

Queer Outburst: A Literary and Social Analysis of the Vancouver Node (1995-96) in
English Canadian Queer Women's Literature

by

Linda Christine Fox
B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1994
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 1999

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of English

© Linda Christine Fox, 2009
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy
or other means, without the permission of the author.

Supervisory Committee

Queer Outburst: A Literary and Social Analysis of the Vancouver Node (1995-96) within
English Canadian Queer Women's Literature

by

Linda Christine Fox
B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1994
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 1999

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Misao Anne Dean, (Department of English)
Supervisor

Dr. Nicole Shukin, (Department of English)
Departmental Member

Dr. Evelyn M. Copley, (Department of English)
Departmental Member

Dr. Christine St. Peter, (Department of Women's Studies)
Outside Member

Abstract

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Misao Anne Dean, (Department of English)

Supervisor

Dr. Nicole Shukin, (Department of English)

Departmental Member

Dr. Evelyn M. Copley, (Department of English)

Departmental Member

Dr. Christine St. Peter, (Department of Women's Studies)

Outside Member

Queer Outbursts' investigation of the Vancouver publication concentration (node) contributes to the fields of Canadian literature, queer and lesbian literature, Asian Canadian literature, and women's literature through three interwoven tasks. The first two tasks develop and combine node theory and node methodology to produce an original approach to materializing micro-histories minoritarian literatures. The third task demonstrates the nodal approach by materializing a node in Canadian queer women's writing centred in the relational geography of Vancouver in the mid-1990s.

The queer aesthetics of the novels under consideration are inseparable from the queer bodies and the material contexts that produce them; literary works are not discrete, static creations springing spontaneously from the mind of an inspired isolated writer. Node work reflects this understanding as it oscillates between material, social, and literary analyses and archival fieldwork. The literary and political context of the Vancouver publication node is historicized through a close reading of the 1988 conference, *Telling It*, which convened authors from First Nations, Asian, and Lesbian communities in the first public and explicit linking of the issues of racialization and sexuality. Social analysis of the node relies on both actor-network theory and Pierre

Bourdieu's analysis of cultural production. Literary analysis is focussed on Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* as the primary representative text, and the social analysis is primarily based on the material circumstances of *Fox*'s production and distribution. Close reading of Lai's novel demonstrates how the political concerns of the enabling communities are taken up literarily. It also demonstrates an inter-nodal connection, through Lai's literary strategies that engage the work of Nicole Brossard, which represents another node of Canadian queer women's writing *circa* 1980 and centred in Montréal.

Secondary close readings of three other node novels reveal a common ethical interest in community and difference that is expressed through a literary strategy that I have named "literary thirdspace." Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms At Night*, Persimmon Blackbridge's *Sunnybrook*, and Daphne Marlatt's *Taken* each opens to a site of possible literary thirdspace that explores the qualities necessary to live difference productively within community: hybridity, instability, kindness, witnessing, safety, and radical acceptance.

Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables.....	vi
List of Figures	vii
Abbreviations	viii
Acknowledgments	ix
Dedication	x
Introduction: Author-ity, Positionality, and Queer Women’s Literature	1
Chapter One: Node Theory, Methodology, and Theoretical Allies	40
Chapter Two: Identifying and Materializing the Vancouver Node.....	76
Chapter Three: A Telling (It) Conference: Event Reception Effect	118
Chapter Four: Larissa Lai’s Transformation of <i>Écriture au Féminin</i> in <i>When Fox Is a Thousand: A TransCanada Internodal Migration`</i>	157
Chapter Five: (Re)Viewing the Node: Materializing a Network “Ecology” of <i>Fox’s Reception & Production</i>	191
Chapter 6: The Vancouver Node: Literary Thirdspace	272
Conclusion	326
Appendix One: “Total Population by Visible Minority Population (1), for British Columbia, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data).....	337
Appendix Two: Vancouver Publications 1964-2003 (116 texts).....	339
Appendix Three: Vancouver Publications 1964-2003 by Location of Publisher	344
Appendix Four: Vancouver Publications 1964-2003 by Genre	349
Appendix Five (A): Bibliography of Media Notices of <i>Fox</i>	354
Appendix Five (B): <i>Fox</i> Media Notices by Community, Year, and City	357
Appendix Five (C): <i>Fox</i> Media Notices: Location Table	359
Works Cited	360

List of Tables

Table 1	Sites of Production of "Vancouver" Queer Women's Publications 1964-2003 ..	91
Table 2	Impact of Most Prolific Authors on Publications 1964-2003	94
Table 3	Impact of Prolific Publishers of Publications 1964-2003	97
Table 4	Impact of Women-only Publishers on Publications 1964-2003	98
Table 5	Publishers of Vancouver Queer Women's Novels in the 1990s	99
Table 6	Genres of "Vancouver" Queer Women's Publications 1964-2003	102
Table 7	Genres of "Vancouver" Queer Women's Publications pre-1990s & 1990s	103
Table 8	"Vancouver" Novels Published in the 1990s.....	108
Table 9	Media Notice of <i>When Fox Is a Thousand</i> : Community and Year	198
Table 10	Media Notice of <i>When Fox Is a Thousand</i> : Community and Place.....	201

List of Figures

Figure 1	English Canadian Literary Texts by City (234 texts)	80
Figure 2	Vancouver Literary Publications from 1964 – 2003 (116 texts).....	87
Figure 3	Vancouver Literary Publications from 1964 – 2006 (127 texts).....	88
Figure 4	Vancouver Literary Publications 1990-2006 (82 texts).....	89
Figure 5	Vancouver Bibliography including Anne Cameron (116 texts).....	95
Figure 6	Vancouver Bibliography excluding Anne Cameron (90 texts).....	96
Figure 7	Vancouver Literary Publications from 1964 – 2003 by Genre	101
Figure 8	Vancouver Novels Including Cameron 1990 – 2000 (22 texts).....	105
Figure 9	Vancouver Novels Excluding Cameron 1990 – 2000 (13 texts).....	106
Figure 10	Press Gang Publishers' Logos	141
Figure 11	Photo of Lai and Mootoo from <i>Angles</i> (June 1997)	241

Abbreviations

ANT	actor-network theory
CCA	Canada Council of the Arts
<i>Cereus</i>	<i>When Cereus Blooms at Night</i>
<i>Fox</i>	<i>When Fox Is a Thousand</i>
DMF	Daphne Marlatt Fonds, Library and Archives Canada
PGP	Press Gang Publishers
PGPF	Press Gang Fonds, Simon Fraser U Archives
WSH	Women's Studies Holdings, Simon Fraser U Archives

Acknowledgments

If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a small city to foster a dissertation. This work has repeatedly shown me how much I benefit from the generosity of others. First thanks must go to my committee: Misao Dean, for her good advice and her confidence in my abilities; Nicole Shukin, for her generous intellectual companionship and guidance; Evelyn Cobley and Christine St. Peter for their rigorous, yet kindly, reading. I also acknowledge with gratitude my external examiner, Rita Wong; I deeply appreciate her careful and insightful reading of my work.

Many other scholars stimulated my thinking and offered useful information, advice, and encouragement. Space considerations require me to extend only general thanks to each professor, student, and conference participant whose comments now inform my own thoughts. More particularly, much of this work benefitted from Jenny Waelti-Walters' astute reading and I owe a special debt of gratitude to Debby Yaffe for her observant reading, perceptive comments, and ongoing encouragement. For other useful conversations, I thank Susan Knutson, Maureen Fitzgerald, Andrea Lebowitz, David Palmer-Stone, Aaron Devor, Smaro Kamboureli, Prama Tagore, Lisa Chalykoff, Dianne Chisholm, Lyn Davis, and Kathryn McCannell. I am grateful to SFU Archive Librarians, Frances Fournier and Paul Hebbard, who vetted many unprocessed Press Gang Fonds for me and provided invaluable help on each of my many visits. I also thank the library staff at UVic for their unfailingly friendly help. For superb technical support, I thank Kathleen Reed and Peter Paré. I also benefitted greatly from the supportive and intellectually stimulating presence of fellow students, especially Tanis MacDonald, Karina Vernon, Madeline Walker, Susan Wilson, and Frances Sprout. I remain awed by their achievements and grateful for their continuing friendship. I also thank UVic's Department of English and Faculty of Graduate studies and SSHRC for the support, fellowships, and travel grants that aided this work.

A number of the women who mid-wived the Vancouver node helped me directly. I thank Barbara Kuhne, Larissa Lai, Daphne Marlatt, Saeko Usukawa, Shani Mootoo, Betsy Warland, Lee Maracle, Rita Wong, Barbara Herringer, Barbara Isaacs, Nancy Pollack, Esther Shannon, Penny Goldsmith, Mary Shendlinger, Barbara Pulling, Marilyn Fuchs, Lorna Boschman, Lydia Kwa, Nancy Richler, Louise Hagar, and Frances Wasserlein for their time and interest.

I thank my parents, Eric and Linda Fox, for helping me to quit my day job to pursue my passion; my brother, Bernie, for his support when most needed. Finally, I am eternally and humbly grateful to my partner, Arleen Paré, for her endless support and patience, her intelligent and nurturing love, and the gift of a wonderful and supportive family.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to the authors, publishers, editors, and readers, who together created the Vancouver Node, which gives this work its *raison d'être*; and to Arleen Paré, author and editor, but most importantly: first reader of my heart and all my life's works.

Introduction: Author-ity, Positionality, and Queer Women's Literature

“One has the imagination of one's century, one's culture, one's generation, one's particular social class, one's decade, and the imagination of what one reads, but above all one has the imagination of one's body and of the sex which inhabits it. . . . The imagination travels in language and through skin. The entire surface of the skin.”
Nicole Brossard (*Aerial* 82)

This introduction is divided into three parts. The first short section gives some background to my use of the terms “queer” and “lesbian” in this study. The second, longer section answers the question, “Why study the literature of, specifically, queer Canadian women?” The third gives an overview of the dissertation's development and application of a nodal approach to a literary and micro-historical “moment” in Canadian queer women's literature.

