Identity, Place, Power And The 'Text':
Kerry's Dale And The "Monster" House.

By

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Abstract

Since the late 1960's, fundamental changes in Canadian immigration policy, encouraging more middle-class/professional immigration in an effort to create employment and to boost the nation's skill profile, have precipitated a shift in orientation of population and capital flows into Canada. In particular the countries of the Pacific Rim have risen in relative importance as source regions of both international finance and migrants. These trends have had an uneven impact across Canada, and Vancouver in particular has come to play a significant role as a "gateway city". This thesis considers some of the ramifications of the emerging social geography of this elite portion of the wide spectrum of immigrants entering Canada. In focusing on neighbourhood change within the upper middle-class suburb of Kerrisdale, situated on Vancouver's elite West Side, it examines the cultural politics surrounding perceived social change. It explores a contested sense of identity and place, showing how these are informed and invigorated by a diverse set of social struggles evident in conflicting landscape 'tastes' in the neighbourhood of Kerrisdale.
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IDENTITY, PLACE, POWER, AND THE "TEXT":
KERRY'S DALE AND THE 'MONSTER' HOUSE

Plate 1: McCleery Farm House in the summer of 1941, Marine Drive.

"Observe the Union Jack. The McCleery's were always very loyal to King, Empire and (northern) Ireland."

Major J.S. Mathews

(The City of Vancouver Public Archives)
Chapter One

Introduction: Literature Review

Since the late 1960's, there have been fundamental changes in Canadian immigration policy which have encouraged more middle-class/professional immigration in an effort to create employment and to boost the nation's skill profile. These changes have precipitated a shift in orientation of population and capital flows into Canada. In particular the countries of the Pacific Rim have risen in relative importance as source regions of both international finance and migrants. These trends have had an uneven impact across Canada, and Vancouver in particular has come to play a significant role as a "gateway city". In this thesis I shall explore some of the ramifications of the emerging social geography of this elite portion of the wide spectrum of immigrants entering Canada. Traditionally, studies detailing immigrant experience have tended to focus on those entering at the bottom of the social structure. To date, scant empirical study has been devoted to the increasing significance of middle-class/professional immigration to many first world countries. In this study I shall consider the emerging significance of this new scenario within the Canadian context. To trace some of the implications of relatively recent changes in Canadian immigration policy, I shall focus on the nature of Kerrisdale, a suburb on Vancouver's elite West Side, traditionally regarded as a stable, predominantly Anglo-Canadian, middle-class neighbourhood. In considering the

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1 For a recent summary of the historical development of Canadian immigration policy, see Elliott and Fleras (1990).
cultural politics thrown up around the creation, maintenance, and transformation of this elite landscape, I shall examine how a debate over landscape aesthetics has come to articulate contested senses of social identity and place. In so doing I seek to recover the process of the making and remaking of the British Columbian social and symbolic order within which social identity is constituted. This, I shall argue, is reciprocally and recursively engaged in the production and reproduction of a 'place' called Kerrisdale. However, before proceeding any further with the details of my case study, this chapter shall map out the intellectual terrain through which I have approached the contested definition of 'Kerrisdale'.

The study of the relationship between the urban landscape and social identity has a long tradition within human geography. While it is not necessary for my present purposes to digress into the realm of the history of geographic thought, I feel a critical entry point for the following discussion to be the formalism which characterised much of the discipline from the late 1950's to early 1970's. At this time, in appealing to the dictates of abstract spatial logic or the behavioural mechanisms of psychological models, human landscapes, in all their richness and fecundity of meaning, were subsumed beneath a posited objective 'reality'. The built environment was detached from the subjective and intersubjective social worlds from which its very meaning arose. Accordingly, a rather anaemic conceptualisation of the human landscape was proffered, one in which it became the apparently unproblematic point of departure for analysis. It was viewed as an unresponsive,\(^2\) inert testing ground upon which abstract logics were deemed to wield the material environment into form. Such an approach rendered space "the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile".\(^3\)

\(^2\) Relph (1989).
\(^3\) Foucault (1980a), p. 149.
For it was only in the collapsing of the positivist dualisms of subject and object, fact and value that a philosophical terrain could be opened up upon which a human landscape could be relationally bound to its subject. This task of recovering the relationship between identity and landscape has been a major focus of research amongst humanistic geographers. A plurality of approaches have been characterised in varying degrees by a common concern to be sensitive to meaning, experience, the everyday, human agency, and context. In particular, those who have drawn upon an interactionist perspective have developed the notion that the subjective representation of the external world embodied in landscape imagery, is at the same time a social one. It communicates collectively shared and constructed meaning and experiences, thus bridging subjectivist and structuralist polarities. This has recently been associated with a renewed interest in the concept of 'culture', which if conceptualised in Geertzian terms as a web of symbolic codes that provide the very context for social action, enables us to situate human landscapes in the whole matrix of meaning, of which they are a part, and in terms of which they receive their meaning. Consequently, a number of studies employing interpretative methodologies have explored the possibility of constructing ethnographies of landscape meaning, tracing the interaction between landscape imagery, social identity, interests and context.\(^4\)

Bringing together insights from both literary and social theory I shall now discuss in more detail the potential fruitfulness and pitfalls of engaging in such an interpretative venture, seeking to map the contours of contested meaning through which individuals and groups make sense of a complex, changing world. Drawing upon both humanist and historical materialist interpretations of human geography, and the crosscurrents

of thought between them, I shall explore what I consider to be the creative tension which develops as insights from the two traditions are brought into dialogue with one another.\(^5\) In doing so I am not denying the important differences between the two traditions, but rather contending that neither have a monopoly on understanding.\(^6\)

**Identity**

His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was dissolving and dwindling.

[James Joyce (1985) p.223]

This opening quotation, taken from the closing paragraphs of Joyce's *The Dead*, vividly portrays the author's pessimistic vision of the nature of humanity in modern society. As Joyce proceeds to describe the descent of a thick blanket of snow upon all of Ireland, he conjures up the sense of a barren landscape, devoid of diversity of life and form, overwhelmed by a sense of alienation and disorientation.\(^7\) Tradition, difference and meaning seem to lose their significance

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\(^6\) Harrison and Livingstone (1982) have traced the role of metaphor in creating and communicating scientific understanding, synthesising event and meaning, observation and interpretation, fact and value, objectivity and subjectivity, in uniting reason and imagination. Highlighting the centrality of language in structuring peoples' subjective experience, they dispel any simple notion of the unmediated determination of consciousness by existence, illustrating the danger of the reductionisms inherent in mistaking the metaphors we employ in analysis for the reality they represent.

\(^7\) "A few light taps upon the pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight ...... snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Fury lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His
and become of little consequence, being subject to this general, universalising condition. Joyce's dramatic description of the modern condition's existential reduction of humanity, in many ways alludes to the nature of the modernist project which has dominated the development of the social sciences during the twentieth century. Characterised by what has been termed "grand theory", such an approach has sought to draw the fragments of a complex, seemingly contradictory modern world together in a way that would provide some rational basis for understanding all aspects of contemporary society in terms of some coherent whole. These visions of modern society have been constructed around often unquestioned, presupposed fundamental human essences, deeming humans subject to an associated all consuming, all compelling social logic -- a very specific form of rationality. This distinctly modern conception of society and 'the' human subject, involves increasing levels of abstraction and formalism -- as a hermetically sealed discourse turns in on itself and away from the world it seeks to understand. In privileging very specific, immutable key concepts in explanation, rather pasty notions of 'identity', 'place' and 'landscape' are offered.

In reviewing some of the recent departures from such orthodoxy (part of the 'post-modern' turn within the social sciences), I want to focus on the need to reconceptualise some of the hitherto taken-for-granted social categories employed in urban studies. In the past, there has been a tendency to treat categories such as class, race, ethnicity, and gender as unproblematic. Often they have been selectively used as explanations in themselves, when in fact, as facets of social differentiation, they deserve to be explained and their social meaning

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soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead." Joyce (1985), p. 223.

8 Skinner (1985), p. 3.
9 Barnes (1989).
unpacked. I shall focus this discussion on the concept of 'race'. This argument draws upon a wider critique of modernist modes of representing the social world, which has highlighted the problematic nature and history of the production of social knowledge, raising significant methodological and moral implications for the task of social research. Briefly by way of example, Michael Banton's text, *Racial Theories*, traces the evolution of the idea of 'race' in European and North American scholarship from earlier notions of 'race' as lineage, to type, subspecies, status and more recently class. Banton's account signifies the importance of the social and political milieu within which these theories were formulated, wielded and still persist, both within academia and society at large. This illustrates the way knowledge is socially constructed and contested, rather than simply received. The strategic absences and silences left in its wake, highlight the need for a much more nuanced notion of social identity. One, as Laclau and Mouffe suggest, "founded not upon the dogmatic postulation of any 'essence of the social', but, on the contrary, on the affirmation of the contingency and ambiguity of every 'essence', and the constitutive character of social division and antagonism".  

This is very important as it has significant moral and practical implications.

By way of illustration, I shall now draw on a variety of recent attempts to integrate 'race' at the conceptual level, into a historical materialist form of

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11 Whilst social conditions may not necessarily be constitutive of *all* scientific theorising (a point still highly contested within the literature) we are very much creatures of our place and time, philosophical, religious, ethical, political and ideological factors inevitably being assumed or promoted in social scientific practice. As Russell (1983) provocatively suggests, since the Eighteenth century the *Sacralisation of science* ....... has meant a burgeoning of the use of science as an argument for justifying, or delaying changes in society*. (p. 259) For example see Livingstone (1985).
enquiry. For example, the work of Gabriel and Ben-Tovim, Hall et al and Miles\textsuperscript{13} on racialised minorities in urban Britain exemplifies in part an attempt to break away from the reductionist elements within classical Marxist theory. In the past, by privileging the relations of production in explanation, Marxism has rightly been criticised for relegating other experiences of oppression, other than that of class, to an epiphenomenal world.\textsuperscript{14} In contrast, Gabriel and Ben-Tovim, in claiming 'race' is irreducible to class, went so far as to essentialise 'race', suggesting it is a completely autonomous ideology, the product of contemporary and historical struggles.\textsuperscript{15} However, Stuart Hall, in his influential text \textit{Policing the Crisis},\textsuperscript{16} was reluctant to subsume 'race' under class, conceptualising it as a 'class fraction'. He regarded it as 'relatively autonomous' from other structural relations, the nature of which can only be understood within specific historical contexts. For Hall recognised the obfuscatory effect 'race' has on class consciousness and class organisations, and the reciprocal impact class has on 'race'. Hall highlighted the importance of the articulation between 'race' and class in grasping an understanding of its social significance. Yet his term 'relatively autonomous' has been much debated, and its analytical value questioned. Miles has sought to move the debate onto a more fruitful terrain, rejecting the explanatory value of the category of 'race' per se, stressing that the object of analysis should be the ideological \textit{process} of racial categorisation in a particular historical setting, in which "the social relations of production provide the necessary and initial framework within which racism has its effects".\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} Rather than rehearse a set of arguments that have been well developed elsewhere in the geographical literature, see Duncan and Ley (1982).
\textsuperscript{15} Gabriel and Ben-Tovim (1978).
\textsuperscript{16} Hall et. al. (1978).
\textsuperscript{17} Miles (1984), p. 233.
Miles' framework essentially replaces biology with economics in accounting for the material origins of the construction of 'racial' categories. What is achieved is recognition of the necessity of tracing the process of the racial categorisation of specific social groups, and its material and ideological basis. Yet the failure within this literature to find any satisfactory degree of consensus as to how to integrate 'race' with class at the conceptual level, reflects a wider, and troubling issue. For 'race' is a powerful social myth, with far reaching human implications. Indeed, racism's relationship with capitalism can by no means be viewed unproblematically. For it to be omnipresent from the very beginning of analysis, may, I would suggest, subvert classical Marxism's own theoretical underpinnings, predicated upon the ceaseless drive of capital accumulation as the principal mechanism behind social change.

In reconceptualising 'race' as a political category, rather than merely an economic one, Paul Gilroy has suggested that the sense of rootedness, as powerfully expressed in the politics of inner city communities in postwar urban Britain, where locality and 'race' ground them in potent historical memories, has largely evaded Marxism. In concluding his examination of the cultural politics surrounding the concept of 'race', he suggests its significance demands that the reappropriation of production, one of the central tenets of the Marxist agenda, should not be pursued independently of the transformation of capitalist social relations as a whole. Through an analysis of the aesthetics of British 'black' culture, Gilroy illustrates that 'race' is a relational concept, through which the naturalisation of social phenomena and suppression of historical process in appealing to the biological realm, comes to articulate a variety of political

18 For a helpful summary of these debates, and discussion of some of their political implications, see Solomos (1986).
antagonisms. Thus the cultural politics of 'race' reveal conflicts over the production of urban meanings. For the process by which racial categories are socially constructed and given meaning is set within a wider context of contending definitions of what city life is about.\textsuperscript{20} This post-modern sensitivity to contextuality, diversity, and experience opens up the radical prospect of acknowledging the authenticity of 'other' voices of social experience besides that of class, affirming the "openness and indeterminacy"\textsuperscript{21} of the social world in which identity is constituted. The problem then arises as to how we gain a handle on such plurality, without either retreating back to an essentialist position of sorts, or becoming disorientated in a quagmire of relativism in which anything goes.

In light of this, renewed attention has been focused on the concept of 'culture', concentrating on the cultural beliefs, political ideologies and discriminatory practices associated with the process of social categorisation.\textsuperscript{22} As Agnew, Mercer and Sopher have suggested, emphasis must be laid on "the practices and ideas that arise from the collective and individual experiences, that are constitutive of urban life and form ....... [and] derive from the social, economic, and political spheres that have shaped group and individual existence."\textsuperscript{23} For culture, as a set of shared meanings and meaningful activities, is the very medium through which social identity is constituted. It can be thought of as the "whole social process"\textsuperscript{24} of producing meanings of and from our social experience, expressing present circumstances as much as a shared past. It dissolves differences between subject and object and constructs each in relation to

\textsuperscript{20} Gilroy (1987), p. 228-229.
\textsuperscript{21} Laclau and Mouffe (1985), p. 144.
\textsuperscript{22} For a brief review of developments in social geography, especially concerning classism, patriarchy, racism and nationalism, see Smith (1990).
\textsuperscript{24} Raymond Williams' (1977) terminology.
the other, in what Geertz termed a web of meaning or significance. Culture represents a way of literally 'making sense' of the world.

In the chapters which follow, I shall pursue a view of culture informed by both materialist and interactionist positions. In doing so I am rejecting the idealist conception of culture rooted in the anthropological writings of Kroeber and Lowie, and Carl Sauer's Berkeley tradition. Yet I am also distancing myself from traditional instrumentalist positions, such as that advocated by the Frankfurt School of critical sociology. They, for example, viewed culture as a rather monolithic entity controlled by elites, which manipulates and homogenises its participants, rendering them mere cultural dupes. Rather, I would suggest, culture may be thought of as "the very medium through which social change is experienced, contested and constituted".

In his influential work, Marxism and Literature, Raymond Williams argued that if critical social theory is to capture the internal contradictions and dynamic processes which constitute capitalist society, it must recognise the indissoluble connections between "material production, political and cultural institutions and activities, and consciousness." In relating this "whole social process," which constitutes the cultural realm, to "specific distributions of power and influence," Williams recalled Antonio Gramsci's use of the concept of hegemony. Thus Williams proffered 'culture' as "practically organised by specific

26 Geertz (1973).
27 See Duncan (1980) for a critique of such a position, in which culture is viewed as a 'superorganic' entity beyond the grasp of humans, not reducible to the actions of individuals, mysteriously responding to laws of its own.
29 Cosgrove and Jackson (1987), p. 95.
and *dominant* meanings and values."\textsuperscript{32} Cultural hegemony, he suggested, can be thought of as a spontaneous philosophy of society which so saturates social consciousness that it defines the very substance and limits of common sense.\textsuperscript{33} Yet Williams, careful not to slip into the instrumentalities and monolithism of other theorists, remarked that hegemony "does not passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own."\textsuperscript{34} Thus Williams indicates the importance of not over-emphasising the degree of coherence, integration and stability of contemporary society, and opens up the possibility of seeing resistance and alternative 'realities'.

However Williams was unwilling to let go of one of the central tenets of historical materialism -- the centrality of class. Therefore culture in his view was ultimately tied to "the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes".\textsuperscript{35} Ley and Olds, in criticising the locating of culture ultimately in economic relations, have stressed the importance of very real status dimensions which permeate society, such as race, gender, religion and lifestyle. Consequently, they envisage popular culture as the "turbulent and multilayered, heterogeneous and actively negotiated," encompassing oppositional elements or subcultures. These subcultures may be located within the mainstream of society, such as the liberal culture and politics of the new class over the last twenty years, or be found around the margins of society, such as youth or ethnic minority subcultures. Thus a variety of oppositional subcultures offer resistance and nurture continually negotiated "alternative realities" within capitalist society. So

\textsuperscript{32} Williams (1977), p. 109.
\textsuperscript{34} Williams (1977), p. 112.
\textsuperscript{35} Williams (1977), p. 100 [ my emphasis ].
any unitary view of culture gives way upon analysis to a "plurality of cultures" and associated identities. These are informed and invigorated by diverse social struggles stemming from the distribution of power within society, such as those focused around the interwoven social distinctions of class, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, locality, nationhood, and so on. Gilroy's analysis of dubbing, scratching and breakdancing amongst Britain's Black inner-city youth illustrates the playful, utopian celebration of the dynamism of city life, coupled with deconstructive, radical forms of signification. The rearrangement, often in an unconventional bricolage of forms allows an ironic or parodic interpretation of the music which challenges the taken-for-granted norms of mainstream society. The recent selective appropriation of these musical styles by white youth and the British music industry illustrates that, rather than the line between dominant and subordinate systems of values and practices being an impenetrable barrier, it may be thought of as a 'permeable membrane' through which alternative realities can penetrate to be selectively incorporated within the dominant culture. The act of incorporation is an intensely political one. The way in

38 Much controversy surrounds the use of the concept of 'ethnicity' within the literature on ethnic and race relations. Jackson (1989), p. 152-3 and Smith (1989), p. 13-14 have recently presented a set of arguments against using this term which they deem to be politically regressive. Smith argues that 'ethnicity' in the British context has become a euphemism for race, masking the problem of racism. Therefore she suggests that 'race' should be conceptually separated, and ethnicity then be subsumed beneath the term 'culture'. To me this position rings of ethnocentrism, ignoring the subtleties of the British context, where less than two hundred years ago the literature was replete with references to the 'Irish', 'Welsh' and 'Scottish' 'races'. Indeed, though now the belief in phenotypical differences between these groups may be on the wane, and the term 'ethnic' seems more appropriate, these monolithic labels still carry a host of prejudices and discriminatory practices with them in contemporary Britain. Therefore in line with Peach's (1983) opinion, I am subsuming race within ethnicity. Race may then be thought of as a very particular form of ethnic group, in which phenotypical characteristics have been culturally invested with social significance. As Michael Banton (1983) suggests, "peoples' physical appearance and history do not of themselves create groups. Only when they are given cultural significance do they become a basis for social organisation" (p.135).
which subcultural elements are appropriated by various competing sets of interests, and their radical potential constrained and negotiated, reflects wider struggles for economic, political, and cultural power. The construction of social identity within this 'lived dominance',\(^{40}\) provides a tangible realisation of the distribution of power within society. It only seems appropriate then to refer to a *cultural politics* of identity as a critical aspect of its social construction. This, as Bernstein notes, is not "the playing out of powerful forces that are always beyond our control ...... but a paradoxical situation where power creates counter-power (resistance) and reveals the vulnerability of power, where the very forces that undermine and inhibit communal life also create new, and frequently unpredictable, forms of [human] solidarity."\(^{41}\)

In recognising the dynamic, negotiable quality of social identity, the problematic nature of such social boundaries, characterised by degrees of ambiguity and fluidity of meaning, immediately becomes apparent.\(^{42}\) For indeed the nature of social identity "varies crucially with the social and structural pressures encountered in different situations, or in different political contexts."\(^{43}\) As a number of contemporary cultural studies have indicated,\(^{44}\) the formation and reformation of such social distinctions is a deeply contested phenomenon. However, the process of the negotiation of meaning between social groups can become sedimented into relatively permanent structures and relations of inequality, such as those embodied in the notion of 'race' in either the British or Canadian

\(^{40}\) Williams (1977), p. 100.

\(^{41}\) Bernstein (1983), p. 228.

\(^{42}\) Sibley (1988).


