of the public police¹³.

Some youth and community group members alleged that Ambassadors use force in order to move youth who are sleeping on sidewalks or behind buildings. They stated that Ambassadors kick youth them or use other means that they perceive to be assaultive. In discussing these allegations in general terms with a senior officer, he advised that the police and private security use their feet to tap people awake, and that this is done for safety reasons.

A number of subjects advised me that street people would be uncomfortable with complaining to the police about incidents of abuse by security guards. This is because they see the police as working cooperatively with guards, and do not feel that they can trust the police to act on their complaints. In an interview with a senior officer I raised this issue and the more general question of whether police informally keep watch over the activities of security guards within District One. This individual's response was:

Informally? I think we've actually had a formal eye on some of them. We've charged a number of security guards for excessive force. Assault. Three of them actually. Sorry, two and warned another one¹⁴.

While I have been stressing the crime and disorder prevention aspects of their mandate, the Ambassadors do serve in a multidimensional role. They also perform a number of duties related to 'tourism and hospitality'. Such duties include providing information to tourists, participating in safe walks, and assisting tourists and other visitors in a variety of ways. Such activities are undertaken in order to provide visitors with a positive image of the downtown core. To this end, Ambassadors are also responsible for assisting in the regulation of visible signs of physical decay and disorder. They do this

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through participation in a program called Best Foot Forward which involves Ambassadors and shopkeepers patrolling designated zones within the City and reporting graffiti and other forms of vandalism, posters on street furniture, overflowing garbage cans, problems with street lighting, and anything else that is seen to detract from an area's visual appeal. These reports are received by both the DVBIA, which monitors street cleanliness and order carefully, and by City Hall officials or private companies who are responsible for responding to the given problem. To ensure that Ambassadors are carrying out these patrols, they are armed with diester wands that they use to swipe on designated bar code readers throughout patrol zones. These readers advise the DVBIA as to whether patrols are being performed.

Granville Mall - the Loss Prevention Officers

To augment the work of both the Ambassadors and various retail loss prevention officers and other site security employed by member businesses within the downtown core, in 2000 the DVBIA also announced the formation of a completely new security enterprise: the Loss Prevention Officers program. This program consists of approximately six licensed security guards, also retained through Alliance Security, whose mandate is to target individuals committing crimes against private property.

What makes this program particularly unique is that it has resulted in the creation of a strange hybrid, with private and public functions embedded in the body of a privately controlled individual who actively works with the public police and other private security. In describing the successes of the program, the DVBIA (2001: 5) indirectly notes this hybrid nature: "151 individuals have been arrested for theft within the DVBIA

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area through joint co-operation, communication and partnership with police, member businesses and in-house and contract security personnel.”

LPOs perform many of the same functions as the classic store detective. As part of their daily activities, they perform covert surveillance on suspect individuals. However, in observing and trailing suspects, they are not bounded by the perimeter of a particular building or space, rather they work within the entire 90 blocks of the BID. According to one subject, “the concept is to provide a number of roving people on different shifts ... ”

Information on suspect persons is collected by LPOs and placed in reports, copies of which are forwarded to the DVBIA for ‘tracking purposes’. These reports require LPOs to provide a suspect’s name, known aliases, a full description (including hair, weight, height), notable features such as scarring or tattoos, and other notes which may include no-go information, dates of previous arrests, and so on. These reports are also supplemented with photographs of the individual that are often taken by LPOs who are armed with digital cameras for this purpose. However, photographs can come from other sources, including store video surveillance cameras and police mug shots¹⁵.

Walking the streets is a significant part of their work; this provides LPOs with the opportunity to spot known criminals or suspicious activity. One individual described this process as follows:

So, the guys are walking the street and they would say, ‘Hey, that’s John Doe. He’s an active booster. We could set up on him, and actually surveil [sic] him.’ And they’d follow him for a period and see if he went into a store. And so he would sit down ... and he would begin to line a shopping bag with tin foil. Then you know that the guy’s going into one of the stores. The tin foil is, of course, to

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beat the detectors. So we'd follow him and actually make an arrest.

Like the store detective who holds shoplifters and vandals for the police, the LPOs employ the citizen's power of arrest. Where this program differs from the more traditional model of private security, is that after an arrest is made the LPOs also fill out Crown reports¹⁶ for attending police officers¹⁷. The rationale for performing this task is simple: it engenders cooperation between the LPOs and public police members who may otherwise be unwilling to provide assistance to DVBIA private security. As one subject explained, "You don't want to make work for the police officer. You don't want to arrest somebody and turn him over, and nail the [officer] with three hours of paper."

Another significant difference is that LPOs will sometimes work in tandem with police¹⁸, or solo, on 'sting' operations in both public and private space. As one subject advised, "We'll have businesses come to us sometimes and say, 'Our parkade is being hit, so can you set up on it?' We'll go ahead and do it." An example of such a 'set up' is placing a truck in a parking lot and monitoring video feed obtained from discretely placed cameras in the target area. As one individual described it, "We'll park a truck in there and set up and see what happens."

While I have been focusing here on the differences between the LPO program and more traditional loss prevention programs, as based on the store detective model, it is important to note that the LPO program is also different from that of the Ambassadors. Unlike the Ambassadors who are visible deterrents and whose presence is intended to invoke feelings of security in space users, the LPOs work undercover and their actions are generally focused on dealing with known or suspected offenders rather than with the general public. This, coupled with the fact that much of their work is in the area of retail,

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office and auto-related theft, suggests that the presence of LPOs on the city's streets would have little or no effect on the overall aesthetics or dynamics of the space, and thus no effect on tourists and other space users. However, this is not the case.

Again, following Wilson and Kelling's ideas on 'fixing 'broken windows', the DVBI requires members in both of its security programs to perform activities centered on reducing signs of crime and disorder that may deter the consumer classes from using a space. To this end, while the LPOs are largely invisible to space users downtown, they do have an impact on the environment through their work on minimizing graffiti and vandalism. This is done through conducting surveillance on known vandals and monitoring areas where vandalism is like to occur in order to apprehend those whose activities damage property and detract from an area's aesthetics. Furthermore, while a significant portion of their work is directed at retail and office theft, LPOs also perform crime prevention services in the area of property offences that largely impact the consumer classes, such as bag snatchings and thefts from autos¹⁹. Thus, in order to protect tourists' and other consumers' experiences, LPOs routinely perform surveillance on individuals known to engage in these activities. Finally, one subject advised that the LPOs have received directives by the DVBI to assist the Ambassadors in 'controlling' panhandlers. This individual described the process of dealing with panhandlers as follows:

If a guy was aggressive, I had the okay from the police. We could phone the police and they would move in and take some of those who were aggressive out. If they were passive beggars, we could hand them out the information. Various agencies, food sources, that sort of thing.

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Gastown – The Gastown security patrol

The use of private security personnel to patrol public streets within Vancouver originated in Gastown in the early 1990s as a result of business concerns with security issues. These concerns can be traced back to the early days of the BIA's existence. Hartford (1993: 73), in his study of downtown revitalization programs, reveals that a former owner of a restaurant in the area told him that the owner's "main concern was the security problem and he gave up his involvement in the BIA when it became clear there simply was not a sufficient budget to address this problem."

Gastown's security patrol program utilizes the services of contract personnel from the Securiguard company. Securiguard employees, who work in shifts of two, patrol the 14 block area on foot, seven days a week. The guards are immediately recognizable in uniforms consisting of white shirts, and yellow jackets and black pants with reflective trim and stripes. Their visibility clearly serves a deterrent function. They carry radios for remote contact and note pads for documenting observations.

Gastown's private security patrols perform a number of tasks, including providing assistance to tourists and responding to calls for service from local businesses. Such calls can range from asking people to leave a premise, to holding shoplifters. In a statement that echoes the view of many within the policing profession, a police subject stated that, "Basically, the private security ... does all the stuff that the cops don't have time to do, and don't want to do." A scenario offered by this individual to illustrate the type of calls that guards may receive, also illustrates the linking of order with aesthetic concerns: "... you have somebody who comes into your store and they're reeking like a garbage can and they're talking to themselves and muttering. And they're obviously a junkie ... you

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want them out of your store because they're either going to shoplift or scare the tourists, or maybe get violent."

As the GBIS is also a supporter of 'broken windows' – they were also one of the sponsors of Kelling's visit to Vancouver - Gastown's guards spend a significant portion of their time preserving physical and symbolic forms of order and minimizing opportunities for disorder. As occurs on Granville Mall, GBIS guards approach one of the more visible signs of 'disorder' on the street – panhandlers. One subject described the means employed to move panhandlers along as follows: "We're trying to use persuasion and common sense and things like that." However, unlike the Ambassadors who have been observed moving panhandlers along by directing them to shelters or by simply standing in front of them (thus forcing panhandlers to 'choose' to move away from a site), Gastown security guards actively work to 'push' panhandlers and other street persons out of the area as a whole by using intimidation tactics. For example, guards will overtly follow individuals who arouse their suspicions in order to signal to the individual that they are being watched. They will continue following such individuals until they have left the BID. The technique is clearly intended as preventative in nature in that it provokes departure from the area rather than facilitating covert surveillance.

The guards, like the Ambassadors, also record observations in notebooks. The guards will follow suspected panhandlers or other 'suspicious persons' and take notes, or will stop these individuals to ask questions, recording responses in their notebooks. This practice prompted some discussion with respondents who had been the subject of guards' notes. It is evident in speaking to these people that they experienced this note-taking as a form of intimidation²⁰:

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Question: What do you think the purpose of the note-taking is?

Answer1 : I think [the guard] wants me out of this part of town.

Answer2: I think that taking the notes would be 'look, we've got a file on you and you'd better be careful. You'd better watch out, I can take notes. I can put it in a database and we know all about you.

Like the LPOs, Gastown guards also photograph individuals who have been caught shoplifting, an activity that is performed with the full knowledge and cooperation of local police. These pictures are then posted in businesses within the GBIS district. One individual who had been caught shoplifting recently in Gastown spoke about the experience:

Question: Has a guard or a policeman ever taken your picture?

Answer: Actually one of the security took my picture here.

Question : How was that done? Did they walk up and take a Polaroid? ...

Answer: Right in front of everyone they took a picture of me.

Question: Were you asked for your permission or they just did it?

Answer: No permission. Just taking your picture is what they told me.

Question: And did the policeman watch them take your picture?

Answer: Yep.

Question: Did you find it unusual that they would want to take your picture?

Answer: They wanted to take my picture so they could put it on every

store on Water Street. That's what I heard.

Question: Did you hear that from them or ...?

Answer: The police officer.

