Re-theorizing Vancouver's inner city as an Entertainment Machine

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Introduction

Buttressed by untempered globalization and the subsequent intensification of global

capital and labour flows, "global cities" have generally restructured their economic and

employment base to favour the quaternary sector (Sassen 88-89). This quaternary sector is more

or less synonymous to Manuel Castells' "informational economy" (163), which is dominated by

the industries of information technology, FIRE (finance, insurance, real estate), producer

services, and media production (Lloyd and Clark 3). To maintain and expand this new economy,

a growing cadre of educated professionals have begun moving into global inner cities[1]; this

phenomenon is further illustrated through an observable correlation between inner city

population growth and the expansion of the quaternary sector in cities across North America

(Walks 409). Furthermore, this emerging professional labour force has garnered a range of

monikers, from the colloquial term "yuppies," to what Richard Florida dubs as "the creative

class." While this new class of professionals are identified through their employment in the

quaternary sector, they are also typically recognized by their relative youth, high levels of

education, high disposable income, absence of children, and interest in consumption and

entertainment (Lloyd and Clark 10).

Thus, as global cities begin to, and continue to compete in the arena of entrepreneurialism

(Harvey 4), the inner city becomes deliberately planned and built to attract the creative class.

The city, then, becomes not only "a destination for work, but also to live and play" (Lloyd and

Clark 6). In this respect, entertainment, consumption and space become inextricably linked;

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1   The terms "inner city", "central city", "metropolitan core," "downtown core", and "downtown peninsula" are
    used interchangeably in this paper to refer to the region of downtown Vancouver (census tracts 59.03 to 68, in
    2006 delineations).

cities become sites of entertainment, while spaces become sites of consumption. And thus, global inner cities respond to the re-suturing of the social fabric through fundamental changes in urban spaces and urban amenities. Nightclubs, restaurants, seawalls and parks begin to emerge as new urban spaces, displacing amenities such as churches and schools which held more appeal to a bygone generation of workers. These changing urban spaces are not only a reflection of emerging cosmopolitan lifestyles and sensibilities, but are also a deliberate attempt at planning and designing the city as an entertainment machine. Specifically, the rise of amenities which exalt leisure and consumption, coupled with intricate urban planning policies and urban design principles which transform urban spaces into spaces of entertainment and consumption are part and parcel of a concerted effort to attract the creative class to the city.

This paper seeks to contribute to a growing discourse in urban studies which examines the socio-economic shifts of cities through a focused analysis of the changing urban spaces within inner cities in the context of the city as an entertainment machine. Specifically, this paper uses the downtown peninsula of Vancouver as a case study. Through a comprehensive examination of this city's history and internal dynamics, this paper illustrates how urban planning and urban design are used concurrently to inform and reinforce Vancouver as an entertainment machine.

Downtown Vancouver

Vancouver serves as an appropriate example for this form of urban analysis because it is currently one of Canada's most prominent global cities. While Vancouver is, in relative terms, a young city, its urban and social fabric have been fundamentally reshaped by the changes in

market, capital and labour flows. In particular, abetted by globalization, the heart of the city's

economic industries have evolved from a manufacturing sector towards one dominated by

quaternary services beginning in the late 1960's (Hutton 1953). However, while Vancouver hit its

peak of post-industrial achievement by the 1980's, a severe recession followed by rapid business

and financial disinvestment within the inner city fundamentally transformed its space-economy

within the same decade (Punter 258). Shortly thereafter, an influx of Asian-Pacific investment

into Vancouver's real-estate market revitalized the metropolitan core such that the inner city has

since become dominated by a series of high-density residential complexes rather than a post-

industrial corporate complex (Beasley). Nonetheless, while Vancouver's post-industrial

experience marks a clear break from classical models, its inner city population is strikingly

similar to the creative class through their relative youth, education, affluence, and appreciation

for consumption, entertainment, and leisure (Hutton 1971). And indeed, Vancouver's urban

planning policies have since been aligned to a specific trajectory, one which is deliberately aimed

at embracing the lifestyle of entertainment and consumption of this new class (Hutton 1977).

  The region of Yaletown, for example, was once an industrial district dominated by

warehouses and rail yards, but is now the pinnacle of Vancouver's high-density residential

complex and creative economy (Hutton 1971). Dubbed as one of the most successful

gentrification projects, Yaletown is a built testament to the newly emerging urban spaces which

are built in accordance to the tastes of the creative class (Lloyd and Clark 6).

Research Design and Methodology

In this paper, the analysis of how urban planning and urban design inform and reinforce Vancouver as an entertainment machine is examined through a case study of the downtown peninsula. First, this paper seeks to contextualize and frame Vancouver's enigmatic post-industrial experience relative to classical models. Second, this paper posits that while Vancouver's experience as a post-industrial city has deviated from conventional expectations, typified by an office-based economy, its ascendant cohort of inner city elite still largely resemble the creative class found within post-industrial cities through a comparative quantitative analysis of census data collected from 1986 to 2006. These two dates are appropriate choices because the former provides a picture of Vancouver just prior to the 1986 Summer World Fair, and thus, immediately prior to the development of the Expo '86 lands into the present-day Yaletown. Likewise, the latter is significant because it provides the most updated view of Vancouver, thereby affording an effective opportunity to compare the changes *vis-à-vis* pre-Yaletown and post-Yaletown.