I

This work, like its author, is queerly lesbian feminist. I foreground this to avoid later confusion and distraction from my arguments, given that the terms, “queer” and “lesbian” are often assumed to be oppositional and this study uses both liberally, so an explanation of my terminological choices might be necessary. Linda Garber's *Identity Poetics*, which appeared about ten years ago, did a creditable job of demonstrating queer theory's debt to 1970s lesbian feminism, and especially to working class and/or of colour lesbian feminists. Although the academic context continues to consider lesbian feminism and queer theory “opponents in ideological battle” (Garber 1), the condition of being

queerly lesbian feminist arises, in my own case, from being a 1970s White working class lesbian feminist activist who became a graduate student during Queer Theory's rise to prominence in the academy.

Garber also argues that "the lesbian feminism / queer theory polarization is overwrought and unproductive," a false dichotomy. "Queer" is a useful collective term for me because this dissertation focusses on the authorship, rather than the content, of literary texts to determine which works should be included in Canadian queer women's literature for reasons that I discuss in Section II (below). The term reflects my disinclination to patrol the shifting and permeable boundaries between bi, lesbian, and trans in order to assign a more specific sexual subjectivity to individual authors. "Queer" is, therefore, the more accurate and convenient collective term for my overall research. Moreover, not all of the node authors I study identify consistently as lesbian nor do the novels I study contain a uniform amount of lesbian content. Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms At Night*, in particular has minimal lesbian content.

I also use "queer" because of its implicit challenge to essentialism, a challenge that stems from the term's recent engagement with postmodern theory, which I will discuss further in Chapter One. My interest in lesbian / queer authors and literature implies that these identifications are not fixed or mutually exclusive. Although many lesbians / queers experience their identifications as fixed and claim a genetic (and, therefore, essentialist) basis for queer identity, I do not because that is neither my experience nor my intellectual position. My choice of "queer" as a primary descriptor attests to my view that sex and sexuality are radically unstable identifications. However, although I claim that all identifications have some instability, I do not ignore how lesbian

/ queer comes to be embodied¹ differently depending on other, interlocking positionalities such as those of nationality, racialization, ability, and class. As Elizabeth Grosz argues, “[b]odies are always irreducibly sexually specific, necessarily interlocked with racial, cultural, and class particularities” (*Volatile Bodies* 19). Ann Cvetkovich argues specifically that “racial and national specificities . . . are underdescribed by the category lesbian” (*Archives* 11). “Queer” addresses this situation (minimally) by serving in what follows as an indicator that more than one marginalized identification may be at stake.

However, although I accept the postmodern critique of the unitary “self,” who is grounded in the illusory possibility of transcendence, I do not accept its claims to newness or solitary academic correctness. Garber “argue[s] throughout *Identity Poetics* that . . . a variety of Lesbian-feminist writers . . . laid the groundwork for the poststructuralist theories of lesbian subjectivity that came to dominate academic lesbian discourse by the 1990s” (12). Lesbian feminist theories posited the social construction of identity and rejected the idea of a “natural” order in the 1970s.² Nevertheless, queer theory has convincingly challenged the usefulness of metanarratives and more clearly delineated the dangers of reinscribing essentialisms (and, therefore, oppressions) when organizing under any “identity” banner. These insights have not, however, convinced me that a dyke-otomy is necessary. It is important to continue to use the term, “lesbian,” for several reasons.

One reason to continue to use “lesbian” is that it is the more specific identification used by the majority of the study’s authors. This use, therefore, respects not only the self-identification of those authors, but also the lived experience that gave rise to that identification. Joan Scott defines how experience conditions subjectivity in this way:

It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience. Experience in this definition then becomes not the origin of our explanation, not the authoritative (because seen or felt) evidence that grounds what is known, but rather that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced. To think about experience in this way is to historicize it as well as to historicize the identities it produces. (401)

This work focusses on literature that is produced by lesbian / queer authors and on their social context within a similar historicizing framework, with an awareness of the contingent nature of identification.

Another reason to use “lesbian” alongside instead of in opposition to “queer” is to challenge “the male-centred canonicity of queer studies” (Garber 189). As Garber notes, “a raft of lesbian and feminist critics have called the term *queer* a false generic that erases the existence of lesbians and the insights of feminism.” In this context, although “queer” serves me as a useful collective noun, I am keen to avoid its (mis)interpretation as a false generic. There is political work being done when “queer,” even when used alone, refers to queer women (rather than the more typically assumed queer men) or to lesbians (rather than *necessarily* invoking the full range of queer women).

Another reason for the co-deployment of lesbian and queer that is more specific to this study, is that most of the period being studied (1988-96) marks a time when the use of “queer” was becoming common in the academy, but had still not achieved much acceptance in Canadian lesbian, bi-sexual, and trans communities. Therefore, “lesbian” is often the more historically accurate term for discussions of that time. Nevertheless, the

literature and events of that time contribute to what may now be described as queer women's culture and literature and so "queer" is sometimes also appropriate. Similarly, it is also appropriate to use "lesbian" frequently in Section II, below, where I discuss lesbian anthologies to explain my contention that author rather than literary content is the appropriate determinant for which literature to include in the field of queer women's literature. Lesbian anthologies contribute to queer women's literature and their grappling with the issue of what might constitute "lesbian literature" has direct relevance to my own task of determining what constitutes Canadian queer women's literature.³ Taking these anthologies as a starting point for my study of "Queer Outbursts" signals from the outset that I do not consider "lesbian" and "queer" to be in opposition, but rather to be part of an on-going conversation about human liberation.

"Queer" is also appealing because of its activist history. Queer communities and not the academy first reclaimed the word to support radical action. "Queer Nation" took its inspiration from "Lesbian Nation," which preceded it and from many other reclamations such as "lesbian," "dyke," "faggot," and "fairy." Only "lesbian" and "queer" seem to have achieved widespread popularity that crosses the town and gown divide. As an active reclaimer of negative identifications, I also embrace the challenge to convention that "queer" contains. Thus, I find "queer" necessary, even attractive, both in history and theory, but simultaneously honouring "lesbian" and lesbian feminism ensures that my use of queer / theory supports a micro-history of, largely, lesbian feminist writing rather than letting it be seamlessly absorbed into "one of the 'new fields of inquiry that feminist literary history has vanished into'" (Margaret Homans qtd. in Garber 194). As I have argued elsewhere, although queer theory offers useful new perspectives it may also

serve hegemonic purposes.⁴ Indeed, Garber argues that it has become hegemonic (201).

My determination to bring together lesbian / queer terminologies and theories means that this study “joins a small but encouraging body of work that refuses the either/or choice of lesbian feminism versus queer theory, in favour of a both/and option” (6). Garber claims that her study is a “gesture of reconciliation” (5), but Cvetkovich also explains that her *Archives of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* “lies between the queer and the lesbian, not quite occupying either category comfortably” (10). Cvetkovich asserts that she “uses both the queer and the lesbian in order to resist any presumption that they are mutually exclusive – that the queer . . . is the undoing of the identity politics signified by the category of lesbian, or that lesbian culture is hostile to queer formations” (11). I happily accept her formulation since I cannot do justice here to a controversy that has received such extensive treatment elsewhere. These few comments serve only to introduce the position taken in this queerly lesbian feminist study and to suggest sources of further research into the on-going debate, which rages more vociferously in American Women’s, Queer, and Lesbian Studies⁵ and Canadian Women’s Studies than it does in Canadian departments of English.

II

I turn now to the question, “Why study the literature of, specifically, queer Canadian women?” This question begs four others: what defines literature, queer, Canadian, and, yes, even women. These questions will be discussed further in Chapter Two, but developing the project’s overall position on issues of identification, subjectivity,

and positionality must begin here in the Introduction. Section I describes how lesbian and queer may, in some instances, be used interchangeably to describe the same circumstance or individual; however, it does not address the question of what constitutes lesbian / queer literature. I approach this aspect of the questions by first engaging the long-standing debate on what constitutes lesbian literature. The question of whether or not areas of literary study can usefully be based on authorial identity is contentious beyond the parameters of that debate. However, this particular formulation of the controversy is directly relevant to my study because most of the authors of Canadian queer women's literature self-identify as lesbians.

Although living a lesbian or queer identification is a series of individual and cultural / social acts, each of these acts is necessarily embodied. The recognition of the importance of embodied experience is basic to feminism; however, New Materialism is also interested in bodies and other material aspects of "reality" that poststructuralist criticism seems to have neglected. While my work is clearly part of that turn, and has strong connections to Women's Studies, Lesbian Studies, and Queer Studies, I approach the issue of author-ity and field primarily as a question within English literary criticism. Within this discipline, but using interdisciplinary tools, a practice that increasingly marks literary critique, my project traces the interactions between literary works, subjects, community, culture, and social change.

The project began with energy generated by rubbing together the twinned pleasures and dissatisfactions evoked by my reading of scholarly anthologies and bibliographies of lesbian literature in English. While I experienced much pleasure in reading lesbian content, there arose a frustrated desire for scholarly collections that

focussed on the literary output of queer women as *writing subjects* rather than lesbian / queer women as *subject of, or subjected to, writing*. Although this study does not concern itself with anthologies beyond this issue, it does require me to determine “what counts” as queer women’s literature, which is analogous, and closely related, to the problem of what counts as “lesbian literature,” which is addressed in several significant lesbian anthologies. Intriguingly, there is not an anthology dedicated to queer women’s literature *per se*, so directly analogous criteria are unavailable.