One of the questions posed to police personnel in and around the Gastown area concerned the extent to which public police perform formal or informal supervision of the guards and their activities while on the street. One respondent answered: "I know that [police officers] watch the security very closely ... They can watch the security guards and say, 'You know what, you really should not be going up and saying ... mouthing off to this guy because ... he just got out of prison for assault. So you want to be careful yourself.'" This protectiveness towards the guards is also manifest in other, more

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unsettling, ways. While walking through Gastown on my way to a meeting, I observed a security guard watching as a police officer yelled at a local street person. The officer was advising the man that "he [pointing to the guard] works with me", thus indicating that the man was to offer the guard respect because of his professional association with a 'real cop.' This was an important scene to witness. As Wilson and Kelling (1982: 38) note, the mere presence of private security is not always sufficient to control or deter someone who is "challenging community standards" because private security lack the "aura of authority necessary to perform this difficult task". Because of this, it is often necessary that the 'real' police are seen to be openly supportive of private security.

In relation to Wilson and Kelling's (1982) comment that private security lack the authority of police, it is worth noting that security guards in the sites studied frequently behave like public police officers as a means of conferring the benefits of an association with legitimate authority upon themselves. For example, security guards often carry themselves in a similar manner to the public police: brisk, erect, and confident, sometimes to the point of arrogance or aggressiveness. One local resident, referring to a Gastown security guard, stated: "She's a problem. She's very proud that she gets to wear a uniform ... [to] parade around."

Guards may also employ the clipped tones of the police officer, and have indeed been trained to punctuate their speech with policing terms. As one subject noted, some guards consciously refer to themselves as 'officers', which is not only "an attempt at authority ... [but] indicative of the way they think of themselves." Their note-taking, which occurs in public and often in the presence of the individual who is forming the basis of the record, can certainly be seen as akin to the reporting and paperwork filing of

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the police patrol officer, as well as a mechanism for power and control. Both the security guard and the suspect understand that such records may be evidence in a potential prosecution.

Guards acting like public police is behaviour that the BIAs derive benefits from. For example, as a result of taking on the role of 'law enforcement', the guards may become more willing to engage in actions which maintain the BIA's view of what constitutes public order, because preserving social order is a mandate of the public police whom they seek to emulate. This can translate into guards removing undesirable individuals from public spaces by asking someone to 'move on', stating that it is 'against the law' to be in a particular space when it is not, physically escorting someone, and in extreme cases issuing threats of violence and engaging in physical assaults.²¹

Another, more obvious benefit to the BIAs is that the guards' overt presence serves to deter undesirable elements who detract from the area's physical charms and lead to perceptions of crime. As one area worker suggested, "if there's a lot of people who could be a problem, they see the security guards and think okay, I'd better not do anything or these guys are going to come after me with their walkie-talkies."

For the police, aside from the crime deterrent value that the physical presence of security guards in public may have, the primary benefit they receive comes from the willingness of guards to perform 'dirty work' (Hughes 1971). Typically dirty work includes rousting vagrants from private property and dealing with 'petty crimes' such as shoplifting, although one guard did advise that police informally ask guards to enforce a provision of the panhandling by-law that is no longer in effect. Thus, guards continue to tell panhandlers and other street people that they must stand up. In the case of the Loss

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Prevention Officers, dirty work also encompasses 'tedious work' such as the filling out of Crown reports and the gathering of basic information to expedite charging and to reduce the paperwork of the attending police officer.

Sharing the job of crime prevention

The DVBIA, as its newsletters make clear, has directed extensive energies at developing mutually cooperative relationships with the public police. The result has been the development of both formal and informal processes of information sharing between the private and public sectors.

Operation Cooperation began in 1991 as a result of a meeting between senior members of the Vancouver Police Department and representatives of private security working within the downtown core. These two groups met to discuss ways in which the public and private sectors could work cooperatively on crime prevention issues (VPD 2000c). Operation Cooperation is coordinated through the Waterfront CPC, with members meeting monthly to discuss relevant issues such as: "improving the working relationship with the Vancouver Police Department; Police/Security evaluation discussions; theft from autos, office theft, shoplifting; vagrants/panhandlers, [and] emergency procedures" (VPD 2000c). As one security company representative advised, the most common problems that Operation Cooperation members face are "graffiti and property damage", followed by thefts from offices and autos. However, the stated rationale for this program is contained in a pamphlet obtained from the Waterfront CPC, which makes the link between entertainment, retail economics and anti-crime and disorder measures explicit:

Tourism employs 72,000 jobs in Greater Vancouver and contributes more than \$2.5 billion into the local economy.

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By getting involved and utilizing this resource group, it will maintain the safety and stability of the area (VPD 2000c).

The CAPP paging program grew out of Operation Cooperation. A subscriber to the paging service fills out a report sheet that asks for specific information to be relayed through the paging network. The subscriber calls the Dispatch Centre and provides the information to be transmitted. The message is then broadcast in text to all pager holders in a specified call group (VPD 2000d). Messages are also sent by the police to subscriber businesses. All CAPP messages are subsequently stored and archived (VPD 2000d).

According to the Vancouver Police Department (2000c), "selective [sic] police & security officers carry pagers from the Operation Cooperation network, providing timely suspect description and pertinent information directly to the officers." It is also described as being "an information exchange between police, private security and Business" (VPD 2000c). At present, there are approximately 60 pagers carried by VPD officers²². Other CAPP members include the DVBCA, the City, the Vancouver Hotel Association, and the Retail Loss Prevention Association (VPD 2000d).

The CAPP program and Dispatch Centre are not part of the E-comm 9-1-1 system, but are instead supported by TeleLink Paging Network. Subscribers pay fees to join the service and are provided with a pager, manual, and access to the service. TeleLink (2000) advertises that businesses that participate will "have a direct link to the police and other businesses by a central Pager Dispatch Centre." This enables businesses to inform the police, and each other, about "a crime or suspicious activity" (TeleLink 2000). The type of activities which TeleLink suggests warrant a paging alert include armed robbery, stolen credit cards and fraudulent cheques, shoplifting, auto-related thefts, property theft, missing persons, vandalism and mischief, other non-violent crimes, and

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suspicious persons. Internal police department records (VPD 2000e) obtained through a Freedom of Information request reveal the nature of some of the dispatches sent over the pager system:

DISPATCH [information deleted]. Aggressive mentally insatiable [sic] male violent, 35+ yrs, 5'10", 150-160 lbs, collar length brn hair, pale skin, beard & moustache smells, gray jeans and off gray suede jacket, brn cowboy.

DISPATCH [information deleted]. Panhandling, Male, 45 yrs., 5'9" tall, 160 lbs., collar length white hair, Caucasian skin, White moustache and white beard about chest length, Bagpipes., Blue hat, green checked Scottish outfit.

Other similar entries suggest that the bulk of the transmissions have more to do with order maintenance issues relevant to member businesses, than actual crime prevention or public policing matters.

While the CAPP program may give member businesses the appearance that they are 'connected' to the police, this is a false image. Officers are not required to respond to a page and may seldom do so. In relation to actual crime prevention benefits, it would appear that the police actually have little practical use for the pager. As one police subject from outside of District One stated: "It sounds, no offence, kind of dorky ... [officers are] listening to radios, and their own cell phones, and their own pagers. I mean, how many modes of light communication do you really need?" The efficacy of the program in relation to increasing arrests is also doubtful. During the course of an interview with an officer who supports the pager program, he was asked for the number of arrests that have resulted from its use. He replied that there had been several, but when pressed could cite only one instance.

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A possible explanation for police involvement in a program which would seem to net them little benefit in the way of actual crime prevention, is that the paging program has a particular symbolic purpose. As was the case in Saunders' (1999) study of community policing in Boston, this program is about producing appearances that signal community involvement. In effect, the pagers say to the business community 'we are here for you, we listen to you, we value you', although this is belied by the fact that officers can and do ignore the messages they receive.

For the DVBIA, cooperative relations with the public police in programs like CAPP can be used to demonstrate to its membership that the Association is actively addressing the crime and safety issues that always seem to be at the forefront of retailers' concerns. Furthermore, messages found in its literature, such as "the DVBIA prides itself on an effective working relationship with Vancouver Police" (DVBIA 2000d), assists in conferring legitimacy and status on the DVBIA's crime prevention efforts.

While formal programs such as Operation Cooperation provide avenues through which police and private security concerns can share information and relay problems that are occurring downtown, information sharing also takes place at an informal level. Previously I mentioned that the LPOs actively work with the public police, to a lesser extent this is also true of the Ambassadors. This 'working together' often takes the form of reciprocal information sharing between the DVBIA and its program members and the public police.

For example, DVBIA staff records and analyzes incidents of crime and vandalism in their district, and information concerning possible trends is routinely passed along. The LPOs also share with and receive information from members of the property crimes unit

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of the Vancouver Police department. As one subject advised, when the program first began "[the property crimes unit] assisted us with identifying booster groups". Not all information provided is specifically in relation to identifying crime or criminals; the LPOs have also been provided with training by members of the public police in areas such as conducting surveillance.

Information sharing is fostered by the prior existence of, or the development of interpersonal relations between members of the DVBI and the public police. This developing of ties is a deliberate process, as one individual makes clear: "We met daily with [the police] ... [we] made sure that the guys knew each other, and as I say, they worked together a couple of times so if they did see somebody or they had something going on, they knew who to contact."

As previously noted, in some cases bonds are fostered as a result of awareness by police officers that private security can provide assistance in performing tasks that the police do not have time or other resources to deal with. A subject made this clear during a discussion of the LPO program:

I think it was the frontline officers that we were a little bit more concerned about. But I think that the program and the individuals who did the programs proved that they were professionals that belong in this together, in partnerships. Now the information exchange and intelligence exchange has been nothing but awesome. [The police] come to [the LPOs] and say, 'Hey we are looking for so and so, if you see so and so contact us.' Or they might say, 'So and so is active in this area or doing this. Keep an eye out for so and so.' And we do the same thing. We say, 'So and so has been seen going into this business. He seems to be going in with product, coming out with nothing. We believe that that business might be buying stolen property.'

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In Gastown, information sharing occurs between the police and the GBIS security guards through routine contact rather than through formal mechanisms. As one police subject stated: "... we have security, and the security, like I've said, really liaises and works very closely with the constables if they're on duty ..."

While it does not appear that the GBIS has made formal attempts to become involved in the provision of crime prevention services outside of their security patrol program, local businesses in Gastown have privately funded a police deployment centre in the neighbourhood (VPD 2000a). What makes the Carrall Street site even more remarkable is its close proximity to four community policing centres²³ and the Department's headquarters on Main Street. According to the notes of one officer, obtained through a Freedom of Information request, the justification for another police office in this area was that the centre "will bring the police officers much closer to the community and will enable the police to get ahead of problems ..." (VPD 2000). Yet, as another memo makes clear: "the public will not be invited ... There will be no volunteers, no community programs, and no public meetings in the premises" (VPD 2000). Another stated purpose of the site is that it will be "where members can write reports, have a cup of coffee, meet to discuss operational beat issues, or use a washroom" (VPD 2000). The Centre "will also provide a central location for coordinated enforcement activities to operate" (VPD 2000). However, the deployment centre may have yet another use: "[i]t will also provide space and resources for both Chinatown and Gastown security to Liaise [sic] and cooperate with police working the area" (VPD 2000). To this end, "[b]oth Chinatown and Gastown Security will be encouraged to use this facility" (VPD 2000).