The quantitative approach analyzes four variables[2]: (1) population aged 20-34, (2) population with a post-secondary degree, (3) income adequacy, and (4) rent capitalization rate. A more detailed account regarding the choice of these variables are provided in the subsequent sections of this paper, but in a general sense, these variables are selected because they are typically characteristics which the creative class can be identified through (Lloyd and Clark 10).

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2   While there was originally an intention to compare occupational shifts, I was informed by Statistics Canada that comparing occupational trends between 1986 and 2006 was not possible because the former was classified by the 1980 Standard Occupational Classification, while the latter was classified by the 2006 National Occupational Classification for Statistics.

The raw data are collected from Statistics Canada and is limited in a spatial sense to the city of Vancouver (census tracts one to sixty-nine), as opposed to the entire census metropolitan area (CMA). All four variables are mapped through the use of location quotients, which measure the concentration of a variable within one particular census tract relative to the concentration of a variable for the average of all census tracts. While the values of the location quotients do not allow for the opportunity to depict absolute data, it provides an effective method in viewing relative differences; the values range from zero to infinity, with 1.00 representing parity with the entire city of Vancouver. Thus, in any given census tract, a value greater than 1.00 suggests a greater than average concentration, while a value less than 1.00 suggests a less than average concentration of a particular variable.

However, between 1986 and 2006, there have been significant boundary changes with respect to Vancouver's census tracts. As such, for the sake of accuracy, precision, and consistency, for single census tracts in 1986 which have split to become two in 2006, the raw values for the split tracts are added together and converted into a single location quotient. Thus, the shapefile used to visualize each variable are consistent with 1986 census tract boundaries. Nonetheless, it is important to note that there are certain drawbacks by converting 2006 data to respect 1986 delineations. For example, by virtue of there being less census tracts overall in 1986 than in 2006, the visualized data provides a coarser resolution which may hinder one's ability to assess more nuanced spatial patterns. This is particular problematic for census tracts 59.05 and 59.06 in 2006, which represent parts of Yaletown and the Downtown Eastside, respectively. While today, these two neighbourhoods are on opposite ends of the socio-economic spectrum,

they are agglomerated as a single census tract in 1986, consequently diluting the changes to a variable. Thus, when viewing these maps, it is not only important to keep these limitations in mind, but to also counter these limitations by reading the maps and their respective textual analyses in aggregate.

Next, the paper focuses on a qualitative assessment of how Vancouver, through its urban planning policies and urban design principles, attracts and retains the burgeoning class of elites within its metropolitan core. In this section, a comprehensive review of literature in this particular discourse of urban studies will provide the necessary conceptual and theoretical framework to develop this argument. First, Harvey Molotch's metaphor of the city as a growth machine will be discussed, followed by how this metaphor can be extended to encompass the contemporary inner city as an entertainment machine. Second, this paper analyzes the internal dynamics of Vancouver's downtown core, specifically, how the urban fabric is deliberately woven in a way to support the rise of the new imperative of entertainment and consumption. Thus, city planning policies, in particular, Vancouver's seminal Central Area Plan will be assessed through the lens of urban planning theories. Furthermore, the rise of "Vancouverism," an urban design principle which espouses high density living, mixed use development, and vibrant streetscapes will be used as an example to illustrate how urban design practices are used to maintain and reinforce a particular image and function of the city.

Vancouver's enigmatic post-industrial and gentrification experience

The collapse of the manufacturing sector located within the heart of inner cities began in

the early 1960's (Hutton 1953). Almost immediately, these fading Fordist industries were

replaced by a rising post-industrial economy, which fundamentally transformed the employment

base of the metropolitan core. Vancouver's downtown peninsula was no exception to this

process. Specifically, beginning from the late-1960's to the mid-1980's, Vancouver witnessed a

period of "functional hyperspecialization," whereby the inner city experienced an extensive

influx of commercial investment (Hutton 1972). Consequently, Vancouver became a distinct

locus of commercial interest, which was substantiated by a proliferation of speculative office

development within the city's central business district (Punter 258).

     While Vancouver has undergone a radical transformation, both demographically and

economically, since the 1960's, its post-industrial and gentrification experiences do not cohere

with those of conventional post-industrial cities. Classical cultural based theories of

gentrification posit that the first wave of gentrifiers are often young artists, who are drawn

towards neighbourhoods with low rents and high social diversity (Danyluk and Ley 2197). By

the virtue of their presence, these artists often transform neighbourhoods to reflect a bohemian

character imbued with an urban authenticity (Lloyd 25). The second wave of gentrifiers are

generally a nominally older cohort possessing higher levels of education, consisting of teachers,

health-care workers, social workers, and media workers who are drawn to these neighbourhoods

due to its aesthetic and cultural appeal (Danyluk and Ley 2197). Lastly, the final wave of

gentrifiers gravitate towards these neighbourhoods similarly because of its aesthetic disposition.

However, this last wave of gentrifiers originate from the upper echelons of the post-industrial

economy, comprising of elite capitalists, lawyers, business people, and medical specialists;

because of their economic ascendancy, this incipient wave of elite gentrifiers often displace the pioneering waves through the translation of cultural capital and aesthetic disposition into economic value, resulting in a drastic increase in property values (Ley, "Artists" 2540).