In considering which authors and texts to include in my own study, I found myself disturbed that existing scholarly collections privilege in their criteria either “lesbian content” or the *idea* of lesbianism itself over the fact that the literary work be written *by* lesbian authors. Although there is now more academic interest in studies of queer women, a category that includes lesbians, bi and gay transwomen, the issue of identification remains problematic. In part, this is because the dominance of postmodern theory within queer thought has made it difficult to use criteria that might be perceived as rooted in naïve essentialist identity concepts. Postmodern awareness forecloses a simple resolution to the challenging, two-pronged, literary dilemma: the problematic of the thematic approach to “lesbian literature” (i.e., how to recognize the literature) and the problematic of the role of the author’s sexual orientation (i.e., how to recognize the author).

My early frustration intersected with an insight. In reviewing my lifelong reading of lesbian literature, I observed that Western lesbian literature in English seems to occur in queer outbursts – suddenly, at a certain time, in a certain place, a publication concentration of lesbian / queer women’s writing emerges. I began to refer to these

concentrations as “nodes” and to examine them using the tools and traditions of literary scholarship, wherein recognition of the provenance of the texts themselves is common practice. This provenance has traditionally been derived from the subjectivities of authors, such as to which nation or era an author is subjected. This has given the discipline of English its structure of “fields” based on geographic or temporal aspects of the author’s life. Thus, the work of an author identified as American falls within American literature and if, for instance, her work was published *circa* WWII, it may be further categorized into the subspecialty of American Modernism. The aspect of transnationality that came into play as the literatures of English-speaking countries beyond Great Britain gained acceptance allows such a text also to be studied within a Modernist field that compares literature across national fields. Despite key postmodern critiques of the position of the author in literary critique,⁶ fields that are based on when and where the author was born, worked, and / or lived (regardless of where the work is itself created or published or its content) continue to structure the discipline.

This study, although it challenges traditional literary criticism in several ways, maintains the discipline’s emphasis on situating literary texts in both space and time. Specificities of time and place mark each publication concentration or node, although there is, perhaps, an indirect challenge in that I foreground and investigate these aspects instead of taking them for granted. I pose a direct challenge, however, to the fields of traditional literary criticism, as well as to the typical criteria that scholars have used to define “lesbian literature,” in my determination to attend to the author’s *social* geography (her identifications and networks), which borders the author's life and text as surely as do time and nation. Social or cultural geography necessarily includes the social positionings

of sex and sexuality as well as racialization, class, and ableism to name only several axes of possible identifications.

Although this dissertation narrows to a material and literary analysis of four novels published during the Vancouver node time-frame (1995-96), it begins more broadly by quantifying queer women's published English Canadian literary monographs. I discuss the theoretical bases of my concept of literary nodes and my method of investigating them in Chapter One and throughout my dissertation; however, the need to establish criteria for the data that confirms the existence of nodes in Canadian queer women's literature requires that I address, *a priori*, two questions: "What is a queer women's text?" and "What is a queer woman author?"⁷

This section focusses on these two problematics, with which lesbian criticism has struggled continuously and which must, therefore, be addressed by any study that takes the literature of lesbian / queer women as its subject. As a way of situating my own approach, I will discuss the approaches taken by several foremost scholars of lesbian literature. Two of the most prominent scholarly anthologies are by American historian Lillian Faderman and British literary scholar Terry Castle. Faderman's ground-breaking *Chloe Plus Olivia: An Anthology of Lesbian Literature from the Seventeenth Century to the Present* and Castle's *The Literature of Lesbianism: A Historical Anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall* are foundational texts; however, they build on the pioneering annotated bibliography by Jeannette H. Foster, whose 1958 *Sex Variant Women in Literature* inaugurated book-length studies of lesbian literature, and Barbara Grier's 1967, *The Lesbian in Literature*. Also significant is a recent Canadian anthology, *No Margins*, in part because it includes a selection from Nairne Holtz's important online

bibliography of Canadian lesbian literature, and in part because Holtz also addresses the role of author sexual identification in her selection process. Other critical overviews such as Bonnie Zimmerman's *The Safe Sea of Women: Lesbian Fiction 1969-1989* and Emma Donoghue's *Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668-1801* are of interest because they too address issues of queer / lesbian identifications in the context of literary history and anthologization. There are, of course, many more lesbian anthologies, but none that offer the same calibre of academic discussion.⁸

The problematic of the thematic approach

Generally speaking, the above texts share a thematic approach – what constitutes “lesbian literature” is defined by narrative content. This useful critical work is typical when a new literary area is establishing itself, as was the case in English Canadian literary criticism. Thematic criticism by Northrop Frye's immediate and consequential followers, D. G. Jones (*Butterfly on Rock*) and Margaret Atwood (*Survival*) coincides with the rise of English Canadian Literature as an acceptable area of study in many Canadian universities.⁹ According to Jones, thematic criticism intends, “by isolating certain themes and images[,] . . . to define more clearly some of the features that recur in the mind, the mirror of our imaginative life” (3). Jones's “our” refers to English Canadians, but the case is similar for Zimmerman, whose thematically-based work identifies “the most characteristic and prevalent symbols and structures within lesbian fiction” for a lesbian audience (*Safe xvi*). In Canadian criticism, Frank Davey's influential “Surviving the Paraphrase” problematizes the thematic approach to Canadian literature; however, a similar problematization of the largely thematic approach towards a

definition of “lesbian literature” has not emerged until now.

While thematic criticism may disappoint, it nevertheless performs useful social action by asserting a group's cultural existence and their desire to address rationally categorized thematic concerns. I am grateful to Faderman *et al.* for setting the context for my own approach, which differs from and critiques a content-based approach as the sole approach to lesbian / queer literature. From a literary standpoint, Faderman's 1994 *Chloe Plus Olivia* demonstrates that thematic study is helpful in tracing literary traditions and influences. However, I would suggest that occasionally Faderman's approach inadvertently obscures significant material, historical, geographic, and economic contexts and, thus, may even obscure some important influences.¹⁰

For instance, there is no appreciation of the queer outburst of 1928, which saw the publication of three key queer texts: Radcliffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, and Djuna Barnes' *The Ladies Almanack*.¹¹ These texts represent three different genres and three very different publication-reception histories, all of which may be read not only for important contextual understanding of the emergence of queer writing, but also for their influence on “lesbian literature.” The node comprised of these texts is perhaps the most famous concentration of lesbian writing to date and has attracted the attention of modernist scholars such as Bonnie Kime Scott and Shari Benstock; however, only Hall's novel would fit easily into Faderman's thematic categories. Had each text been included and duly categorized, the classification would separate the texts rather than bringing them together to explore their richness in a critical encounter.

Whereas literary scholars might use chronology (e.g., Elizabethan or 19th century), genre (e.g., poetry or prose), register (e.g., popular vs. high), or literary trope

(e.g., symbols and metaphors) to order a collection of texts, Faderman employs broad thematic categories. Surprisingly, although her categories are presented in the approximate chronological order of their literary appearance, contemporary works are anachronistically included within any category whose theme is deemed to have on-going currency. The treatment of the category “Carnivorous Flowers: The Literature of Exotic and Evil Lesbians” demonstrates further strengths and weaknesses of this classification system. Faderman begins with French male writers, Baudelaire and Le Fanu, whose influence is traced through early twentieth century lesbian writers such as Renee Vivien and Djuna Barnes. While this seems useful, Faderman, more problematically, introduces Jewelle Gomez’ *The Gilda Stories* as a contrary contemporary reclamation of this theme. However, while the characters drawn by Vivien and Barnes have a definite flavour of the *fin de siècle* Decadents, Gomez’ vampires are hardly exotic and they are most assuredly not evil. As Gilda explains to the Girl, who becomes a willing initiate:

[W]e who live by sharing the life blood of others have no need to kill. . . .
 There is a joy to the exchange we make. . . . We give what’s needed –
 energy, dreams, ideas. It’s a fair exchange. (433)

Faderman rightly argues that Gomez “transforms the horrific nineteenth-century vampire image to be consonant with the positive values of late-twentieth-century lesbian-feminism” (*Chloe* 425). This comment suggests that *The Gilda Stories* might more properly belong under the category of “Amazons: The Literature of Lesbian-Feminism,” an observation that raises a serious methodological question. If the placement of texts within thematic categories is not only dubious, but even somewhat arbitrary, are not the benefits of a thematic approach also dubious?

Faderman finds that “attempts to define a lesbian aesthetic or sensibility are . . . specious or arbitrary,” without recognizing that the elements of style that other critics note in “lesbian literature” simply categorize formal elements rather than narrative content. The impulse to define lesbian aesthetics is actually quite similar to the impulse to define lesbian literary themes. Faderman’s assertion that “any generalization about what is distinctly 'lesbian' in writing is easily contradicted by numerous counterexamples” applies as readily to the distinctness of her own classifications (Preface xiii).

However, I would argue that the predictable failure to discover transhistorical features in lesbian literature is not an indication that it is not worth studying writing by embodied lesbian (or queer) women as a cultural phenomenon. The issue it does highlight is emphasized by Susan Knutson, who “reminds us of the multiple dimensions of meaning folded into lesbian fiction, which is never only *lesbian* fiction, but is *human* fiction, with all of the complexities that there are” (9, emphasis in text). As critics, we focus on queer or lesbian fiction instead of all of human fiction, not to limit it to specific characteristics, but because “human” is too large a category to critique adequately and because the Western interpretation of “human” has tacitly privileged the literature and criticism of White¹² male subjects.