\(^{44}\) For example Cohen's (1982) analysis of the Notting Hill Carnival, Lipsitz's (1988) account of the Mardi Gras Indians in New Orleans, and Jackson's (1988) treatment of the Notting Hill Carnival as a dramatic/territorial metaphor of the cultural politics of 'race' and citizenship in contemporary Britain.
contexts, for example. Over time a discourse may develop around particular ideas, which reflect and reproduce existing power relations. Language, in simultaneously structuring and articulating human experience, plays a crucial role in structuring peoples' social and cultural identities. This act of intersubjective communication, can be thought of as taking place within linguistic communities, characterised by the metaphors members invent, the meanings they share, the symbols they create, the myths they believe, and the ideologies they possess.45 These coalesce in a particular form of life to provide a collective sense of identity.46

Yet such speech practices are not isolated entities, for they are dialogically interrelated forms of conceptualising social experience, set amidst a competition for ascendancy amongst the various idioms of different classes, races, genders, localities, and so on. As such, language cannot be thought of as a 'prison house', but rather as "a collective instrument ...... an arena for struggle."47 In saying this, I take care to stress that the problematic nature of social identity cannot be reduced to a political struggle over language to the exclusion of context, action and structure. Rather the meanings of the social categories employed, must always be, as Foucault's provocative analyses of prisons48 and the human body49 suggest, related to the material world from which they derive their significance. As Foucault suggested, "the individual, with his (sic) identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power

45 Alan Pred (1989), in employing a textual strategy in which he disrupted the conventional narrative thereby symbolically problematising the taken-for-granted, commented: "the practices of language within any given place are saturated with ideology / to the extent the culturally arbitrary classifications of the world they impose // become second nature, taken for granted, unexamined // regarded as being incapable of being otherwise, / to the extent their modes of representation order knowledge, limit ways of seeing, / provide certain perceptions while 'rendering others unthinkable, aberant or extreme'" (p. 220).
46 Harrison and Livingstone (1982).
48 Foucault (1979).
49 Foucault (1980b).
exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires and forces".50

Identity. Place

"Would not conversation be much more rational than dancing?" said Jane Austin's Miss Bingley. "Much more rational," replied Mr. Bingley, "but much less like a ball".

[Jane Austin 'Pride and Prejudice', quoted by Lewis (1979) p.40]

The last few years have witnessed a surge of interest in the bringing together of, what have been termed, the geographical and sociological imaginations.51 For some, the post-modern challenge for the social sciences lies in exploring a vocabulary of human proportions, key terms being contextuality, diversity, meaning, experience and the peculiarity of place. Indeed a number of geographers have begun to reconceptualise previously taken-for-granted social categories through exploring the significance of place and territory in the shaping of social life.52 For social groups often actively create a 'sense of place', investing "the material environment with symbolic qualities such that the very fabric of the landscape is permeated by and caught up in the active social world."53

Such 'place-linked identities' may find their expression through sacred

51 See Agnew and Duncan (1989) for a recent collection of articles devoted to this theme.
52 For example see Massey's (1984) pioneering work on the spatial division of labour, and Wolch and Dear's (1988) edited collection.
buildings, monuments, place-names, and street aesthetics, or through rituals, ceremonies, carnivals, festivals and parades. As Boal's work on the highly politicised communities of West Belfast cogently illustrates, these forms of cultural expression in the landscape play an important role in the establishment, preservation and development of group identity and solidarity. Plagued by the economic, political and cultural uncertainties of everyday life in Northern Ireland, communities such as the working class Roman Catholic, and Protestant Shankill districts are clearly demarcated by graffiti, the symbolic painting of curbstones, wall and gable-end murals, bunting and national flags. Separated by a reinforced concrete wall, euphemistically named the 'Peace Line', the endurance of the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland, and the embellishment of such territories testify to the rootedness of social struggle in 'place'.

Ley and Cybriwsky, in their analysis of urban graffiti as territorial markers in inner city Philadelphia, commented, "to define a small space one's own permits a higher level of social control to be maintained, by surveillance, by restricting entry to recognised friends, and by limiting the range of acceptable behaviour within the area. Establishing the territory generates security [both cultural and physical]; maintaining or embellishing it guarantees status". The entrenchment of such territories or 'turfs' within the landscape plays a crucial role in social reproduction. For such turfs are reciprocally and recursively engaged in the making and remaking of the social and symbolic order within which they gain their meaning and significance. For the processes and mechanisms by which people establish, maintain and defend 'places' are implicated within the negotiation of power, status and identity within

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54 Rapoport (1981), p. 18 [See also Rapoport (1969)].
56 Ley and Cybriwsky (1974).
Frank Parkin's conceptual framework of 'dual closure' helps to capture the way social collectivities, in the struggle for access to both the material and symbolic resources embodied in 'place', frequently resort to strategies of usurpationary closure against the state, and political and economic elites (and vice-versa). This may be combined with strategies of exclusionary closure against less organised groups. The institutionalisation of such a pattern of beliefs and practices has been illustrated in Susan Smith's work on the complex relations in postwar Britain between racial residential segregation and the development of public policy. Smith's account suggests, the meaning of racial segregation in the United Kingdom's liberal democracy lies in the system of apportionment of residential space, "where the niceties of cultural preference are overlaid with the stark realities of a struggle for privilege and power."

To briefly summarise my argument, a place may be regarded as, "a negotiated reality, a social construction by a purposeful group of actors. But the relationship is mutual, for places in turn develop and reinforce the identity of the social group that claims them." By way of example, in the Canadian context, Kay Anderson's thesis on the making and remaking of Vancouver's 'Chinatown', illustrates how the process of racial categorisation can be directly translated into a politics of place. Anderson examined the evolution of the idea of 'Chinatown' in public policy discourse over the last two centuries in British Columbia, tracing the way in which the area was perceived within the dominant white European culture, firstly as a source of threat with 'outsider' status, then a slum, and finally as an 'ethnic'

57 Gold (1982).
58 Parkin (1979).
61 Anderson (1986).
neighbourhood. She demonstrates the remarkable social force and material effect these images played in shaping and justifying a host of discriminatory practices by various powerful institutions toward people of Chinese origin. In focussing on the idea of 'Chinatown' as part of the dominant white European tradition, she shows how "the space of knowledge called Chinatown grew out of, and came to structure, a politically divisive system of racial discourse that justified domination over people of Chinese origin."62

In a different vein, Sally Marston's work on the Irish in nineteenth-century Lowell, Massachusetts, illustrates the collective benefits that may be accrued from the political mobilisation of the resources embodied in an ethnic neighbourhood. From the first arrival of the Irish in Lowell in 1822, they tended to live apart from the dominant, wealthier Yankee population, deemed outcasts in a Yankee dominated society. Spatially and socially segregated from the majority of Lowell society, the Irish community's wide array of local ethnic voluntary associations was to prove a powerful influence in the aspirations and beliefs of the community. Often meeting in local saloons and corner pubs, organisations such as the Ancient Order of Hiberniaus, the Irish Benevolent Society, and the Young Men's Catholic Library Association provided the media through which everyday life flowed. Though initially such associations helped the Irish to adjust to urban life, in time as the associations became dominated by the Irish middle class, they proved crucial to the evolution of local politics. Increasingly these local associations became a vehicle for expanding personal and business contacts, facilitating upward social, economic, and political mobility. They played a critical role as a base for political struggle, successfully challenging their subordinate position in Lowell society and eventually gaining control over local political resources with the election of the first Irish Mayor to the City Council in 1881. Marston

concludes that the power of place in her case-study, was constituted "through shared experiences, values, beliefs and institutions, the Irish develop[ing] an effective political consciousness that sought to challenge their disadvantage." 63 What Marston and these other authors have conveyed in their empirical investigations, is the rootedness of human experience in 'place', and the constitutive role it plays in the process of identity (re-)formation. As Agnew and Duncan advocate, 'place' "serves as a constantly re-energised repository of socially and politically relevant traditions and identity which serves to mediate between the everyday lives of individuals on the one hand, and the national and supra-national institutions which constrain and enable those lives, on the other." 64

Identity. Place. Power and the Text.

Tfesting his images he assumes their relevance;  
Mistrusting my images I question their relevance.  
Assuming their relevance he assumes the fact;  
Questioning their relevance I question the fact.  

[Robert Graves, In Broken Images.]

As mentioned in the previous section, as social groups participate in the politics of 'writing' spaces and places, they often invest the material environment with symbolic qualities. The task of recovering the relationship between identity and the landscape has been an important theme in humanistic geography in

particular. However the treatment of the idea of landscape within this literature has often been criticised for focusing exclusively either on the subjective aspects of human experience, or the task and techniques of production. Drawing partly upon a materialist tradition, Denis Cosgrove, among others, has sought to reinsert the concept of landscape into contemporary political and ideological debates. For example, he has traced how the concept developed as a bourgeois 'way of seeing' during the 15th and 16th centuries amidst the spirit of Renaissance humanism, and was implicated in the exercise of power over the land.\(^{65}\) In tracing these connections, Cosgrove has sought to uncover some of the ideological and material underpinnings of the concept. In so doing, he has opened up a set of questions about the society within which a landscape image is created, maintained and transformed, and the social identity of those who claim it, that hitherto had remained unasked in traditional approaches within human geography.

Partly what makes this line of research so fruitful in gaining fresh insights, and yet at the same time so problematic, is that as a linguistic statement, the meaning of the symbols and codes of which the landscape image is composed is not directly referential to some immutable, 'real' world. For though the role of landscape, as a major repository of symbols of social status, in both the public and private domain, is well attested to within the literature,\(^{66}\) it is not possible to map each symbolic component directly onto one 'real', 'authentic' meaning. From the work of Saussure, linguistic structuralists and poststructuralists,\(^{67}\) it has become apparent that the meaning of a symbol is not...

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\(^{65}\) Cosgrove (1985a).

\(^{66}\) Duncan's (1973) Alpha and Beta landscapes illustrate landscape taste as a symbol of group identity and social status, whilst Pratt's (1981) comparative study of home interior decoration in two Vancouver elite neighbourhoods strikingly shows the complex of values and practices embodied in 'taste' as expression of two contrasting social worlds.

\(^{67}\) For a useful introduction to this literature see Eagleton (1983), and for an application within geography Duncan and Duncan (1988).
derived from some one-to-one correspondence with its object of reference in the 'real' world. Rather the meanings of such signs depend directly upon conventional systems of relations among other signs. Hence the relationships between signs, signifiers and 'real world' objects that are signified (ie. the image and reality), are intensely problematic. The play of codes and symbols in the landscape image presents a deceptive appearance of naturalness and transparency to the onlooker, concealing an opaque, distorting, arbitrary mechanism of representation. Barthes, in taking this line of argument to its ultimate conclusion, argues that the image and myths with which the landscape is imbued, represent an "empty site of eternally open signification."68

Cosgrove and Daniels have, to my mind, rightly eschewed such hyperrelativism which has marked some of the excesses of the post-modern debate.69 For when such images are grounded by a group of actors in the process of social interaction, and are anchored to discrete social groups, it then becomes possible to trace their meaning by considering their conjuncture with other images. Such images create, transform and reconstitute space to suit human ideas of truth, justice, beauty, harmony, fear and so on, often representing a deeply contested inner world of competing meanings and experiences as if purged of ambiguity and alternative possibility. Consequently, as Cosgrove has forcibly argued, the study of symbolic landscapes becomes one of "the ways of seeing and representing" the world, of patterning, composing, framing and organising space into an image.70 The degree to which the image is commonly understood and its system of values expressed in it, reflects the power of the ideologies

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68 As quoted in Duncan (1990a).
69 See the introduction to Cosgrove and Daniels (1988).
with which it is deeply imbued.\textsuperscript{71} For in serving to 'naturalise' social reality, it acts as "a kind of contemporary mythology."\textsuperscript{72}

Yet in the meeting of the producers and consumers of a landscape, people seldom swallow a given ideology whole. For in its widest sense as a lived experience, ideology is often absorbed only partially, people simultaneously holding onto contradictory ideas and practices.\textsuperscript{73} In this way the creation and embellishment of the meaning of a landscape may be thought of as subject to a process of negotiation, often incorporating an ambiguous synthesis of redemptive and manipulative qualities.\textsuperscript{74} For although a landscape's meaning may incorporate ideas and values that cherish notions of human freedom and fulfillment, nevertheless the necessary partial nature of such visions of society direct attention away from the more complex and wider set of social relations within which the image is constituted. However the power of these images lies in the knowledge for their participants of the consequences should they be broken. It could be argued that this power may be wielded proportionately to "the cumulative praxis invested in them, and to the extent that that praxis was itself structured."\textsuperscript{75} For the image, in its creation, endurance and meaning, incorporates a contested set of relations of power and authority -- at once cultural and economic, aesthetic and practical.\textsuperscript{76} Thus as a visual statement, the landscape image is constantly open to challenge, alteration, reinterpretation and endless further annotations.

In many ways, this is why the appeal to hermeneutics, and employing the analogy of 'landscape as text' seems to provide such an interesting way

\textsuperscript{72} Eagleton (1983), p.135
\textsuperscript{73} For example see Pratt's (1989a) critique of incorporation theory, and Ley and Olds' (1988) study on the exercise of cultural hegemony and Vancouver's 1986 World Fair.
\textsuperscript{74} Daniels (1989).
\textsuperscript{75} Kobayashi (1989), p. 173.
\textsuperscript{76} Cosgrove (1989).
through which to trace out but one terrain over which ideas about social, economic, and cultural life are fought. In employing such a self-consciously representational metaphor as 'text', it becomes clear that the plurality or ambiguity of meaning of the landscape does not depend upon its contents, but upon the plurality of signifiers that weave it (ie. its intertextual origins). Therefore landscape interpretation can be likened to the process of 'reading', in which we are constantly moving between "backgrounds' and 'foregrounds', different narrative viewpoints, [and] alternative layers of meaning."\(^7^7\) However, as Duncan and Duncan have pointed out, this realm of interacting texts cannot be divorced from the historical, social and political processes by which interpretations of a text are negotiated, contested, maintained and transformed.\(^7^8\) Given the unstable nature of meaning, the act of 'reading' a landscape becomes a political one, our interpretations being the product of specific historical and social contexts and related cultural discourses. 'Readings' may be thought of as constructed by interpretative communities,\(^7^9\) which frequently, but not always, reflect hegemonic value systems.

In further pursuing this metaphor, in the production and consumption, maintenance and transformation of a landscape, various social groups may mobilise around particular readings of the landscape and attempt to make theirs the dominant, 'focused' one.\(^8^0\) In mobilising around, promoting and living through a particular textual model, a group may seek to 'naturalise' their view of

\(^{77}\) Eagleton (1983), p. 77-78.
\(^{78}\) For a useful review of some of the salient literature and brief empirical applications, see Duncan and Duncan (1988).
\(^{79}\) Duncan and Duncan (1988), p. 120.
the world. Ley's interpretation of the emerging politico-cultural landscapes of two redevelopment projects in inner Vancouver presents a concrete illustration of this. To the north of False Creek lies an instrumental landscape of neo-conservatism -- a monument to modern technology, the internationalisation of rational, instrumental planning and corporate engineering. In contrast on the southern shore lies an expressive landscape of liberal reform in which attempts were made to be sensitive to the needs of people and the specificities of particular places. These two emerging landscapes, both initiated by different levels of the government, contrast the boosterist, growth strategies of a neo-conservative, corporatist provincial government with the liberal reform oriented municipal government's vision of a 'livable city', dominated by the interests and expressive values of a cultural new class.

Thus the contested definition of a landscape, can be thought of as a 'symbolic drama' serving a larger purpose of power, domination, exploitation, and resistance. In bringing to bear deconstructivist and interpretative methodologies to the study of landscapes, it becomes possible to construct ethnographies of their meaning, tracing the interaction between landscape imagery, social identity, interests and context. In recovering the multiplicity of landscape images and the social processes which underly them, such a contextualist approach enters a realm of moral discourse set amidst a wider social and political struggle for the production of meaning. This theme I shall presently develop in the context of the contested definition of an elite landscape on Vancouver's West Side, illustrating the interrelated domain of ideas and interests rooted in the spatiality of social life.

In the chapters which follow I shall focus upon both the local and wider

81 Ley (1987).
significance of landscape change in Kerrisdale's single-family residential area. In particular I shall consider the conflicting sets of values and interests rooted in class and ethnic relations which have invigorated and mediated the transformation of this landscape. In chapter two, after briefly identifying the focus of my thesis and situating it in its wider contemporary context, I shall outline the methodologies I employed in my research before proceeding to trace out the historical backdrop upon which present changes are occurring. Having broadly sketched the process whereby 'Kerrisdale' as an elite, Anglo-Canadian enclave came into being, chapter three will concentrate on residents' perception of change, the arguments they publicly articulated for the landscape's preservation, and the way in which the local civic government responded to the rising chorus of demands for state intervention, from what has traditionally been an influential community in city politics. This shall lead on to a more detailed discussion in chapter four, of the nature of neighbourhood change, and the significance of the changing wider social context in which the neighbourhood politics of Kerrisdale are set.
Chapter Two

Kerrisdale: The First Gloss

Introduction

Since the early 1980s, an influx of both migrants and capital into the British Columbian economy from abroad and elsewhere in Canada, though temporarily dampened during the recession of 1982-5, has contributed to an investment boom in Vancouver's property market (graph 1).\(^1\) This has been associated with a low vacancy rate for rental units, rising rents, the replacement of relatively cheap low-rise apartment buildings with expensive condominium developments, rising property values and taxes, and the redevelopment of single-family residential neighbourhoods, in what many have perceived to be a 'housing crisis'.\(^2\) These have stimulated demands on behalf of those adversely affected for government intervention by tenants' groups, anti-poverty groups, and a variety of ad hoc, predominantly middle-class, neighbourhood based associations.

Vancouver's West Side (fig. 1), traditionally regarded as one of the

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\(^1\) The increasing pressure on Vancouver's housing resources during the 1970's and 1980's must also be viewed in the context of British Columbia's shifting demographic structure and significant lifestyle changes that together have profoundly affected the nature of housing demand over the last two decades. A shortage of available land to build upon, and the designation of approximately 70% of the city's area for single-family residential use have imposed severe constraints upon meeting housing needs as they have evolved during the 1980's. For a discussion of some of these features of the housing situation in Vancouver, see the City of Vancouver Planning Department's published collection of reports to council, July 1989, and Hulchanski (1989).

\(^2\) Stanbury and Todd (1990), pp. 1.
Graph (1): Historical Growth Of Vancouver's Population

Source: Census of Canada, 1961-1986
FIG. 2: STREET MAP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF KERRISDALE

(source: author)
city's most stable and expensive suburbs, has not escaped some of the consequences of this flurry in real estate investment activity. This is well exemplified in Kerrisdale, a middle-class neighbourhood, which has experienced quite dramatic changes over the last ten years. Composed of a small commercial and apartment district, surrounded by single-family residential housing (fig. 2), members of both the area's residential and business communities have voiced concerns and fears about the nature of redevelopment within their locality. The eviction and relocation of elderly renters from apartment complexes marked for expensive redevelopment projects illustrated the pace and associated trauma of change in very human terms. This issue in particular prompted the formation of a neighbourhood based citizen's group, Concerned Citizen's For Affordable Housing, with the aim of urging the municipal government to implement demolition controls, and provide more affordable housing for the area's senior citizens. Meanwhile, the area's small-business association voiced concern over substantial increases in their business taxes as the amount levied by the municipal government rose in accordance with their rising property values. They also protested about what they perceived to be an unwelcome encroachment into the retail district of a significant number of financial and real estate offices.

In addition, single-family dwellings have undergone a rapid turnover in ownership, often associated with the demolition of the existing structures and construction of new architectural styles. Despite the increase in investment

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3 Fig. 1 shows the neighbourhood as designated by the City of Vancouver's Planning Department. However locally the neighbourhood is generally regarded to cover a more extensive area, whose outer limits are 37th. Avenue, Granville Street, 64th. Avenue, and Collingwood Street (see Fig 2).
4 Ho (1989).
6 Vancouver Sun, January 10th, 1986, p.A9 "Finance firms' drawn drapes called curtains for Kerrisdale."
potential accrued to local residents as property values have dramatically escalated, residents have expressed their opposition about the nature of redevelopment, both on an individual basis and through the collective voice of homeowner associations. In particular homeowners have mobilised around the interrelated issues of the building of new architectural styles (which have been locally dubbed 'monster houses') and the associated loss of trees and shrubs (plate 9). It is the transformation of the landscape of the single-family residential zone that I shall presently focus on. However before discussing the current contested definition of Kerrisdale's landscape, I shall begin by briefly outlining the methodologies employed in my research and the variety of sources upon which the following account draws. Then I shall provide a sketch of the historical backdrop upon which neighbourhood changes are occurring. Firstly I shall concentrate on the period between 1900 and 1930 when the broad lineaments of the district's single-family residential character were defined, and then briefly review some of the subsequent historical markers which to my mind illustrate the affirming and evolution of a place called 'Kerrisdale' as an elite, Anglophile suburb.

Methodology

The following investigation draws upon a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, brought together in a theoretically informed manner, thereby attempting to produce a relational, contextual form of understanding, sensitive to both the specifications of place, and at the same time the broader social context within which Kerrisdale also gains its meaning. Attempting to piece together both visible facts and less visible meanings, I at first ambitiously set out to portray the transformation of Kerrisdale's landscape from a variety of perspectives, encompassing the ideas and interests of the old and new consumers of the
landscape, its producers and the state. In the broad nature of neighbourhood change, I drew upon a variety of statistical data sources, such as published census material, street directories, assessment rolls, real estate sales, immigration statistics, and electoral results. The broad patterns and trends which these sources suggested were further augmented by a streetscape survey conducted in the neighbourhood as designated by a local homeowners' association. This survey mapped changes in ownership, architectural form and noted a variety of institutions involved in the transformation of Kerrisdale.