In light of this gentrification process, Vancouver should have theoretically reached the pinnacle of third-wave gentrification by the 1980's, whereby the inner city became a hub for commercial interests, accommodating the cadre of slightly older, better educated, and more affluent business elite. However, Vancouver's inner city did not experience a period of pronounced urban revitalization until the late 1980's. Following a deep recession, Vancouver lost its role as a nexus for commercial interests, and rapid disinvestment within the inner city was mirrored by the contraction of the corporate complex and the collapse of speculative office development (Punter 258). Soon thereafter, Vancouver became privy to a resurgence of growth fueled by an incipient wave of Asian-Pacific investment into the inner city's property market. During this period, Vancouver transformed its space-economy to embrace the growth of high-density residential complexes in lieu of the post-industrial corporate complex through a series of urban planning provisions and urban design guidelines which largely revitalized and gentrified the metropolitan core (Beasley, Hutton 1967-1968, 1971).

Mapping the Creative Class: Socio-Economic and Demographic Change in Vancouver

By the 1980's third-wave gentrifiers consisting of office-based professionals have firmly established themselves as the reigning social faction within Vancouver's metropolitan core (Hutton 1962). However, despite Vancouver's enigmatic post-industrial and gentrification

experiences, the comparison of census data for Vancouver in 1986 and in 2006, using four variables which are indicative of the creative class, suggests that the emerging inner city cohort is markedly similar to the creative class found within post-industrial inner cities.

The first variable measures the percentage the population between the ages of 20-34 living within each census tract (see Figure 1). Vancouver's inner city has welcomed increasing concentrations of this youthful cohort since 1986, which, unexpectedly, is reminiscent more of first-wave artists than of third-wave office-based elite professionals.

Moreover, the second variable measures the spatial concentration of an educated demographic, in particular, those who have completed post-secondary education and have subsequently been conferred a degree by a recognized institution (see Figure 2). Surprisingly, eight out of the elven census tracts within Vancouver's downtown core have witnessed an increase in the spatial concentration of post-secondary educated respondents from 1986 to 2006; a result which indicates that while Vancouver's inner city may no longer be a corporate complex, its present-day residents are better educated than their preceding office-based professional counterparts of the 1980's.

The third variable illustrates income adequacy, which is calculated by taking the median annual income for a census tract, and dividing it by the average number of persons per census family within the respective tract (see Figure 3). In this regard, the resulting quotient is a relative measure of the financial wellbeing of an individual. Thus, above-average income adequacy is indicative of either two factors: (1) low incidence of children and dependents, and/or (2) high level of (discretionary) income. And indeed, both of these factors are generally attributed to the

creative class (Ley, "Artists" 2540; Lloyd and Clark 10). While the majority of all census tracts

within the inner city have maintained an above-average concentration between 1986 and 2006,

the most pronounced shifts have occurred around Yaletown. While reinvestment into Yaletown

following Expo '86 has induced brownfield redevelopment within this neighbourhood, it is

important to note that Yaletown has been transformed into an emblematic elite residential

neighbourhood and a creative heartland, rather than a mono-cultural corporate complex (Hutton

1968; Ley, "Artists" 2534).

The fourth variable measures rent capitalization rate, which is calculated by dividing the

average annual rental rate for residential dwellings within a census tract by the average market

value within the respective tract (see Figure 4). While the market value of houses may indicate

desirability to live in an area, it is simultaneously affected by a variety of dynamic factors, such

as housing market conditions, and interest rates. Rent capitalization rate, however, exclusively

represents the desirability to live within an area, with higher rates being indicative of a more

desirable area, as the variable balances these dynamic factors with rental demand. As such, it

becomes clear that Vancouver's inner city has become an increasingly desirable area to live since

1986; desirability in this instance, is synonymous to the growing ambiance of livability which has

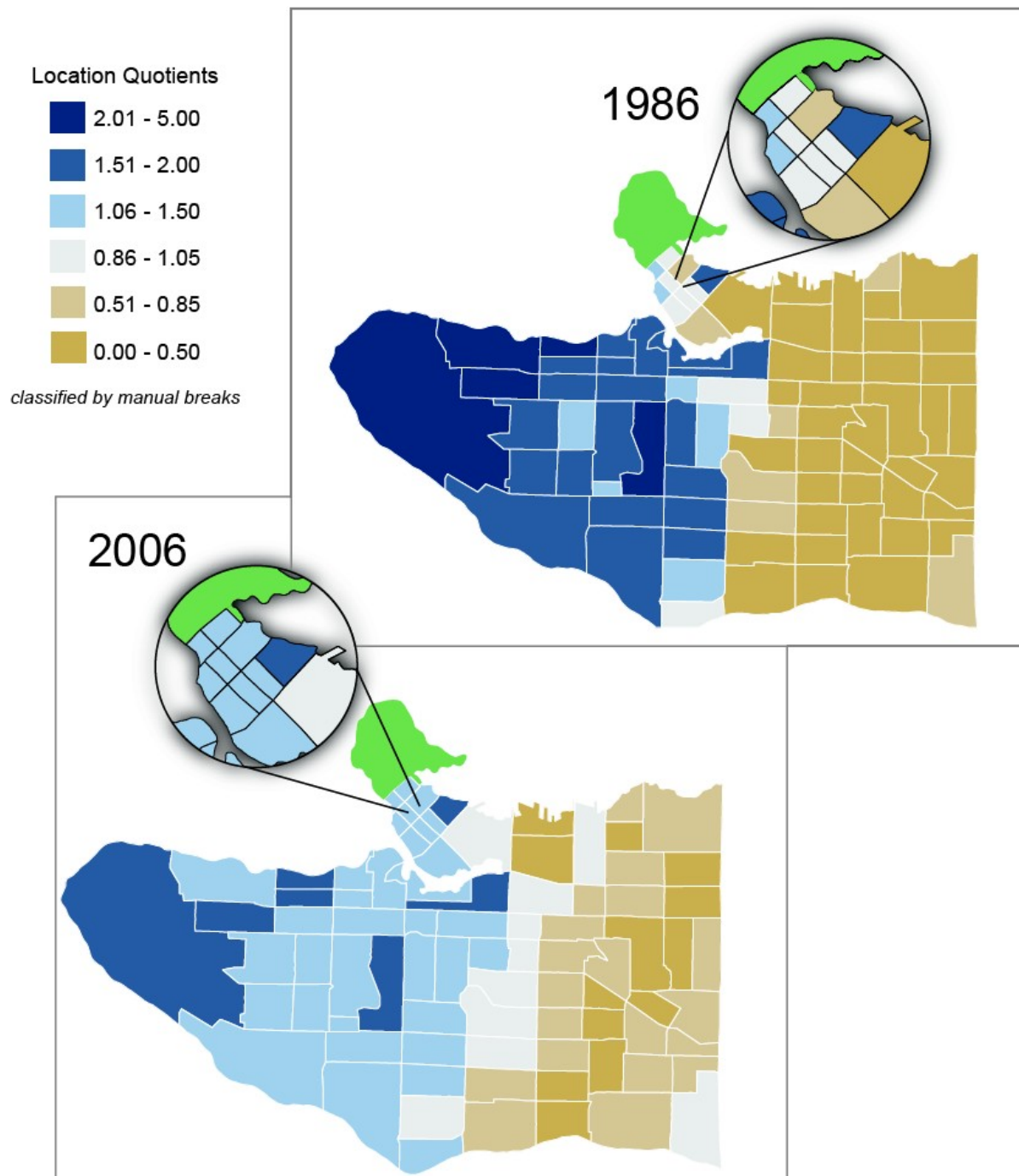become an imperative for attracting the creative class (Ley, *New* 54).