Faderman is not, of course, the only scholar to employ categories and themes to impose order on unruly lesbian literature – she situates herself among several “critics [who] have tried valiantly to categorize and define lesbian literature” (Preface xii). Although not cited by Faderman, Foster, the mother of lesbian literary bibliography, overview, and criticism, may be credited with beginning the trend towards classification

on the basis of content. Foster deploys categories that are based on how the fictional lesbian character is represented in terms of physical appearance and temperament, choices that seem to respond to the Western pathologizing of love between women that occurred in the late nineteenth century.¹³ In *Sex Variant Women in Literature*, texts are classified according to the amount of lesbian content they provide, the lesbian characters' emotional history or etiology (i.e., what "made" them lesbians), the responses of other characters to any lesbian characters, and also according to the author's implied attitude towards the lesbian characters.

Predictably, as social attitudes towards lesbians have continued to change, so have the corresponding categories chosen by compilers. The variability in the critical categories reflects this, but also indicates that while themes may change, the drive towards thematic criticism remains strong whenever any overview of the field is sought. Garber quotes Grier's "elaborate rating system to indicate whether entries in her bibliography include 'major Lesbian characters and/or action,' 'minor Lesbian characters and/or action,' 'latent, repressed Lesbianism or characters who can be so interpreted' (*Identity* 182). Grier's method reflects the hunger for representation that existed before the gay liberation movement gained enough strength for more openness. Post-gay liberation and lesbian feminism, Faderman notes that Elaine Marks identifies two lesbian literary themes, mother-daughter or amazonian, while Catharine Stimpson finds the two themes of damnation and suffering or enabling escape (*Chloe xii*). Zimmerman, on the other hand, in her 1981 study, views "lesbian fiction as the expression of a collective 'myth of origins' with four primary divisions . . . : the lesbian self, the lesbian couple, the lesbian community, and community and difference" (*Safe xv*). Her emphasis on

communities shifts the categories to be more relevant to lesbians as social beings rather than as individualized subjects. This shift responds to the political activities of “communities” of European and North American lesbians in the 1970s. Donoghue also engages ideas of culture and community in her history of British lesbians. She, too, is drawn towards focussing and categorizing content, arguing that it is a necessary step in making “such diversity manageable” (11). Her 1995 study is “structured around four primary topics . . . central to lesbian culture: gender blurring, friendship, sex and community.”

Contemporary literary critics in more traditional fields do not seem troubled by the content issue that plagues critics of “lesbian literature.” Canadianists do not (currently) exclude Sara Jeannette Duncan despite the Anglo-Indian content of most of her novels or the fact that she lived most of her writing life in India. Neither does Annie Proulx become a Canadian author when she writes of Newfoundland. Moreover, literature written by men is not included in courses that study women's literature, despite the fact that men often write about women and their ideas on the subject have been (most decidedly!) influential. I argue that the content of the literature has not been the determining factor in establishing other literary “fields” and areas nor should it be the case for lesbian / queer women’s literature.

I do not denigrate the work of scholars who use themes and content as their guides through the shadowy (night)woods of “lesbian literature.” On the contrary I am grateful for their work. However, the thematic approach raises issues that are problematic for queer women’s literature and I argue that other approaches are necessary in order to redress these issues and to achieve a balanced critical view. Nor do I simply

suggest replacing it with an approach that is dependent on formal categories. Some literary critics, myself among them, may prefer to define and study texts that exhibit a queer sensibility, which in contemporary studies, has become nearly synonymous with postmodern aesthetics. My own study focusses its detailed attention on fiction wrought at the intersection of queer bodies and queer aesthetics. However, these personal preferences are not proper bases on which to define an academic field of study and ought not determine the parameters of queer women's literature. Queer aesthetics are often *not* aesthetics written *by* queers, but rather they are aesthetics that disrupt conventional, realist aesthetics. It is axiomatic that while any writer may employ any aesthetic or style, she cannot as readily embody any social identification.¹⁴ This study does not argue for a lesbian or queer aesthetic that is intrinsic to the literature of queer women.

In this study, queer literature is literature written *by* queers for the purposes of my initial compilation of English Canadian queer women's literature, which constitutes the matrix for several publication nodes. My close readings, however, focus on core novels from the Vancouver node that combine queer aesthetics and queer writing bodies. Moreover, the structure of the dissertation is influenced by and mirrors this doubled interest by oscillating between aesthetics and bodies, between close reading of literary texts and close readings of community, between theory and materiality. The alternative literary history that the node approach offers is grounded in a coherent chronological and geographical approach. To some extent, my work *materializes* Canadian queer women's literature by first literally "counting" literary texts written by Canadian queer women and making them visible by producing a graphic representation. My aim in taking the writing body of the author as a starting point is not to ignore the narrative content of texts, but to

restore the literature's social context by attending to the intersection of queer bodies *and* queer aesthetics.

The problematic of the author's sex and sexual identity

To some extent, the extant scholarly anthologies of lesbian literature may also contribute to the neglect of the female queer writing body by including male authors who write *about* lesbians. The problem of "lesbian invisibility" is frequently raised in political discussions of queer women's lives. In *The Apparitional Lesbian*, Castle asks, and responds to her own question: "Why is it so difficult to see the lesbian – even when she is there, quite plainly, in front of us? In part because she has been 'ghosted' – or made to seem invisible – by culture itself" (4). Indeed, this is one of the reasons it is important to keep using the term, "lesbian" as well as "queer." It is all too easy for women to disappear when they are subsumed within general terms such as "man," "homosexual," "gay," or "queer."

Without questioning the indubitable role of intertextuality and the influence of not only male authors, but also of heterosexual female authors on writing by lesbians, I would like to problematize the inclusion of non-queer and / or non-female authors within the field of lesbian / queer women's literature. There exist two quite different rationales for the inclusion of non-lesbians in anthologies of lesbian literature. The first appears in Foster's groundbreaking work that aims "to trace historically the quantity and temper of imaginative writing on its chosen subject" (11). Her subject is "sex variant" women *in* literature and not literature *by* sex variant women. Male authors are included because they write sex variant women into their texts. Similarly, Donoghue's study historicizes

British lesbian culture between 1668 and 1801. Her subject “is whatever was known, thought, and fantasised in Britain about passions between women” (18). Thus, Donoghue often has recourse to historical material authored by men because it is the most readily available material about “lesbians” (a term not yet in use) in the cultural imagination of seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain.

Castle’s monumental anthology is the most recent contribution in this vein and it is significant that she emphasizes that her “volume is *not* a collection of ‘writings by lesbians’” (*Literature* 1, Castle’s emphasis). For Castle, as for Foster and Donoghue, the project is to locate the idea of the lesbian historically and within literature. Castle investigates “lesbianism-as-theme. . . . the ‘idea’ of lesbianism itself . . . its role as rhetorical and cultural topos” in Western literature from the Renaissance period to Stonewall (1969) (6). As such her project uses material from both male and female writers, which are organized chronologically so that readers may better appreciate “the collective psychic assimilation of the lesbian idea” (48). Castle claims this as a shift in focus and notes the “startling” consequence of including numerous male authors (6). However, given the similarity of her rationale to that put forward by Foster and Donoghue, it would have been more startling had she *not* included male authors.

Faderman’s rationale is different and more problematic. She includes male authors because “some writing by men who focused on women's relationships. . . . [is] important to the development of lesbian literature” (*Chloe xi*). However true this may be – and surely this also applies to some writing by heterosexual women – it seems a risky basis on which to introduce, *as creators of a cultural group’s literature*, authors who are not part of the social group in question. Besides undermining the integrity of the set of

cultural works collected, which alone seems problematic for a minoritarian literature that has received little positive critical attention as a discrete literature, it also risks collecting literary stereotypes of lesbians. After all, by definition, stereotypes are influential ideas that have become commonplace. The other risk is that, in an attempt to avoid stereotypical or pornographic texts that deploy lesbian characters (more typical in writing by men than in writing by lesbians), an anthologist would be forced to make exclusions on unacceptably subjective grounds.

The rationale of “influence” raises the issue of what place the authorial body ought to hold in literary study. It is a question that has vexed lesbian scholars for years. Bonnie Zimmerman's overview of lesbian feminist criticism argues that lesbian criticism needs “to determine how inclusively or exclusively we define lesbian” (“Never” 204). She cites Adrienne Rich’s controversial “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence,” Catharine R. Stimpson’s “Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English,” and Faderman's *Surpassing the Love of Man: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (205-06; 211) as oft quoted touchstones in the lesbian identity debate. Nearly 30 years on, the issues have changed very little. Despite the fact that the category to be defined has broadened to the more inclusive “queer,” the question of whether or not sexual identification is an important cultural category for literary study and its corollary, how to ascertain sexual identifications, remains.

The position taken in this study is argued by Julie Abraham, who asserts that “the question of definition must itself be problematized rather than resolved. Definition will be an ongoing task without a conclusion, shared between authors, texts and critics,” but

recommends that lesbian critics study all the works of historically identifiable lesbians and not simply those works which have overt lesbian content (274-75). Resolution is neither an achievable nor necessary goal. Various axes of definition may be suitable for different purposes and no merit exists in restricting ourselves to one point of view, whose use may be limited and which would, in any case, be skewed by its historical and cultural context. My adoption of the lesbian / queer rubric may be part of problematizing definitions, but clearly Abraham is arguing in favour of making the author rather than the content of the text the basis for selection. On that basis, it seems reasonable for this study to suggest that queer women's literature ought to be authored by queer women's bodies.

The recent Canadian anthology, *No Margins: Writing Canadian Fiction in Lesbian* does not include male authors in its admittedly less scholarly anthology. Its co-editor, Catherine Lake, claims cultural copyright and specificity for the literary production of lesbian writers. In fact, the title, itself, reinforces the assertion of lesbian culture by using "lesbian" in the same grammatical construction that would be used to refer to a language (e.g., *Writing . . . in English*).¹⁵ However, the position put forward by the collection's co-editor, Nairne Holtz, the Canadian librarian who earlier took up Foster's bibliographic torch to illuminate Canadian lesbian literature for the Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario (UWO), counters this to some extent. The changes wrought in Holtz's bibliography, originally posted on UWO's website, may be read as symptomatic of the difficulties imposed by the imperative of the "lesbian literature" debate.