This was to lay the groundwork for a more intensive study of a variety of qualitative sources at hand. Letters and various submissions on file at the City Clerk's office, planning department reports, City Council meeting records and observations gathered while attending a number of the public hearings surrounding the 'monster' house issue provided valuable insights into the way in which the variety of actors involved in the public debate defined the situation. In addition I conducted a search for the years 1981-1990 of the B.C. Newspaper index under a variety of headings such as 'Kerrisdale', 'Vancouver Housing', 'Race Relations', 'Immigration' and 'B.C. economic relations' noting the details of local media coverage and the many letters sent to the editors. Finally in addition to archival sources, and a variety of local community publications, I conducted a number of informal interviews with residents, planning department officials, members of a local homeowner association and the designers, builders and real estate agents involved in the transformation of Kerrisdale. Being dependent upon the willingness of those involved to participate in my study, my endeavours were frustrated by a number of interested parties who for a combination of reasons stemming from political sensitivities, financial interests at stake, and time constraints declined to be interviewed. Consequently, the voices of the owners of the 'monster' houses and those designing and marketing these new homes have been partly pushed to the background of my account since I had to rely more
heavily on secondary sources in dealing with the roles of these groups of actors. Thus the account which follows concentrated more upon the perception of neighbourhood change amongst established residents, the variety of arguments they publicly articulated for the preservation of the existing landscape and the mediating role of the state. Finally, this account sets all of these different elements within their wider context.

The First Gloss

Take hold of the shaft of the pen.
Subscribe to the first step taken
from a justified line
into the margin.

[Seamus Heaney, Station Island (1984)]

To walk around Kerrisdale's single-family residential area, and observe some of the older architectural styles dating from around the 1920s, set in a well controlled landscape of trees and open spaces (plates 5-7), and to take note of the very names of the streets, is to enter a landscape imbued with myth. For it represents, I suggest, a poetic terrain, recalling a very specific interpretation of the area's history and selective appropriation of the past. For example, place names, such as 'McCleery', 'MacKenzie', and 'Kerrisdale' itself, recall a distinctly British pioneering heritage. Few markers, with the exception of the nearby Musqueam Native Indian reserve, are left to remind us that there were others who claimed this territory before white European settlement. As well,

7 The significance of the celebration of place names, a tradition of bardic origins known as Dinsenchus, has not been lost on some of the local chroniclers of Kerrisdale's history. For example see A.G. Harvey's article 'Call it Kerrisdale!' (1942) in the Vancouver City Archives file no. M4889-1, and Edwards (1955).

8 The neighbourhood is reputed to have been named by a CPR official after the birth place of one of the district's early settlers from the British Isles. It was originally called Kerry's Dale after its namesake in Gairloch, Scotland, later corrupted to 'Kerrisdale'.

names such as 'Angus' recall the major role of the CPR in Kerrisdale's development, 'Yewbrook' and 'Maple Grove' its carefully fashioned pastoral image, whilst 'Balaclava' and 'Blenheim' commemorate famous British battles which by tradition recall a struggle for nationhood and Empire. In the making of Kerrisdale as an affluent suburban neighbourhood, I argue, the interweaving of a dominant set of shared ideas and interests rooted in class, ethnic, and lifestyle relations in the context of early twentieth century British Columbia, produced a very distinctive landscape. In many ways it came to reflect the social order of its times, its symbolic qualities being permeated by, and caught up in, the contemporary contested world of politics, economics and culture. This I shall now briefly illustrate through a sketch of the neighbourhood's historical development as part of the suburbanisation of Point Grey as a whole.

On January 11th., 1908, the first elected Reeve of the newly created municipality of Point Grey (Fig. 1), Sammuel Howe (plate 2), proudly extolled his vision for the fledgling city of Vancouver, and his municipality in particular, commenting:

"The importance of the municipality which we have the honour to represent as the first council would be hard to overestimate, lying as it does alongside the great city of Vancouver which is destined to become the Liverpool of Canada and the metropolis of the Canadian Pacific coast for all time to come, and whose fast growing population will soon overflow her boundaries and quickly convert this municipality into a thickly settled and most beautiful residential district."9

This speech came after the Point Grey peninsula had been transformed by logging operations, experienced fifteen years or so of rapid industrial growth, and recently undergone a small scale housing boom (plate 3), upon which the municipality had seceded from its tenuous association with the predominantly working class municipality of South Vancouver. The Reeve's reference to the

9 As quoted in Edwards (1955), p. 30 [my emphasis added].
British Isles, and his confident economic and political ambitions for this Canadian city, reflected intertwined imperial and boosterist sentiments that were shared amongst many of the city's institutions and newly arrived inhabitants at this time. The municipality's population grew from between 2-300 in 1908 to over 35,000 in 1929, the year it amalgamated with the City of Vancouver. The political heartland of the municipality was Kerrisdale, and though the history of the neighbourhood's residential development has been sporadic and uneven, common themes can be traced with remarkable consistency. They reflect the combination of people, capital, and ideas from in particular the British Isles, with West-Coast American building technology, design, marketing systems and experience, in the creation of a landscape characterised by detached single-family houses, individual home ownership and a pervasive suburban theme.

Deryck Holdsworth's work on the emergence of the West Coast urban landscape from 1886 to 1929 clearly documents the important role of the Canadian Pacific Railway company (CPR) and several other corporations and syndicates (chiefly based in Eastern Canada, the U.S.A. and the British Isles), in ensuring the development of Vancouver's West Side as a middle-class suburb. Despite the characteristically periodic nature of the influx of migrants into the city, these institutions not only exercised control over the pace of development through the strategic timing of the release of parcels of land to maintain market value, but also stipulated conditions of sale that ensured the minimum value of the house and building design standards. By way of illustration, the Royal Trust Company, acting on behalf of the CPR, sold a vacant lot on Marguerite Street in

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Kerrisdale to an Elma Catheryne Boyce in 1924, stipulating in the deed of sale that the site could not be resold or subdivided for ten years thence. In addition, it could only be used for the construction of a one household private dwelling, the site and general architectural design of which had to be approved by an officer of the CPR prior to construction, and finally its value had to be at least five thousand dollars. The requiring of such terms and conditions in special covenants by a number of land owners, helped to ensure from as early as the turn of the century the affluent future of Point Grey as a residential district. For example, by 1909 Kerrisdale's street directory recorded in addition to a number of farmers, twenty-three managers and professionals, and six unclassified residents, and only three labourers.

The development of the inter-urban railway and streetcar systems between 1910 and 1920 connecting the municipality with Vancouver, marked the beginning of a significant growth in the intensity of real estate investment activity. However the close connections and sense of cooperation between developers and the local council, ensured the area was set aside for predominantly residential development. Indeed, through novel zoning by-laws, some of the earliest in Canada, the council systematically integrated open spaces with residences, and confined the spread of commercial and industrial land use, thereby creating the sense of an urban village. The municipality's zoning by-law of 1922 was later to be incorporated into British Columbia's Town Planning Act of 1927, when similar measures were adopted elsewhere in the province. The council also proved instrumental in soliciting public funds for the construction of roads, sewers, a

14 These details were taken from the title deeds of lot 3, sub. of lot 8, block 3, sub. of D.L. 526, Group 1, New Westminster District, Map 4695. Source: B.C. Land Registry Office.
16 Bartholomew (1928).
water system, sidewalks, landscaping and parks. In fact, even before the municipality had been incorporated, the Point Grey Improvement Association had sought support for a public park, a marine driveway, and the contracting of a landscape surveyor to plan the unsurveyed portions of the area.\textsuperscript{17} With the municipality's secession from South Vancouver, developers such as Alvo von Alvensleben, encouraged the council to implement policies to guide the development towards the creation of a naturalistic environment, one which drew upon contemporary notions of British suburban developments infused with an elitist spirit of liberalism.\textsuperscript{18} Demonstrating this theme's popular currency at the time, contemporary marketing strategies for vacant lots for sale drew on these ideas. One such advertisement exemplifies this well, suggesting that a sense of harmony between nature and people was an important step towards social improvement:

"Nature has done for Point Grey, in the matter of location, topography and environment, what no efforts of man could have accomplished, to make it a perfect residential section. It only remained for man to provide such necessary improvements as roads, water, sewers, etc. (which is rapidly being done), to make Point Grey occupy the same relation in regard to Vancouver as such fashionable residential districts as Westmount to Montreal, Rosedale to Toronto."\textsuperscript{19}

The pursuit of this naturalistic theme appealed directly to an Anglo-elite\textsuperscript{20} as suggested in the quotation's reference to the upper-middle class neighbourhoods of Westmount and Rosedale. This 'English landscape' tradition was even reflected in the deliberate planting of an uneven screen of trees along the boulevards and

\textsuperscript{17} Roy (1980), p. 68.
\textsuperscript{18} Gibson (1971), p. 86.
\textsuperscript{19} An extract taken from an advertisement for Alvo von Alvensleben Ltd. of 774 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, placed in the July 1911 edition of the British Columbia Magazine, Vol. 7, no. 7.
\textsuperscript{20} See Porter (1965) for a discussion on the social significance of the Anglo-Celtic label in Canadian society, past and present.
streets of the area. In the same vain, a contemporary writer observed the seeming immensity of the task of developing Point Grey, which previously had been characterised as an under-utilised tract of "forests and stumps." He couched the process of landscape transformation in ways that conjure up allusions to a task of imperial proportions, commenting:

"Point Grey and Kerrisdale made rapid strides along the lines of civilisation. Work was being carried on in all parts of the municipality. Main thoroughfares were opened up and access given to all parts of the large district. Houses, modern and of pleasing appearance, sprang up. The work of colonisation had started."

Gibson has illustrated how "the spirit of Point Grey was supported by the corporate spirit of the CPR." His account of the Point Grey landscape at this time details the keen interest the company showed in ensuring the way in which the district developed. For the company had been granted considerable land holdings in the immediate vicinity and was intent upon realising the capital gain that rising property values would entail. In fact tax revenue from CPR land accounted for as much as one third of the municipality's total income by the end of the First World War. During the times when the municipal budget was under strain, the company was known to have advanced money to it. In addition it provided inexpensive public open space adjacent to new subdivisions for the provision of parks, and even donated land to the municipality, such as the three acres upon which the community centre was to be erected. The company also helped finance a number of elite recreational facilities and social clubs in the locality, such as the Shaughnessy Golf Club and the Vancouver Tennis Club.

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23 Paton (1911), p. 735.
25 See Gibson (1971), p. 87 for details on the strong connections between socially prominent
In 1912 the CPR commenced work on laying out a new elite subdivision of large lots, directly to the north of Kerrisdale, called Shaughnessy Heights (Fig. 1). This was to become the model of "suburban splendour" upon which subsequent residential development in the Point Grey municipality, and Kerrisdale in particular, was to be largely modelled. A central image was pursued throughout -- a pastoral theme, drawing on a romanticised notion of the English countryside. This drew on the Tudor Revival and Arts and Crafts movements of late nineteenth century Britain, in which a revival of a romanticised country-house tradition was recreated in the peripheral parts of nineteenth century English cities. The Tudor Revival was characterised by the half-timbered motif whilst the Arts and Crafts interpretation of an English farmhouse was distinguished by rough stucco surfaces, buttress-like sloping end-walls and exaggerated roof lines (Plates 6-7). Duncan and Duncan, in tracing the origins of the 'English landscape' tradition in the British Isles and its adoption in North American cities have argued that as successive social and political elites have claimed it for their own in a variety of contexts, so the meaning of the symbols employed have continually been replaced or modified by new meanings. Such changes are complex they argue, leaving contradictions between artifact and use, meaning and behaviour. They suggest that the popularity of these architectural movements in Britain can be variously interpreted. At one level it represented the proclamation amongst a new industrial elite of an urban 'aristocracy'. Yet it also is represented in a yearning for an idealised rural past, symbolising and concretising a critique

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Point Grey families and the city of Vancouver's elite social clubs such as the Terminal City Club and the Georgia Club. As the district grew in population and prominence, so it monopolised the suburbanisation of such elite social clubs.

26 Holdsworth (1981).
27 Duncan and Duncan (1984), p. 258. Holdsworth (1986) has noted the popularity of such designs in many American suburban developments, such as in Minneapolis, as well as suburbs such as Point Grey in the Anglo-Canadian context. They were made widely available and circulated in the form of building design pattern books.
of industrialism and bourgeois values amongst the English upper classes, in an attempt to return to an older, romanticised pre-industrial way of life. However as these styles were imitated and popularised amongst the middle and lower-middle classes, so the anti-bourgeois critique they emphasised was submerged beneath their status value as a derivation of an elite landscape. Thus what had been consecrated as the "aesthetic" by the holders of "the canons of good taste" in nineteenth century England, by the 1930s, had become designated in Britain's expanding 'bypass Tudor' suburbs as "kitsch." Yet, confirming the arbitrary nature of sign, in North America, and Vancouver in particular, this landscape model was appropriated as a symbol of privilege, high status and an anglophile tradition.

With the development of industrial society, the consumption of commodities such as a house has increasingly come to play an important role as a gatekeeping activity to social worlds, conferring social status as the material features of a commodity are subordinated to their symbolic potential. Shaughnessy Heights was marketed for an affluent clientele of home-buyers, such as barristers, managers, company owners and directors, and leading public servants. The prestige location and deliberately fashioned landscape recalled a distinctly 'British' Canadian cultural heritage. The set of symbols and codes with which the landscape image was composed represented a selective appropriation of the past to signify social distinction. It recalled a seemingly unchanging, highly romanticised 'Old Country', a tradition caught up in the collective destiny of, as a CPR advertisement suggested, "a world movement which will go on for

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30 Holdsworth (1986), p. 27.
A variety of architectural styles were called upon. For example Tudor Revival houses shared contoured, tree-lined streets with revivalist interpretations of rough-stuccoed English farmhouses, smooth-stuccoed and red-tiled Spanish Missions, gambrelled-roof Dutch Colonial farmhouses and even ostentatiously porticoed Georgian Mansions modelled after those in the American South. Largely mimicking the more elaborate examples in Shaughnessy, the broad 'Old English / Tudor Cottage' style became commonplace on Vancouver's West Side, distinguished by familiar features such as token half-timber gables and curved roof edges to resemble thatch (Plates 6-7). These were interspersed with a selection of the other popular designs, care being taken by builders to modify the basic house designs to create an appearance of individuality.

Though composed of smaller lots than the adjacent neighbourhood of Shaughnessy, Kerrisdale too pursued this central image of a "pastoral" theme and appeals to a preindustrial way of life. The familiar architectural styles were set in a well controlled landscape of curbs, sidewalks, deciduous trees and landscaped gardens. Together the producers and consumers of this landscape actively negotiated the meaning of Kerrisdale, for in the meeting of producers and consumers over style and symbolism, the resultant meaning of the landscape engaged the cultural codes of its consumers. Thus the various institutions involved in the transformation of Kerrisdale's landscape came to engage the meanings and values of its intended 'white' Anglophile, middle-class clientele. A contemporary real estate promotional article captures the sense in which the area

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32 Holdsworth (1986)
34 Mills (1988).
was targeted for a very specific clientele, remarking with then popular imperial and patriotic fervour:

"Homes alone indicate the extent and quality of citizenship. It is in them that patriotism is developed and cherished. The home is the heart, the life and the index of a city."\textsuperscript{35}

Table (1) showing the ethnic composition of Vancouver and Point Grey between 1911 and 1913 illustrates the dominance of Anglo-Canadians within the city during this period. The percentage of those of 'British' ethnic origin in the municipality of Point Grey is quite striking. However the proportion of those of 'Chinese' ethnic origin in the municipality may at first seem surprising, but we must take into account the fact that they would have been chiefly employed in the poorly paid resource industries clustered at the southern edge around Eburne, on the Fraser River. The industrial landscape of Eburne contrasted markedly with the 'pastoral' middle-class suburbs of Point Grey to its north. However, while the price of land and building restrictions in Point Grey precluded many from buying property there, and the production and marketing of the residential neighbourhoods appealed to a very specific, intended clientele, it is harder to ascertain to what extent direct exclusionary measures were employed to ensure the district's ethnic homogeneity. Whilst the municipal authority had no legal mandate to deny property rights to those socially defined as 'outsiders', often, according to Anderson, 'gentlemen's agreements' were established which prevented vendors either formally (ie. through the use of restrictive covenants) or informally selling property to those deemed socially 'undesirable'.\textsuperscript{36} In practice often Jews and those of Asian ethnic origin were thus

\textsuperscript{35} From a promotional article entitled 'Vancouver, a city of beautiful homes' for Vancouver Free Homes Ltd. in the December, 1911 edition of the \textit{British Columbia Magazine}, p. 1313-1315.

\textsuperscript{36}Anderson (1986) p. 212.
Table (1): Ethnic Composition Of The City Of Vancouver, 1911-1931.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals for the City of Vancouver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>115 652</td>
<td>163 220</td>
<td>246 593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% British</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>77.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Chinese</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipalities (amalgamated in 1929):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Vancouver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>95 206</td>
<td>117 217</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% British</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Chinese</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Vancouver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>16 126</td>
<td>32 267</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% British</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Chinese</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Grey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>4 320</td>
<td>13 736</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% British</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Chinese</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Canada, 1911-1931.

1 After the British Isles, the Chinese represented the next single largest ethnic group in the City of Vancouver for the years 1911 to 1931.
2 The municipality of Point Grey included the industrial settlement of Eburne, located on the northern shore of the Fraser River, near Granville street. This would account for the relatively high proportion of Chinese recorded in the census for 1911 and 1921.
singled out. Such discriminatory clauses in the titles of properties were employed right up until 1956, when a new Real Estate Act abolished their legal status. Anderson, in discussing the difficulty in assessing how widespread these practices were in Vancouver, noted Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy amongst those areas where it was common practice. Such institutionalised discriminatory practice reflected the current popularity of white supremacist views. These often taken-for-granted presuppositions were deeply embedded within the dominant culture of the time, and served to maintain and reproduce Anglophile privilege within the evolving social order of early twentieth century British Columbia.

Kerrisdale's Day

Between 1900 and 1920 Point Grey lagged well behind the initial frenetic pace of development experienced by its eastern neighbouring municipality of South Vancouver; however by the 1920's Point Grey underwent a construction boom, surpassing the rate of construction activity in South Vancouver (Table 2). Increasingly, as the remaining vacant lots in the city of Vancouver's well-to-do West End residential district were built upon, and its popularity declined, so Point Grey's popularity as a middle-class suburban development grew. The

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38 Ward (1989) comments: "Urban racial minorities congregated for several reasons - market factors, restrictive covenants, white community pressures, and group cohesiveness in particular. But whatever the explanation, this limited the possibility of interracial contact and simultaneously provided visual evidence of the racial frontiers in provincial society." p. 270 See also Ward (1978).
39 Roy (1989) in her account of the popularity of racist beliefs in British Columbia between 1900 and 1950 noted that in 1911 67.8% of British Columbia's population was classified by the official census of 'British' origin (i.e. including those born outside the British Isles), and by 1941 this had risen to 85%. Anderson (1986) provides more details on the nature of racism within the dominant white European culture in Vancouver at this time, in particular as this set of beliefs and practices applied to the 'Chinese'. She provides an enlightening account of the institutionalisation of racist beliefs and practices within state policy, and their subsequent evolution.
40 'Kerrisdale's Day' was a civic celebration held on 9th. July, 1936 to mark Vancouver's golden jubilee.
Table (2): Building permit data for the municipalities of Vancouver, Point Grey and South Vancouver, 1922-1926.41

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Permits Issued</th>
<th>Average Value of Permits $</th>
<th>Total Value of Permits $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Vancouver</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>1447</td>
<td>5480</td>
<td>7,932 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>4165</td>
<td>5,209 094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>1708</td>
<td>3205</td>
<td>5,477 898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>2049</td>
<td>3315</td>
<td>6,795 343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>2420</td>
<td>6010</td>
<td>14,541 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Grey</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>1080</td>
<td>3115</td>
<td>3,364 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>2880</td>
<td>2,397 750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>1242</td>
<td>3420</td>
<td>4,251 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1526</td>
<td>3330</td>
<td>5,080 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1581</td>
<td>3825</td>
<td>6,045 650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Vancouver</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>5,597 716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>712 275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>618 662</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>1185</td>
<td>1,032 790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1121</td>
<td>1240</td>
<td>1,390 590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

emerging landscape contrasted to that of South Vancouver (Table 2). Whilst also pursuing an image of a 'garden city' composed of low density, single-detached housing,42 South Vancouver's labour-dominated municipal council implemented fewer regulatory measures to control the nature of residential development. They raised money, and comparatively little at that, only on an ad hoc basis, for the provision of public amenities. In addition the average value of building permits issued in Point Grey between 1922 and 1926 was approximately three and a half times greater than that for South Vancouver. By 1930, shortly after these two municipalities had amalgamated with the city of Vancouver, the pattern of

41 Bartholomew (1928), p. 32.
residential development in Point Grey had become firmly established. In the years that followed until after the Second World War, the rate of population growth and spread of residential development sharply declined. By then the landscape image was most complete in the north-east section of the district, bounded by 41st. Avenue, Granville Street, 49th. Avenue and Cypress Street (Fig. 3).