From the Growth Machine to the Entertainment Machine

Harvey Molotch, in his seminal piece, "The City as a Growth Machine," posits that the

desire for growth is a unifying imperative for local elites within any given locality (Molotch 310).
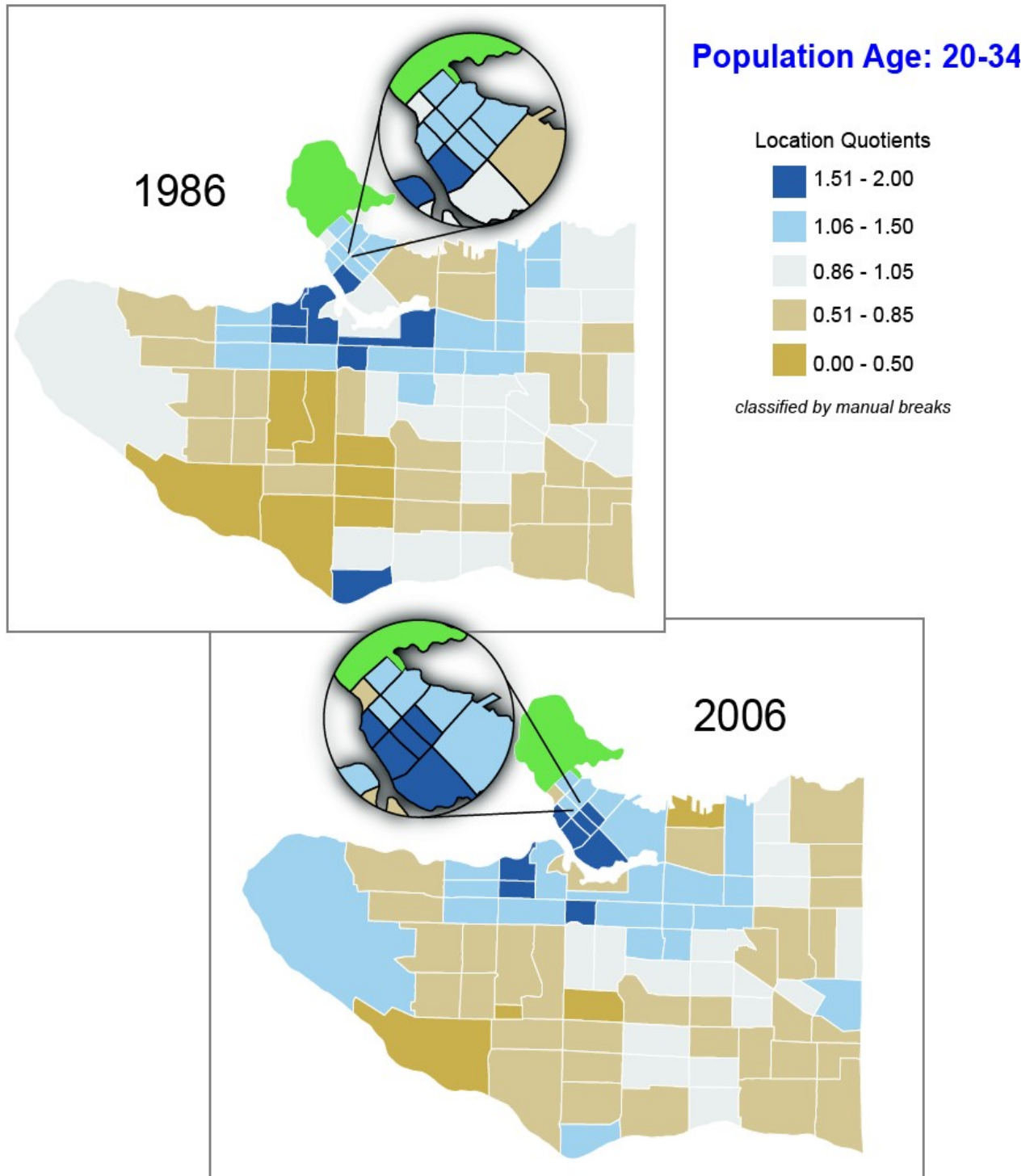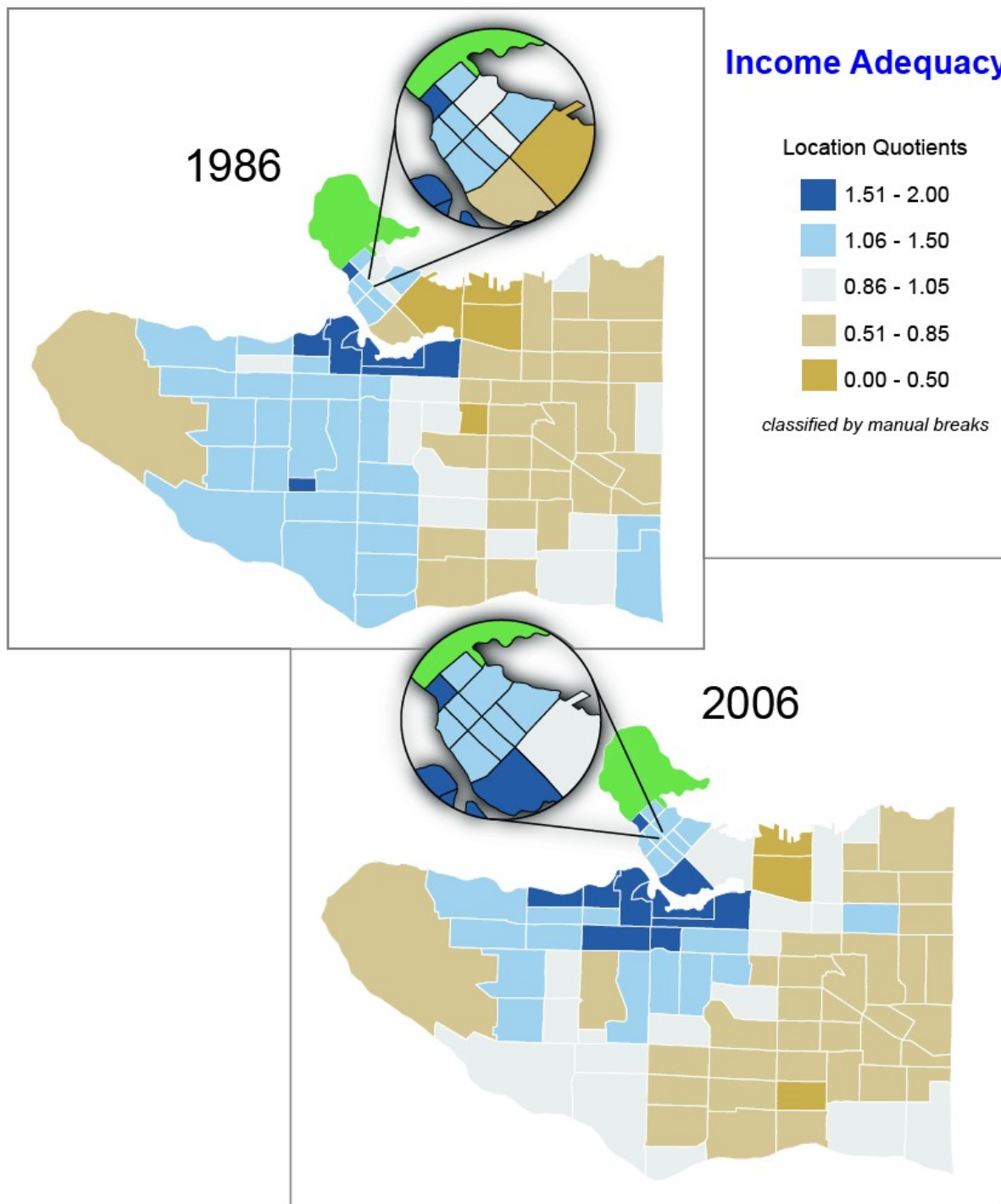
Figure 1. The spatial concentration of a youthful cohort in Vancouver's inner city.

Population with a Post-Secondary Degree

Location Quotients

- 2.01 - 5.00
- 1.51 - 2.00
- 1.06 - 1.50
- 0.86 - 1.05
- 0.51 - 0.85
- 0.00 - 0.50