In *No Margins*, Holtz explains that her online bibliography was initially entitled "An Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Lesbian and Bisexual Women Authors"

("Bibliographer Notes" 280). That bibliography includes "An Introductory Manifesto" in which she outlines her approach. The manifesto has changed over the years, but this portion has been stable since 2007 and states that Holtz is "interested in the production of lesbian culture, not the particular sexual identity of any given author" ("Manifesto"). Leaving aside the question of non-lesbians producing "lesbian culture," which is of great importance, Holtz's approach is in keeping with the scholarly tradition that focusses on queer content rather than queer authorship. However, Holtz justifies my concern with the content-based approach to lesbian literature in that she excludes work by "Canadian authors generally thought to be lesbian or bisexual if they have not published at least one work with overt queer content" ("Manifesto" 3).¹⁶ Surely it is egregious to exclude from anthologies and bibliographies queer women who write without lesbian content. If, in addition, the collection or bibliography includes writers who are neither queer nor women, but only write *about* queer women, the lesbian / queer writing body is not only erased, but overwritten.

In *No Margins*, and on her now independent and updated website, Holtz's position remains essentially the same; however, her emphasis shifts slightly and her research has advanced. Her focus remains on "lesbian-themed work," but she repudiates her previous title because it cites "Authors" and their sexual identity ("Bibliographer Notes" 280). The bibliography is now more accurately entitled "Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Literature with Lesbian Content" on Holtz's website¹⁷ <<http://www.canadianlesbianliterature.ca>>. A selection of this bibliography appears in *No Margins* and includes Morley Callaghan's *No Man's Meat* ("Selective" 286). The inclusion of a novella by a heterosexual man confirms her allegiance to the content-based

approach; however, it is Holtz's frank description of why she finally committed to this approach that is germane here. Her three reasons are as succinct¹⁸ as her frustration is palpable:

There were authors who no longer identified as lesbian or bisexual or even female. There were lesbian authors whose work has never addressed lesbian themes or included any lesbian content whatsoever. There were authors who resented being listed on the bibliography as they considered it an attempt to ghettoize their books. (280).

Holtz's retrenchment is congruent within the context of her work as a librarian. When confronted with the cited difficulties, she makes the perfectly reasonable declaration that "the personal lives of authors . . . and their reasons for writing particular books is neither my interest nor my concern: satisfying the needs and desires of readers is" (280). The choice of content over authorship is a practical one for Holtz.

Literary critics, however, have a mandate beyond satisfying readers. At stake in our choices is how queer women's literary history is materialized. Castle's response to the problematic is to embrace the framework of the history of ideas, an area of scholarly investigation that is less assailable than lesbian literature. Laudably, Castle then creates a work that is "more capacious than the relatively small corpus of works that would result were one to cast about for 'authentic' lesbian-authored texts" (7). Her text makes an important contribution to the "*history of ideas*" by investigating "the lesbian 'idea'" (Castle's emphasis). Castle's way of avoiding the problematic is to "start with the assumption that it is precisely the category itself that is in need of historical examination" (5). Nevertheless, she, too, is compelled (as am I), to discuss the problem of "lesbian

literature.” Castle asserts that “[f]or an anthologist . . . the 'writings by lesbians' approach has one spectacular defect – . . . [w]ho counts as a 'lesbian writer' and who doesn't?” and gives examples to “show how exasperating, editorially speaking, such issues can be” (Introduction 3). She also refers to the “aggravating ambiguities of the term *lesbian* itself” (5 Castle's emphasis). Like Holtz, her irritation is palpable. I empathize with the frustration expressed by these critics – it is frustrating to have to deal with such complex foundational issues before “getting on” with the envisioned project.

However, I am uncomfortable with the condescension Castle displays towards the “gossipy biographical conundrums” posed by the “literature by lesbians” approach. The negative connotation of “gossipy” comes through loud and clear, despite her earlier claim to appreciate this identity-based work. Castle dismisses this work in part because “[o]ver the past thirty years such identity-driven collections have been de rigueur . . . often for ideological reasons” (Introduction 2). Her reasoning reflects the unnuanced and smug anti-identity reflex that is currently academic fashion, but it does not present an adequate basis upon which to decide that “literature by lesbians” or by queer women is not deserving of scholarly, as well as community, interest and respect. If postmodernism has taught us anything, it is that all work is ideologically driven. Castle's comment applies to her own work (and to mine) as readily as it does to these pioneering anthologists.

That subjectivity is a social construct and remains permanently under construction I take as axiomatic; however, social identifications remain important constructs that must be named for as long as the bodies so named suffer oppression linked to those names – until such bodies, as Judith Butler puts it, “matter.” I would add that once the bodies matter, the names won't, but until then, I must take issue with critics who relegate interest

in author positionality to a more naïve time. I consciously echo Betsy Warland's telling (it) assertion: "I must be named. I am not nameless and I wouldn't come to this conference if I didn't have my name" ("Panel One: Audience Discussion" 45). To recognize literature *by* queer women as a valid area within literary criticism is to treat that positionality as English treats other socially constructed identifications. It is a cruel, oft-noted coincidence that postmodern theory has been (mis)interpreted as undermining authority and identity just as, in the West, people marginalized on the basis of racialization, sex or sexuality claim textual authority.¹⁹ Postmodern perspectives introduce more complex views of identity and power that are a beneficial corrective to essentialist perspectives; however, they do not obviate the need to attend to the many significant issues, both social and literary, that are related to aspects of social positionality.

In most contemporary European / North American contexts, both "lesbian" and "queer" are, variably, claimable as social positions, albeit the act of "coming out" remains a difficult act that must be performed repeatedly throughout life. Thus, here and now, it is possible to anthologize and critique queer literature without engaging in "biographical conundrums," which are, nevertheless, no more gossipy or complex than determining national, regional, or racialized subjectivities. To illustrate this possibility, the editors of *Lesbian Poetry: An Anthology* observe, in 1981:

Some expect only love poetry; others, a collection of poems specifically about our oppression as lesbians. Instead, we have put together a book of poems that show the scope and intensity of lesbian experience. They were all written by women who define themselves as lesbians. And who have

chosen, by publishing their poetry here, to affirm publically that identity. . . . their poems belie a simple sexual definition of lesbianism. (Bulkin and Larkin xi)

In the 2006 *No Margins*, Lake has no observable problem with presenting literature by English and French Canadian lesbian writers. She also allows authors to self-identify and celebrates the fact that they can: “[w]hat is critical and marvellous about this collection is that all these writers are out as lesbians” (13). I take a similar position and celebrate the privilege of working with living authors in a society where it is increasingly possible to claim a lesbian / queer cultural identity without *necessarily* bringing unbearable hardship upon oneself and one’s family.²⁰ Moreover, to acknowledge lesbian / queer subjectivities and to profess “our” literature allows us to address dangerously negative misreadings that continue to have social currency.

The position of this study is that when authors who identify as lesbian / queer publish literary works those works are lesbian / queer literature. If male authors or female authors who identify as heterosexual publish literary works, those works are *not* lesbian / queer women’s literature, regardless of the content or the influence of that work. My criterion for “Queer Women’s Literature” depends *only* on the identification of its authors because this identifies the cultural producers whose work, as a whole, has political, as well as literary, significance. Queer aesthetics attract my critical interest, but are not determining, primarily because allowing formal or content criteria to be determinants would undermine the political significance of studying a particular minoritarian group.

This position lends an element of literary ethnography to my work; however, it is

not simply ethnographic. Studying queer women's literature as a discrete area yields literary insights that might go unnoticed otherwise. Readers, on the other hand, especially when looking for personal identity reinforcement, may well look for lesbian literature that does have lesbian content or literature about lesbians by non-lesbians. However, including only work with identifiable lesbian / queer content within queer literature reproduces the unacceptably narrow and stereotypical (mis)reading of us as people primarily concerned with sex and our own sexual subjectivity. It obscures the range of our literary concerns and interests.

What makes it crucial to recognize queer author-ity is not an essentialist identity based in sex or the stereotypical lesbian concern with sex, but the continuing social oppression of queer subjects. The production of queer women's literature is now, as lesbian literature has been previously, difficult, and its supports, fragile. An awareness of this fragility informs my efforts to materialize a particular publication node in Vancouver that was authored by a number of queer women. It is my hope that this "case study" will be a contribution to Canadian literature, Women's literature, and Queer literature, and Asian North American²¹ literature (since several node authors are Asian Canadian). I invoke these several categories with a postmodern awareness of their provisional and interlocking nature.

If then, as I am suggesting, it is beneficial to use the author's social positioning as lesbian / queer as the primary criterion for which texts are included in this study, how is this to be achieved without falling into the already-investigated-and-found-wanting avenues of essentialism? In this study, although queer authorship is a necessary criterion, the dangers of essentialism are off-set by the de-centering of the individual author that is

achieved by historicizing the node and investigating its enabling networks and communities. The study's oscillation between queer textual analyses and material description undermines inclinations towards the transcendent because the work repeatedly interrupts its own lines of flight or fancy.