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Confirmation as to whether private security use this space was difficult to obtain. When the issue was raised with a senior officer, the response was: "I don't think so. I could be wrong there, but I'm not aware of that ... We try to have a very good relationship with all the security companies that work within all our areas ... the deployment centre, I'm not sure that they have access to that because we have police stuff in there." A member of a community group stated that GBIS security guards have been seen entering the building on multiple occasions.

At first glance the centre would seem to serve little practical purpose from a community crime prevention standpoint. Its location is not well marked, the blinds are drawn, and the police seldom, if ever, linger outside the doors. As one area resident suggested, "[It] doesn't make a lot of sense to me ... I think it's just a token gesture."

The deployment centre is, however, not just a token gesture, rather it serves at least two specific purposes. First, for the business community it is a means by which they can exert pressure on the police to use the facility in a way that justifies their expenditure. The contents of an internal memo obtained by the police department (VPD 2000a) make this evident. The memo discusses a complaint by a local business owner that the deployment centre is having little effect in curbing neighbourhood drug trafficking. The recipient of the memo is advised to work on "developing some enforcement 'High Profile' programs to work out of that centre" (ibid.).

Furthermore, the centre itself and its design are symbolic, and the messages sent are of benefit to the police. This is evidenced by a small old-fashioned glass globe marked with the word POLICE over the centre's entrance. This globe is interesting for two reasons. First, it deliberately evokes an association with Robert Peel's 1829 London

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bobbies and the first rise of community policing. Second, it is intended to fit in with the heritage character of the Gastown site. Thus, this adornment, like the CAPP pager program, is intended to produce the appearance of community involvement.

Summing up

In this chapter I have looked at both public and private policing programs in Gastown and Granville Mall. Examining programs such as the Downtown Ambassadors, the Loss Prevention Officers, the Gastown Security patrols, and Operation Cooperation, reveals some of the means by which the private sector has become involved in policing and how this involvement is changing the division of labour between police and private security. For example, retail interests now fund private services to patrol and do routine surveillance and order maintenance tasks in public spaces – activities formerly associated with the public police role. Public police also now work more closely with private security, sharing information and providing support. Finally, both public and private are increasingly directing resources at both the regulation of signs of disorder and the installation or preservation of symbols that convey messages that are beneficial to their interests, or those who employ them.

Chapter IV – Institutional and community support for the new policing practices

In the previous chapter I introduced some of the new policing practices that are occurring in Vancouver's urban entertainment destinations. In the sections that follow, I briefly look at an aspect of the 'broken windows' philosophy and its relationship to support for, and resistance to, these practices. I also discuss how the BIAs use policing as a means of reconciling competing internal and external visions of Granville Mall and Gastown.

Supporting private sector policing initiatives

I have previously noted that public 'civility' is a recurring theme found in much of the literature of 'broken windows'. The essence of this theme which, when coupled with rhetoric on public safety and conceptions of public good becomes the discourse of 'broken windows', are perhaps best explained by Ellickson (1996). For Ellickson (ibid.: 1179) 'reclaiming' public space is central to fulfilling a variety of needs of urban communities. For example, "open-access public spaces are precious because they enable city residents to move about and engage in recreation and face-to-face communication" (ibid.: 1179). Ellickson (ibid.: 1188) thus sees BIAs and other 'third-party' sources of order as enforcing formal and informal rules of "proper street behavior", activities that permit the flow of speech which might otherwise be curtailed by "disruptive forces" (ibid.).

What Ellickson and other proponents of 'broken windows' policing are actually advocating is the reproduction of class-based distinctions in the form of a conception of a public good/ideal republic that is intricately tied to retail economics, commercialization, and pro-consumption messages. This conception of the ideal public life as a series of

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'consumer lifestyles' can be seen in multiple places, but I will limit myself to noting three. First, Ellickson (1996) makes the prioritization of consumer lifestyles explicit when he discusses public disorder as "the tragedy of the agora" (*agora* being the Greek word for marketplace). Second, pro-civility advocates generally urge the reclaiming of public spaces from the disorderly, who are portrayed as limiting the potential for expression and exchange in these spaces (Ellickson 1996; Kelling and Coles 1996). When one looks at the spaces from which the 'disorderly' are being removed, it is apparent that these are urban centres where expression is becoming increasingly exclusive to commercial speech²⁴. Third, retail economics and community well-being are typically linked by supporters of BIA policing.

That Vancouver City Council actively supports the BIA process is apparent not only from their willingness to listen to the BIAs, but moreover in the changes that they have made in order to streamline the BIA approval process. The effect of this streamlining is to encourage BIA formations within the City.

One municipal worker informed me that Council's support for the BIA process is predicated on the belief that BIAs make "the city more healthy economically, more healthy in terms of helping the community". According to this individual, a "healthy community has a healthy business district. A healthy community means that people can go and *shop* and do other things inside their community". A healthy community is also one that does not "attract crime." In short, by supporting the BIAs and their area improvement and order maintenance efforts, Council believes that it is facilitating means by which crime can be reduced and communities can be made economically viable - at little cost to the City. Indeed, at the recent opening of the Carrall Street deployment

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centre, the City's Mayor, Phillip Owen, stated that he hoped the new centre would result in increased collaborations on similar projects by the private sector and public police because "This is what's happening in the world ... It's the right way to go" (McCune 1999: A39). While Owen did not expand on why he perceives such measures as being 'the right way to go', it is clear that 'collaborations' like the deployment centre offer support for Garland's (1996) 'responsibilization' thesis, and that it is the use of private funds to support public services that is a significant factor behind Mayor Owen's approval.

Police officers interviewed generally supported the BIAs and their willingness to fund policing programs and/or private crime prevention initiatives. This support was particularly evident among department management. For example, the contents of an internal VPD memo on the CAPP pager program, written by a department manager, reveals this individual's views on the benefits of supporting public-private policing relationships: "I remain convinced that this is the way to go, linking security and police for a common community interest." An interview with a senior officer revealed a similar attitude. This person advised, "I am prepared to work with anybody in that area that wants to engage in a real partnership."

In relation to the question of how members of the rank and file view private security, those interviewed tended to see the presence of private security as providing benefits for the police. During interviews it became apparent that support for private security and public-private partnerships is likely due to the fact that private security alleviate police from some forms of lower level duties, or 'dirty work'. One officer discussed this in relation to community policing, a program which she depicted as

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providing means by which the police can divest themselves of some of the responsibility for dealing with nuisance issues. Private security is part of this solution because it enables property owners to direct service calls over nuisance issues to security rather than to the police.

Some officers who support redevelopment of urban areas see private security patrols and the work of the BIAs as beneficial in assisting this process. As one officer stated, "We look around at the decay and the disorder and we wish we could fix it and make it a nice place to live. And the idea with 'broken windows', and dealing with it from the ground level up instead of the reverse, I like it." Then, in a comment indicative of the tendency of proponents of 'broken windows' to equate order with commercialization, this officer proceeded to tell me his vision of a re-developed space within the Downtown Eastside (an area of which Gastown is part of): "a Starbucks on the corner and maybe some secretaries on these benches having lunches, feeding birds." Unfortunately, the majority of inhabitants of this area cannot afford the \$3.00 for a cup of coffee.

The civility discourse also comes through in the comments of business owners and business representatives. For example, one representative of the business community illustrated the success of security-based programs in the downtown area by noting that the number of 'squeegees' has been substantially reduced, and stated that "we look at victories where we've sort of taken back the public realm from individuals [such as squeegees] who were creating havoc." A business owner, in giving support to the DVBlA's crime prevention efforts, made the link between retail economics and the Ambassadors program: "I think the Ambassadors do a good job in that it's nice to have

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people who have their eyes focused on the street. And it's nice having them be able to help people. We've had a lot more tourism this year, so the economy is coming back ... [the Ambassadors] help."

The majority of non-business individuals interviewed were unaware of specific programs of the BIAs aside from the security patrols. Of those who discussed the DVBIA patrols, several saw the program as a positive development. One street vendor related a story in which a local lady - 'a street person' - had her stolen handbag retrieved from a dumpster by three Ambassadors. In describing their actions, the vendor repeatedly stressed their "effectiveness". An outreach worker, who was somewhat critical of aspects of the Ambassadors program, spoke of why she was not wholly opposed to the program. She spoke of witnessing an Ambassador escorting an individual to a detox facility in the Downtown Eastside at night. This episode convinced the worker that "It's not all about 'you can't pan here'. There are some of them that are helping people in a good way."

In relation to Gastown's security patrols, one business representative advised that the area's merchants were supportive of the program because it made them feel safer in their stores. In providing another reason for why such programs are perceived to be necessary by property owners and merchants, this individual also advised that there was empty retail space on Water Street and attributed this to what he perceived to be a deterioration in public civility in this neighbourhood:

What you see is the downward spiral. The businesses move out ... And this is all due to this kind of behaviour that has been allowed, and the bureaucrats dictating to us about what is and is not allowed and should be acceptable in our neighbourhood. And I'm saying, no. There should be no difference. I don't care if you're in Kerrisdale²⁵ or you're on Water Street. Why does the code of behaviour have to

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change? The people aren't behaving like this because they're poor.

It is worth noting that it was difficult to locate individuals outside of GBIS members who hold favourable views of its security patrol program. In part, this is because of the nature of the program and what it represents to many within the community: the guards symbolize the socio-economic disparity of the neighbourhood and the creeping nature of gentrification. However, I did locate a representative of a community group who advised that some elderly people feel safer due to the presence of the guards.

Areas of tension and/or resistance

Security guard: "I feel that police ... they think that they are more over us, you know."

Senior officer: "Getting police officers to accept [working with private security] is difficult".

It was apparent from speaking to different sources that, while many police officers accept the presence of private security and are willing to work with them in a limited capacity, not all officers hold private security guards in high esteem. Of those interviewed, some viewed private security guards as a form of nuisance. This was first raised by a non-police subject who has had extensive contacts with the police in District Two:

We've always raised our concerns about ... private security guards, and the police are sort of keeping their head down. They've tried to stay out of the politics ... But on the Q-T some of them have actually told us that 'this is really a problem and they tend to actually cause more trouble' - the security guards tend to cause more trouble than they actually alleviate.

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A police officer subsequently confirmed that private security create problems for police as a result of their mistreatment of members of the public. According to this individual, "we deal with a lot of victims that become victims because of dealings they've had with private security people, and they've been negative dealings."

Police subjects were generally concerned about a lack of appropriate training for guards on patrol. This training deficiency was perceived as posing a threat to the safety and rights of the public. As one officer expressed it, "...you always hear of this about the police, but certainly I think that from private police you'll find with more frequency you get more people that complain that their rights have been violated." Another officer noted that guards lack an "awareness of a person's rights ... different municipal by-laws or provincial statutes, federal laws, [and the] Criminal Code."