In 1936, as part of Vancouver's Golden Jubilee celebrations, a day of festivities and parades was held in Kerrisdale. This in many ways symbolised the coming of age and establishment of a sense of community in what the official program called, an "ideal suburb" recently wrestled and transformed from a "tangled wilderness". As a social text, the assemblage of sporting events, exhibitions, parades, dances and concerts organised for the day is quite informative, drawing strongly upon Anglo-Canadian traditions. In many ways the day's festivities can be thought of as a public drama of the contemporary social relations within which they gain their meaning and significance. Lawn bowling, box lacrosse, baseball and basketball competitions were complemented by an exhibition championship tennis match, model aircraft exhibition, and finally a parade of decorated cars and bicycles accompanied by the RCMP piped band. In the evening a choral and orchestral concert opened with 'Land of Hope and Glory', to be followed by renditions of various musical pieces ranging from 'Vancouver, Favoured City', 'Colonel Bogey', 'Saddle your Blues to a Wild Mustang', to Hadyn's 'The Heavens are Telling'. Those credited with supporting the day's events in the form of sponsorship and their time, make up an

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43 City of Vancouver Planning Department (1978).
44 'Kerrisdale Jubilee Plans Formulated', May 1936. (City of Vancouver Archives, file no. 1936-104).
45 Quoted from the Kerrisdale Day Souvenir Program, 9th. July, 1936 (City of Vancouver Archives, file no. 1936-104).
impressive list of people seemingly well connected in Vancouver's established social circles at this time.

The highlight of the day's celebrations was to be a historical pageant written by a local resident especially for 'Kerrisdale's Day', and performed by a large cast drawn from the community. Whilst Mrs. Coterill's pageant may not have won any lasting recognition, it is worth briefly dwelling upon, as the themes it traced articulated many of the taken-for-granted values and practices embodied in Kerrisdale's emerging landscape. In many ways it vividly alluded to the identity of those who claimed this image of social 'reality'. This popular interpretation of the district's history dramatised the interwoven themes of exploration, discovery, pioneering, military prowess, achievement and a sense of progress. Of a listed cast of over 150 people, all except 5 had surnames of Anglo-Celtic derivation. The exceptions were of French origin. As well, band members from the local Musqueam Native Indian reserve, "howling like so many wolves" as the official program stated, participated in two early scenes that told of Simon Fraser's exploits. The pageant's prologue is worthy of quotation, for the British imagery employed, the sense of tradition, permanence, a struggle for a 'natural' destiny, and self-righteous ethnocentrism it is used to convey:

"We have no feudal castles old,
like eyries perched on high
Whence issues knights or barrens bold
To range and destroy,
But in their stead the Old World pours
Its streams of living men,
Its hearts afire along our shores,
To people hill and glen;
To battle through a nation's youth
Until, by heaven's grace,
We rise, in freedom and in truth,

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47 Kerrisdale Day Souvenir Program, 9th. July, 1936 (City of Vancouver Archives, file no. 1936-104).
Another British race. 48

In the passage of time the place called 'Kerrisdale', in turn developed and reinforced the identity of the social group that claimed it. The stability of the neighbourhood has been an important characteristic, and a number of locally spawned institutions involved in the recreational, business, social, educational and religious life of the community have played an important role in fostering a strong sense of local identity. As a predominantly middle-class ethnic community, Kerrisdale developed a remarkable level of what Breton has termed 'institutional completeness'. 49 To illustrate this point, by 1950 the community's educational needs were served in the immediate locality by four elementary schools and three high schools (including a private girls school), all of good academic reputation. 50 Its spiritual needs were catered for by over nine religious establishments, three of which belonged to the Anglican communion alone. A variety of community sports teams served the recreational needs of both young and old alike, whilst a number of youth organisations, such as the Boys and Girls Brigade and Scouting movements, played important roles in instilling and reproducing social values. In addition there were a number of associations such as a residents association, community centre association, a branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, a Masonic Lodge, and the Kiwanas. Plate 4, depicting the opening of the trolley-bus service between Vancouver and Kerrisdale illustrates the vibrant sense of community that these local institutions helped to foster. From time to time these groups have entered the political arena to safeguard and promote the various interests they claim to represent. In the postwar period they fulfilled critical roles in helping to mobilise

48 From the Kerrisdale Day Souvenir Program, 9th. July, 1936 (City of Vancouver Archives, file no. 1936-104).
49 Breton (1965).
community interests to provide more local amenities, such as an ice-rink (the largest such local community project for its time in Vancouver),\textsuperscript{51} a community centre and swimming pool.\textsuperscript{52} However, before discussing some of the more recent examples of the grassroots politics which have profoundly influenced the nature of the development of Kerrisdale, I will trace out the way in which the neighbourhood evolved during the post-war period up until the 1970's.

Since most of the single-detached housing in Kerrisdale was built over the relatively short period of time between 1920 and the Great Depression of the 1930s, the residential landscape displayed an impressive degree of coherence in form and styles. Kerrisdale originally developed amidst the spirit of early Twentieth century boosterism, characterised by a growth ethic and belief in progress. However, in time the culture of consumption and status values which gave substance in the landscape to the then dominant Anglophile culture's vision of the social order, came to dominate local political and social values. The social

\textsuperscript{51} See City Archives file no. M4889-1 for details on the protracted dispute between the Parks Board and a coalition formed from the local residents association and the Kerrisdale branch of the Kiwanas, over both the location, size and financing of the ice-rink.

\textsuperscript{52} The community centre was to be run by the Kerrisdale Community Centre Association under the auspices of the Parks Board, the cost of which would be partly subsidized by profits from the ice-rink, private subscriptions, and monies raised from two plebiscites. See 'Plans okayed for Kerrisdale Centre', 5th. Sept., 1953 (City of Vancouver Archives file no. M4890 : Kerrisdale Community Centre). Once completed, a library and indoor swimming pool were eventually added sometime later, after well publicised struggles between the Kerrisdale Community Association and both the Parks Board and municipal government for approval and funding of the association's proposals.

A promotional brochure explaining the function of the centre, published and circulated by the Kerrisdale Community Centre Association, gives us an insight into the socially and culturally defined norms which informed the gender roles associated at this time with this suburban 'ideal'. The \textit{Kerrisdale Busybody} (1956), in answering 'what is a community centre?' commented: "It is Mr. and Mrs. Kerrisdale's home ...... Father, the normal head of the house, here is the board of directors looking after the business administration. Mother is the Women's Auxiliary, having charge of the kitchen and domestic requirements of the house" (City of Vancouver Archives, file no. 1956-118). In 1961, with a high labour force ratio of 2.37 relative to a figure of 1.86 for Vancouver as a whole (tables 3-4), Kerrisdale clearly contained a high proportion of women employed as full-time homemakers. Whilst for the purposes of my thesis I am focusing on the class and ethnic dimensions of Kerrisdale's single-family residential landscape, the landscape can also be simultaneously seen as one symbolising and concretising a specific set of gender relations.
power represented and invested in this 'English' landscape model was illustrated as early as the late 1950s and early 1960s, when community protests were raised over what local residents deemed to be 'insensitive' in-filling of the few remaining vacant lots with one-storey ranch-style bungalows and split-levels (Plate 8). Yet by the mid-1960's the residential component of the neighbourhood had almost ceased to expand, reaching a population of 13,000 by 1966. In comparing Kerrisdale with the City of Vancouver during the 1960s (tables 3-4), the neighbourhood's residents continued to be disproportionately drawn from the managerial and professional occupations, incomes were above the city average (table 5), and the proportion of its population which had attended university was more than twice that of the city as a whole. Kerrisdale's ethnic composition remained predominantly Anglo-Celtic. This is somewhat striking when one takes into consideration the greater ethnic diversity which was increasingly coming to characterise the rest of the city. Indeed the community's demographic characteristics displayed a remarkable degree of stability between 1961 and 1971. Thus Kerrisdale's owner-occupied, single-detached, family and residential character remained intact over this period. In buying a property set amidst this now well-established middle-class suburban landscape, new residents, it would seem, bought into an associated lifestyle and set of status relations. However Table (3)

53 City of Vancouver Planning Department (1978).
54 Note: in tables 3 and 4, the proportion of the labour force in the managerial and professional occupational categories fell between 1961 and 1971 for both Kerrisdale and Vancouver. However during this time the actual numbers increased by 1.7% and 8.5% respectively. The relative decline in these occupations reflected broader structural shifts within the City of Vancouver's employment market as the service sector expanded and rose to increasing prominence. For more details, and an analysis of the enveloping political climate within which this took place, see Ley (1980). Symptomatic of this, between 1961 and 1971 the clerical labour force, which draws predominantly upon the female labour market, expanded quite dramatically by 28.7% for Kerrisdale and 45.6% for Vancouver. This in part accounts for the concomitant rise in the proportion of females in the labour force during the same period.
Table (3): Selected population characteristics of Kerrisdale, 1961-1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>12 231</td>
<td>13 410</td>
<td>12 170</td>
<td>12 355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Structure (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 0-14</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 15-19</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 20-34</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 35-54</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 55-64</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 65 and above</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of the labour force in managerial-professional occupational categories</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force ratio (m/f)</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of the population 15+ who have attended a university</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Isles</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>63.3 *</td>
<td>60.9 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European (incl. British Isles)</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>80.0 *</td>
<td>66.8 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiatic</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>8.2 *</td>
<td>11.9 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 See figure (1) for details of the area from which the statistic were drawn.
2 Categories included are managerial, administrative, natural sciences, engineering, mathematics, social sciences, arts, literary, teaching, leisure, medical, and health care services.
3 Note: the statistics for 1981 and 1986, marked by an asterix, are not comparable. Prior to 1980 ethnicity was traced through the male side of the family, whilst after 1981 respondents could trace it through both members of the family. In addition the figures available from 1981 exclude the inmate population. Finally, multiple-responses were collapsed into a single category prior to 1981. In 1981 only one other response was allowed, and by 1986 this was broadened to three. For both these years only single-response data has been given, representing 90.0 % and 60.0 % of all the responses for 1981 and 1986 respectively.
Table (3): continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<td>3860</td>
<td>4810</td>
<td>4875</td>
<td>5030</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of one person households</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of one family households</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of one family households</td>
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<td>3490</td>
<td>3110</td>
<td>3210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Family Size</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of households with total income of at least $50,000 (1981 dollars)1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single-detached</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owned</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>61.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of single-detached</td>
<td>2993</td>
<td>3015</td>
<td>3015</td>
<td>3035</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. owner-occupied</td>
<td>2975</td>
<td>3105</td>
<td>3100</td>
<td>3090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Residency (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 1 year</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 10 years</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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1 These percentages were calculated on the basis of 1981 dollars using the Implicit Price Index.
Table (4): Selected population characteristics of the City of Vancouver, 1961-1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>384,522</td>
<td>426,520</td>
<td>414,280</td>
<td>432,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Structure (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 0-14</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 15-19</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 20-34</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 35-54</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 55-64</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons 65 and above</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of the labour force in managerial-professional occupational categories</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force ratio (m/f)</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of the population 15+ who have attended a university</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Isles</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>40.5 *</td>
<td>31.7 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European (incl. British Isles)</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>66.6 *</td>
<td>43.8 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiatic</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>20.0 *</td>
<td>28.5 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Canada, 1961-1986. [Continued onto the next page]

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1 Categories included are managerial, administrative, natural sciences, engineering, mathematics, social sciences, arts, literary, teaching, leisure, medical, and health care services.

2 Note: the statistics for 1981 and 1986, marked by an asterix, are not comparable. Prior to 1980 ethnicity was traced through the male side of the family, whilst after 1981 respondents could trace it through both members of the family. In addition the figures available from 1981 exclude the inmate population. Finally, multiple-responses were collapsed into a single category prior to 1981. In 1981 only one other response was allowed, and by 1986 this was broadened to three. For both these years only single-response data has been given, representing 91.7 % and 71.1 % of all the responses for 1981 and 1986 respectively.
Table (4): continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of households</td>
<td>118 405</td>
<td>153 260</td>
<td>173 080</td>
<td>186 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of one person households</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of one family households</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of one family households</td>
<td>95 740</td>
<td>101 705</td>
<td>93 805</td>
<td>100 965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Family Size</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of households with total income of at least $50,000 (1981 dollars)(^1)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single-detached</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owned</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of single-detached</td>
<td>75 937</td>
<td>76 240</td>
<td>79 725 (^2)</td>
<td>70 490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. owner-occupied</td>
<td>72 029</td>
<td>72 065</td>
<td>77 740</td>
<td>78 940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Residency (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 1 year</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 10 years</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^1\) These percentages were calculated on the basis of 1981 dollars using the Implicit Price Index.
\(^2\) In the 1981 census there was a substantial amount of error in classifying dwelling unit types. Despite an adjustment made for this error, the single-detached statistics appear overstated.
shows that within this period there was a relative increase in the proportion of one-person households despite an increase in the number of one-family households. In part this reflects the construction of a number of high-rise apartment buildings near the retail district during the late 1950s and 1960s, catering especially to senior citizens, and some less affluent young families. These apartments would partly account for the proportion of dwelling units constructed between 1945 and 1961 shown in Table (5).

Table (5): Average Income and Age of Dwellings for Kerrisdale and the City of Vancouver, 1961.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kerrisdale</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average income (dollars)</td>
<td>$ 2507.7</td>
<td>$ 2265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of construction of all types of dwelling units (%)</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before 1920</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1945</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Throughout this period, and in particular in the liberal political climate in the late 1960s and early 1970s, local residents associations continued to mobilise local support around what they defined to be social and aesthetic issues crucial to the maintenance of neighbourhood 'character'. Since the mid-1960s, a changing

55 For details on the evolution of the wider political, social, and economic context at this time, and the way in which it was manifest in city government, see Ley and Mercer (1980).
national perspective away from a single-minded focus on economic growth towards a more plural set of objectives and underlying values has been documented within many North American cities. This has in part been manifest in a resurgence of the vitality of neighbourhood politics, and in particular, opposition to high-rise development and urban expressways. Ley has suggested that perhaps amidst the convergence of increasing real wealth and more leisure time, new opportunities for consumption arose and consumption related political issues rose to increasing prominence. Vancouver proved no exception, witnessing the rise of these social movements in local politics. Prior to the Second World War covenants and local area planning had ensured the nature of suburban development in Point Grey, but by the 1960s the public planning process had become a critical guiding the neighbourhood's future development. Thus zoning became a great exclusionary weapon of suburban communities such as Kerrisdale which sought to sustain their suburban ideal. During the 1960s residents embarked upon a number of campaigns to restrict the construction of high-rise apartment buildings in Kerrisdale, especially when developments were proposed which encroached on land previously zoned for single-family housing (ie. land zoned under bylaw RS-1). Proposed land use changes during the 1960s and 1970s were intensely political affairs, capturing much publicity. From the early 1970s, during the term of office of the reform oriented municipal government at this time (ie. TEAM), an often sympathetic council was to support many such community initiatives. The politics surrounding consumption styles and the subcultures they articulated, were often conveyed in popular rhetoric in the rather

58 For example see 'Kerrisdale high rise extension ruled out', Pacific Press 25th. Oct. 1966 (at a public hearing held for the proposed extension 250 members of the community are reported to have attended to express their views) and 'Kerrisdale apartment freeze sought', Pacific Press 7th. Mar. 1967 (both in Pacific Press File 1, City of Vancouver Public Archives).
59 For more details, see Ley and Mercer (1980).
nebulous concepts of 'the liveable environment' and 'neighbourhood character'. Social and aesthetic criteria often dominated land-use disputes in Kerrisdale, to the expense of wider notions of efficiency and social equity. After the mid-1970s, as the cost of housing in Vancouver began to climb adding hardship to lower income groups, the friction between these visions of urban life as 'city efficient and equitable' and 'city aesthetic' were increasingly often to be pitted against one another in political discourse.60

By way of example, in 1983 a controversy arose when a local Anglican church successfully proposed a rezoning application in a single-family area to build non-profit senior citizens' housing on adjacent church land.61 At the time of the application, many of the nearby residents submitted a petition to the city council protesting over what they argued was another step towards the densification of their neighbourhood and denigration of the area's 'character'. A commentator on city politics at the time questioned the social costs involved in maintaining styles of consumption which deemed a low-rise senior citizens' complex to be 'unneighbourly'. He suggested it was an example of 'snob zoning', the residents elevating their tastes and interests above wider pressing housing needs in Vancouver.62

Similar aesthetic and social arguments were raised in another westside zoning controversy that came to a head during the 1980s -- the 'thin house'. Some of the large lots which characterise the neighbourhood incorporated,63 under a special provision in the zoning bylaw, extra land in the form of narrow lots. The creation of these larger lots had originally been permitted so that homeowners

could extend existing lots where they felt they were too small. As property prices escalated during the 1970s, and in particular during the 1980s, a number of homeowners attempted to capitalise upon a loophole in the zoning regulations by constructing separate dwellings on these narrow strips of land. Between 1974 and 1985 just five of these 'thin houses' had been built, but by 1986 there were twenty such dwellings. A planning department report at the time revealed that there were an additional 480 potential sites. Homeowners in Kerrisdale, Dunbar and West Point Grey lobbied the municipal government to amend the RS-1 zoning bylaw to prevent the construction of any more 'thin houses' on lots less than 24ft. wide. Local residents protested that these new houses undermined the spirit of the RS-1 guidelines and existing neighbourhood character. They argued the 'thin house' represented an unacceptable increase in housing density. They also felt the house designs employed were unsympathetic with the existing landscape.

In 1982 the RS-1 bylaw was amended reducing the floor space ratio and implementing design and site coverage guidelines. However the amended bylaw's legal status was successfully challenged by some of the minority of the homeowners with narrow lots. With mounting pressure on the city council by the majority of homeowners to introduce another bylaw amendment, narrow lot owners countered the aesthetic and social arguments their protagonists were advancing with an economic one. They argued narrow lot owners would have to be compensated by the city's ratepayers for the losses any ban might sustain. In addition they pointed to the city's housing shortage, shifting market demands as

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64 Reports to Council, City of Vancouver Planning Department, August, 1986.
family structures changed, and finally the role 'thin houses' might play in strategies by young families to become homeowners. However in January 1988 another RS-1 bylaw amendment was successfully passed by the city council stipulating the minimum building lot width to be 24 feet. For those existing lots less than 24 feet wide, the areal coverage of any building was restricted to 35% of the lot size, effectively banning 'thin houses'.

These two examples illustrate that the ideas and practices embodied in the notions of a 'liveable environment' and 'neighbourhood character' are pervaded with an undercurrent of elitism. In controlling residential densities and the aesthetic appearance of the landscape, residents have simultaneously maintained the neighbourhood's privileged status and associated property value. This raises the thorny issue as to who has the power to define 'liveability' and 'character'. Indeed, for what purposes, and at whose expense? These themes I shall return to in the following chapters when considering the appearance of the 'monster house' in Kerrisdale. While the 'thin house' controversy had no racial connotations whatever, in the debate over the 'monster' house a similar set of arguments over neighbourhood 'character' have taken a different twist as a new social order emerges in Vancouver.

Chapter Three

'Kerry's Dale' and the 'Monster' House

Up until the 1980s, the stability of Kerrisdale as a middle-class single-family residential neighbourhood has been an enduring feature, a mark of distinction in a city that has experienced tremendous growth and change in the postwar period (Graph 1). As the previous chapter illustrated, the area's homeowners have often sought to defend and maintain their interpretation of Kerrisdale's landscape. In so doing, they have not only protected their property values, but also the way of life and set of beliefs with which the landscape is imbued, and by which the social significance of the landscape is defined. Over time, lines of continuity between the past and present in the symbols and codes employed in the landscape may be traced. However their meaning can by no means be taken for granted. As I shall explore in more detail in this chapter, the evolving meaning of Kerrisdale as a place and residential neighbourhood cannot be divorced from the historical, social and political processes by which interpretations of it are negotiated and contested. In seeking to re-present the contemporary meaning of Kerrisdale's landscape, this chapter shall endeavour to recover a complex set of meanings which people have both inherited and also redefined.