Canadian literary criticism has been similarly concerned with negotiating a productive relationship between essentialist identities and postmodern understandings of subjectivity. Diana Brydon suggests a shift to plurality, historicity, and action that also entails a reevaluation of identity as significant, but not fixed (14ff). Brydon points out that we are each at the intersection of a number of culturally constrained identities that are subject to change through such obvious variables as time and geography, but also through more idiosyncratic variables such as relationship, education, and chance. She calls on critics to recognize the importance of "Context. Politics. History. Agency. Choice" (16). My investigation of the mid-1990s Vancouver publication node takes up this challenge. Node methodology works to answer the question: "What are we doing here?" (14), a question that Brydon suggests is more useful than Frye's famous, "Where is here?" (826). In fact, this question is actively explored by several of the node novels and I address it implicitly in both my discussions of the novels and my investigations of the communities that support them.

Brydon's question encompasses postcolonial as well as poststructuralist concerns. The situation of invader-settler colonies such as Canada,²² Australia, and New Zealand, where the settlers usurped control over the land and its people from First Nations inhabitants, is somewhat complex. Canada, for instance, might be considered postcolonial in relation to England and France; however, the Canadian government

remains in a colonizing position in relation to First Nations peoples.²³ Nor is this Canada's only connection to postcolonial concerns. Many Canadian citizens retain links to countries that were previously colonized and to countries that were previously colonizers. Queer women's literature reflects these differing relations and I look to postcolonial critics Rey Chow and Homi K. Bhabha to help me interpret issues of colonization, racialization, hybridity, immigration, and nation in a balanced way.

However, node theory, as I envision it, raises another question: "How and why did this node arise in this place at this moment?" The national context discussed by Frye and Brydon is pertinent here because the Canadian state supports (some) literary production through direct funding to authors, book prizes, and Canadian publishers. The interventions of the Canadian government in the nation's literary production are discussed in detail by George Woodcock and Roy MacSkimming, but they have also been commented on by British critic, Coral Ann Howells, who observes that "Canada's discourse of national identity [is] being rewritten as creative writers, cultural theorists, historians, and literary critics have responded to a revised official rhetoric of nationhood" (10). Although multicultural policy has been widely critiqued as a means of containing rather than including difference,²⁴ Howells argues "that the policies relating to multiculturalism have been a major force in transforming Canada's discourse of nationhood and identity" (11). Queer women are not exempt from this reciprocal set of influences; the material support of the federal government has been critical in the emergence of the Vancouver node. Node theory argues that, *pace* New Critics, literature cannot be understood in isolation from its socio-economic supports.

Geography, government, and literature are interactive systems of imaginative

identity that make the study of a country's literature of interest, even though, like topographies, gender and sexualities, literature and human imagination always exceed man-made borders. Peter Dickinson, Jon Kertzer, and Bhabha all note that literature supports the "imagined nation-ness" theorized by Benedict Anderson (46). Reciprocity argues that Canadian cultures and the Canadian nation-state would benefit from a better understanding of the literary contributions of queer women.

III

The aim of this project is both to develop a new critical approach that restores the material and cultural contexts to literary texts and to model the approach by developing a particular case study. It argues for the advantages, both literary and social, to viewing Canadian Queer Women's Literature as a discrete field. I examine both material contexts and the literary texts themselves in an acknowledgement of Virginia Woolf's assertion that "intellectual freedom depends upon material things [and that] poetry depends upon intellectual freedom" (*Room* 106). My interest in both queer writing bodies and queer literary aesthetics is echoed in the structure of the following project, which oscillates from chapter to chapter between theoretical or literary close readings of texts and examinations of their material and social contexts.

I found it necessary to make frequent shifts in register across the work as a whole to adequately discuss both the textual aesthetics and the material conditions of the queer outburst of literary production that occurred in Vancouver in the mid-1990s. Although my attention to the literary, the theoretical, and the material isn't typical in literary

studies, I argue that a multivalent approach allows the differing perspectives to supplement each other. The resulting insights are grounded without being naïve. The material work of the study ranges from archival research to quantitative analysis of the field of English Canadian queer women's literature. My investigation into the material contexts of publication and my innovative use of book review data links the research to the study of the book and print culture in Canada. This work is also enabled by and builds upon decades of (gay and) lesbian feminist activist thought, literature, and action. One of my key assumptions is articulated by the authors of *Challenging Racism in the Arts*: "culture is a key site in the political struggle to transform power relations" (Tator, Henry and Mattis 3).

The nodal approach offers an alternative strategy within literary history by materializing a particular point of interest, historicizing that moment, and performing literary close readings of core node texts to find commonalities that have both social and literary relevance. An exciting potential of the nodal approach is that the commonalities so derived may be compared both intranodally and internodally. This flexibility offers many critical possibilities. Node methodology involves first locating a node. This requires compilation and categorization of the publication circumstances of large numbers of literary texts. Once located, the node becomes the focal point for a multivalent investigation. I use theoretical allies from several disciplines to investigate the material circumstances conditioning the node's emergence; however, the selected node texts themselves are analyzed using the critical strategies of English. Although this project's application is singular, node theory and methodology is flexible and could be useful in many cultural contexts, locally or globally, and across decades or centuries. It

might be particularly valuable in materializing the emergence of minoritarian literatures whose histories, like the literary histories of queer women, risk being overlooked in hegemonic histories.

Chapter One performs three functions. It starts from the premise that neither authors nor texts are ever truly isolated from their social conditions and moves on to discuss the “idea of node” by describing its theoretical supports in contemporary postmodern and (queer) feminist theory. Following this, the chapter focusses on the theoretical supports for node methodology. Bruno Latour’s actor-network theory (ANT) as it has been developed by Jonathan Murdoch is central to this, in part because it integrates Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari, who provide inspiration for my conception of nodes. The location of the publication node is an integral part of its emergence and Murdoch’s poststructuralist geography views “Vancouver” as a place where “meaning, identity and space became closely intertwined. . . . [and] ‘alternative’ modes of spatialization . . . came to focus on the complex sets of relations that inevitably surround any spatial entity” (23). I also describe my use of Pierre Bourdieu to describe how these “complex sets of relations” were involved in the production of the node’s primary representative text, Larissa Lai’s *When Fox Is a Thousand*.²⁵ Chapter One continues the work of situating node theory and work by further contextualizing it and the novels of the Vancouver node, briefly, in relation to Dianne Chisholm’s *Queer Constellations* and new queer narrative.

In the study’s first shift from the theoretical to the work of materializing the node, Chapter Two quantifies Canadian queer women's literary texts and graphically presents English Canadian data from 1964 to 2004.²⁶ After identifying the period’s three primary

nodes, I focus in on the node that emerged in Vancouver in the mid-1990s and discuss the issues involved in who “is” a Vancouver node author by considering, for instance, why Anne Cameron might not be. This is undertaken within an overall tabular analysis and discussion of the decade’s authors and publishers. My investigations in this chapter point to women-only publishers and the emergence of Asian Canadian literature as significant conditions of possibility for the 1995-96 Vancouver node.

Chapter Three historicizes the conditions of the Vancouver node by shifting from the 1990s to the 1988 Telling It conference and its eponymous book. I use the Telling It conference as a case study of an event that is representative of the cultural forces that conditioned the emergence of the Vancouver node. I (re)read a specifically “telling” eruption that occurred at the conference, one that highlights issues that were of interest to BC women's literary cultural communities at the end of the 1980s. Because the conference was organized as much around racialized and sexualized identities as it was around writing, it created flashpoints that demonstrated the illusory nature of idealized solidarity, which challenged participants to focus on and rethink issues of identification and to reconsider coalitions of communities. My re-visioning of the conference argues that its perceived “failure” altered the political consciousness within the women’s literary communities represented there. One significant result was that writers, editors, and publishers were encouraged to attend more meaningfully to the work of writers who were female, queer, and racialized.

Chapter Four shifts into the mode of literary close reading to discuss the Vancouver node’s representative text, Lai’s *Fox*. As a text in which queer bodies and queer aesthetics intersect, *Fox* foregrounds queer content within a form that is “queer” in

comparison to traditional realist form. Moreover, its author and characters also demonstrate a reciprocal interest in multiple interlocking social identifications. This aesthetic and social concern with what I call a thirdspace of intersectionality is a hallmark of the mid-1990s Vancouver node of queer women's literature that will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six. However, *Fox* is an especially apt text for the purposes of gesturing towards a theory of nodes because it enacts a migration of ideas and literary strategies from a Montréal node that occurred *circa* 1980 to the mid-1990s node in Vancouver. Lai's text is structured by migrations through time, space, cultures, species, sexes, and sexualities, but narrated using strategies of *écriture au féminin*,²⁷ which challenge the "generic" of discourse and create new literary and social space for Asian Canadian queer women. Thus, *Fox* makes an individual contribution to the "social work" of the node, but also suggests the open-ended possibilities of the nodal approach since future studies might constellate a number of nodes.

Chapter Five returns to the material relationships in which node authors and texts are embedded. I examine and tabulate the media notices of *Fox*'s reception in terms of their inferred audiences, which act as material pointers to the communities and networks that had an interest in *Fox* and, by extension, the Vancouver publication node. The chapter does not focus on the content of the reviews, but instead materializes a social ecology of the novel's emergence by attending to the material specifics that supported Lai in its writing, publication, and distribution. The reviews lead to six communities that I identify as Academic, Asian North American, Feminist, Literary, Mainstream, and Queer. I examine the supporting networks within each community in sufficient detail that this chapter becomes, in effect, a case study that has pedagogical value.

Simultaneously, acknowledgement of community involvement presents a strong argument against the idea that literary creation is the product of an isolated individual.