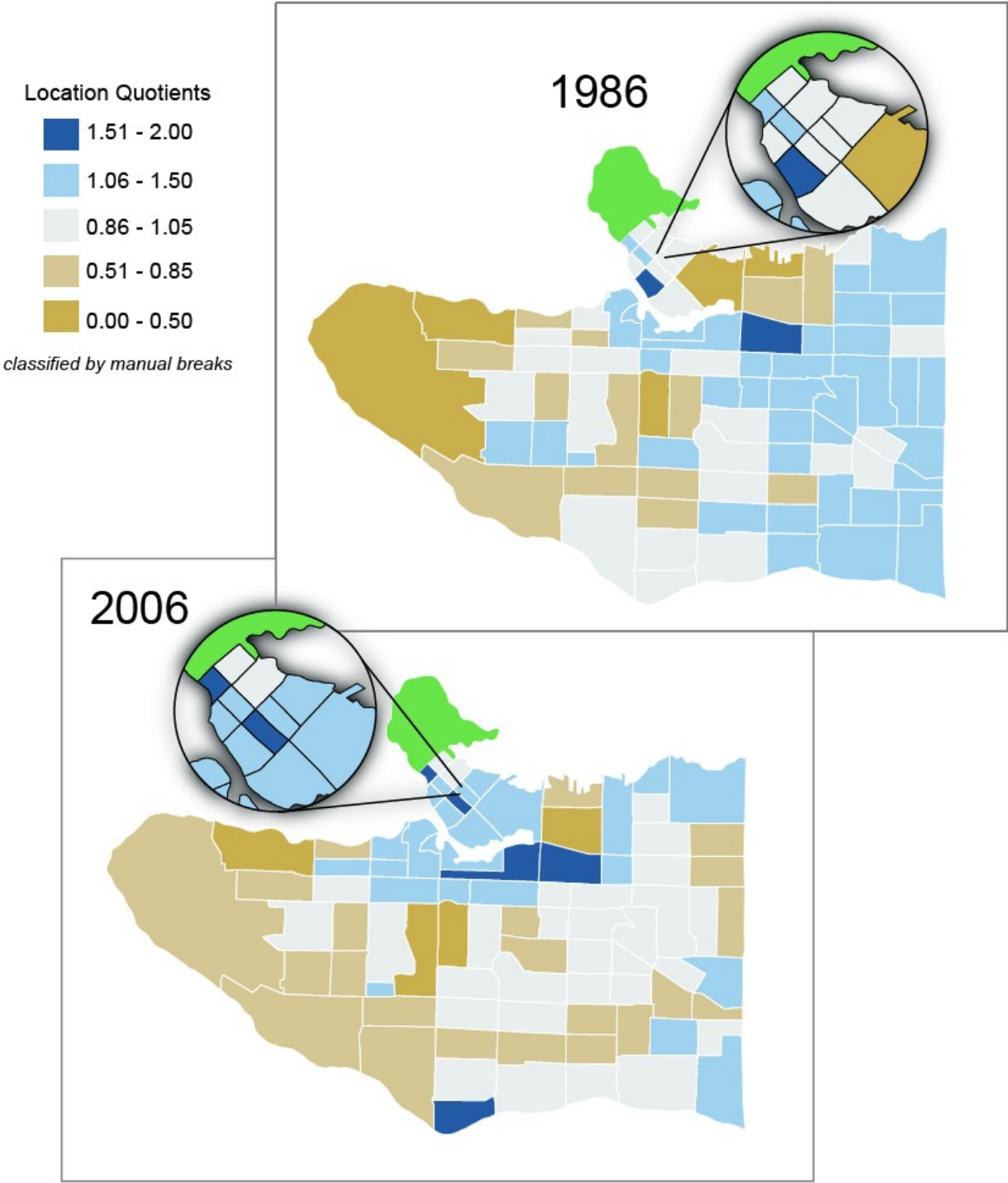*classified by manual breaks*

1986

2006

Figure 2. Spatial concentration of a post-secondary educated cohort in Vancouver's inner city.

Figure 3. Spatial concentration of income adequacy in Vancouver's inner city.

Rent Capitalization Rate

Location Quotients

- 1.51 - 2.00
- 1.06 - 1.50
- 0.86 - 1.05
- 0.51 - 0.85
- 0.00 - 0.50

classified by manual breaks

1986

2006

Figure 4. Spatial concentration of rent capitalization rate in Vancouver's inner city.

Thus, while the political theatre of a city may be a constant battleground, locally-dependent elites share vested commercial interests in shaping the city to attract growth. In particular, the local growth machine is engaged in a constant struggle with other competing localities to attract industries and its accompanying labour force; consequently, the growth of a city is indicated by an expanding urban population coupled with an intensification of land development and financial activity (Molotch 310).

While Molotch's thesis is generally applied to industrial cities in the 1970's, his theory has recently been extended metaphorically to encompass post-industrial and post-modern cities. The re-theorizing of Vancouver under the conditions of its enigmatic post-industrial experience reveals that the inner city has undergone a paradigmatic shift since the 1980's. Specifically, the erosion of Vancouver's head office sector coupled with the rezoning of millions of square feet of commercial and office space for the development of residential mega-projects gave rise to new clusters of residential populations, occupations, and demands (Beasley; Hutton 1967-1968, 1971).

While the mapped variables above indicate the emergence of a younger, more educated, and more affluent cohort with a penchant for living within the inner city, their arrival is accompanied by new lifestyle imperative that, similar to the creative class, is concerned with entertainment, consumption, culture, and leisure (Hutton 1971; Lloyd and Clark 4-5). Thus, if the inner city in the 1970's functions as a growth machine through its concerted efforts to attract industry and labour, then the inner city in today's era functions as an entertainment machine through the production of consumption opportunities and sites of entertainment in an attempt to attract this emerging class of elites.

Re-orienting Vancouver's inner city: The Central Area Plan

The collapse of the office sector and the rise of residential development in the 1980's have largely redefined the forces which shape Vancouver's metropolitan core. Specifically, the emergence of a new space-economy, labour market, and resident population have realigned social and urban processes towards concepts associated with post-modernism, which is defined as the acknowledgement and celebration of "diversity, complexity, and ambiguity" (Hutton 1955). And indeed, this new ethos of post-modernity was embraced by the city through the implementation of the Central Area Plan.