This chapter will begin by briefly completing my sketch of the neighbourhood's shifting demographic characteristics for the period from 1971 to 1986, drawing mainly on the published census material for the years in question. This data would suggest that over the last twenty years Kerrisdale has been
distinguished by both continuities and disjunctions with the past. It would appear that a relatively more heterogeneous community emerged during this period. However it was not until the mid-1980s, with the appearance of large or 'monster' houses on the streets of Kerrisdale, that considerable antipathy was to emerge among many of the area's residents towards both the pace and nature of change within their neighbourhood. In light of this conflict, the act of reading Kerrisdale's landscape has ever more become an explicitly political affair. Drawing on residents' perceptions of change and the debates within the community over the value of the aesthetic qualities of the landscape, I shall consider the realm of beliefs and practices of those groups who have traditionally claimed the landscape for their own. I shall follow this up by tracing how the city council, largely in reaction to community protests, has explored a number of avenues through which to placate angry residents. For as the 'monster' house debate raged through the local media and council chambers, the issues at stake became clearer within the minds of city officials and residents alike. In light of a number of regulatory responses implemented by the civic government, I shall argue that the large house issue in Kerrisdale has in time transpired to be a question of 'taste'. This shall set the context for chapter four, in which I will illustrate how 'taste', is at once aesthetic and economic, symbolic and practical.
In the previous chapter I referred to a lot in Kerrisdale which had been sold by the Royal Trust Company on behalf of the CPR in 1924 to a Mrs. Elma Cathryne Boyce. Mrs. Boyce then constructed a dwelling upon the property in accordance with the strict terms and conditions of the land title. Between 1924 and 1988 this property was to change hands between as many as nine owners. Each in the succession of new owners registered the property’s address as that of their permanent residence. As one would have expected, in light of the nature of the early development of Kerrisdale, the assortment of surnames on the title deeds were all of Anglo-Celtic origin. By way of example, in the last transaction within this time frame, a Mrs. MacKenzie bought the property for $132,000 in 1976 with the original dwelling still standing. However in February of 1989 an investment company bought Mrs. MacKenzie’s property for $640,000, only to resell it in March of the same year to another B.C. registered company for $765,000. This second company demolished the original dwelling, and constructed a new single-family detached house upon the site, changing the street number from 4412 to 4418. The new house and lot were sold the following December for an as yet undisclosed amount, though presumably in excess of $1,000,000.

From the information that can be gleaned from the land title, the new owner, as was the custom before, recorded his new residence as his permanent address. However not only was a new dwelling constructed upon the lot, but the new

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1 This information was obtained through a title deeds search of lot 3, sub. of lot 8, block 3, sub. of D.L. 526, Group 1, New Westminster District, Map 4695. Source: B.C. Land Registry Office.

2 Source: B.C. Assessment Rolls (January 1990). Judging from the market value of new properties of similar size, design and quality in the same area, the new house would in all likelihood have sold from between 1 - 1.5 million dollars.
owner differed from the previous ones in a way that has assumed a wider significance within the established community -- his surname was of 'Chinese' origin. This brief sketch of the ownership of one single-family residential lot in Kerrisdale, touches upon a number of important recent changes in the neighbourhood that I shall describe presently. As the original dwelling was demolished, and a so-called 'monster' house erected in its place, the associated change in the streetscape reflected not only the dictates of the economy, as the land values rose dramatically, but also the introduction of different landscape tastes amidst a growing ethnic heterogeneity in what remains one of Vancouver's more exclusive residential neighbourhoods.

The roots of recent change in Kerrisdale, contrary to popular belief, can be traced back to the 1970s. The following discussion, dealing with the period between 1971 and 1986, draws in part upon the data presented earlier in Tables (3) and (4). Between these years the single-family residential zone remained largely intact in spite of attempts by developers to expand the apartment district, and subdivide existing lots. However the household characteristics of the neighbourhood were to change in response to a combination of life cycle and lifestyle factors. The proportion of one-person households in the neighbourhood increased between 1971 and 1981 by 8%, while at the same time there was a decline in the actual number of one-family households. An explanation for this may be related to the relatively large proportion of residents over 55 years old in Kerrisdale. A higher mortality rate amongst this age group may have left in its wake a greater percentage of single, elderly residents. A significant proportion of this population may have been homeowners. The increasing proportion of this vulnerable population would have increased the likelihood of property turnover as the 1970s advanced. Additional factors accounting for the increase in one-person households were the freeing up of apartment units as young families moved into
single-family housing, and also divorce. By 1986, subsequent turnover in the residential housing market reversed this trend as the number of one-family households started to recover. For the same period the neighbourhood's shifting age structure to a large extent reflected broader trends. In particular the proportion of the population in the youngest age categories of 0-14 and 15-19 years old declined markedly. Meanwhile the proportion in the 20-34 and 65+ age categories increased. Locally these shifts reflected the combination of a number of factors, including decreasing family size, the ageing of the population, the movement of the postwar 'baby boom' cohort through the age structure, and the related, cyclical flow of new families and single people through the local housing market.

Relative to the rest of the city, throughout this period the neighbourhood's residents have continued to be disproportionately drawn from the professional and managerial occupational categories. By 1986, 50.7% of Kerrisdale's labour force was recorded within these categories, compared to only 30.5% for the City of Vancouver. The neighbourhood's affluence is confirmed by statistics regarding average income and level of education. Between 1971 and 1986 the proportion of households with total incomes above $50,000 (in 1981 dollars) was substantially greater than the rest of the city. In fact the proportion of households that fell into this category in Kerrisdale actually increased. By 1986 the average individual income in the neighbourhood was 91% greater than the respective figure for the city as a whole (Table 7). In contemporary society, post-secondary level education has come to play a critical role as a gatekeeper to
Table (6): Selected population characteristics from the 1986 census for Kerrisdale and the City of Vancouver.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kerrisdale</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population by Ethnic Origin (single responses)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% British</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% French</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% German</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Chinese</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% South Asian</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population by Home Language (single responses)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% English</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>77.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% non-official languages</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Chinese</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population by Place of Birth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% non-immigrant population</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% born in B.C.</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% born elsewhere in Canada</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% immigrant population</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Population - Period of Immigration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% before 1946</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1946-1955</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1956-1966</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1967-1977</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1978-1982</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1983-1986</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Population - Place of Birth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% United Kingdom</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Europe (including the United Kingdom)</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% United States of America</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Asia</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Canada, 1986.
Table (7): Average Income, Age and type of Dwellings for Kerrisdale and the City of Vancouver, 1986.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kerrisdale</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average income (dollars)</td>
<td>$76,451</td>
<td>$39,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of construction of all types of dwelling units (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before 1946</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-1960</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1970</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1980</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1986</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Dwelling units (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single-detached house</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duplex</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apartment (less than 5 storeys)</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apartment (5 or more storeys)</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all other types</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Canada, 1986.
managerial and professional social worlds. In Kerrisdale the proportion of the population fifteen years and older who have attended a university increased between 1971 and 1986 from 35.2% to 51.7%. This contrasts markedly with the respective figures for the City of Vancouver -- 17.0% in 1971 and 30.2% in 1986. It would seem that from 1971 to 1986 not only did the residents of Kerrisdale succeed in maintaining their privileged position, but also in embellishing it even further.

The ethnic composition of Vancouver, and to a lesser extent Kerrisdale, has become increasingly heterogeneous in composition between these years. Due to fundamental changes in Canadian immigration policy in the late '1960's, 1971 is somewhat of a watershed census year in Vancouver's history. I shall return to the details of these policy changes in the next chapter, but for now let it be said that 1971 marked the transition of Vancouver from a predominantly Anglo-Celtic city into a cosmopolitan one. These fundamental shifts in Vancouver's ethnic composition have borne witness in particular to the growing numerical significance of the city's Asiatic population. In Kerrisdale these changes have been of a lesser order though no less significant. Unfortunately inconsistencies in the way in which ethnic data was collected for the census over this period preclude direct inter-census comparison. Nevertheless by 1986 a historically significant increase in the Chinese and South Asian component of Kerrisdale's population is apparent (Table 6). In the same year those who claimed British ethnic origin accounted for 60.9% of the neighbourhood's population, whilst those of Chinese and South Asian ethnic origin for 11.3% and 0.6% respectively. Since the creation of Kerrisdale as an elite, Anglophile residential neighbourhood, the period of transition from 1971 to 1986 marked the beginning of a radical departure from both local and

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3 Gouldner (1979).
national past practices which ensured its Anglo-Canadian character.

These changes in the social composition of Kerrisdale coincided with rising property values, especially during the mid-1970s and in particular after the recession of 1982-1985. Graph 2 shows both the number of single-family residential sales and sale values (in 'ooos of dollars) plotted against the same axis, for the West Side and the Central Business District (ie. 'Vancouver West') since 1980. The rise in real estate turnover from 1986 is quite marked. By January 1990, Greater Vancouver's housing market had experienced a 22.2% increase in the cost of housing over the previous year alone, the largest price rise in any Canadian city. The dramatic rise in housing costs in Vancouver during the 1980s was a metropolitan wide phenomenon, though on the East side prices fluctuated and lagged behind Kerrisdale. The inflation of lot values in Kerrisdale has been particularly marked. For example a property in the 6000 block of Churchill Street sold for $112,000 in 1975, $132,500 in 1978, and then $888,000 in 1989. For many of the long established residents of the neighbourhood, of which in the past there has been a significant intergenerational component, the dramatic rise in land values has entailed a loss of their ability to control the pace and nature of redevelopment within the neighbourhood. Traditionally, through their market power they ensured and maintained their reading of Kerrisdale's landscape. The last 4-5 years in particular have witnessed a rapid turnover in single-family dwelling ownership, as both elderly and young residents sold their properties to capitalise on the buoyant conditions of the housing market. The reasons for moving are numerous, and inevitably tied to individual life circumstances. Some, the retired in particular, often on fixed incomes,

4 Ottawa Letter, vol. XIX, no. 64, p. 521,
5 From information gathered from a number of informal interviews with long time residents in the neighbourhood.
Graph (2) Median selling price for single family dwellings, Vancouver West, 1980-89.

Source: Quarterly Statistical report of Detached and Attached/Apartment Unit Sales (Vancouver: Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver). Note: these statistics are based on those properties listed through the Multiple Listing Service of the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, 1980-1989. 'Vancouver West' is comprised of the West Side, West End and Central Business District.
have found themselves unable to afford their local taxes, which have escalated in tandem with the value of their property. Others have exploited the opportunity the current market conditions have provided to pay off an existing mortgage on their house, and have subsequently purchased either a nearby condominium, or another single-detached dwelling further from the city centre. The motives behind such decisions as revealed in interviews and letters to the city council, have been mixed and various. However, the changing 'character' of the neighbourhood was a recurrent theme often cited amidst this medley of factors.

For the recent spate of turnovers of house ownership in the community has often been associated with the demolition of existing housing, trees and gardens, and the construction of larger, single-detached houses, usually of architectural styles that are new to the neighbourhood (Plates 9-12). The extent of residential redevelopment varies greatly block by block, though as Figure 3 shows, some streets have in the space of five years been radically transformed as land values have continued to spiral upwards. However change has not gone uncontested. Many of the local residents have voiced concern over the sheer pace of change, and the relative size and new designs employed in newly constructed dwellings. Protests have also been raised over the number of families thought to live in such houses, landscaping issues such as the removal of established trees and shrubs during construction, and finally the sub-division of existing lots. I shall return to the way in which Kerrisdale's streetscape is changing in greater detail in the next chapter, but for now I shall now briefly consider the established 'reading' of Kerrisdale's landscape. For though this reading up until recently was largely taken for granted, it has of

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7 City Clerk's Office: Location file no. 8018, *Kerrisdale*.
late become focused and articulated as residents have argued for the preservation of what they define as an aesthetically appealing, 'traditional' landscape of heritage value.

Since 1986 several thousand letters have been sent to the city council and planning department lobbying for bylaw amendments to curb the nature of redevelopment in Vancouver's west side, and in Kerrisdale in particular. Upon reading a sample of these letters, I was struck by the frequent reference residents made to the symbols and codes which were employed in the original landscape model. While this may illustrate how a particular image of social reality may become naturalised, and deeply implicated within a very particular social world, to recover its meaning is rather problematic. For whilst lines of continuity in the use of symbols and codes in Kerrisdale may be traced from the 1910s and 1920s, their meaning and the set of shared experiences they convey has had an emergent quality over time. Letters protesting present changes articulate a number of common themes, reflecting the interplay between the local and wider societal context. The manner in which residents portray the landscape represents a selective appropriation of the past to convey a seemingly immutable landscape couched in terms of an ideology of 'urban liveability.' Recurring expressions such as 'pastoral setting', 'traditional housing', 'our village' and 'stately trees' recall a preindustrial way of life, communal sensibility, environmental ethics, and a natural, given social and moral order.

One resident described the importance of family and intergenerational attachments to the neighbourhood. In portraying it as an old neighbourhood, filled with personal memories, the resident confided that "Kerrisdale ...... our once lovely, peaceful and happy neighbourhood ...... is the area where I grew up, and in which my husband and I decided to live and raise our family when we moved back from Victoria in 1964." Another resident, celebrated the family as a
prized institution. She extended it beyond blood ties to the mix of ages and life cycles that characterised a community with "a good mix, ..... with seniors peeking into baby carriages." Many stressed the sense of tradition and rootedness that the neighbourhood symbolised, one commenting that Kerrisdale was "a neighbourhood with traditional homes, rich green lawns, manicured colourful gardens and stately trees." Such appeals to the themes embodied in the 'English' landscape tradition were seldom far from the surface of their texts. Within this landscape, many argued, a sense of community provided a sanctuary and source of stability in a rapidly changing world. Thus a resident proclaimed the common battle cry to preserve "our village" with "its special character."  

As to why Kerrisdale's existing streetscape should be preserved, one resident suggested that "this neighbourhood and others like it, are a credit to the previous generations who built them, maintained them and passed them on to us, the people of Vancouver. As a result, ordinary people and not just the wealthy, have been able to enjoy a quality of life that very few other cities can offer their citizens." Indeed many of the arguments for the preservation of what the residents termed a 'liveable environment', drew upon the interrelated themes of the 'garden city' and environmental consciousness. As Plate 6 shows, what is in fact a carefully contrived landscape image drawn from a very specific group's heritage, was regarded by residents as the very embodiment of a sense of harmony between people and nature. Irrespective of the wider social relations through which the landscape image gained its meaning and social significance, Kerrisdale's streetscape was argued by many to be both a public and private

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8 Letter to Council 27/2/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]  
9 Letter to Council 26/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]  
10 Letter to Council 27/2/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]  
11 Letter to Council 27/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]
amenity:

"We moved to Churchill Street in December of 1982 because we valued the sense of neighbourhood that clearly existed here. Over the years, we have watched hundreds of joggers and strollers and dog walkers pass along our street enjoying its pastoral setting. The trees on our property must exceed 20m in height and are the home to many nesting birds and foraging squirrels ..... help us keep this area a spot where all Vancouverites can leave the hustle of Granville street and walk beneath the trees and perhaps smell a few roses."12

'Kerry's Dale' and the 'Monster' House

In writing to the city council extolling the virtues of the existing landscape, this image of 'tradition' and 'nature' was juxtaposed to the offending "piles of dusty brown dirt, monstrous ugly houses, paved gardens and plain barren treeless landscaping" (Plate 9).13 Interestingly, with only a few exceptions, most targeted their rhetoric and criticism towards the activities of the developers, with a noteworthy absence of any mention of the consumers of these new houses. The significance of this will become apparent in chapter four. Residents criticised developers for "clear cutting the lot", replacing "Heather house" with a "Pink Palace",14 "oversized box",15 or "monster house."16 The new designs which have generated such discontent fill to near capacity each lot's allowable building envelope under the RS-1 zoning guidelines. The result has often been a box-like, symmetrical design which contrasts markedly with existing structures. In part this reflects current market conditions, for the older dwellings were built at

12 Letter to Council 27/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]
13 Letter to Council 26/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]
14 Letter to Council 28/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]
15 Letter to Council 28/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]
16 Letter to Council 29/4/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651]
a time when the economics of land and construction costs encouraged builders to leave the available building envelope underutilised. As a result, under the current phase of redevelopment there has been an apparent massing on the wider lots commonly found in Kerrisdale (figure 4). Leaving aside for one moment the relative size of these new houses, long-term residents have also objected to their general design and the materials employed in their construction.

The transformation of Kerrisdale's streetscape has prompted many of the local homeowners to rally around their reading of Kerrisdale's landscape, and to seek to make it dominant. In the westside a number of pre-existing homeowner associations have adopted the cause of landscape preservation. Indicating the pace and extent of change and the strength of feeling amongst many of the area's homeowners, a number of new associations have also been established. For example, a group of homeowners in the W 41st. Avenue / Cypress Street / W 57th. Avenue / Granville Street area (figure 3), called a public meeting in November, 1988, concerning the nature of changes in their neighbourhood at a local high school in November 1988. Around 300 concerned homeowners attended the meeting as well as the Mayor and two Aldermen. High voter turnouts in the West Side have traditionally proven influential in municipal elections. The attendance of members of the business oriented, NPA dominated City Council at the meeting during the run-up to a civic election, comes as no surprise considering the level of NPA support found in the neighbourhood (table 8). At the meeting it was decided to form the Kerrisdale/Granville Homeowners Association (KGHA). It was to be a non-profit organisation, whose goal was to ensure the "preservation and protection of

\[17\] Stanbury and Todd (1990).
FIG. 4: CONTRASTING STREETSCAPES IN KERRISDALE

(source: City of Vancouver Planning Department)

50 ft. lots

Traditional

New

66 ft. lots

Traditional

New

75 ft. lots

Traditional

New
Table (8): General Municipal Election Voting Behaviour In The Kerrisdale Area, 1984-88 (Polling Districts 69, 70B, 70C, 72, 73, 90).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1986</th>
<th>1988</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Poll</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Mayor:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Alderman:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Poll</td>
<td>59 102</td>
<td>62 007</td>
<td>54 086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>64.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>12.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEAM</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Vancouver
'Kerrisdale / Granville'.\textsuperscript{18} By April of the following year the association claimed to represent over 400 members in its designated 'turf' (figure 3). The association's president, Mr. Eric Watt, stated that its goal was to ensure what he termed "neighbourliness" in the KGHA's area by lobbying the city council to pass an area-specific bylaw outlining redevelopment guidelines.\textsuperscript{19}

The sort of bylaw which the KGHA advocated was largely modelled on one successfully implemented in Shaughnessy Heights. Although lot sizes and the layout of Kerrisdale was not as grand as that of Shaughnessy, the same 'English' landscape image had been pursued in both these "sister communities".\textsuperscript{20} In the 1970s the Shaughnessy Heights Property Association (SHPOA) had attempted to stem changes within their neighbourhood and force a return to the old landscape model that had guided the original development of the area. To achieve this, the SHPOA composed a legal text which Duncan and Duncan have argued was multivocal, permitting alternative readings. Thus a liberal planning department and city council supported the SHPOA's 'public heritage preservation' plan, which though purportedly was in the public 'interest', in many ways was also conservative and elitist since it preserved the landscape tastes of a wealthy minority.\textsuperscript{21}

In Kerrisdale the KGHA drew on the experience of the SHPOA in formulating possible strategies to maintain and preserve their reading of Kerrisdale. Yet to define and wield such a nebulous concept as 'neighbourliness' has proven intensely problematic. If defined in terms of architectural style alone, the sporadic fashion in which Kerrisdale developed raises numerous difficulties.

\textsuperscript{18} KGHA newsletter, November 25th. 1988.
\textsuperscript{19} KGHA newsletter, April 24th. 1989.
\textsuperscript{20} As quoted in Pratt (1981), p.35 from a SHPOA's document produced for the city council.
The neighbourhood is composed of a mixture of houses of different ages and designs (Table 7), scattered unevenly in relatively homogeneous clusters.\textsuperscript{22} The area represented by the KGHA also includes a mixture of houses. Of note is the area bounded by W 41st. Avenue, Cypress Street, W 49th. Avenue and Granville Street. This was developed within a relatively short time period, permitting the establishment of the 'English' landscape model with remarkable consistency. Yet to the south of W 49th. Avenue the neighbourhood's pastoral image has always been incomplete. For the later infill of dwellings in the 1950s and 1960s (Plate 8) interrupted the central theme pursued at an early date within the neighbourhood. It therefore comes as little surprise that the KGHA has relied for most of its support from the area to the north of W 49th. Avenue.\textsuperscript{23}

Interestingly, of those letters sent to the city council from within the territory of the KGHA, the few that were critical of the association's objectives all came from the area south of W 49th Avenue. Though advocating a position that is representative of only a minority of Kerrisdale's residents, some questioned the value of the traditional landscape. One resident argued that to preserve neighbourhood 'character' is to legislate for 'taste'. Fearful of extending the powers of the state and confident of the 'free-hand' of the market place, he stated that "in a myriad of ways, [new house designs] reflect and recognise the community in a much broader sense than many of my neighbours seem to recognise, in that it includes people - entire races and generations of people - not presently resident in our area."\textsuperscript{24} This would perhaps suggest that where the landscape image is broken, so the power of the ideology with which it is imbued is weakened, exposing the elitism which undergirds this image of social reality. I shall return to this theme

\textsuperscript{22} City of Vancouver Planning Department (1978).
\textsuperscript{23} From an interview with Mr. Watts, President of the KGHA.
\textsuperscript{24} Letter to Council 1/5/89 [City Clerks Office, File no. 4651].
in the next chapter.