The subject of private and private-public cooperative policing programs is one on which the communities studied are divided. Some members of community groups approve of these programs or, perhaps more accurately, do not view themselves as being opposed to aspects of these programs (such as the outreach worker who applauded an Ambassador for taking an individual to detox). Other groups, however, are in total opposition to private security performing public patrol.

Of the latter, some view the presence of private security in public as part of a general 'poor bashing' trend, one with disturbing implications. According to this perception, security patrol programs are equivalent to privately owned occupation forces. Security is seen as the arm of businesses that are not above using coercion as a means of imposing an identity on a space that is beneficial for business, but is also at odds with the community's present and historical reality. The idea of using guards to protect a site and

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its image for the benefit of businesses and shoppers is viewed as offensive to traditional notions of public space and community. The concerns this raises are brought into focus by a member of a local community group:

The idea of putting security guards out in order to make the place feel safer for shoppers implies that the public spaces, the streets, are circulation areas between the private spaces - the businesses - [and] are valuable only insofar as they serve to channel people into private businesses ... many people have a weightier view of public space than that ...

The issue of a lack of public accountability for private guards on public patrol was raised by several community group members who expressed concern about the potential for civil rights abuses. As was noted by one subject, the governing legislation - the *Private Investigators and Security Agencies Act* (1992) - contains no reference to their use in public. This is viewed as problematic because, without appropriate enforcement mechanisms built into the Act, infringements by guards on the rights of citizens go largely unanswered, or are dealt with solely as private disciplinary matters²⁶. It is worth noting that a number of residents of Gastown, in discussing both the BIA's previous and present security patrol companies, spoke of harassment of street people and other members of the urban poor as an ongoing concern. As one community group member stated, "I just hear of really rough treatment of some of our folks [in Gastown] ... I think basically [the guards are] there as a thuggish presence."

Another criticism directed at security guards in general is in relation to their style of uniforms. One subject suggested that militaristic uniforms, coupled with the affectations that guards often adopt, may confuse or mislead people into believing that guards are police officers. The supposed effect of this would be to render it more likely that people will mistakenly obey a guard's direction. However, individuals who spoke on

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this subject stated that they were easily able to distinguish between security guards and police officers. In particular, subjects were aware that private security guards, unlike public police, have no more legal right to enforce public laws than other citizens. While street youth sometimes referred to police scornfully as “pigs”, they recognized that police hold a legitimate state-sanctioned form of authority, compared to Ambassadors who were variously described by youth as “snitches”, “street rats” and “bitches”²⁷. This recognition of the difference in powers leads to small acts of resistance. Both street youth and outreach workers described how kids would disobey Ambassadors’ directions to ‘move along’ by sitting down as soon as an Ambassador’s back was turned. Other individuals, when told to move along because they are violating property rights by leaning on a privately owned wall, will sometimes respond by removing their body from the wall, but otherwise remain in place.

I spoke with two business owners/managers who are opposed to the Gastown patrols, and one who is opposed to specific aspects of the behaviour of the guards. Essentially, these individuals raised many of the concerns previously noted.

Gastown workers interviewed about the security program were either ambivalent or expressed opposition. One employee of a local business, when asked if he would ever use the services of the GBIS’ security patrols, stated that he routinely chooses to deal with conflicts on his own because he feels that the guards are too confrontational.

In relation to the Ambassadors program, a community group member who is also a long-time resident of the Granville area, informed me that “... I know the owners of a couple of businesses that don’t support [the Ambassadors] at all. They don’t approve of what they’re doing, they don’t approve of their tactics ...” One business owner, while in

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the main supportive of the Ambassadors' work, exposed his concern over the philosophy underpinning the program in response to a question as to whether he would be willing to participate in citizen crime-prevention patrols:

No, I wouldn't do that ... Maybe if we're dealing with Sarajevo outside or Herzegovina. I mean come on here, it's just a bunch of panhandlers and a bunch of kids ... If that's the world you want, you should privatize it and hire security guards ...

Balancing competing future visions – the problem of market segmentation

Competing views of the sites studied, and the role of policing within them, also arise as a direct result of street-level market forces. Retailers and service providers increasingly target their products and services to specially created aggregates within the marketplace (Turow 1997). These aggregates are described as the products of advertisers and corporations that create 'lifestyle' or 'niche' sub-markets based on a variety of demographic characteristics that are seen to be more closely associated with the image that corporations wish to project for their product (Turow 1997). While there have been a number of analyses of market segmentation as it relates to the marketing of products to large-scale audiences through mass communication (Turow 1997; Slater 1997), what has been neglected is the role that the technology of market segmentation plays in shaping smaller-scale market venues such as specialized shopping districts. Indeed, we are increasingly seeing a 'market segmentation of the street', as local street-level retailers (BIAs) organize their attempts to draw customers who fit desired demographics.

'Lifestyles' are not simply abstractions created at the whim of advertisers, as Turow (ibid.) seems to suggest, but very real divisions that can have a significant impact on urban streetscapes. This point was raised during an interview with a local

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businessperson when the discussion turned to tensions that exist along Granville Mall due to competing visions among retailers of what the site should look like, and what purposes it should ultimately serve. The Entertainment District (TED) concept, which is in the process of being implemented along Granville Mall, is about nightlife. It is about concentrating the number of liquor license seats in the area to a few blocks within the downtown core, and increasing the number and diversity of bars and cabarets available to serve patrons who are seeking an 'experience.' For this reason, its proponents seek to attract a younger, hipper, 'edgier' type of customer, one who will be drawn to the clubs and bars, as well as to the funky clothes stores, tattoo parlours and body-piercing boutiques that litter the Mall. These stores fit nicely into a vision of homogenized counter-culture that can be packaged and sold to those seeking 'risk-less risk'. Therefore, in a perverse way, the envisioned 'edginess' of the TED space would seem to be enhanced through the presence, within 'tolerable' limits, of the street's youth. Their being in the space, in conjunction with the prophylactic presence of police and security, adds an authentic touch to the 'slumming' experience while allowing space users to also feel a measure of safety and security. However, when individuals are seen to cross the boundary as to what is considered acceptable behaviour in public space by, for example, displaying signs of active addiction or being in a particularly 'shabby' or unkempt state, then pressure is brought to bear on them to move along as their presence then begins to detract from the 'experience'.

Not all site operators on Granville fit within the TED concept, and the markets they cater to reflect widely divergent tastes. For example, businesses on the Mall run the gamut from sex shops to family hotels, from nightclubs to the Vancouver Symphony.

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This mix draws disparate consumers, each with their own personal comfort level. In the long run some businesses may be forced to re-locate as their 'up market' clientele or 'family values' goods and services become increasingly incompatible with the 'down market' clientele that TED sponsors will attract. This is an important point because, although my primary focus here is on how the imposition of a marketable 'identity' on an urban neighbourhood can create divisions between residents and businesses, this process can also foster divisions among retailers and other business interests.

At present, attempts are being made to balance competing market needs and interests as much as is possible. For example, the Orpheum Theatre has moved its front entrance from Granville Street, so that symphony patrons may now enter on Smithe²⁸ Street and avoid Granville's club-goers and panhandlers. Another problem facing merchants on the street has been the over-representation of sex shops, which are apparently a little too 'edgy' for homogenized TED (Aird 1994). In order to reduce this glut of sex shops, the City has pledged to use strategies involving licensing and municipal by-laws (Bula 1995; Ivens 1995).

Policing remains the primary method used on Granville Mall to bridge divisions that have arisen due to the competing demands of a segmented market space. As a local businessperson advised, "we find that people ... that like going to the Orpheum, to the VSO, they don't like the street. The only way that we can make them feel more comfortable is to have a physical presence on the street. Police. The Downtown Ambassadors." The importance of policing to area businesses in terms of managing the transition from what the street is now, to what it could be under the TED concept, cannot be overstated. Again, comments by this businessperson make this clear:

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... we're going to have entertainment businesses that are going to attract a different type of crowd ... But at some point we have to find a balance ... we have to have a police presence. You have to have Ambassadors doing patrols. You have to try to minimize, again, unruly behaviour. I think that by just having a mere presence of the Ambassadors and the police that does sort of say ... people can have fun but within confines. And if something does get out of those confines there's action that's taken to take it under control. Panhandlers ... they can be on the street if they want to be, but they have to be within the by-law. They can't be aggressive. They can't bother people. Everyone's allowed on the street. We have no right to force people off the street. But at the same time property rights have to be respected ... So it's going to be achieving that delicate balance between all the different users ...

Gastown stands in sharp contrast to Granville Mall, in that there is seen to be less reason for concern among the businesses about balancing space to meet the needs of differing market 'lifestyles'. This is primarily because of the uniform nature of the businesses in the area. While there are a number of artists and dot.com companies present, Gastown operates principally to service day tourists. Many of these tourists disembark from cruise ship terminals seeking 'experience' in the form of a pleasant visit to the historically picturesque sites offered in guidebooks. Their needs and desires are different from those who patronize the Mall; 'risk-less risk' is not part of the desired experience.

Tensions in Gastown are between long-time lower income residents, and the community groups who serve them, and area retailers. This is because within Gastown 'disorder' is commonly represented in the form of the lower income community resident whose presence and activities in public space may be considered unsightly by tourists. Since business owners appear to agree on a common desire to create and maintain Gastown as a completely 'risk-less' environment for tourists, therefore, unlike businesses

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along the Mall which seem to have a *marginally* higher tolerance for the presence of 'disorder', the efforts of Gastown's security patrols are directed almost exclusively at ensuring that persons or things which project 'disorder', 'crime', 'danger', or anything 'unpleasant' to consumers are completely excluded from the site. In this fashion, those who are usually constituted as 'insiders' (community residents) become 'outsiders' in their own neighbourhoods, whereas traditional 'outsiders' (tourists and other visitors) become 'insiders' whose presence is desirable because they have the means to consume the products and services that the site's businesses offer.

However, given the dynamics of the neighbourhood, and its history and geography, recreating Gastown as a pristine fantasy city completely free of crime-related risk and disorder in order to promote tourism is an impossible task. There are practical limits to what the GBIS and its patrols can do. These limits are set not only in terms of available money and resources that can be directed toward 'solving the problem', but also arise when consideration is given to what the net effect of increased policing would have on the space. As one representative of a security company noted, "you can't put the guards all up and down there to protect the tourists ... it just starts to look like a police state then."

Summing up

In this chapter I examined the views of various groups about the use of private security in public. Support for, and resistance to, private policing varies substantially. In some cases, support is predicated on the view that the presence of security is good for business, and therefore good for the community. However, the majority express concerns

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about issues of mistreatment by guards, lack of public accountability by security firms, privatization of public space, and lack of adequate training for guards.

The issue of market segmentation and the role that this process plays in creating demands for policing was also addressed. In order to make the TED concept viable, with its reliance on multiple forms of entertainment on Granville Mall, businesses must not only attract clienteles from differing market segments, but must also ensure that conflicts between competing interests are minimized. To do so, the BIA relies on the presence of the Ambassadors, while continuing to place demands on the public police for more resources. Gastown's BIA, on the other hand, utilizes the services of private security to manage tensions that the presence of 'outsiders' – in the form of the area's panhandlers, addicts and the mentally ill – produces, in order to minimize the effects on tourism.