Chapter Six oscillates to close reading once again, this time to examine *Fox*'s three core node companions: Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms At Night*; Persimmon Blackbridge's *Sunnybrook*; and Daphne Marlatt's *Taken*. I argue that these three texts, along with *Fox*, each embody queer aesthetics and demonstrate the node's primary concerns. While *Cereus* is most strongly related to *Fox* because the two share many similar writing and production circumstances, all four novels challenge stereotypical readings of constructs such as "Asian," "Canadian," "queer," and "lesbian." Each novel is also resolutely anti-hegemonic, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic, anti-racist, and anti-ableist. The most profound contribution of Vancouver node is the mobilization of a textual strategy that I identify and name "literary thirdspace," which reflects the "thirdspace of intersectionality" that conditions both the novels' authors and community supports. Literary thirdspace enables the novels to comment on how individuals might best live with and through difference individually and within community. The deployment of this literary strategy signals that, in the mid-1990s, queer women's attention, both authorial and readerly, became focussed on complex and interlocking identifications beyond "lesbian," "queer" and "female."

My conclusion assesses some of the benefits that the node approach offers to both literary history and literary criticism and also observes some of the shortcomings of this first application. Node theory and methodology offers an emergent critical strategy that does not aim at definitive conclusions. It offers instead a pattern of exploration, description, and insights gained through reading an unexpected grouping of texts

together, insights that might not be generated so readily through traditional methods. This study rejects offering a master narrative of even such an unmasterful subject as queer women's writing. Instead, it offers a unique case study of a moment in English Canadian Queer Women's literature that might be pedagogically useful in the study of literatures besides those authored by queer women. I hope that it will find use as an additional critical tool, another way of acting (i.e., performing criticism) locally while remaining aware of how local networks connect well beyond the local.

 Notes

¹ Consistent with my overall position, which rejects the mind-body duality, any reference to bodies includes the mind.

² I would add that theorizing “the fact that everything is constantly in flux, constantly changing . . . [and] the absence of any intrinsic nature of phenomena, and their interdependence . . . is said to be the ultimate view of the Buddhist teachings” according to Alan Wallace, president of the Santa Barbara Institute for Consciousness Studies. These insights precede postmodernism by some 2,500 years.

³ I employ the self-conscious practice of “scare-quoting” this term because the anthologists I discuss are themselves very self-conscious in their determination of what will constitute “lesbian literature,” which is by no means intuitively obvious. My own tendency is to make the usage more obvious.

⁴ See my article, “Queer Discipline: Lesbian Bodies” for a discussion of how queer theory may operate to serve hegemonic interests.

⁵ Garber suggests “two important collections of essays: Dana Heller, ed., *Cross Purposes: Lesbians, Feminists, and the Limits of Alliance* (1997) and Bonnie Zimmerman and Toni A. H. McNaron, eds., *The New Lesbian Studies: Into the Twenty-First Century* (1996)” (6).

⁶ See Michel Foucault’s “What Is an Author” and Roland Barthes “Death of the Author.”

⁷ To avoid tedious repetition, future references to “queer” will imply “queer women / woman” unless the context obviously refers to queer people in general.

⁸ In particular, there are many collections of short stories. To cite a Canadian example, one of the more interesting of these is the recent autobiographical collection, *Telling Moments*, edited by Canadian scholar, Lynda Hall. Hall selects stories “by self-identified lesbians who represent a diversity of age, race, ethnicity, class, education, and geography” and notes a number of other prominent collections, including one edited by Emma Donoghue (xiii). However, she does not address the issues raised by Faderman et al.

⁹ These are not by any means the first instances of Canadian literary criticism. Well before Northrop Frye writes what is perhaps the first thematic Canadian criticism, as the Conclusion to Carl F. Klinck’s *Literary History of Canada*, Archibald MacMechan produced the 1924 *Headwaters of Canadian Literature*. Moreover, individual articles of criticism from the nineteenth and early twentieth century fill Carl Ballstadt’s *The Search for English-Canadian Literature*. The McGill Movement was also a force for critical recognition and encouragement of English Canadian literature from the 1920s through the 1960s (Stevens).

¹⁰ Faderman’s useful section introductions provide readers with historical contextualizations that ameliorate this problem without fully resolving it.

¹¹ Faderman does note that Hall’s and Barnes’ texts are published in the same year.

¹² A note about capitalization: I capitalize “White” consistently when standard practice would capitalize any other term of racialization. My practice in this follows Anthony Chan (59), Betsy Warland (“Where” 191) and Daniel Coleman (141 n1). I also occasionally capitalize Lesbian and queer to encourage thought about what constitutes “capital-letter” culture and what does not.

¹³ Faderman's earlier history demonstrates that “[i]t was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the *category* of the lesbian – or the female sexual invert – was formulated” (*Odd* 2) and explains that “[Karl] Westphal, a German psychiatrist writing in 1869 was the first to describe extensively love between women in medical terms” (*Odd* 41). Foucault similarly argues that it was only in the nineteenth century that “[t]his new persecution of the peripheral sexualities entailed an *incorporation of perversions* and a new *specification of individuals*. . . . [whereby t]he nineteenth century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history” (*History* 42-43, emphasis in text).

¹⁴ Judith Butler's theory of performativity, as she explains it in *Gender Trouble*, is sometimes cited to suggest that this possibility and such a “wilful and instrumental subject” exists (Butler *Bodies* x). However, in *Bodies That Matter*, she clarifies her position, which is that in the underpinnings of heterosexual hegemony, sexual and gender “construction [function] as constitutive constraint” (xi). Thus, she emphasizes that “the agency denoted by the performativity of ‘sex’ will be directly counter to any notion of a voluntarist subject” (15).

¹⁵ This subtle allusion invokes Daphne Marlatt's meditation on women's relationship with language and language's relationship with the body,” *Musing with Mother tongue*.”

¹⁶ Interestingly, in 2009, this sentence has been altered to change “queer” to “lesbian”: “I have not included Canadian authors generally thought to be lesbian or bisexual if they have not published at least one work with overt lesbian content” (Holtz “Manifesto”).

¹⁷ Curiously, the site itself is still entitled *Canadian Lesbian Literature: Bibliography of Lesbian and Bisexual Women Authors*. The trace of original desire remains.

¹⁸ Holtz's current manifesto is even more succinct: “Rather than attempting to keep abreast of who has decided that they are a guy or that they only like guys, I have chosen to focus on lesbian content” (Holtz “Manifesto”).

¹⁹ Although the role of the author is convincingly critiqued by Barthes (“Death”) and Foucault (“What”), Nancy K. Miller responds to these critiques on behalf of female authors and readers. In “Changing the Subject” she argues that “the postmodern decision that the Author is dead, and subjective agency along with him, does not necessarily work for women and prematurely forecloses the question of identity for them” (106). Miller's comment raises an important issue for all cultural groups who are oppressed on the basis of negatively attributed identifications.

²⁰ Of course, within North America and Europe, there are many cultural groupings within which it is nearly impossible to come out as lesbian / queer; however, it is increasingly easy, though always painful, to move on to more hospitable territory.

²¹ It is a truism noted by the authors of *Challenging Racism in the Arts* that “[o]ne of the most significant challenges facing those who wish to write about identity, culture, race, and

racism relates to appropriate terminology. [Raymond] Williams (1976) [*Keywords*] makes the point that not only the words change but their historical context affects how they are used” (Tator, Henry and Mattis 10-11). Most recently, Eleanor Ty and Donald Goellnicht “propose that ‘Asian North American’ is a more useful umbrella term [than ‘Asian American’] because Asian subjects who reside in the United States and in Canada face many of the same issues regarding identity, multiple cultural allegiances, marginalization vis-à-vis mainstream society, historical exclusion, and postcolonial and/or diasporic and/or transnational subjectivity” (Introduction 2). “Asian North American” recognizes these similarities while avoiding the imperialist implications of Asian American.

²² I use the word “Canada” to describe the land / water mass that currently is constituted politically and recognized globally under that name. This naming is not meant to discount the separatist desires of any of its constituent parts or the desire for self-government by the original inhabitants.

²³ In relation to most countries in world, Canada clearly possesses first world privileges and status, despite its intermittent struggles against becoming an economic and cultural colony of the United States. Although the latter is a position it shares with much of the world, Canada’s overall situation is markedly different from the countries of postcolonial Africa, different again from postcolonial India and Pakistan, yet again different from countries in South America.

²⁴ For instance, *Challenging Racism in the Arts* notes “the tension between multiculturalism as a vehicle for affirming racial and cultural diversity and an instrument of social transformation, versus multiculturalism as a mechanism for containing cultural and racial differences and as an instrument of hegemonic control” (Tator, Henry and Mattis 4). For a more complete discussion of the history and problems of multiculturalism see Eva Mackey’s *The House of Difference* (65-70).

²⁵ Although Press Gang’s initial publication of *Fox* is of paramount importance, I reference the 2004 Arsenal edition because it is more readily available and also includes an afterword by the author.

²⁶ This timeframe coincides with the emergence of Canadian literature itself as a legitimate field of study within the academy. Both coincide with the expansion of North American civil rights struggles, which began with Black activists and later extended to struggles mounted by other equity-seeking groups such as other peoples of colour, women, First Nations, people with disabilities, and gay, lesbian, bi and transgendered people.

²⁷ This literary strategy is discussed, and distinguished from *écriture féminine*, in Chapter Four.

Chapter One: Node Theory, Methodology, and Theoretical Allies

“The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut . . . it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network.”

Michel Foucault (*Archaeology* 23)

This chapter defines and contextualizes the critical approach whose development and application is the work of the dissertation. Like the Introduction, it is in three sections. The first elaborates on my literary conception of a node as a concentration of literary publications related to a particular temporal and spatial site. The second discusses the varied methodology I use to materialize and investigate the node of English Canadian queer women’s literature that emerges in Vancouver in the mid-1990s. The third contextualizes the approach within queer criticism by briefly contrasting its approach with Dianne Chisholm’s approach in *Queer Constellations* and by discussing the node novels’ relation to new queer narrative.