Approved by City Council in 1991, and adopted as the official growth strategy for Vancouver's inner city, the Central Area Plan set forth the motion of re-orienting the downtown core in accordance to the tenets of post-modernism, while respecting the city's historical affiliations with post-industrialism (Hutton 1956). This new context of planning engendered a five pronged approach: (1) consolidate and reduce zoning for offices, (2) relocate business support services, (3) expand high-density residential development, (4) improve livability, and (5) reconfigure retail activity (City of Vancouver 1-3). In a concerted effort, these five strategies were used to first and foremost to create "an alive downtown," which not only encourages a variety of activities and social groups, but also appreciates differentiated landscapes, urban form, and livability within the central city (City of Vancouver 1); indeed, a concept which is strikingly reminiscent of post-modern principles. Thus, the development of residences, and in particular, high-density condominiums, became a critical task as it increases density and invites a mix of activity and livelihoods within the downtown core (Hutton 1964).

The Entertainment Machine: Livability through planning and design

The consolidation and compaction of the corporate complex, coupled with the allocation

of a new zoning category termed "choice-of-use/mixed-use," largely contributed to the

advancement of residential development in areas formerly zoned for offices (Punter 244). For

example, the area of Triangle West, previously home to major office buildings, was rezoned by

Council in 1991 into a "choice-of-use" neighbourhood due to its stunning views of the North

Shore mountains, Stanley Park, and the Burrard Inlet (Punter 245). By 1992, four luxury high-

rise condominiums were erected, with several more pending approval from the Permit Board.

Furthermore, the influx of Asian-Pacific investment into Vancouver's burgeoning housing market

provided new opportunities for growth and development. In particular, the sale of the Expo '86

lands north of False Creek to the Hong Kong business mogul Li Ka-Shing in 1988 resulted in the

construction of over 9,000 new condominium units designed to house an estimated 15,000 new

residents (Boddy 18; Price 3).

Nonetheless, various policy statements released by Council warned urban planners and

designers that increased density within the downtown core would have a significant impact on

livability, and as a result, needs to be ameliorated through a range of planning provisions and

design guidelines (Punter 244). Livability, in the context of the Central Area Plan, is primarily

concerned with the *embourgeoisement* of the inner city; specifically, promoting notions of

"environmental sustainability, social equity, public household, health and fitness, [and a] sense of

connectedness with the physical fabric of the city," all of which are ideologies and behaviors

attributed to the ascendant inner city elite (Danyluk and Ley 2196). Consequently, the reduction

of one's reliance on the automobile is a significant priority of the Central Area Plan, such that

residents are encouraged to engage with alternative modes of transportation. For example, the

emergence of "choice-of-use/mixed use" zoning categories enabled the juxtaposition of

residences, places of work, and entertainment, effectively facilitating the ability to walk or cycle

from home, to work, and to play (Punter 244; Danyluk and Ley 2195). Moreover, the

development of residences alongside public amenities, shops, services, restaurants, and

nightclubs not only offers residents a significant breadth and scope of choice (Berelowitz 219),

but also creates a lifestyle which appeals to the burgeoning cohort of elites.

Livability is further reinforced through a repertoire of urban design strategies, which are

primarily informed through an innovative integration of both discretionary and regulatory

planning processes. Major applications for development within the inner city of Vancouver are

subjected to a complex process which solicits both professional and public advice from three

bodies: (1) the Urban Design Panel, (2) the Development Permit Board Advisory Panel, and (3)

The Development Permit Board. Pending development proposals are first submitted to the Urban

Design Panel, chaired by thirteen experts drawn from the fields of architecture, engineering and

urban planning, which provides descriptive design advice and architectural input for the project.

While the Urban Design Panel votes on whether or not the to support the proposed development,

it holds no authoritative power as they are considered to be an advisory board (Punter 32-33).

Thus, regardless of whether the Design Panel approves of, or rejects the concept, the proposal is

forwarded to The Development Permit Board, comprised of the city planner, the city engineer,

and the deputy city manager, who is delegated administrative powers by Council to either permit

or refuse development. While the Board retains the ability to grant assent for development, they

are obligated to seek advice from the Development Board Advisory Panel; composed of two

representatives from either urban design professions or the development industry, in addition to

four representatives from the general public, the Advisory Panel balances the interests of both the

developers and the public domain (Punter 323). Similarly, the Board is compelled to take into

account the advice and verdict of the Design Panel, with which they rarely disagree (Punter

335).

     While Vancouver's planning process is often touted as "transparent, rigorous, highly

skilled, and consensus-seeking" (Punter 344), it is important to note that the members of the

Design Panel, the Advisory Board, and the Permit Board are all appointed by Council (Punter

320, 323, 327). Consequently, while the developments which are approved by this meticulous

process may maintain high standards of design, they often shape the inner city in accordance to

local policy. For example, the majority of preoccupations by both the Design Panel and Permit

Board are concerned with whether the placement or the size of condominium towers will block

existing view corridors, whether the design is conducive to streetlife, whether the design

prioritizes the pedestrian over the automobile, and whether the design is aesthetically and

materially consistent to the existing neighbourhood (Punter 337). These significant

considerations appropriated to the concepts of livability through urban design are conducive to

the production of a vibrant street life, or as one urban theorist terms it, "life between buildings"

(Gehl 77). Thus, the inner city ascribes to the principles of post-modernism through the

integration of diverse urban forms that promote a multiplicity of uses, effectively encouraging a

growing inner city population to explore the city on foot (Danyluk and Ley 2195).