Chapter V – Retail policing in fantasy city

To this point, I have been looking at a number of larger issues in connection with Gastown and Granville Mall that I have treated separately, including the changing nature of urban policing, urban redevelopment and the goals of businesses and redevelopers, and the views of those that use the spaces studied. In the sections that follow I will put these themes together in order to both present a more complete picture of these 'fantasy cities'. I will also advance three arguments. First, that the primary concern of urban entertainment destination operators is control of the image that their spaces project. Second, that much of the policing occurring in Vancouver's urban entertainment destinations is not a response to actual crime, but is more properly thought of as related to this task of image management. Third, that the preoccupation of retailers and consumers with image is linked to market forces and specific aspects of consumer culture. Image and profits are entwined.

Spotting fakes

One of the more interesting stories in Gastown is the steam clock on Water Street, built in 1977 to replicate a 1875 design. Its claim to fame is that on the quarter hour it blasts puffs of air to the tune of Westminster chimes, providing endless amusement to the crowds that gather around to take its picture.

It is a fake. It is powered by electricity, although a rather cunning design gives it the appearance of being steam powered. The majority of tourists, and even some locals, are fooled by its appearance. Somehow it seems appropriate that the clock stands as a symbol of Gastown. As a 'genuine reproduction' it not only falsely conjures historical associations to a past that never quite existed in as genteel a fashion as the clock suggests,

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but it also represents a present that is equally contrived. Gastown is postmodern redevelopment – a pastiche of fake historicism, crass commercialism and chocolate box appeal.

Granville Mall, which is itself undergoing redevelopment, is clearly in danger of similarly becoming transmogrified. While terms such as 'fake' and 'contrived' are used to describe the urban entertainment landscape of Vancouver, it is important to remember that fantasy city *is* deception. These sites deceive people into believing that their feelings of nostalgia, their need to be entertained, their desire for 'otherness' or for the exotic, is, or can be, fulfilled by a few hours of consumerism disguised as legitimate 'experience'. The deception is perpetrated through the imposition of an 'identity' on a space, and through the use of marketable 'images' associated with that identity which are produced for consumption and are not ultimately 'real' products. And, to be clear, this deception is perpetrated solely as a means of generating revenue. Close examination suggests that the policing that occurs in fantasy city parallels aspects of the environment to the extent that policing in these sites is increasingly focused on producing and preserving images.

'Crime problems'

Police and other respondents acknowledge that a primary, if not the main task of both public and private police in Gastown, is to deal with order maintenance issues rather than crime. Respondents also overwhelmingly agreed that violent crime is not a significant problem in Gastown, that the bulk of offences committed are property crimes associated with drug and alcohol addiction. Auto-related theft is an especially frequent occurrence with, as one officer described it, "cars being smashed and ransacked." Area workers and business owners similarly spoke of businesses being victimized through

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property crime, especially 'smash and grab' burglaries perpetrated by addicts who often take items of little value. Other common offences include shoplifting, drug dealing, and thefts of tourist luggage and bags.

Perceptions related to crime are especially salient in Gastown. In particular, issues commonly associated with 'urban blight' or 'social decay' were repeatedly raised by respondents when the subject of crime and safety was introduced. The majority of those interviewed acknowledged that Gastown's problems were largely social problems and not criminal matters *per se*. However, the effect of 'nuisance-related' problems on the site's image was cited by many as a significant cause for concern. One police subject noted "... I think this neighbourhood ... It looks horrible. I mean you see somebody picking scabs off their face who weighs eighty pounds, you think this neighbourhood is Armageddon."

Perceptions of crime and danger associated with the presence of panhandlers and the mentally ill are sometimes fed by their behaviour. Incidents of panhandlers harassing people on the street, following behind and shouting, refusing to accept a negative response, and simply the sheer volume of requests for money, have all been observed. As a police subject stated, "tourists get very freaked out when they come down here because the aggressive panhandling makes them feel very uncomfortable. I think they're worried that they're going to get mugged right on the street ... " Local retailers are worried that such perceptions, whether accurate or not, will undermine business. In speaking of the subject of panhandling to a vendor, this person opined that "... there's a lot of panhandling and [it] is reaching proportions beyond damage control in the name of our tourism."

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As with Gastown, crime along Granville Mall tends to be low-level property and drug offences. Respondents interviewed stated that serious violent crimes are relatively infrequent and those that do occur are generally out of the sight of tourists. As one community group member offered: "... we know there's drugs down here. We know there's marijuana and whatever. But ... you don't see people being robbed down here. I mean, we know people are getting robbed, but it's the lower, lower, lower echelon." While tourists and shoppers have been victimized through purse snatchings and other forms of theft, incidents of robbery or assault tend to occur on 'Cheque Issue Days' and involve individuals 'rolling' other low-income people for welfare money. Thus, contrary to what the presence of private security might suggest, violent crime in this neighbourhood is seen to impact primarily on those who are traditionally constituted as the 'disorderly'.

In speaking to the police, it is clear that they also recognize that most issues affecting the community are not *Criminal Code* offences. One police officer stated unequivocally that

the nature of the problems in that area have less to do with crime and much more to do with the so-called public order maintenance issue[s]. Things that are irritating to people because people are not respecting each other's rights to be in that public space at the same time. So that's one person's perceptions of their rights to skateboard down the sidewalk, and there's another person's right to not have to listen to the noise and have to constantly look to dodge them. Likewise somebody's right to lie on the sidewalk interferes with somebody else's right to run a business that's attractive.

This is again reminiscent of the 'civility' theme found in much of the 'broken windows' literature: formal rules and agents of enforcement are necessary to ensure civility in

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public space because informal rules of 'etiquette' and 'decorum' are not always observed (Kelling and Coles 1996; Reiss 1987; Ellickson 1996).

As in Gastown, panhandling is seen to be a primary threat to businesses along the Mall. As one business owner explained: "Panhandling isn't a big problem, it's what you call a visible nuisance problem. For people who want tourist money into the street, particularly retailers and business people in general, property owners, it's a blight because they know people don't like it ..." While some panhandlers are older local residents, and include addicts and the mentally ill, many are street youth. Based on observation and comments made by service providers, the youth are significantly less aggressive in their tactics. They tend to be quiet, polite, friendly, and do not harass, follow, or obstruct the path of others as commonly occurs in Gastown.

Image management projects

In order to combat negative perceptions that result from the presence of various forms of 'social decay', and, more generally, in response to market dictates and the desire for life-style based consumerism, image management is a central preoccupation in fantasy city. Vancouver's UEDs attempt to project a façade of safety and security while simultaneously offering consumption-oriented pleasure for the consumer classes. This is done through a targeted use of policing.

In a fashion similar to Disney World's use of seductive, informal techniques of control (Shearing and Stenning 1984), the police presence in these spaces, both public and private, is experienced by rule-observing tourists and consumers as either non-existent, as blending seamlessly into the space, or as openly friendly or perhaps simply benign. Among tourists in Gastown, some individuals interviewed did not realize that the

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guards were in fact private security, while others did not notice the guards at all. The focus of the guards' attention is on those who break the formal and informal rules of the space -- panhandlers and other street people - rather than on interacting directly and routinely with the area's visitors.

The DVBIAs approach is slightly different from that of Gastown. For the DVBIAs, the Ambassadors are themselves a marketable product, a service that it offers to potential consumers, consumers not only of that particular service, but also of the other products and services that the site offers. To this end, the Ambassadors are actively marketed through an advertising campaign that signals to would-be space users that this is a helpful, friendly, and approachable service that provides them with safety and well-being, at least in the form of assistance, while visiting the city's downtown core. In order to propagate this image of the Ambassadors, the DVBIAs has recently begun placing advertising posters at bus stops across the city. These posters show smiling Ambassadors underneath a caption that reads: "Wireless, mobile & user friendly". We are also informed that the Ambassadors are "Your personal connection to Vancouver's Downtown."

There are many ways in which the public police also participate in this image management project. Perhaps the most obvious form of participation is their selective enforcement of 'nuisance' by-laws during tourist season. The issue of whether there was a noticeable difference in levels of police enforcement of the former panhandling by-law between the tourist and off seasons was raised with both panhandlers and community group members. Both groups were generally quick to agree that there is an observable difference. One community group member noted that: "... with the panning laws, cops

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are tightening up. More so in the summer because of the tourists ... In the wintertime, it eases up a little bit ...” A young panhandler linked increased enforcement to specific public events: “They’ll leave panhandlers alone say like a week or so, but when something like Symphony of Fire or something else [comes along], they’re really cracking down.”

Merely having a police presence, regardless of how active this presence is, is not however sufficient in terms of assisting the BIAs in their goals. Considerable private and public police attention must also be spent on issues that are directly related to enhancing the areas’ images and projecting the appearance of a ‘clean’ and ‘controlled’ environment. I have previously discussed the Best Foot Forward program and the role of the Ambassadors in ensuring that visual signs of dirt and decay are removed from downtown sites, as well as the means by which LPOs attempt to eliminate graffiti. Thus, it is worth noting that GBIS security patrol also perform ‘cleaning’ functions centred on preserving aesthetics and managing space users’ perceptions. An illustration of their activities can be found in an incident witnessed by myself and two members of a community group during a walk through Gastown. Someone had placed posters advertising a march in support of efforts at locating women missing from the Downtown Eastside on various city-owned street poles. A security guard was observed tearing these posters down in order to enforce the City’s anti-postering by-law²⁹. That this action was clearly tied to managing perceptions of space users was immediately apparent when one considers both the space in which this action occurred, and the content of the posters. The posters were put up in a neighbourhood that caters largely to tourists, and advertised a planned protest on behalf of local prostitutes who are believed to have been murdered. By

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removing these posters, security guards were reinforcing a contrived image of Gastown as a 'safe' or 'crime-free' zone. This interpretation is supported by observation of the guards being highly selective in relation to which posters they tear down. Posters that relay information concerning homeowners' meetings are usually left in place, while those of local activists and poverty-related community groups are frequently removed.

Moving it along: one effect of image-management policing

While my primary concern here is with the effect that the new policing practices are having on the neighbourhoods studied, it is also worth briefly addressing their effects on other communities. Within the past couple of years, suburbanites within the Lower Mainland (Vancouver and surrounding municipalities) have begun to experience something which was largely unknown to them outside of the downtown core, or known to a significantly lesser extent: panhandling. There are two ready explanations available for understanding the rise of panhandling in nearby communities. First, the increase could reasonably be attributed to gentrification in urban neighbourhoods that formerly housed the poor. As was previously noted, areas such as Granville Mall have seen inexpensive housing stocks decline as SRO hotels and other cheap lodging were converted into tourist accommodations and/or expensive condos. This has 'pushed' some low income people into other communities where they can find affordable rental properties. Second, and equally likely, is that much of the image-oriented policing described here is producing its intended effect: petty criminals and visible signs of 'disorder' (such as panhandlers) are being 'pushed' into neighbouring areas.