Homeowner associations such as the KGHA have played an important role in mobilising the community around a reading of the landscape that has been dragged sharply into focus as development has continued unabated. Neighbourhood protests have gained widespread media attention, pressuring the City Council to embark upon a protracted series of debates over an appropriate regulatory response. In tracing the evolution of the 'monster' house within city politics, the issue up until 1988 was often confused with another problem that goes back to the 1970s -- the Vancouver Special. A box-like house with built-in garage, the Vancouver Special fills to near capacity the available building envelope. The structure's design easily facilitates adaptation to include a separate, illegal suite. Increasingly common-place on the east side from the 1970s, this house design provided an effective strategy at the time for many to become owner-occupiers. Often the illegal suite was either used as a rental unit or for extended family members. In 1974, changes to the RS-1 zoning schedule increased the floor space ratio (FSR) from 0.45 to 0.6, and the maximum site coverage was set at 45%. This encouraged the demolition rather than renovation of existing homes, and in particular spurred on the construction of Vancouver Specials. By the 1980s the Vancouver Special had started to appear in small numbers on the streets of the west side. During the mid-1980s the city council and planning department received a growing number of complaints, mainly from the east side, about illegal suites, the relative size of these new houses, problems of overshadowing of neighbours' gardens, and an associated loss of privacy. In 1985 the city council authorised the planning department to draw up proposed

changes to the RS-1 guidelines and hold public hearings with the aim of establishing a means to reducing the 'bulkiness' of these houses. Proposed amendments to the zoning schedule were to include a means of eliminating the illegal suite problem.

Amendments to the RS-1 schedule were eventually passed by council in April 1986. These included reducing the height of the building, altering the front, side, and rear yards, and counting garage area within the house as part of the FSR. Figure 5 shows the way in which these changes in the zoning schedule reshaped the building envelope. However a report monitoring the effects of the new bylaw changes, the Hulbert Group Report, noted that a number of problems remained with the new guidelines. Consequently, political agitation from both east side and west side residents continued through 1986 and 1987. Despite two more minor sets of changes to the RS-1 zoning schedule in 1987, residents' complaints failed to be placated. Amidst a protracted series of discussions between city politicians, planners, residents from both the east and west sides, builders and the real estate industry, in April 1988 another set of major amendments was finally laid before council. The amendments were the end product of a review process governed by three loosely defined objectives. The first objective was 'livability', defined as "ensuring that new houses meet basic family livability criteria and do so in a way which does not detract from the

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27 For more on this see Hulbert Group (1987) and Cheng (1987).
28 The popularity of Vancouver Specials among many ethnic groups which by tradition place importance on the extended family, raised fears of ethnic discrimination as the council moved to eradicate illegal suites by the banning of second kitchens. See 'Racism alleged as council bans new second kitchens' Vancouver Sun February 27th. 1987, p.A3.
FIG. 5: CHANGES TO RS-1 BUILDING ENVELOPES TO ENCOURAGE "NEIGHBOURLY DEVELOPMENT"

4.1 PRE 1986

4.2 1986-1988

4.3 1988-1990

4.4 1990 CHANGES

(source: City of Vancouver Planning Department)
livability of neighbouring houses". Secondly 'neighbourhood character', that is the "detached family housing characteristic of the neighbourhood", must be maintained. And finally the last objective was 'efficiency' -- the minimizing of costs of new developments to City services.\(^{30}\) As figure 5 shows, the new guidelines opened up the backyard space, in effect spelling the end of the 'bulkiness' problem associated with Vancouver Specials. Subsequent amendments in May of the same year converted some RS-1 districts into RS-1S districts thereby legalising previously illegal suites whilst maintaining the appearance of a single-family zoned neighbourhood.

These regulatory measures largely eradicated the Vancouver Special, and with them neighbours' complaints concerning the denial of their right of access to sunlight and privacy. However the city council continued to receive complaints about large houses during 1988, and it soon became apparent to city officials that on the west side the large house phenomenon had taken a different twist in form and nature -- the 'monster' house.\(^{31}\) Ohannesian claims that under the existing RS-1 bylaw intended to prevent new large houses from being built, traditional house styles have been rendered non-conforming. This further encourages the demolition of existing dwellings.\(^{32}\) Therefore since the bylaw amendments of 1988, the large house issue in neighbourhoods such as Kerrisdale has become more clearly identified by both public officials and residents alike as one of aesthetics and 'taste'. As the KGHA identified in one of its newsletters, the three key areas in which homeowners actively sought to ensure the preservation of their local neighbourhood's 'character' were landscaping, design guidelines and the subdivision of lots.\(^{33}\)

\(^{31}\) 'Property boom fuels westside tensions' Province April 6th. 1989, p. HK6.
\(^{32}\) Ohannesian (1987).
\(^{33}\) KGHA newsletter 24/4/89.
Principally a question of aesthetics, these issues were couched in popular rhetoric in terms of an ideology of 'livability'. In doing so, homeowners were able to tie a parochial issue which in part is conservative and elitist in nature, to wider social movements.

A tale of two trees

A good example of this is the problem of landscaping, an emotive issue in the west side generally, and Kerrisdale in particular. With the demolition and construction of new houses in the neighbourhood, well established trees and shrubs were often removed or destroyed. Indeed, even after completion of the house, neighbours often complained further about what they considered to be inadequate, immature landscaping around the new structure.34 The signing of petitions (plate 13-14) and attempts to obstruct the path of bulldozers intent on clearing sites for construction, became a constituent part of local neighbourhood protest. In seeking to protect the landscape's 'pastoral image', residents effectively tied the issue of the preservation of an elite heritage landscape to the growing environmental consciousness which was coming to characterize the country as a whole during the late 1980s.35 In 1989 residents successfully convinced city council to request the provincial government to amend the city charter to grant the municipality the authority to control landscaping on individual property. Though denied by the provincial government, it was moved by the council that a second request be

made in 1990.\textsuperscript{36}

Of the numerous protests organised by homeowners and environmentalists over the destruction of trees and shrubs in the neighbourhood, perhaps the one most worthy of mention is the felling of two giant sequoia trees in the 6400 block of Marguerite Street. In March of 1990 members of the KGHA demonstrated outside a recently sold house at 6425 Marguerite Street. The house's new owner, Mr. Jack Eng, was planning to remove two giant sequoias, measuring 80m in height, from the front of his property. Tying yellow ribbon around the trees, and standing beneath them, local residents managed to temporarily stave off their felling.\textsuperscript{37} Though ultimately unsuccessful in achieving their immediate goal to preserve the two sequoias, the KHGA were very successful in attracting favourable publicity for their cause of landscape preservation. It gained extensive media coverage both locally and even internationally.\textsuperscript{38} Many Vancouverites from outside the neighbourhood rallied to the KGHA's cause. For example a highschool student collected over 700 signatures on a petition protesting the destruction of the sequoias, a high school in New Westminster planted two saplings in its grounds in memory of the fallen trees, and the editorial pages of local newspapers and the City Council received a deluge of letters on the matter.

A Vancouver resident's letter illustrates the merging of an environmental discourse on the one hand, with a discourse seeking to legitimise the preservation of a particular group's heritage on the other. The resident commented that "the

\textsuperscript{36} 'Threat of tree preservation' \textit{Vancouver Sun} March 22nd. 1990.
\textsuperscript{37} 'Neighbours protest tree-cutting' \textit{Vancouver Sun} March 9th. 1990.
 'Neighbours stump redwood fallers' \textit{Vancouver Sun} April 3rd. 1990.
 'Shorn giants await fate' \textit{Vancouver Sun} April 5th. 1990.
\textsuperscript{38} 'Hong Kong media feast on local fallen tree story' \textit{The Vancouver Courier} May 2nd. 1990, p.1.
killing of the sequoias represents a blatant disregard for the aesthetic qualities and heritage values of these unique trees ...... a sickening display of environmental ignorance." 39 Most of these letters were sent from individuals living in the West Side, an indication that the KGHA draws much support from Vancouver's middle classes. The City Council also received a significant number of Earth Day 1990 form letters protesting the destruction of the trees on Marguerite Street. 40 Nevertheless a minority of letters challenged the arguments presented to preserve the sequoias. A Dr. Berry, countering an essentially aesthetic argument, drew attention to the traditional legal entitlements and economics of property ownership. He suggested that "sequoias, firs and cedars are giant forest trees ..... [they] should never be planted on small city lots. The suggestion that we should legislate what we as private property owners can or cannot plant or change is a precedent which few Canadians ...... will accept." 41

Legislating Taste

After the RS-1 zoning schedule amendments were passed in 1988, the Zoning and Development bylaw was further amended in December 1988, March 1989, and September 1989. In spite of these changes to the guidelines, neighbourhood protests continued. For example, in November 1989 approximately seventy neighbours demonstrated outside an old house on the northern edge of Kerrisdale. They had heard that the new owner planned to demolish the existing house. They collected 125 names on a petition calling for City Council to prevent

39 'Saga of sequoias most repugnant', letter to the editor (C. Szabo) The Vancouver Courier April 22nd. 1990.
40 City Clerks Office file no. 5051-3 and 5301-5.
41 'Sequoias too big for city', letter to the editor (Dr. J. Berry) The Vancouver Courier April 29th. 1990.
the construction of 'monster' houses, and to "preserve the character and spatial
relationships of our neighbourhood." What the neighbours wanted was greater
autonomy in local planning issues, modelling their demands on the design
controls implemented in the adjacent neighbourhood of First Shaughnessy that
were discussed earlier. In trying to save the house in question, one resident even
offered to buy it from its new owner, Mr. Khouw, for $200,000 more than he
had originally paid for it. However Mr. Khouw defended his plans, stating that he
had been advised by his architect against renovating the existing property. He
said he needed a larger house to accommodate his family of eight and two live-in
nannies. Defending his right to build what he regarded to be a structure more compatible
with his lifestyle needs, Khouw commented that local residents: "treat me like I'm a
foreigner even though I've lived in this country for 20 years." 42

Despite a number of protests such as this one, after the eradication of
the Vancouver Special and with the passage of time in 1988 and 1989, there was
a large drop in the number of complaints concerning large houses compared to
the previous years. Stanbury and Todd noted that the letters the city council
received after 1988 were predominantly from the west side. Owners of older
homes and long-time residents resigning themselves to the seeming inevitability of
change stated that they felt the municipal council had responded too slowly and
timidly in placing controls on 'monster' houses.43 Allan Duncan's review of the
letters and petitions sent to the city council by residents between May 1988 and
November 1989 highlighted once again the problems that bylaw amendments to
date had failed to address -- front, rear, sideyard setbacks, failure to replace
landscaping after redevelopment, the need for design criteria, and other matters

43 Stanbury and Todd (1990), p.52.
such as double height entrance ways, views, subdivision of lots, renovations, and the floor space ratio.\footnote{Allan Duncan (1990) as quoted in Stanbury and Todd (1990), p.53.}

In 1990, an election year, this issue was to consume an impressive amount of council time, energy, and money. In January 1990 the council undertook to send to public hearing another set of proposed city wide RS-1 amendments, and approved a special review for the area bounded by W 25th Avenue, Oak Street, W 57th. Avenue and West Boulevard with the objective of developing zoning requiring conditional design approvals. The secondment of additional planning staff to help in the RS-1 guidelines review process was also approved. Between January and March 1990 the city council and planning department were to hold another series of public hearings on the latest set of guidelines aimed at curbing the 'monster' house. Amidst the public wrangling over the best way to achieve this, one proposal in particular deserves brief attention. Attempting to legislate the external design features of the new houses, the draft bylaw proposed restrictions on the number of materials that could be used, their type and colour, and the proportions in which materials are used.\footnote{RS-1 and RS-1S / Housing scale and character bylaw amendment -- draft for public hearing (City of Vancouver Planning Department).} This attempt to legislate external design forged a rare sense of unity among homeowners, builders and designers alike. They argued that such legislation would be far too unwieldy in a city characterised by such a variety of house types. Most were agreed that the only way to impose guidelines on external design features would be on an area-specific basis. Though some of the zoning schedule amendments were adopted in April 1990, the proposal on legislating external design was thrown out by the City Council.\footnote{City council debates 'monster' house bylaws' \textit{Vancouver Sun} March 16th. 1990, p.A14 'Council unsure if house bylaw will tame monsters' \textit{Vancouver Sun} April 11th. 1990,} Under the new bylaw, as
figure 5 shows, the City Council tried to encourage the building of designs more compatible with traditional houses in part by reshaping the building envelope, and by breaking up imposing roof lines. The success of these measures remains to be seen.

Two months later the City Council was to hear yet another bid to legislate an end to 'monster' houses. For the first time in the city's history a privately sponsored, area-specific bylaw -- the Pitts Bylaw -- was moved before Council. The bylaw referred to a portion of South Shaughnessy, bounded by W 37th Avenue, Granville Street, W 41st Avenue and Cypress Avenue, and immediately north of the KGHA territory (fig. 2). An earlier version had been put before Council earlier in the year by a long-established local resident, Mr. Pitts. Pitts had commissioned and paid for a team of architects to produce a detailed account of the variety of architectural styles represented in his neighbourhood. Armed with this information, Pitts and a team of lawyers set about drafting an area-specific bylaw which was intended to "preserve and maintain the single-family residential character ... [of the district] ... in a manner compatible to the existing amenity and design of development." Emphasis was to be placed on encouraging "neighbourly development" by preserving outdoor space and views and by ensuring that the bulk and the size of new development is similar to existing development." Mention was also made in the Pitts-bylaw (P.D.-1) of the need to encourage the maintenance and planting of vegetation which reflects the "established streetscape."

The original draft of the bylaw was later modified by the City's planning department, but the spirit of it remained intact and was submitted to Council as bylaw RS-3 on June 14th, 1990. A total of 28 speakers had been assembled to support the

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48 Quoted from *PD-1 district schedule*, in City of Vancouver report to Council, April 5, 1990.
motion, including delegations from the SHPOA and the KGHA. It was passed unopposed. However an Alderman, declaring his misgivings about the bylaw stated: "the desire of the people in that neighbourhood is almost to put it in formaldehyde." 49 What the bylaw sought to preserve was a 'taste' in landscape. The bylaw was intended to ensure through zoning legislation the traditional reading of the neighbourhood's landscape.

The apparent success of Pitts' intervention in his neighbourhood's future has been welcomed by a number of West Side homeowner associations. For example, the KGHA has declared similar aspirations for a greater degree of local autonomy in neighbourhood planning decisions. At one of the early Council meetings concerning his proposed bylaw, Pitts commented: "there are a lot of values beside money values." 50 Indeed, as I have already argued, the elite 'taste' in landscape he publicly advocated, embodies a set of ideas and practices which have both class and ethnic components to them. However, as I will presently describe, so too does the emerging landscape which has provoked so much antipathy from long-time residents. In the next chapter I shall explore the wider significance of 'taste', arguing that it is at once practical and aesthetic, economic and cultural. To attempt to tease these strands apart is intensely problematic. For in doing so, we enter a symbolic drama set amidst a variety of competing sets of interests engaged in a struggle to define the place known as 'Kerrisdale'.

Chapter Four

Styles of the Times?

With the challenge to the established 'reading' of Kerrisdale, a group of residents formed around a traditional 'reading' of the landscape to lobby for the preservation of what they defined to be of aesthetic appeal and heritage value. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the majority of letters sent to the City Council on the 'monster' house issue tended to be highly critical of the developers responsible for building these new homes, while little mention was made of those who were actually buying them. This silence, I suspect, may have been partly strategic, for a minority of letters were in no doubt as to whom they felt were responsible for the changes in the neighbourhood. The target of their criticism was wealthy Hong Kong immigrants thought to be fleeing the colony before it comes under Chinese rule in 1997. Sometimes the origin of the 'newcomers' would not even be mentioned. This was instead alluded to in a passing reference to the highly symbolic date of 1997. In a letter I quoted earlier, in which a resident lamented the loss of her "once lovely, peaceful and happy neighbourhood", she went on to say that:

"we do not want to see it fall into the hands of Hong Kong developers and absentee landlords....... How about making the 'Chinese Barracks' as they are called here, pay triple the taxes that the other homes on the block do".¹

Another resident claimed that increasing property taxes, and architectural styles which he regarded as "instant visual pollution," were "a direct result of the

¹ Letter to Council 28/4/89 (City Clerk's Office, file no. 4651).
millions of dollars of Asian money being injected into our real estate market". He went on to suggest that the Mayor and Council members should exert pressure on the Federal and Provincial governments to change an immigration policy which in his view:

"allows high numbers of immigrants to come into the city -- how can Vancouver hope to assimilate such a high percentage of newcomers? Rather the newcomers, if not restricted in any way, will assimilate us".2

As I shall illustrate in this chapter, these two letters touch upon a racial subtext which is interwoven with the issue of landscape aesthetics. Interestingly, many of the residents who have lobbied the Municipal and Provincial governments for regulatory intervention, have been careful to avoid mention of the class and ethnic interests at stake. In contrast, the two letters I just quoted, draw on, and modify a reservoir of racist imagery3 which has been established during the history of white European settlement in British Columbia.4 Such imagery is wielded to articulate present day uncertainties, in light of the racist beliefs and practices of the past. In this chapter I shall consider the close identification of the 'monster' house with homeowners of 'Chinese' ethnic origin within the minds of many of the neighbourhood's long-time residents. The ascription of a racial category to these architectural designs shall be considered in light of recent changes in Canadian immigration policy, and the evolution of a complex net of relations between the Pacific Rim countries and Vancouver. In tracing the broader backdrop upon which changes in Kerrisdale are occuring, I shall consider the wider significance of what residents have argued in public is a question of

2 Letter to Council 1/5/89 (City Clerk's Office, file no. 4651).
3 After Hall, as quoted in Jackson (1989), p.133.
'taste'. I shall reflect upon whether the new architectural styles evident in Kerrisdale are in part symbolic of the undermining of white European economic and cultural hegemony in British Columbia, arguing that amidst the current phase of social and spatial restructuring, we are possibly witnessing the emergence of a new, more fractured social order.

The Nature And Context Of Neighbourhood Change

As mentioned previously, between 1971 and 1986 the official census picked up the growing racial diversity of Kerrisdale. The very symbolism of the landscape and the elite Anglo-Canadian social world which gave such symbolism its social significance, has in the last two decades gradually opened up and been embraced to a degree by a more diverse populace. At the same time the neighbourhood has maintained, if not embellished its privileged position, conferring status on those who claim it. Keeping in mind that the 'monster' house debate largely post-dates the 1986 census, Table (6) indicates those who gave only a single response to the census question on ethnic origin for 1986. In that year 60.3% claimed 'British' origin, while 11.3% claimed 'Chinese' origin. However if we look at the proportion of people who spoke 'Chinese' at home, only 3.9% were recorded in this category. One possible interpretation of these statistics is that by 1986 many of those of 'Chinese' ethnic origin who had moved to Kerrisdale were predominantly either Canadian born or else had immigrated to Canada some time ago. Figures (6) and (7) show the proportion of those Asian born in

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5 It is important to remember that the census categories of 'British' and 'Chinese' are rather monolithic, hiding much diversity within them. However they suit my present purposes since they provide a useful guide to locally perceived 'racial' difference.
FIG. 6: % ASIAN BORN IN KERRISDALE AND OAKRIDGE
BY ENUMERATION AREA, 1981.

(source: Census of Canada, 1981)
FIG. 7: % ASIAN BORN IN KERRISDALE AND OAKRIDGE
BY ENUMERATION AREA, 1986.

(source: Census of Canada, 1986)
each enumeration area for Kerrisdale and Oakridge for 1981 and 1986. In comparing the two diagrams, they suggest relatively little proportionate change in Kerrisdale over this period. Even taking into account the enumeration boundary changes between censuses, Kerrisdale would still appear to contrast with the adjacent neighbourhood of Oakridge. Over this period Oakridge experienced a marked growth in its proportion of Asian born.

Figure (8) showing the percentage of the population of 'Chinese' ethnic origin in 1986, indicates that in Kerrisdale some enumeration areas were characterized by a relatively high proportion of 'Chinese'. A number of enumeration areas registered as much as 28% of its population as such, particularly in those areas to the south of W 49th. Avenue. It is important to remember that in this section of Kerrisdale the streetscape has traditionally been more heterogeneous as a consequence of the postwar infill of vacant lots. However, since the 1980's the same district has been markedly transformed, as 'monster' houses have further added to an already mixed streetscape. In a field survey I conducted6 of the territory that the KGHA claims to represent, to the south of W 49th Avenue, 38% more new homes (ie. those constructed since 1980) were identified than in the area to the north. Figure (3) shows the distribution of these new homes. Their concentration to the south of W 49th Avenue reflects in part the intergenerational turnover of property, and the value and size of the original dwelling relative to its now heavily inflated lot value.

From the list of surnames provided in Vancouver's street directory, by 1980 the growing ethnic heterogeneity of the community was very much evident. However by 1990 the magnitude of change recorded in the directories is quite striking. In contrasting figures 9 and 10 which detail a block of one of

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6 Conducted in the late Spring of 1990.
FIG. 8: % OF CHINESE ETHNIC ORIGIN (SINGLE RESPONSE)
BY ENUMERATION AREA, 1986.

(KEY)

- 0–9 %
- 10–19 %
- 20–29 %
- 30–39 %
- ≥ 40 %

(source: Census of Canada, 1986)
FIG. 9: RESIDENTS OF ANGUS STREET, KERRISDALE, 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>52nd. Ave.</th>
<th>54th. Ave.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crompton</td>
<td>Mancor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsu</td>
<td>Buchanan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montieth</td>
<td>Lepage</td>
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<td>Douglas</td>
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<td>Macdonald</td>
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<td>Sywalych</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[0 100 200 \text{ ft.}\]

(scale)

(source: Vancouver, B.C., City Directory, 1980)
FIG. 10: NEIGHBOURHOOD CHANGE - ANGUS STREET, KERRISDALE, 1990

52nd Ave.