The sidewalk, then, becomes an important conduit for social contact (Jacobs 55), whose criticality is realized through a series of planning and design strategies. While many theorists are critical of condominiums, arguing that they stymy a vibrant street life through the imposition of a monolithic residential landscape (Gehl 6), Vancouver's inner city has countered this aspersion of high-density living through encouraging forms of design which embrace the streetscape and facilitate street life. *Vancouverism*, a style of design distinctive to Vancouver, incorporates ground-oriented townhouses, shops, and services at the base of many condominiums (see Figure 5). Consequently, the enclosure of these towers by a podium of ground-oriented, mixed-use buildings promotes a livable environment whereby residents are encouraged to interact with one another on the street, while the monumental towers fade from one's perception of the urban landscape (Beasley). Streetlife is further enhanced through the emergence of new landscapes, and new urban spaces. Thus, while the development of the seawall, coupled with the fifteen kilometers of dedicated bicycle and pedestrian greenways throughout the inner city animate the street, the rise of shopping districts, restaurants, nightclubs, and bars throughout the central city complements this process, and caters to the preferences of the city's elite (Danyluk and Ley 2199; Hutton 1966).

Domesticating the central city: processes of social exclusion

While Vancouver's inner city has undoubtedly become more livable as a result of salient urban planning and urban design policies, these practices have simultaneously set in motion a

series of class conflicts and tensions associated with displacement (Hutton 1953; Punter 287).

The Central Area Plan sought to revitalize several key neighbourhoods within the central city, the

most prominent being Granville Street (Punter 252). Since the 1970's, Council has been ensnared

in a series of failed attempts to regenerate this neighbourhood, which has hitherto been a nexus

for drug dealers, street kids, and the homeless (Lees 247). However, following the adoption of

the Central Area Plan, the entire neighbourhood was rezoned, striking an intricate balance

between the entertainment district now consolidated between the blocks of Nelson and Robson,

and the residential district to the south (Lees 248; Punter 252). Furthermore, six blocks of

Granville Street became a pedestrianized zone, effectively closing the area to automobiles; this

decision, in conjunction with increasing density through the Central Area Plan, was an explicit

attempt by urban planners to domesticate the streets by attracting the burgeoning class of elites

through livability (Lees 247).

Figure 5: *Vancouverism* in Yaletown
Source: Author's photograph.

Similarly, while the revival of other neighbourhoods within the downtown core have enhanced livability by generously catering to the lifestyle imperatives of the inner city elite, they have also facilitated processes of social exclusion through urban design. For example, the design of Vancouver's new public library was approved, in part, to stabilize revitalized areas (Lees 239). This iconic post-modern structure, reminiscent of the Roman Colosseum, emerged as a new urban space which not only provided a public amenity, but also provided new opportunities for consumption and entertainment through a series of shops which line the library walls (Lees 241; Punter 263). However, while this library is meant to be a public space, it ironically becomes a space which privileges the lifestyles of the inner city elite. Specifically, while the exterior of the building is reminiscent of a fortress through its inward, curling design (Lees 239), the interior is reminiscent of a bourgeois, cosmopolitan site of consumption and entertainment, privy only to those who can afford the luxury of such a lifestyle (Lees 242; Punter 263).

Thus, while the quintessentially post-modern Central Area Plan embraces the tenets of diversity and livability, the inner city becomes paradoxically planned and designed to attract and retain the emerging cohort of elite, while simultaneously subverting its own goals of diversity and inclusion through its attempts at revitalizing and domesticating the streets. And indeed, the conditions of the Downtown Eastside are a bleak reminder that while Vancouver has largely ameliorated problems associated with density and livability within much of the inner city, social exclusion still runs unchecked.

Conclusion

Molotch's metaphor of the city as a growth machine is designed for localities within the 1970's, but an extended application of this metaphor to encompass the contemporary city as an entertainment machine reveals several fascinating processes which cumulatively re-orient the inner city. Thus, while the complex history of Vancouver's central city deviates from classical models of gentrification and post-industrialism, it nonetheless, illustrates that a burgeoning cohort of elite who collectively embody new lifestyle imperatives concerned with entertainment, consumption, and leisure are emerging within the inner city. Accompanying this rise of a new demography, is the fundamental transformation of the city's space-economy with the influx of Asian-Pacific investment into Vancouver's real estate market. Thus, buttressed by the intensification of global capital flows, the central city has adopted a new ethos of planning which is largely informed by the tenets of post-modernism, known as the Central Area Plan. Though a repertoire of new urban planning provisions and innovative urban design processes, the Central Area Plan has successfully reconfigured the downtown core by consolidating the corporate complex, expanding high-density residential development, and enhancing various forms of livability. In this regard, Vancouver, through a recourse to policy and design instruments, has not only reconfigured the urban form of its inner city, but also has become complicit with the entertainment machine through accommodating the emergence of new urban spaces which are conducive to the lifestyle imperatives of the ascendant inner city elite.

While this paper has largely discussed how urban planning and urban design are twin processes which collectively transform the central city, it is important to realize that there are

equally large forces, such as gentrification, globalization, and economic restructuring, which also impact urban reconfiguration (Hutton 1975). Nonetheless, Vancouver serves as an exceptional case study of how the interplay between the market, space-economy, local policy, and social ecology have decisively reconfigured the inner city as an entertainment machine.

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