Various interviewees who represented security interests similarly noted changes taking place as a result of what they perceived to be a 'pushing' of crime and disorder out

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of downtown neighbourhoods. Their insights are worth briefly recording here in light of the lack of available data in the criminological literature on the displacement effect produced by 'broken windows' style policing (Cohen 1999; Silverman 1998). For example, in relation to a discussion on the efficacy of the DVBIAs programs, a subject advised:

We know [bad] guys who've said, 'You know you guys are just too much for me.' They get on a bus and move out to Metrotown [an area in Burnaby] ... Are we having an impact? Yeah, we are, we're having an impact. Are we displacing some of that stuff? You bet we are doing some of that.

One security agent, also speaking to the effectiveness of the LPO program, stated that: "[bad guys] know all of a sudden that another group of loss prevention officers are watching them and they found that it was not profitable for them to steal in this area and [they] move onto another one ... Just like prostitution. You go in and you move it out of the area, you know that it's going to go somewhere else." This sentiment was echoed by yet another security representative: "It's a complex thing because you're never going to stop crime, you're just going to displace it."

Why fantasy city generate demands for image-oriented policing

In order to understand more fully why it is that fantasy city generates demands for new forms of 'image-oriented' policing, it is imperative that we understand its place in consumer culture.

At its most elemental, today's consumerism is about status consumption and the search for social identity (Lasch 1984; Schor 1998; Lasn 1999; Klein 2000). To this end, retailers and brands have a vested interest in creating desire through manufacturing 'exclusivity'; that is, through associating products with certain images that carry cultural

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cachet, and then marketing them as exclusive products to those willing to pay for the status that being 'exclusive' carries (Schor 1998). Lasn (1999: xiii) explains how this works:

The most powerful narcotic in the world is the promise of belonging. And belonging is best achieved by conforming to the prescriptions of America ... In this way a perverted sense of cool takes hold of the imaginations of our children. And thus a heavily manipulative corporate ethos drives our culture.

The importance of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1990) and its accumulation was a subject that was raised during interviews by individuals of lower socio-economic status and by community group members. Individuals who participate in the accumulation of 'stuff' may be less aware of the processes involved than are those who are unable to participate.

In discussing their experiences as the objects of exclusionary tactics practiced by public and private police who enforce laws and policies which are directed at preserving 'images', the role of clothing as indicative of social status, and thus of negative or positive ascribed attributes, was discussed. The difference in attribution of characteristics based on apparel is made explicit in the comments of a local outreach worker. In discussing whether street kids in groups on Granville Mall project an intimidating image to other space users, he stated:

We have suburbanites come down here and they're standing in a group ... People are walking by [and] they don't seem to be intimidated by the suburbanites dressed in nice FUBU shirts ... But you have our youth standing there with raggedy jeans and holes in them, with skateboards, and that poses a threat.

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This perceived threat clearly relates to the fears that urban centres are seen to invoke. Fears are precipitated over the presence of those who aren't like us, and are heightened through repeated conflating of panhandling, and other forms of street involvement, with crime (Wardhaugh 1996). That such perceptions can be mistaken ones, on multiple levels, is evidenced in the following statement of a local street youth:

I've met a lot more dangerous people wearing rich, expensive clothes ... I'm just saying people dressed in normal as a disguise. ... I used to dress really good and hang around with bad people. Hanging out with people that robbed people, and they looked just like everybody else. [Now] I usually wear all black and scary looking sometimes. And I don't do anything.

These comments offer support for one of Harcourt's (1998) criticisms of 'broken windows': the categories used in order-maintenance policing, those of 'order' and 'disorder', are ultimately useless in facilitating crime prevention because they require individuals to make attributions based on class-based conceptions of what a 'criminal' looks like or how a 'criminal' behaves. As the young panhandler makes clear, these attributions are often erroneous.

For years now, the mall has held a special place in our social life. The mall is also an exclusive space due to the presence of security; it is the mandate of mall security to make sure that people are behaving 'civilly', which means in this space according to consumption-oriented scripts. Thus, you are unlikely to see bag ladies in the Gap, or people panhandling in front of the Eddie Bauer store. The work of the guards ensures that you will only see people like yourself, people with the means to purchase and to wear the products that the mall offers. However, when the street becomes the mall, as is occurring in cities across North America, the problem of how to maintain exclusivity arises. The

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answer, of course, is to import the technology of the mall onto the street and to apply the same screening processes to ensure that cool-ness does not become contaminated through contact with the 'un-cool'.

How is it that we come to see people as objects to be 'moved along' and otherwise manipulated at our whim? Lasch (1984: 30) offers a cogent explanation:

Commodity production and consumerism alter perceptions not just of the self but of the world outside the self. They create a world of mirrors ... the mirror effect makes the subject an object; at the same time, it makes the world of objects an extension or projection of the self. It is misleading to characterize the culture of consumption as a culture dominated by things. The consumer lives surrounded not so much by things as by fantasies. He lives in a world that has no objective or independent existence and seems to exist only to gratify or thwart his desires.

Extending Lasch's thoughts, we see that fantasy city isn't just about offering patrons consumable 'experiences', or even about offering consumable products and services, it is also about providing a site where consumers can consume images, including their own. Like the hall of mirrors in the amusement park funhouse, fantasy city is an attempt at escaping reality, where everything, including ourselves, becomes a series of fantastic images reflected off the mirrors that the site provides. In entering this space, we enter the world of the hyper-unreal. Strolling along cobble stoned pathways to visit a shop that offers 'genuine' reproductions, dancing on tabletops in faux-Mexican cantinas, throwing darts in an 'English-style' pub, or experimenting with pink afros and tongue rings in the most oxymoronic of places – the trendy counter-culture shop - we try out new identities for ourselves and others to see and experience.

Lasch (1984) also argues that "the state of mind promoted by consumerism is better described as a state of uneasiness and chronic anxiety" (ibid.: 28). Our ever-

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increasing preoccupation with fantasy, as evidenced by our desire for fun (at almost any cost) is the result of a state of anxiety provoked by mass-media entertainment outlets, product manufacturers and retailers who all have a vested interest in presenting idealized versions of the 'ultimate self' – selves that can never be achieved because they are simulacra, images of images that do not exist.

For most of us, poverty, mental illness and addiction, are not the stuff of fantasy. The presence of poverty in spaces of pleasure serves not only as a reminder of what can happen to the less fortunate of us – fears we would like to be protected from - but it also has no intrinsic amusement value. In fact, quite the opposite; it is alternately depressing, fear-inducing, boring, guilt-provoking, sad, frustrating, anxiety-producing, confusing, and so on – all unpleasant feelings that we seek to escape by going to a site intended to offer us pleasure and distraction. Wardhaugh (1996: 709) sums up this nexus well: "there is something dangerously pre-modern about the poverty and apparent disarray of beggars and other street people that sits uncomfortably with the struggle for identity and a sense of place engaged in by the inhabitants of the postmodern city."

It is not only our struggle for identity that causes our reaction toward those we seek to dispossess from spaces, it is also our belief that they lack identity and, more dangerously still, that they have, or are in the process of, giving up the struggle that we may find ourselves engaged in. Douglas (1979: 78) clearly speaks to this in discussing the relationship between 'dirt', 'disorder', and 'identity':

In the course of any imposing of order, whether in the mind or in the external world, the attitude to rejected bits and pieces goes through two stages. First they are recognizably out of place, a threat to good order, and so are regarded as objectionable and vigorously brushed away. At this stage they have some identity: they can be seen to be unwanted

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bits of whatever it was they came from ... this is the state at which they are dangerous; their half-identity still clings to them and the clarity of the scene in which they obtrude is impaired by their presence.

These 'unwanted bits' represent disorder because they are abandoned, derelict, and 'dirty' (visually or otherwise aesthetically unappealing – at least by the standards of the consumer culture's aesthetics). And, because "dirt offends against order", we can thus perceive the actions of the BIAs, in concert with the City and the public police, as representing a move towards restoring order: "[eliminating dirt] is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment" (Douglas *ibid.*: 2).

Where the urban poor are tolerated to some degree is in those spaces that utilize their presence for 'image management' purposes related to the 'experience' offered. However, even then, risk in the form of human or other physical symbols associated with poverty, crime and danger, is only tolerated if it is 'riskless-risk', risk that is managed, sterilized, contained, or otherwise rendered 'harmless' for general consumption.

Summing up

In this chapter, I advanced three arguments. First, fantasy city retailers are preoccupied with issues related to control of the image that their spaces present. Second, preoccupation with image extends to how the space is policed. Third, there is a clear link between policing in fantasy city and commercial culture trends. Consumption both drives the need for exclusionary practices, and provides a means by which class-based divisions can be enforced through judgments based on 'behaviour' and the appearance of possessing cultural capital.

Chapter VI – Fantasy city as a site and as an identity

What fantasy city tells us

Fantasy city is a physical manifestation of social changes that are presently occurring on a global basis. Analysis of this physical space reveals the extent to which we have become mired in a consumerism that is seductive for those with means, but retains a strong coercive element directed at excluding those without. This consumerism, fuelled by a multi-billion dollar advertising and entertainment industry, is seductive because it plays on twin desires: to belong, and to experience pleasure without pain.

Advertising and media increasingly dictate the manner and style of our social interactions. “Shopping is good³⁰” because it provides fulfillment of social needs. Primarily, the need is to be part of a community, with common purpose involving others and identification with a group. However, in a consumer-oriented society this need becomes perverted so that the primary messages sent and received are those associated with status and hierarchy based on consumption of material goods. Belonging in a more encompassing sense is replaced with a form of belonging that has multiple forms of inclusion and exclusion.

I have explored the nature of some of the divisions that are being created and maintained in the public realm through an examination of policing strategies used by retailers in order to preserve the integrity of the consumer’s ‘experience’. The targets of these strategies include the homeless and other urban poor, who are told to ‘move along’ in order to assist in the presentation of desired images to be sold and packaged to fun-seekers. Reminders of poverty, inequality, difference, and/or anything that does not fit the desired image, are similarly removed from these sites.