Ho
Hsu
Shen
Wittenburg
Macdonald
Forbes
Sywalych
Law
Smith
Bute
Webb
Alexander

Angus St.

Ma
Liu
Sandhu
Leung
Wong
Nilsen
Chi
Ng
Yoshikawa
Cheng
Fulton
Blaine

54th Ave.

Fahrni
Seow
Thompson

KEY

'monster' house

property managed by third party

0 100 200 ft.

(source: B.C. Assessment Authority and author's survey)
the streets in my survey area for 1980 and 1990, a pattern connecting new
construction and ownership does emerge. These diagrams illustrate a finding that
was replicated elsewhere in the neighbourhood -- the close association of names
of 'Chinese' ethnic origin with new, large, so-called 'monster' houses. Of 155
properties sampled from Angus, Marguerite and Wiltshire Street, of the 40 dwellings
constructed since 1980, 82.5% of them were owned by people with surnames of
Chinese origin. In contrast 79.1% of the remaining, older homes belonged to people
with non-Chinese surnames. The relationship between date of construction, and by
inference architectural style, with ethnic origin, may seem compelling. However
exceptions did occur. A minority of 'monster' houses appeared to be owned by
people with surnames of European origin, and a number of 'traditional' houses
were owned by those apparently of 'Chinese' ethnic origin. This renders any
tight identification between architectural style and ethnic origin intensely
problematic. It is a complex issue. For example, in proposing the RS-3 bylaw
for South Shaughnessy mentioned earlier, Mr. Pitts submitted a petition to the City
Council signed by local residents supporting the bylaw. Of the 159 signatures on
the petition, all but 12 of them possessed surnames of European ethnic origin.
The exceptions were of Chinese and Japanese ethnic origin. This not only
reflected the changing neighbourhood composition, but also suggests that the
matter of landscape 'taste' and the identity of those who have supported the
preservation of the existing landscape is much more complicated than many have
suggested. However presumably one could hypothesise that these were established
'Chinese-' and 'Japanese-' Canadians, yet at present this remains conjecture.
Nevertheless, leaving aside for one moment these 'exceptions' (as important as

7 Petition for rezoning application: proposed bylaw to be known as RS-1 Pres(ervation) 1.
(City Clerks Office: Local Area Planning, zoning applications 1990, file no. 5307-3).
8 For an alternative view on this matter see Cannon (1989).
they are), there remains a close relationship between so-called 'monster' houses and owners of 'Chinese' ethnic origin.

The question whether the transformation of Kerrisdale's landscape associated with the construction of these new homes is related to the settling of long-time Chinese-Canadians in the neighbourhood, or recent immigrants from the Pacific Rim countries as many residents claim, may not be fully resolved until the census of 1991. However from the tax assessment records for the properties surveyed, a number of interesting inferences may be drawn. The property tax records indicate that a number of those houses owned by people of 'Chinese' ethnic origin were registered under the care of a third party. Of the sample drawn from my survey, 24.6% of the 57 'Chinese'-owned properties were thus registered. These third parties or property caretakers invariably possessed 'Chinese' surnames, and gave addresses ranging from private homes in the east side, Richmond, and North Vancouver, to property management companies. This may indicate the purchase of the property as a specululative investment; more likely it could mean that the home's owner is either living abroad or elsewhere in Canada. Within the neighbourhood these homes, often left vacant, have been interpreted as evidence of the purchase of westside properties by recent wealthy Hong Kong immigrants.9 These are widely thought to be part of an 'insurance policy' which includes taking out Canadian citizenship thereby securing a second home in case they should be forced to flee Hong Kong as the colony approaches 1997 when it reverts to mainland Chinese control.10 The absentee ownership of property in Kerrisdale has been one of a number of contentious issues related to the construction of 'monster' houses in the neighbourhood.

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9 Informal interviews with residents.
These neighbourhood tensions have often had both a racial and class component to them. For example, many of these tensions have emerged amongst the local school age population as the education system responds to the changing demands placed upon it. At a more general scale, graph 3 shows the sharp increase in enrolments for English as a second language programs (ESL) in the Vancouver District School Board since 1987. Children from Hong Kong in particular, and to a lesser degree Taiwan, have come to dominate enrolments by the close of the 1980's. In the westside this has necessitated a significant increase in ESL class numbers. By February 1990 the School Board had agreed to institute new ESL classes in three west side high schools which up to then had not offered any such program. As well the Board agreed to expand the existing programs offered in three other west side high schools including Kerrisdale's Magee High School (Figure 3). Even taking into account the overspill from east side high schools offering the same program, this is a truly remarkable development in the west side, once regarded as a bastion of the Anglo-Canadian elite in Vancouver. Similar expansion had also taken place by this time in west side elementary schools.11

Up until the 1980s, Magee High School, one of the west side's most prestigious public schools, had traditionally been thought of as largely an Anglophile enclave. But by 1989 up to one third of its student body was of 'Chinese' ethnic origin, and the school had developed a large ESL program. Reflecting the school's more diverse ethnic composition, by 1989 it had instituted a number of 'special event' days such as Robert Burns Day, Channukah and the Chinese New Year.12 A number of newspaper accounts of the changes within the

11 Vancouver School Board: Update on the Oakridge reception and orientation centre (February 1990).
Graph 3  Enrollment in English as a Second Language Courses in Vancouver, 1979-1989

Source: Vancouver School Board
school have reported racial tension between the Chinese-Canadian and AngloCanadian students. Friction has been reported between what their Anglo-Canadian counterparts regard as relatively more wealthy Chinese-Canadian students. One report suggested differences were also reflected in sports and even the classes students enrolled in. Reflecting the allocation of classrooms within the school building for ESL classes, the same newspaper report quoted a Magee student as saying:

"there's not one Chinese person in the basement of the school, the second floor is kind of mixed, and the third floor -- well, some people call it Chinatown now."

It could be argued that within Kerrisdale, the vociferous debate over landscape aesthetics, is part of a wider struggle over identity and the meaning of place. As various interest groups struggle over scarce material and symbolic resources, such as access to a school of high reputation, the cost of housing, and the style of residential development, this has highlighted the unstable terrain upon which the popular Canadian ethos of multiculturalism rests. I shall now briefly outline the broader context within which these changes in Kerrisdale have occurred, discussing the impact of past and present immigration policies upon the Canadian ecumene. It is not my intention here to provide a detailed account of the historical development of the state sponsored ideology of multiculturalism and its relationship with the evolution of immigration policy in Canada. Much has been written on this, but for the purposes of this discussion I wish to only

13 'Race relations deemed healthy', The Vancouver Sun February 18th. 1989.
14 'Students say racial barriers growing' The Vancouver Sun October 10th. 1989.
briefly mention the background upon which a number of recent developments have occurred. These I regard as important to understanding the dynamics of the changing social order within which Kerrisdale as a place is inevitably embroiled.

According to Anderson, the public rhetoric of multiculturalism may be traced back to its origins in the emergence of the liberal political culture of the 1930s in Canada. Before this, Anglo-conformism had characterised Canadian society. Immigration policies had favoured those deemed most 'assimilable' to the Anglo-Canadian way of life. Within Canada this ideology justified a host of discriminatory practices which sought to exclude those identified as 'outsiders' from gaining access to economic, political and cultural power. Contrasting in degree rather than form, the emerging ideology of multiculturalism sanctioned the official recognition of a degree of cultural pluralism. The central metaphor of a cultural 'mosaic' had its origins in the idea that Canada consisted of two 'founding' societies. By the 1930s this began to be interpreted in a more inclusive manner, being extended gradually to include other Caucasian groups. Yet it was not until the 1960s that the notion of mosaic was to embrace non-Caucasians as well. Even then, as the revised mandate of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism illustrated, this mosaic ideology was couched in terms that perpetuated 'founding people'/ 'immigrant' distinctions. This myth of a 'non-ethnic'/ethnic' dichotomy comprising the Canadian ecumene, was held amongst the dominant Anglo- and Francophile populations, and was to pervade the process of nation building during the 1960s and 1970s. Inspite of some progress in terms of regulatory reform, the celebration of expressions oft quoted in political rhetoric such

15 For more details see Malarek (1987), Driedger (1987), Elliott and Fleras (1990), and Roberts and Clifton (1990).

as 'unity in diversity', belied the stark realities of deep seated structural inequalities that continued in a variety of ways to characterise the Canadian mosaic.\(^{17}\)

By the 1960s a number of Acts of Parliament, dating from as early as 1885, which sought to inhibit the entry of visible minorities to Canada, were being dismantled.\(^{18}\) A comprehensive review of immigration policy in 1964 eventually resulted in the redefinition of policies, and the introduction of a 'point system' in 1967. This was based upon universalistic criteria such as education, occupation and language, and established three classes of immigrants: family, independent and refugee. The result was the elimination of many past discriminatory practices based on notions of 'race' or national origin. Elliott suggests the new system was basically a manpower recruitment strategy which reflected current official notions of cultural pluralism. It was partly aimed at encouraging more professional and technical immigrants to Canada, while opening the nation's doors to many Third World countries.\(^{19}\) The result was a lessening of Canada's traditional dependence on Europe for immigrants, and the rise in relative importance of the countries of the Pacific Rim.\(^{20}\) By way of illustration, in 1951 the leading four source countries of immigration to Canada were the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands in order of decreasing significance. After the regulatory reforms of the late 1960s, in 1976 the United Kingdom, the United States, Hong Kong and Jamaica were the four leading source countries. By 1986 the list ran -- the United States, India, Vietnam and

\(^{17}\) Richmond (1982).
\(^{18}\) In 1885 the Chinese 'head tax' was passed in British Columbia. This was the first of a variety of subsequent Acts which imposed a very selective filter upon immigration flows into Canada.
\(^{19}\) Elliott (1983), p. 296.
\(^{20}\) Vibert (1988).
In 1989, the year a general amnesty was offered, Hong Kong, Poland, the Philippines, and India were the leading source countries. However it is important to keep in mind that during the postwar history of Canadian immigration, the permitted level of immigration after the regulatory reforms of the 1960s has been consistently less than the peak in immigration experienced during the 1950s. During the 1970s and 1980s the number of immigrants entering Canada was less then the peak of the 1950s, however regulatory changes have fundamentally altered the nature of immigration to Canada.

As a consequence of these policy changes by the Federal government, there are now more people of Asian origin living in Canada, especially in Canadian cities, than ever before. Around 60% of the Asian born population in 1981 were concentrated in Toronto and Vancouver alone. The statistics in Table 4, showing the changing ethnic composition of Vancouver, illustrate the relative pace of change that the new regulatory measures precipitated. For example, in 1989, 66% of those immigrants who claimed their intended destination as British Columbia were from Asia. Of the Asian component, Hong Kong was the major country of last residence accounting for 18.9%, followed by India (14.9%), the Phillippines (11.4%) and Taiwan (8.2%). Of particular significance during the late 1980s was a dramatic increase in the number of immigrants coming from Hong Kong to Vancouver. As previously mentioned, in 1984 the British government signed a treaty with the mainland Chinese authorities ensuring the colony's return to China by 1997. Reflecting the present uncertainty over the colony's future, the average level of immigration from Hong Kong to Vancouver increased by as much

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21 Kalbach (1990), p. 28.
as 71% between 1981 and 1988. From 1981 to 1988 we see a three fold increase in the numbers of Hong Kong immigrants claiming their intended destination as Vancouver.\textsuperscript{24} The broad socio-economic spectrum of Asian immigrants settling in Vancouver has been reflected in their geographic spread within the city. Mercer notes that though the relative poverty and economic disadvantage of many immigrants direct them toward lower-cost housing locations on Vancouver's east side, the suburbanisation of affluent immigrants, often with professional and entrepreneurial status, in areas such as Oakridge and Richmond has become increasingly evident. This elite portion of the Asian born population has also been further augmented by more recent Asian immigrants who have entered Canada under the current business immigration program.

In a series of policy amendments between 1978 and 1986 the Federal government instituted a business immigration program whose objective was "to promote, encourage and facilitate the immigration of experienced business persons from abroad who will make a positive contribution to the country's economic development .... creating jobs for Canadians".\textsuperscript{25} Under this scheme as of 1987, immigrants could enter Canada as either 'self-employed', 'entrepreneurs' creating jobs for one or more Canadians, or 'investors' who must have a net worth of $500,000 and make an investment of $250,000 that must remain in Canada for three years. Though contributing only a relatively small proportion to the total immigration flow into Canada, this scheme has become increasingly popular since its inception. In 1989, the third year under the current guidelines, of the 12,660 immigrants who entered Canada as entrepreneurs, 31% were from Hong Kong,

\textsuperscript{24} Figures obtained from Stanbury and Todd (1990), p.103.
10.5% from Taiwan and 7.6% from Europe. The investor scheme, which attracted 2146 successful applicants, shows a similar pattern — 41.3% from Hong Kong, 37.5% from Taiwan and 4.9% from Europe. In assessing the relative significance of these figures, it is important to keep in mind as well the dependents who accompany immigrants entering Canada through this program.

Administered and promoted by the provincial government, British Columbia has proved especially successful in attracting wealthy immigrants under the investor scheme. In 1989, the Province attracted 783 entrepreneurs and 217 investors thereby assuming the leading position among the other provinces. Though these figures refer only to 'intended destinations', they nevertheless are useful benchmarks, accounting for 24.3% of all entrepreneurs and 42.0% of all investors entering Canada between January and December of 1989. Under the auspices of the Province's Ministry of International Business and Immigration, the business immigration program has been widely promoted abroad, particularly in the countries of the Pacific Rim, by both the state and business interests. While this program does not consider residential real estate development or the acquisition of property for personal use as eligible under its investment criteria, it has nevertheless facilitated the entry of wealthy prospective homebuyers who often arrive with a net personal worth in excess of $1 million. In all likelihood, the entry of immigrants into Canada under this scheme, and to a lesser extent the family reunification plan, has played an important role in

27 Department of Employment and Immigration of Canada (1990)
   'BC sets up Kelly in Taiwan' Vancouver Sun March 9th, 1988, p.29.
30 Stanbury and Todd (1990), p.117.
structuring the nature of Asian demand for houses on Vancouver's elite west side, and in Kerrisdale in particular.

The development of the business immigration program represents but one interrelated aspect of an expanding international network of state, legal and financial relations between Vancouver and the Pacific Rim region in particular. Over the last decade state and business interests actively solicited potential investment and immigrants.\textsuperscript{31} For example a major downtown legal firm's promotional brochure makes special mention of its experience in real estate and immigration work, emphasising that their:

"immigration team includes lawyers fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese and qualified to practice law in Hong Kong. The immigration group is well-equipped to help immigrants establish businesses and acquire property in Canada under the Business Investment Program".\textsuperscript{32}

Such brochures make it very clear where these firms perceive the main market for their services to be -- amongst middle and upper-middle class Hong Kong Chinese. Special investment portfolios have been gathered together under the terms and conditions of the investor program and widely marketed abroad. These offer both citizenship and investment opportunities in Canada. Indeed real estate companies have even marketed Vancouver single-family residences in specially organised fairs in Hong Kong and Taiwan, in effect trading Vancouver residential properties on an international market.\textsuperscript{33} In addition a computer network and facsimile system between Hong Kong and Vancouver was set up in 1989 by two realtors, linking 80 real estate agents in the Greater Vancouver area with Hong

\textsuperscript{31} See De Mont and Fennell (1989) and Cannon (1989).
\textsuperscript{32} Quoted from a Ladner Downs (Barristers and Solicitors) publication entitled \textit{Since 1911}.
\textsuperscript{33} 'Canadian homes star attraction at Hong Kong show' \textit{Vancouver Sun} November 15th. 1989, p.A18.
Kong. The targeting of neighbourhoods such as Kerrisdale by realtors of 'Chinese' ethnic origin is another important development. In the survey I conducted in the KGHA's designated neighbourhood, of the 37 houses that were listed for sale at the time, 29 were being coordinated by realtors of 'Chinese' ethnic origin. A number of the advertisements for the real estate firms operating in the area symbolised the placing of Kerrisdale upon an international market. This is reminiscent of the nature of the district's early development as a residential area in the 1920s, when developers such as von Alvensleben marketed vacant Point Grey lots in Europe. However by the 1980s companies such as the Vigers group advertised connections in London, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul, and names such as L and D associates, and International Pacific Properties Inc. told of the increasing importance of the Pacific Rim market.

As I mentioned earlier, all three levels of the state have been active in encouraging both investment and by extension immigration to Vancouver. By the close of the 1980s Vancouver had been designated an International Financial Centre by a Federal government edict, allowing certain offshore business transactions conducted from Vancouver to benefit from a range of tax incentives. This was part of a wider public policy discourse which anticipated Vancouver as an "international" or "world" city. The mayor for the City of Vancouver from 1986, Gordon Campbell, defended this economic growth strategy in saying that

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34 Stanbury and Todd (1990), p.114.
35 See Goldberg (1986).
36 For example at the municipal level see 'Council approves jaunt to sell Vancouver in the Orient' Vancouver Sun March 6th. 1985, p.B7, 'Would be immigrants swamp offices in Hong Kong' Vancouver Sun February 1st. 1986, p.A1, at the provincial level see 'Bennett woos Hong Kong' Vancouver Sun May 25th. 1984, p.A1, and at the federal level see 'More Asian immigrants welcome, Mulroney says' Globe and Mail October 17th. 1989.
37 'Hong Kong seen as vital to the Vancouver Stock Exchange's future growth' Vancouver Sun October 24th. 1989.
"by bringing in new people, new cultures, new ideas .... the city becomes more lively and active. By embracing that diversity and saying it's an asset, we will be a more humane and interesting city". Campbell countered fears of a racial backlash among the city's Anglophile residents over what they often ominously term 'offshore investment', arguing that what residents feared was losing what he termed "their economic destiny". Amidst this set of interests, centred upon policies aimed at boosting the Province's economy, advocates for multiculturalism have arisen from what may seem unlikely quarters. The pro-economic development lobby, influential for a large part of the 1980s in Municipal, Provincial and Federal politics, has sought to downplay the role of 'foreign' investment and immigration in the housing affordability crisis mentioned at the beginning of chapter two. Indeed an aggregate of real estate and business interests, in fear of racial backlash over foreign investment, even set up a non-profit research group, the Laurier Institute, with a mandate to promote multicultural harmony and understanding. Such fears have had a wide currency amongst certain sections of the business community.

For example, a construction industry newspaper in October 1989 reported on a special seminar at the Amalgamated Construction Association's annual conference in Vancouver. At the seminar, which dealt with "offshore and out-of-province investment in B.C.", a Vancouver-based developer, Michael Geller warned:

"I see the anti-growth movement getting stronger and better organised ... developers must take a responsible approach to their work or expect to be battered by sensation hungry media".

39 Hong Kong Business, January 1990.
40 For example the Vancouver Real Estate Board president told a delegation in Hong Kong that the 'monster' house controversy was "a minor problem that has been magnified. There has been redevelopment taking place in the wealthier areas of Vancouver for years" ('Monster house issue overblown, real estate head tells Hong Kong' The Courier June 10th. 1990).
Also addressing the seminar, the president of the Vancouver Real Estate Board explained what he thought was at stake, suggesting that "we have just seen the tip of the iceberg of Asian foreign investment". In light of this potential market, the senior vice-president of Royal LePage Commercial Real Estate Services told the seminar that "the laid back reputation of life in the West Coast's major city is history".42

To date the Laurier Institute has commissioned a series of reports on demographic changes in Canada, immigration, and housing issues. A study released in December 1989 on the role of migration in the current housing situation in Vancouver, noted that the largest component of migration into the city was intra-urban migration from elsewhere in Canada. However the author of the report, Gregory Schwann, was later quoted in a local newspaper as going on to suggest that "historically, immigrants as a group do not have incomes that are substantially higher than existing residents ..... the conclusion you can draw from that is that they're not out there demanding these massive homes".43 Schwann's historical generalisation may have contained a grain of truth but as I have just described, by the 1980s a combination of 'events' both within and outside Canada demanded a rethinking of the traditional scenario of the immigrant experience. Another Laurier report released the following January was to focus more closely on the 'monster' house issue in Vancouver. Its authors, Stanbury and Todd contradicted Schwann's earlier assertion, concluding that to understand the possible role immigration might have played in the 'monster' house problem as it evolved in the late 1980s, one had to confine one's discussion to the

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effects of an emerging elite portion amongst the wide spectrum of immigrants moving to British Columbia. Taking into account this new immigrant scenario, they quoted Pettit suggesting that new large homes in Vancouver's west side were largely a manifestation of the perceived tastes of a wealthy minority group, primarily of Hong Kong origin, who possessed enough economic power to afford the area's top of the market real estate prices.\textsuperscript{44}

'Block Busting With Style ?'