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In order to assist the objective of image maintenance, the City has borrowed from its counterparts across North America and enacted a series of 'public order' or 'quality of life' by-laws which disproportionately affect the poor, and are used alternatively as instruments by both public and private police to expunge their presence from public space or to regulate their behaviour. Proponents of the enforcement of such by-laws, principally Kelling and Coles (1996) and Ellickson (1996), have argued that individuals should be judged on their behaviour and not on their status. This is a disingenuous argument, and one that calls to mind de Tocqueville's famous comment on the poor and rich alike being prohibited from stealing bread and sleeping under bridges. The acts that each cite as 'disorderly', such as panhandling, bench squatting or sitting on sidewalks, cannot be isolated from the actor's status since individuals who perform such actions often do so for reasons related to their status. For example, low-income individuals in the neighbourhoods studied view adjacent areas of public space as a type of 'living room', a place where they can visit with their neighbours and participate in their community. This occurs because the tiny, squalid SRO rooms that many live in do not facilitate social interaction. Individuals who defecate and urinate in public spaces, acts particularly viewed as offensive by 'broken windows' proponents (Kelling and Coles 1996), often do so because they have limited or no access to washrooms. Open access public restrooms are limited in the city, and the majority of so-called 'public' facilities are only available to paying consumers of products and services. Finally, what Kelling and others neglect to satisfactorily address when insisting on the necessity of enforcing codes of public behaviour that reflect dominant middle class values, is the degree to which standards are being imposed on areas where other values have traditionally held sway. This imposition

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comes about through the 'reclamation' of desirable urban property from the urban poor by redevelopers and others.

In some instances, such as on Granville Mall, the urban poor are more likely to be tolerated by retail and other interests because they serve as 'props' on a site that caters to a young and hip market, a clientele that is searching for 'risk-less risk'. In such cases, 'quality of life bylaws' assist private security and police by providing a means by which any 'danger' that these props may signal to others is reasonably contained. In still other situations, notably in Gastown, by-laws similarly assist in the image management project, although the project is a markedly different one. In Gastown, 'quality of life' by-laws are used simply to effect removal of those things that do not project the desired image of quaintness and heritage, or offer competing visions of the space.

These projects, and similar others across North America, have led to the creation of 'image-oriented policing', a form of public-private policing which is modeled on the 'broken windows' theory. Such policing is primarily directed at the creation and maintenance of images through the regulation of signs of disorder. Image-oriented policing has as its goal the re-creation of public space as 'orderly' commercialized sites. This link between order and commercialization is evidenced in multiple sources: from the City Hall person who advised me that a 'healthy community' is one where people shop, to the police officer who envisioned progress as a Starbucks in the middle of a ghetto. It can also be found in the underlying connection between so-called 'quality of life' policies and policing, and conceptions of public space as commercial space. This link is also made explicit in the work of Ellickson (1996) who views public disorder as 'the tragedy of the marketplace'. 'Broken windows' and other such image-oriented forms of policing

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that have as their aim the regulation of signs of disorder are, and are intended to be, exclusionary. Exclusion is based largely on surface appearance, including appearing to possess the means to consume.

My research has also revealed, in part, the extent to which policing is becoming commodified and how this process is blurring the traditional boundaries between public and private policing. Security guards now patrol public streets on behalf of retailers, and are used to provide services that the public police no longer have the time, money, or inclination to carry out. This is best exemplified by the Loss Prevention Officers who not only conduct surveillance and set up covert 'sting' operations for retail and auto-related thefts, but, on a more mundane level, routinely fill out Crown reports – a task that was formerly conducted only by peace officers.

It is not only the private police who are a commodity to be purchased and used. Increasingly the services of the public police are being bought by retail and other business interests. The deployment centre and the CAPP pager program are cases in point. What is particularly interesting about such transactions is that they are most often conducted under the guise of community policing, a set of practices that carry with them egalitarian principles that are never truly realized. Nor can they be, because most citizens and citizen groups lack similar means to purchase buildings and high-tech equipment in order to ensure police cooperation for ordinary community efforts.

This buying and selling of policing has had a serious impact on the urban environment itself and, particularly, in relation to our understanding of public space. Urban geographers and others have been decrying for years the changing face of the urban landscape due to increasing losses of public space through privatization. What they

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have noted is that privatization has largely been a result of local and/or provincial or state efforts to increase revenues in urban centres. What has largely escaped undetected is the role of the police in facilitating this process. Whereas the City remains heavily involved in privatization through its planning committees and its BIA development program, the police assist by actively supporting the efforts of business interests in their order maintenance efforts. They do this, for example, by lending some of their authority to BIA programs, and to the guards specifically, and they do so knowing that the guards routinely push people off the public streets at the behest of the BIAs. The message that is conveyed by such activities is that the streets belong not to the public, but to retailers and consumers. This message is reinforced during tourist season and special events, when the police initiate 'public order' crackdowns on street people. It is not coincident that such times are the most profitable for retailers.

The politics of community identity

What is taking place in both of the spaces studied is a struggle for identity that in many ways reflects contemporary identity crises occurring within, and spurred by, the consumer marketplace. In today's society, in order to be successful at their enterprise, entities must have a socially desirable identity (Lasch 1979). This identity must be a whole image, because as Douglas (1979) rightly suggests, we seem unable to tolerate ambiguities. The politics of identity, as applied to community, necessarily revolves around those questions that are also seen to apply to individuals, to companies, to marketplaces, and even to countries: What should the community look like? What vision should it have for itself? How ought its members to feel about it? What steps should be taken to achieve its goals? What image does it wish to project to outsiders? What and

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whose interests will it ultimately serve? These are questions that many inner city dwellers, community groups, space users, politicians and business interests face, and will continue to struggle with, as redevelopers continue to promote the economic benefits of establishing urban entertainment destinations and other spaces that import the consumer classes to low-income neighbourhoods.

Political, economic, social and cultural issues surrounding community identity threaten to undermine the ability to achieve the wholeness desired by site operators and redevelopers. These issues speak to divisions within market segments, local neighbourhoods, and the larger society, and particularly to those divisions that centre on the question of what conception of 'the good' neighbourhoods and other spaces ought to be striving for. Wholeness in identity, in image, can be achieved, but this means exorcising those parts that are not perceived to fit. It means the silencing of voices within a community in order to preserve an aesthetic that, superficially at least, appears to have seamlessness and unity of form.

Does it have to be that way? Of course not. There is nothing inevitable or particularly necessary about creating and maintaining whole images and presenting them as identities. This is a fiction of the marketplace, and one that speaks to a shallow preoccupation with surface and a lack of imagination and adventure. Its effects are dangerous, and they clearly threaten to destroy fragile or faltering communities by erasing or weakening the diversity, and thus the vibrancy, that can exist within them. Furthermore, it exacerbates tensions among groups, which can threaten to undermine further the stability of a neighbourhood.

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I conclude with further reflection on the comments of the police officer who expressed sadness over the wasted potential that he sees daily in the inner city, and a yearning for some semblance of community to replace those areas that seem to him to be falling apart. While I disagree with his vision of progress as a Starbucks on the corner, and the means he would chose to implement this vision – ‘broken windows’ style policing – I can understand and sympathize with his dreams of community. What I did not ask him, and now regret, is whether he views it is as preferable to have organic communities that grow out of the character of the neighbourhood and all its people, or whether he would settle for the imposition of manufactured entities upon streetscapes, mass-produced, to be consumed by those who stop by on their way to somewhere else, but which, at least to his mind, offer ‘order’.

Endnotes

¹ 'Consumable experiences' refers to the use of entertainment and cultural themes as a means of selling retail products and services. For the consumer, he or she is not merely purchasing a product, but moreover buying an 'experience'. An example of this can be found in restaurants such as The Rainforest Café. The Café's jungle experience begins with the naming of one's party (we were the bumblebees), and is followed by the placing of said party into a waiting area that also doubles as a gift shop. While touring the gift shop, one is treated to various special effects, such as a snapping mechanical alligator in a faux swamp, and a mechanical elephant that trumpets with annoying frequency. Once at one's table, wait people walk by in safari gear. The supposed effect of all of this is to create a dining 'experience' with elements of the jungle present that have been rendered safer and, because of the use of gadgetry, more interesting than the real jungle.

² Turow (1997: 3) describes lifestyle marketing as the blending of variables (income, generation, gender, etc.) into "geographical and psychological profiles" that advertisers can use to target their desired audience.

³ Harcourt (1998) makes this point perfectly clear through a deconstruction of Zimbardo's (1969) famous car-vandalism study, a study frequently cited as offering support for 'broken windows'. Zimbardo found that many of the "vandals" who stripped and destroyed the abandoned car, were "well-dressed, apparently clean-cut whites", including one middleclass family of four (Harcourt 1998: 14).

⁴ By open-focused, I mean that I did not go into interviews with a set of pre-prepared questions, but rather a set of general concerns that I desired the subject to speak to. By keeping the interview style very open and loose, this permitted subjects to raise issues that I had not previously considered. Key concerns are listed in Appendix II.

⁵ R.S.B.C. 1996 Chapter 323.

⁶ S.B.C. 1953 Chapter 55.

⁷ R.S.B.C. 1992, Chapter 34

⁸ The current style of Ambassador program owes much to similar programs found in other North American cities, such as Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Winnipeg and Ottawa.

⁹ Kelling's visit was repeated in 1998, when the DV BIA sponsored the Cascadia Forum, an invitational forum looking at Alcohol Management issues (Rogers 1998).

¹⁰ According to the DVBLA (2001a), not all of these interactions involved requests to 'move along'. Interactions also included exchanges of information, with Ambassadors advising individuals on where to obtain meals and shelter.

¹¹ The panhandling by-law was legally amended by City Council in early March of 2001, as a result of a successful challenge to a similar by-law in Winnipeg and court action in Vancouver by anti-poverty groups scheduled for March of 2001. The amendments substantially loosen some of the restrictions on panhandling but still place limits on people's ability to beg on Vancouver's city streets.

¹² This was in keeping with a provision of the panhandling by-law that prohibited begging while sitting or lying down.

¹³ Much attention was given by the media to the statements of public police that they seldom, if ever, enforced the panhandling bylaw. Such statements were misleading. The public police may not have given out tickets to panhandlers, but the police routinely told panhandlers to 'get up' or 'to move along', using the threat of a ticket under the by-law as a means of ensuring compliance. During the course of interviewing a subject on Granville Mall, myself and my subject were directed by a police officer to "get up" from the sidewalk, even though neither one of us was in the act of soliciting money. The mere appearance of individuals sitting or crouching on the sidewalk was sufficient to trigger the order.

¹⁴ The question asked of a senior officer about security guard abuses, and the answer quoted above, were not specific to the Ambassadors program.

¹⁵ The use of police mug-shots in these files was noted during an interview. The actual source of the mug-shot is not known. In response to a question on this point the interviewee advised that "you can always scan pictures in on a scanner."

¹⁶ In Canada, charges are filed by Crown Counsel upon the recommendations of police. Police officers must fill out a Crown report that provides details of the alleged crime and information on evidence gathered.

¹⁷ This involves filling out the first two pages of the Crown report and providing a narrative of what occurred.

¹⁸ The degree to which public police and the LPOs work jointly on 'sting' operations is not known. However, at least two subjects advised that public police 'cooperate' in such endeavours.

¹⁹ Tourists and local shoppers are likely more affected by thefts from autos than other groups because thieves looking for quick and easy cash will target cars with consumer goods, cameras, and so on, lying visibly within a car's interior.