Knickerbocker\textsuperscript{45} and Pettit\textsuperscript{46} have suggested that many of these so-called 'monster' houses are often built by local developers as speculative ventures. From my own observations it would certainly appear that a number of the homes are speculatively built, following standard designs. However some too are custom built.\textsuperscript{47} Either way, in tracing the debate within the City's council chambers, I was struck by the virtual absence of one, quite crucial voice — the owners of these new houses. In the course of my research, I came across only three letters sent to the City Council by 'monster' house owners. During the public hearings on the various RS-1 amendments, their interests were usually represented by the designers, architects, real estate agents, and developers. It was they who publicly defended the construction of these new homes. Given the wealth of the new residents, the racial subtext interwoven with the issue of landscape aesthetics, and

\textsuperscript{44} Stanbury and Todd (1990), pp. 112.
\textsuperscript{46} Pettit as quoted in Stanbury and Todd (1990), chapter 5.
\textsuperscript{47} According to a number of informants in the local building industry.
the emergence of racial tensions within the west side in particular, this is perhaps not too surprising. Illustrating this, on one occasion in January 1990, pending further amendments to the RS-1 bylaw, the council withheld the issue of development permits from January 26th to January 31st. During this short period 17 new development applications were filed, only two of which referred to properties beyond the west side. At the time the City Council received a number of letters from interested parties protesting the move, and requesting the insertion of a 'grandfather' clause to allow proposals presently under formulation to go ahead. Only two letters claimed to be from property owners; the majority were from individuals or groups involved in the housing construction industry, such as a body called the West Side Builders Association representing 31 firms in total.

On the same occasion a Kerrisdale homeowner filed a petition with the City Clerk's Office asking for an exemption clause to be passed to allow him to renovate his Tudor style house. Among the letters local residents had written in supporting the request was one from a 'Chinese'-Canadian neighbour. Having lived in the neighbourhood for four years, he commented that his neighbour's renovation plans will "be inclined toward a more authentic Tudor design and as such will be a real compliment to the updating we're now seeing in our street. We look favourably upon their renovation". Unwittingly this letter unmasks the arbitrary nature of sign, deeming a house extension "more authentic". Also the neighbour interestingly describes the changing streetscape as undergoing a process of "updating". This brings us back to the focus of the chapter -- the extent to which this process of "updating", the production of an associated set of new

48 'Buying up their new world: Hong Kong's immigrants drawn to the city's west side' \textit{Vancouver Sun} February 27th, 1988.
49 Managers Report: Withholding action on RS-1/RS-1S development applications, February 5th, 1990 (City Clerks Office).
50 Letter to Council 3/2/90 (City Clerk's Office: file no. 5301-5).
house styles on the streets of Kerrisdale, signifies the emergence of a new social order. For the production of a modified and new set of meanings for 'Kerrisdale', not only reflects the historic swirl of culture, politics, and economics in British Columbia, but also in the rest of Canada and abroad. The usurping of the Anglophile elite's traditional economic power to maintain and defend their interpretation of Kerrisdale's landscape, perhaps points to the emergence of a new economic elite, with different landscape 'tastes'.

Certainly there would appear to be strong evidence to support the contention that local developers and designers are constructing these 'monster' houses with a specific market in mind. They are often constructed in such a way so as to deliberately engage the cultural codes and symbols of a very specific, intended clientele -- new middle-class Canadian citizens, usually of Hong Kong and Taiwanese origin. However there are at least two sets of arguments at play in the transformation of Kerrisdale's streetscape -- one cultural and the other economic. And problems arise in trying to separate the two in any discussion of landscape aesthetics. Just as class and ethnicity cannot be easily separated at the empirical level, so the social significance of the emerging symbolic landscape must be simultaneously thought of in terms of interwoven cultural and economic realms. For it is within these intertwined realms that the landscape gains its very meaning. Conceptions of material utility are always delimited by a cultural system of interpretation. Given the economics of land values in Kerrisdale by the mid-1980s, and the existing RS-1 guidelines which in effect discourage renovation, developers tended to demolish existing dwellings and build so as to maximise the use of the available building envelope. Thus while the size of the new house may reflect the most efficient use of the available building space, it is important

to remember that in the 'fluid medium' of the contemporary mass market, drives for substance and prestige are collapsed together in each contemplated act of consumption.52 Large houses in many cultures are symbols of status and a vehicle for "conspicuous consumption".53 A 'monster' house can be thought of as an outward expression of wealth and social status, a capital investment, and at the same time a unit large enough to accommodate relatively large households in considerable comfort. They are in part an expression of a lifestyle that values extended family members and home-helps. Even if we accept for a moment that the economic rationale I mentioned earlier may have strongly encouraged the redevelopment of many of the lots in Kerrisdale and the production of relatively large, new houses,54 builders would appear to have incorporated a number of other themes into the nature of the house design. These are widely believed to be popular amongst Asian, and in particular Hong Kong buyers.

Djao has suggested that some traits in the cultural background of immigrants from the British colony are distinctively Chinese. However he qualifies this in saying that the overall cultural system in Hong Kong is a curious mixture of British colonial, Chinese, and modern Western values, attitudes, customs and so on.55 This is reflected in the cross-current of themes re-presented in the new house designs often found in Kerrisdale. Neo-Georgian mansions with ostentatious pillared porticos (Plate 11), large brick clad Tudor 'villas', and modern utilitarian designs (Plate 12) brush shoulders with older, smaller stucco-clad Arts and Crafts 'cottages' and 'farmhouses'. Of interest, one

54 Given the reasons Mr. Khouw stated for wanting to demolish his house in Second Shaughnessy which I mentioned in chapter three, I would suggest such a contention misses a very important aspect which makes the 'monster' house issue so significant for old and new residents alike. What I am referring to is a whole new set of lifestyle relations and values which new residents are bringing with them into the neighbourhood.
55 Djao (1982).
such luxury house, was spectulatively built and placed on the housing market in 1990 for $1,639,000. This 'Kerrisdale mansion' with red tiled roof and brick facade, was advertised as a "European first quality custom built home", appealing at once to a colonial heritage intertwined with status connotations. For the assortment of symbols and codes in both old and new buildings represents a selective reaching back into the 'past', and the creation of a kind of contemporary mythology communicating social identity through the rituals of possession and grooming.

In addition, the new houses often incorporate feng shui sensibilities into the core of their design, though more recently attempts appear to have been made to blend these with more 'traditional' motifs in what may be an attempt to placate older residents' objections. Feng shui (meaning 'wind' and 'water'), the Chinese way of living in harmony with 'nature', stresses the importance of balance, proportion and geography. Originally developed under the Chinese Dynasties as a way of ordering society, and by implication geography, it has been readily incorporated within capitalist relations. Common characteristics of a 'monster' house are symmetrical, balanced proportions, the use of bright colours signifying life, and a variety of building materials, especially brick which gives the structure an imposing air of permanence and solidity. Large two-storey entrance-ways, while effectively exploiting the FSR allowance under the RS-1 zoning guidelines, reflect both the size of the building and the household within (Plate 10). In addition imposing front windows, sometimes stretching for two storeys, indicate the importance of light, symbolically opening up the interior of the house onto the street and community beyond the property's private domain.

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56 See Appendix B for more details.
As Rossbach's exploration into the world of feng shui illustrates, this ancient cultural system is at once both practical and symbolic. From within this world view, the importance of 'place' in bringing together the forces of nature in harmony is quite explicit. This is reflected in common features found in Kerrisdale's 'monster' houses, such as fountains, wind chimes in doorways, Chinese lions guarding the entrance-way, red roof tiles and red bricked driveways, the use of mirrors in the interiors, and even chandeliers, which frequently adorn the impressive two-storey central hallways. Lights, for example, in symbolising the sun are meant to be auspicious. Bright lamps bring light to dark areas, that is 'yang' to a 'yin' situation. This stimulates a person's ch'i or motivating force by unifying the complimentary opposites of light and darkness. According to Rossbach, chandeliers activate ch'i and distribute strong ch'i evenly around a room. In a similar vein stairways, "the house's conduits", seldom run straight down towards the front door, but rather curve gracefully into the main hall, "pumping ch'i from one floor to the next".

The elite Anglophile culture which until recently claimed Kerrisdale for its own, has traditionally associated certain numbers, such as 7 and 13 with magical powers. By tradition Chinese culture has also endowed numbers with mystical properties. As I alluded to at the beginning of chapter three, it has been common practice in Kerrisdale for recently sold houses to have new street numbers. Often homeowners wishing to sell their houses, and developers, have changed the original house number to one the 'Chinese' traditionally associate with good fortune or success. In the hope of enhancing the market value of their property, this

61 In the history of ownership I sketched for a lot in Kerrisdale, in 1989 the lot was bought by a developer and its street number changed from 4412 to 4418. Many examples of this may be found in Kerrisdale.
practice indicates the strength of popular belief that it is those of 'Chinese' ethnic origin who are redefining the meaning of Kerrisdale as an elite neighbourhood. Hence the introduction of these styles into Kerrisdale's landscape reflects changing times. As I have suggested in this chapter, the numerical dominance of the Anglophile population has weakened within Vancouver since the late 1960s. In particular for the middle and upper-middle classes, this has been associated with the weakening of their traditional economic power. The reshaping of Kerrisdale's landscape testifies to this. However power is seldom absolute, for as long-time residents have no longer been able to rely on their market power to ensure their 'reading' of Kerrisdale, they have resorted to other resources at hand.

In challenging and transforming the traditional landscape image, newcomers to the neighbourhood have challenged a largely taken-for-granted sense of identity and a privileged social world. The debate over the apparent niceties of landscape aesthetics which has raged through the local media and Council Chambers has progressed hand-in-hand with a struggle over the cultural politics of identity, nationhood and power. The usurping of an Anglophile elite's economic power, has forced homeowners to resort to the cultural politics of 'taste', wielding their traditional political and cultural dominance. This has been affirmed by the level of public support residents have been able to draw from outside the neighbourhood for their cause. Their appeals to "tradition" and "heritage" call upon ethnic themes which still pervade British Columbia's dominant culture. In addition the amount of Council time these issues have monopolised is indicative of the residents' political influence.

Since the mid-1980s pressing housing needs concerned with equity in access to housing have had to share the political limelight with the 'monster' house issue. The amount of Council time devoted to the latter illustrates the power wielded by particular ethnic and class interests in bringing to the fore the issue of neighbourhood 'character'. In light of these calls for greater autonomy in neighbourhood planning decisions must be
approached with a degree of caution. For the arguments for a "livable" environment, or heritage value have an elitist underside to them, reflecting a crosscurrent of class and ethnic interests.

However the new styles transforming the landscape of Kerrisdale are no less elitist. Whereas in the development of Shaughnessy Heights by the CPR in the 1920s the large house was perhaps the highest vernacular expression of the 'canons of good taste' by the dominant Anglophile culture, in Kerrisdale in the 1980s and 1990s it would seem to represent the 'tastes' of a minority culture. The evidence I have been able to assemble suggests that the new housing styles which are transforming the streetscape of Kerrisdale similarly incorporate another set of ethnic and class sensibilities.
Chapter Five

Conclusion

Since its formation in the 1920s, Kerrisdale as a residential neighbourhood has come to embody a set of expressive and instrumental values for those who have claimed it for their own. Its location and landscaping have been a means to fixing social position, an example of residential credentialism. However as an elite landscape, its form has reflected the social order of the times in which it has gained its meaning and significance. Viewed by its traditional adherents as the height of 'taste' and a 'character' area, the codes and symbols within the existing landscape image recall a distinctly Anglo-Canadian heritage. Even though the neighbourhood's population became more ethnically heterogeneous by the 1970s, its privileged position and status value remained intact, and if anything were embellished. The culture of consumption symbolised in the landscape, retained both its ethnic and class component. It would appear that up until the 1980s, new residents moving into the neighbourhood bought into an established set of values and lifestyle relations. With the redevelopment of the neighbourhood in the 1980s, these themes were to be clearly articulated in response to a challenge to the established 'reading' of the landscape. For newcomers to the neighbourhood were to bring with them new values and associated styles of consumption.

As I stressed in chapter two, Kerrisdale's landscape was originally fashioned by the local state, developers and consumers alike, into an image that presented a deceptive appearance of naturalness, immutability and a given social and moral order. The social power represented by this image has been wielded throughout the neighbourhood's
history ensuring the maintenance of what residents defined as neighbourhood 'character'. To question why this 'character' was deemed so important, brings us to the close relationship between identity, place and power. For the ability to define the landscape has been critical to the reproduction and legitimisation of the set of values and practices embodied in this image of social reality. The local significance of the power to define the landscape, lies in the knowledge of the economic, political and cultural consequences for the participants in a particular 'reading'. In challenging the image in which the landscape was molded, newcomers to the neighbourhood have undermined the dominance of the social world which claimed the landscape's image of 'reality' for their own.

By the mid-1980s Kerrisdale's residents witnessed the emergence of a neighbourhood characterized by a greater degree of diversity. The construction of new architectural styles and the growing ethnic heterogeneity of the population signified the usurping of an Anglophile elite's traditional economic dominance. This reflected broader changes at both national and international scales which helped to re-shape Kerrisdale's landscape. These economic and political contingencies reflected the emergence of a new, more fractured social and symbolic order within British Columbia.

Therefore I would suggest that the transformation of Kerrisdale's streetscapes, is related to the 'economic destiny' Mayor Campbell anticipates for Vancouver. This 'World City' ideology has been assiduously promoted by the Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments, as well as a variety of business interests. Critical to this were the fundamental changes to Canadian immigration policy in the late 1960s as previously outlined. These precipitated a shift in orientation of population and capital flows into Canada with the rise in relative importance of the Pacific Rim region. By the 1980s the implementation of the Business Immigration Program, and the increasing uncertainty over Hong Kong's
future, helped to further establish and strengthen Vancouver's position as a Pacific Rim city. In recent years these developments have come to have an important bearing on the future of Kerrisdale. Developers and real estate agents have targeted the neighbourhood with a specific clientele in mind -- new Canadian citizens of Hong Kong origin.

The existing and emerging landscape styles represent a selective appropriation of the 'past' to confer social status. These contrasting styles each interweave ethnic and class components. For example the felling of the two Sequoia trees in Marguerite Street described in chapter three illustrates the profound significance of the debate over aesthetics for both old and new residents. The KGHA portrayed the event in moral terms, stressing environmental ethics and the importance of heritage and the traditional. The property owner's actions were regarded as displaying a lack of respect for these values cherished in the community as a whole. However the fate of Jack Eng's trees received much publicity in Hong Kong, where these neighbours' protests were seen as a slight directed towards the moral dictates of feng shui which stresses the importance of light.1 These contrasting interpretations of the events on Marguerite Street reflect the meeting of the differing sets of values, beliefs and interests of old and new residents. This struggle to define the landscape is symbolic of a deeper struggle over rights of citizenship, a sense of place, and the nature of identity itself.

This clash of two systems of cultural values and associated ways of interpreting the symbolic landscape draws us back to the question of multiculturalism discussed in chapter four. Within the dominant, Anglophile population it would appear that the 'non-ethnic'/ethnic' myth still has some

1 'Hong Kong Media Feast on Local Fallen Tree Story,' The Vancouver Courier May 2 1990, p.1.
currency in the minds of many. Yet among the Anglophile elite it would seem that the cultural mosaic is a popular ideal. Residents were often at pains to avoid criticising the new owners of the 'monster' houses in public, for fear of being labelled racist. Nevertheless they were intolerant of the new landscape tastes evident in their neighbourhood.

The evidence at hand would appear to suggest that the struggle over the meaning of Kerrisdale as an elite neighbourhood underpins the argument over landscape aesthetics. Landscape 'taste' is at once aesthetic and practical, economic and cultural. For the state and development interests, Kerrisdale's landscape is viewed as a commodified component, part of a strategy for economic growth. However amongst old and new residents alike, the contest over the definition of the neighbourhood's landscape articulates a struggle over social identity and place within Canadian society. This competition for the scarce material and symbolic resources embodied in the place called Kerrisdale, illustrates the unstable terrain upon which the benign myth of multiculturalism rests.
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Appendix A

Plates 2 - 14
Plate 2: Reeve Samuel Howe at the inaugural speech of the Municipality of Point Grey, 1908.

(The City of Vancouver Public Archives)
Plate 3: Panorama of Kerrisdale in 1911 showing the junction of West Boulevard and Forty-first Avenue. Note the Point Grey Municipal Hall on the left-hand side of the top view. It was constructed in the Tudor Revival style that came to characterize much of the subsequent residential development in the neighbourhood. Little of the suburb had been developed by this date.

(The City of Vancouver Public Archives)
Plate 4: The civic parade at Forty-first Avenue and West Boulevard celebrating the opening of the Arbutus trolley bus service from Downtown to Kerrisdale on the eighteenth of July, 1952. Note the Union Jack came ahead of the historical Pageant followed by a parade of cars festooned with banners advertising the variety of businesses of which Kerrisdale boasted. The leading car advertised six motorcar dealers, one corset seller, one printer, and seven barbers.

(The City of Vancouver Public Archives)
Plate 5: The wide, curbed avenues and 'pastoral' setting of Wiltshire Street in the heart of Kerrisdale. The KGHA draws most of its support from this area where the 'English' landscape image was most complete.

Plate 6: An Arts and Crafts cottage dating from the 1920's in the 6000 block of Churchill Street. Note the leaded windows, the exaggerated roof lines, and the roof edges curved to resemble thatch indicative of this architectural style. The contrived naturalism of the garden is another characteristic of this landscape style.
Plate 7: The modest doorway of a Tudor Revival house on the 1000 block of Forty-third Avenue. Note the half-timber motif typical of this architectural style.
Plate 8: A 1950's-1960's infill bungalow in the 7000 block of Marguerite Street. In this area, the original landscape image is broken by the addition of these later styles.

Plate 9: On the left side of the photograph is an example of the gambrelled roofed Dutch Colonial Farmhouse style. Juxtaposed is a 'monster' house - note the size of the dwelling, the use of glass blocks, and the contrasting lines.
Plate 10: The doorway of a 'monster' house in Neo-Georgian style. Note the imposing two-storey entranceway contrasting with more traditional styles such as those shown on Plate 7. The chandelier, the patterned glass on either side of the double door, the Chinese mythical creatures guarding the entranceway, and the lamp standards are popular features typical of these new houses.
Plate 11: The imposing architecture of monster houses transforming the 6000 block of Angus Street. The use of brick, two-storey entranceways, 'ostentatious' columns, arches, floor-to-ceiling windows, and the removal of mature vegetation have been points of contention raised by residents at City Council public hearings.

Plate 12: Blockbusting with style? A modern design contrasting markedly with the traditional landscape near Fifty-second Avenue and Adera Street. Note the Chinese script on the architect's advertisement. This architect in particular was responsible for a number of new designs found in the neighbourhood. When the photograph was taken, the older styled houses either side of the property were for sale.
Plate 11

Plate 12
Plate 13: Protesting the removal of mature vegetation from building lots in Kerrisdale, a neighbourhood petition was nailed to a tree that local residents wanted preserved.

Plate 14: Graffiti sprayed upon a 'monster' house under construction. The graffiti artist most likely intended to write 'Genius Loci?', a latin phrase which asks: "Is the guardian spirit of the place in its rightful context?". In other words, is this new architectural style fitting to the spirit of the surrounding landscape?
Appendix B

Extracts From A Real Estate Promotional Brochure For A 'Monster' House In Kerrisdale, June 1990
Extracts From A Real Estate Promotional Brochure For A
'Monster' House In Kerrisdale, June 1990

The following description has been taken from a promotional brochure for a 'monster' house located on Marguerite Street, near the intersection with 54th Avenue. Upon the construction on this lot of a new house, its number was changed from 7111 to 7133.

Age: Brand-New (old by-law)
Lot size: 64.7' x 143.9'
Finished area: 5533
Total no. of bedrooms: 7 plus den
Total no. of bathrooms: 8 (6 ensuite)
Total no. of fireplaces: 3 (all gas)
Price: $1,639,000
Main floor: - 2157 sq. ft.
   - 2 storey entrance foyer with elegant marble floor and gold plated chandelier
   - 9 ft. ceiling
   - sunken living room with 13 ft. high ceiling
   - dining room with gold plated chandelier
   - luxurious gourmet kitchen
   - large family room opening onto sundeck
   - guest bedroom with full ensuite
   - den or office with wet bar
   - mud room with closet and sink
   - powder room
Upper floor: - 1572 sq. ft.
   - 4 bedrooms with 4 delux ensuites
   - extra large master bedroom, luxurious marble ensuite and big walk-in closet
Appendix B (continued)

Basement:
- 1804 sq. ft.
- 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 bedroom with full ensuite
- recreation room or gamesroom with oak wet bar and built-in
  fridge and marble gas fireplace.
- spacious spa room and sauna
- laundry room with chute from the upper floor
- very spacious and bright
- mechanical room and storage room with two hot water tanks

Kitchen:
- fully equipped with granite counter tops and oak finishing.

Other Features:
- elegant crown molding in all three floors
- colour coordinated by an interior designer
- luxurious pile carpeting
- built-in vacuum, 7 intercoms, 11 telephone outlets, 7 TV outlets
- Professionally landscaped, fenced garden with automatic
  sprinkler system

Contact: Daniel Liem, P.Eng
Sutton Group, Heritage West Reality Ltd., Vancouver.
(member for two years of the Medallion President's Club).