²⁰ On one occasion prior to my commencing this study, I was chased out of Gastown when it was perceived by the guards that I was behaving suspiciously (I had taken a photograph of a panhandler being interrogated by a security guard – a perfectly legal act). This resulted in my being followed and watched for some time by two security guards who stared directly at me while they talked on walkie-talkies and took notes on my behaviour. Even though I was on a public street, and outside of the Gastown boundary, I was subjected to this form of overt intimidation until I left the area.

²¹ For examples of documented cases of violent acts committed by security guards see *Private Security, Public Places* 1998 and Waldern 1998a; 1998b. I should also note that I was privy to a number of allegations of violence that were raised privately. I did not attempt to substantiate these stories, as the issues raised were not directly relevant to the focus of my inquiries.

²² It is worth noting that the initial CAPP program start-up costs for the Police Department were significantly underwritten by outside interests. Of the roughly \$5,750 operating cost for the initial fifty designated police pagers, the police committed only \$1,000; the remaining money was secured from external sources (VPD 2000e).

²³ The Vancouver Police and Native Liaison Society, the Chinese Community Policing Centre, the Gastown Community Policing Centre, and the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Safety Office.

²⁴ The presence of the panhandlers in such spaces can be seen as personifying powerful social messages with distinct anti-capitalist overtones – messages that conservative thinkers tend to portray as socially insignificant, or as rabble-rousing that occurs at the expense of others (usually, the mythical 'honest taxpayer').

²⁵ Kerrisdale is a relatively wealthy community in Vancouver's west side.

²⁶ What is particularly disturbing about the *Private Investigators Security Act* is that it favours the concerns of private security service providers over those of the public. This is suggested because individual complainants are not provided input during any stage of the process. Nor are they made aware of the ultimate disposition of their case. This is because the Act treats investigations as confidential. Thus, the Act does not allow for publication of the names of offender agencies, so that those agencies or individuals with particularly bad track records in dealing with the public are never subjected to public scrutiny.

²⁷ A street slang term to denote someone who is weak or lacking in power.

²⁸ Many references to the Orpheum's location list the theatre as being on Smithe and Seymour rather than Smithe and Granville.

²⁹ Vancouver has an anti-postering bylaw that prohibits the placement of posters on City or private property. Posters are permitted in 'kiosks' that are provided by the City in

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designated places. The enforcement of this by-law, including removal of the posters, is rightfully the jurisdiction of city by-law enforcers. However, I was advised in a conversation with an individual from City Hall that there is nothing to prevent private citizens (including guards) from enforcing the by-law by tearing down posters placed on City property.

³⁰ This is a slogan taken from the Bay department stores' latest advertising campaign. I should note, however, that while the Bay tells us that "Shopping is good", they neglect to say why. Any explanations offered are my own.

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Appendix I – List of acronyms used

BIA – business improvement association

BID – business improvement district

CAPP – crime alert pager program

CPC – community policing centre

DAs – Downtown Ambassadors

DVBIA – Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association

GBIS – Gastown Business Improvement Society

LPOs – Loss prevention officers (a term used in private security and the name of a DVBIA security program)

SRO – single resident occupancy hotel

TED – the entertainment district (the 700-900 blocks of Granville Mall)

UED – urban entertainment destination

VPD – Vancouver Police Department

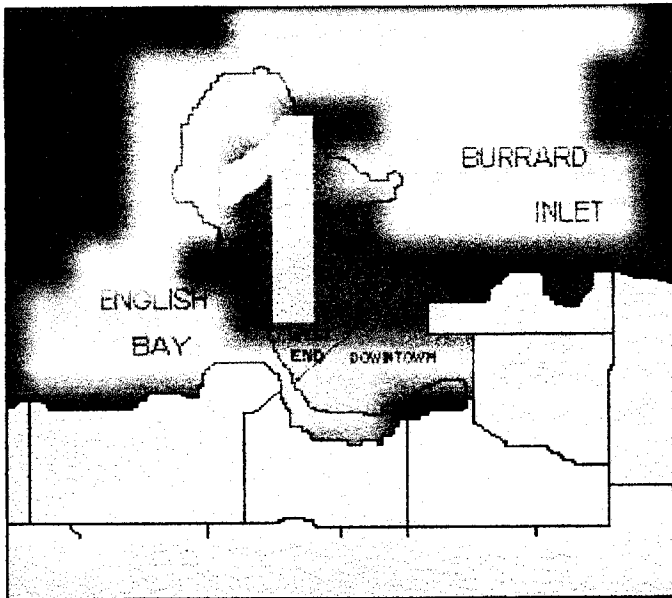
Appendix II – Substantive areas of focus during interviews

The following is a list of general subject matters that I raised with individuals during interviews. The list is not exhaustive, and not all concerns were addressed with each interviewee.

1. Experiences with private security.
2. Knowledge/experience of specific details of programs studied (ie. use of cameras, surveillance techniques).
3. Benefits of private security programs.
4. Problems with private security programs.
5. Experiences/perceptions of crime in the area discussed.
6. Experiences with police and public policing programs.
7. Views as to the nature of the relationship between public police and private security in the area studied.
8. Experiences with, or views of, the business improvement association under discussion.
9. General views/experiences of development/redevelopment in the area discussed.
10. General views of the neighbourhood under discussion.

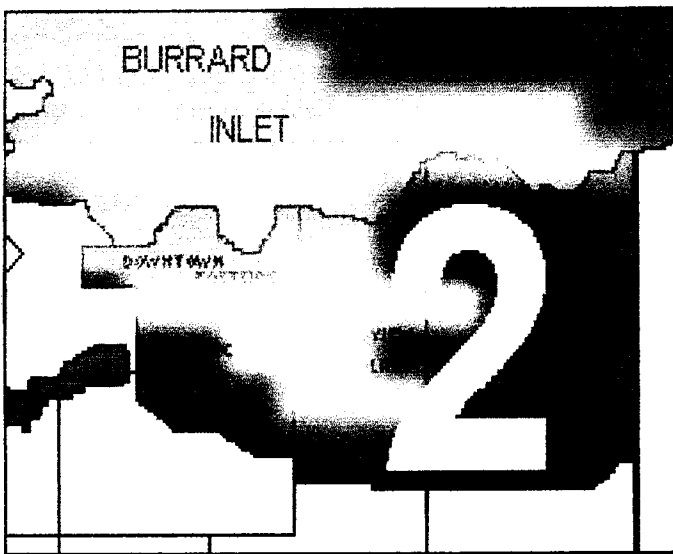
Maps of areas studied

Figure 1



VPD District One (encompassing Granville Mall in area marked Downtown)

Figure 2

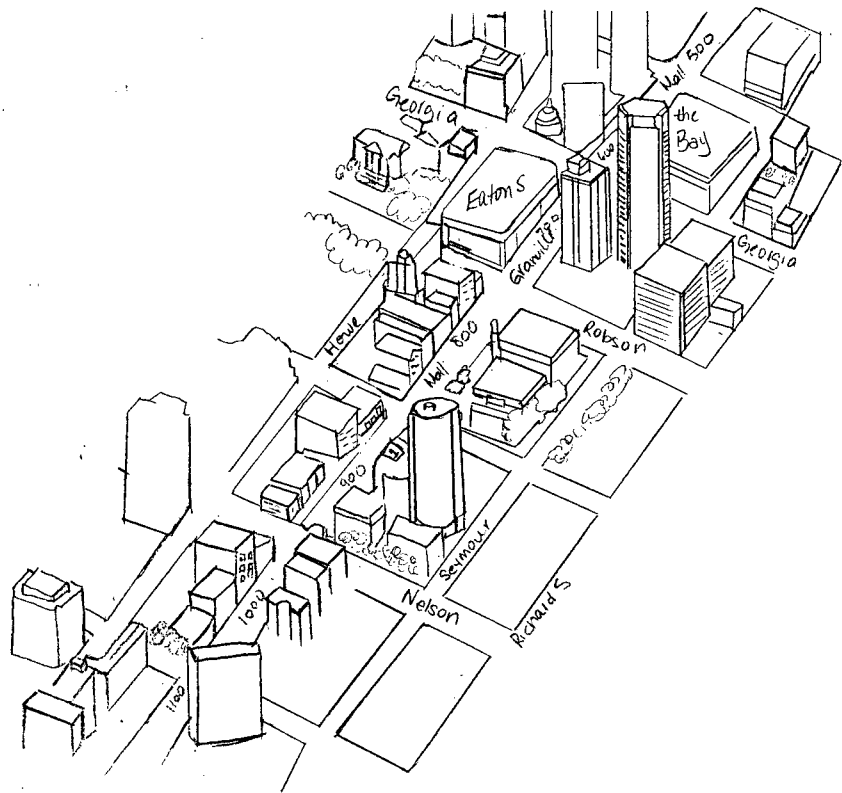


VPD District Two (encompassing Gastown in area marked Downtown Eastside)

Maps are from the Vancouver Police Department website at:
<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/police/>

Figure 3

Granville Mall

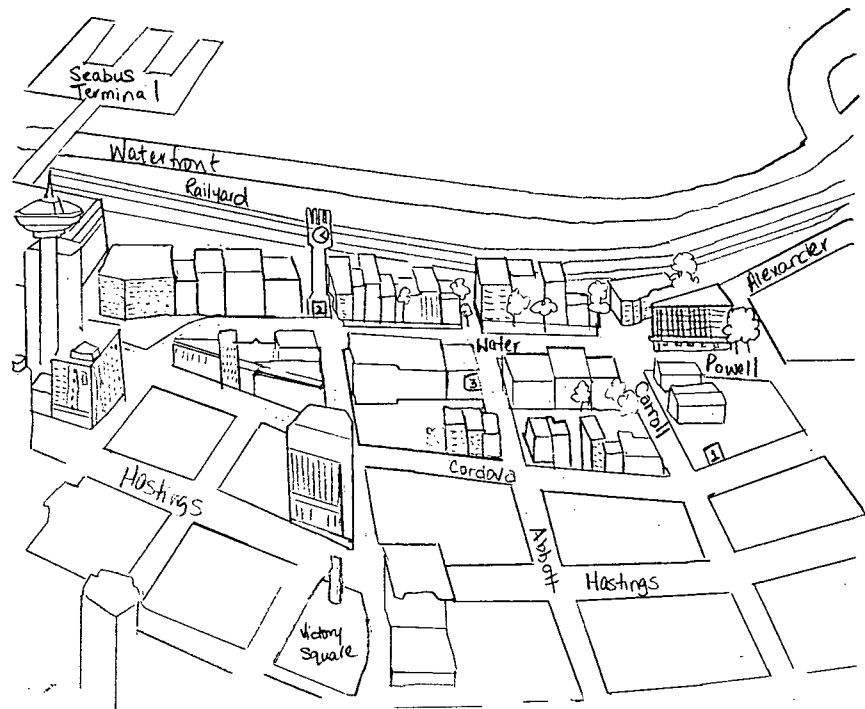


TED (The Entertainment District - 700-900 blocks of Granville

1. Granville community policing centre.

Figure 4

Gastown



1. Deployment Centre
2. Gastown Steam Clock
3. Gastown Community Police Centre.