I

Node Theory

Node theory rests on four basic axioms. The first, as I argue in the Introduction, is that it is worthwhile to make the writing body, and its identification with a particular cultural group, the primary criteria for creating a body of literature. This is particularly necessary when that body of literature is precarious, as is the case with queer women’s literary production. The second is that, within such bodies of literature, it is possible to rationally identify concentrations that are linked to specific times and locales. The third is that a study of literary nodes, which includes social conditions and contexts of their emergence as well as core literary texts themselves, contributes a worthwhile addition to

existing literary critical methods. It offers an alternative mode of literary history that works to “materialize” marginalized bodies of literature that are often overlooked in dominant literary histories. The fourth is that (queer women’s) literature is conditioned by, and registers, cultural shifts and material contexts, which are also materialized through a nodal approach. Here, I concur with and follow Carol Tator, Frances Henry, and Winston Mattis, who suggest that “cultural products and practices mirror the larger social process: cultural representations echo social realities” (7).

Moreover, I argue that it is important to investigate the social context of the node because, as Foucault asserts, “Emergence is always produced through a particular stage of forces (“Nietzsche” 83). The appearance of the Vancouver node of queer women’s literature is a Foucauldian “entry of forces; it is their eruption,” a queer outburst from a developing and energetic discourse. Because the social and material conditions for queer literature are never continuous, never secure, a Foucauldian tracing of this “emergent” moment is useful. From a critical point of view, insights from the material field enrich textual understanding and enable a kind of case study that preserves the social context of a moment in the history of a relatively new and fragile minoritarian literature. To this extent, my work participates in the contemporary (re)turn to materiality that maintains a postmodern awareness.

My approach to literary history and to queer women’s writing in particular, finds some theoretical support in several postmodernist and feminist scholars whose work I have found suggestive for node theory. Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler provide both important conceptual frameworks and key metaphors that are fundamental to my development of this critical approach.¹ These

theorists guide me conceptually *towards* theorizing the node, but once located *in* the Vancouver node, my theoretical supports become more interdisciplinary as I draw upon work from Sociology and post-structuralist Geography to analyze material and social networks. I enact a rapprochement of these various, even contradictory critical approaches because I believe, as Miriam Nicols argues,² that “seemingly incompatible strategies and positions in contemporary poetics and theory might be understood better as complementary” (39). Like Nicols, I find putting several paradigms into play advantageous “in constructing critical vocabularies capacious enough to promote polylogical ways of doing criticism” (40). What results is an eclectic and flexible approach to the study of English Canadian queer women’s literature.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED)*, a “node” is the “point of a network, tree diagram, or graph where a line meets another line or terminates. Also called *vertex*” (“Node” def. 9a). Node theory builds on this basic definition to argue that graphing the literary publications of the authors of a particular cultural group (e.g., Canadian queer women) and locating the vertices gives a good indication of where and when concentrations of publications actually occur. However, while quantitatively identifying these vertices or nodes is useful as a starting point, it must be emphasized that, rather than a simple “point” on a graph, a node represents a group of literary texts embedded in complex social contexts. To do justice to this complexity requires going beyond the simple mathematical definition of node to explore the full range of the term’s multiple meanings and implications. I use the concept of the node as an instrument that allows me to sort, sift, choose, and visualize – in short, to *materialize* – the primary nodal artefacts and their contexts. The different perspectives inspired by the alternative

meanings that the *OED* assigns to “node” can operate kaleidoscopically: each shifting turn in meaning presents new perspectives and new insights, individually and collectively. These definitions are worth exploring in depth since they are the poetic basis of node theory.

Although the term has obvious use in its mathematical formulation, it appeals also for its, admittedly “poetic” rather than theoretically rigorous, resonance with Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of “rhizomes.” Their suggestion that rhizomatic connections are the basis for creative societies, arguing that “the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance” reinforces my own sense that literary production is a community affair, social rather than solo (25). In particular, their claim that “a rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles” informs node theory’s commitment to investigating the personal and material networks within communities as well as focussing on literary texts (7). In part, my use of Deleuze and Guattari is metaphorical, based on the botanical resonance between “node” and “rhizome.” The *OED* defines “rhizome” as a “prostrate or subterranean root-like stem emitting roots and usually producing leaves at its apex; a rootstock” (“Rhizome”)³ while a “node” is defined by the *OED* as a “the point on a stem from which a leaf, lateral stem, adventitious root, etc., arises” (“Node” def. 7). A node may thus be metaphorically read as a productive point of concentration on Deleuze and Guattari’s “rhizome as subterranean stem” (25). In this reading, nodes and rhizomes are inextricably connected and dependent on each other for their “underground” spreading, for their sustenance and growth.

Root and stem both, the rhizome is remarkably flexible in reality and equally so

as metaphor. Deleuze and Guattari's perception of the loose generativity of the arts and activist communities makes the rhizome an apt descriptor for progressive communities (7-9).⁴ I use it to argue that nodes form within rhizomatic stem communities, which act as communication networks. Publications, like leaves, spring forth, presenting a visible social product. For me, the metaphor captures the active and micropolitical force of queer women's writing communities.⁵ It evokes the disruptive potential of the node, the energy that is generated when, periodically, groups of lesbian texts burst into the public literary discourse. Nodes and rhizomes suggest underground influences that spread unnoticed by the mainstream, but which are poised to erupt. The movement from imagining the node as mathematical vertex to imagining it as an integral part of a rhizomatic system facilitates an analytical shift from the isolated author and text to texts engendered by artists within communities. This shift also finds a parallel in the oscillation between the theoretical and material that is intrinsic to node theory and methodology and to the structure of this dissertation.

Deleuze and Guattari outline four principles of rhizomatic practice: connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and asignifying rupture (8). I contend that these principles may be found to operate within queer women's literary communities. In fact, the first three of these will become most apparent in my examination (in Chapter Five) of the communities that are interested in Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*, my primary representative text of the Vancouver node. However, I want to take a moment, here, to connect the fourth, asignifying rupture, to intertextuality and influence as it can operate between nodes. As Deleuze and Guattari describe it, "there is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight but the line of flight is part of the

rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another” (9). In this study, Lai’s *Fox* strikes out in a Deleuzian “line of flight [that] is like a tangent to the circles of significance and the centre of the signifier” (116). However, this new “line of flight” is not separate from literary experiment or political aspirations within Asian Canadian, Queer, and Women’s communities. My textual close reading of *Fox*, in Chapter Four, reveals that the literary strategies that Lai deploys there “tie back” to the strategies of *écriture au féminin* used by Nicole Brossard in an earlier node that I locate in Montréal. *Fox* also shares a commitment to historiographic metafiction with other Asian Canadian texts. These intersecting lines of influence prompt me to add my own definition of “node”: a site of intersecting literary and social narrative forces.

The Vancouver node’s intersection with Brossard is enhanced through Deleuze and Guattari’s assertion that “Nothing is beautiful or loving or political aside from underground stems and aerial roots, adventitious growths and rhizomes” (15). This statement makes a lovely (if inadvertent) connection to Brossard’s conception of lesbian influence as “a cartography of a set of realities which, having traversed me, initiate me to the idea of an aerial vision: a fiction-writing project which would co-respond to it like an echo” (*Aerial* 84). The echoes of other nodes and other intersecting lines of flight and thought from a multiplicity of communities ensures that, despite a certain amount of quantifying, which might be seen as an attempt to “capture” or contain queer women’s literature, a certain “deterritorializing” is always in play. Moreover, the nodal commitment to creativity as a community endeavour places it in accord with Deleuze and Guattari’s opposition to more “singular” organic approaches to literature. As they put it:

Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order. (7)

I argue that the pattern of literary influence invoked by rhizomatic thought and by node theory challenges both the architectural model theorized by T.S. Eliot (the “existing monuments [which] form an ideal order among themselves” [761]) and Harold Bloom’s psychoanalytic model (e.g., “Anxiety of Influence”). These more canonical theories of literary influence and development are more linear, tradition-*bound* progressions. They relate to the arboreal schemas challenged by Deleuze and Guattari and best illuminate processions of authorship that mimic the processions of men observed by Virginia Woolf in *Three Guineas* (70ff). In node theory, the fact that publications are visible and their rhizomatic connections are not can make a literature look as if it proceeds by quantum leaps, when in fact each publication is a concentration of energy and effort attached at all corners to the queer (social) matrix that sustains it.

Although I am interested in the botanical image of the “node” for its explanatory force, I want to distance myself from another traditional, botanically-based literary concept. New Criticism’s investment in the “organic unity” of the literary work is antithetical to the node concept in that it sanctifies individual works that are studied in hermeneutic isolation from their social and material conditions of emergence (Abrams 181). Organic unity offers a paradigm that is both totalizing and individualistic, as opposed to the paradigm metaphorized by the rhizome-node, which, although equally botanical, involves growth and spreading that is more flexible and emphasizes the collective over the individual. Rhizomes link many de-centralized nodes that each

produces numerous individual texts. They are, therefore, continually in process. Deleuze and Guattari both invoke and counter the idea of organic unity when they argue that “the Tree or root as an image, endlessly develops the law of the One that becomes two . . . Binary logic is the spiritual reality of the root-tree” and is entirely opposed to the idea of the rhizome (5, ellipsis and capitalization in text). My invocation of Deleuze and Guattari means that node theory contains within its multiplicity of meanings the blueprint of its trajectory from the one-pointedness of graphical vertices into the complex networks of people, place, and text. It offers a corrective to essentialist readings of identity, nation, or text.

While Deleuze and Guattari’s observation that “the trees of language are shaken by buddings and rhizomes” (506) is perhaps overly optimistic, it intimates the disruptive power of rhizomatic growth as it contacts hierarchical, hegemonic systems. It is not coincidental that many plants that are deemed “weeds” spread through rhizomatic growth. A weed is sometimes defined as a flower that grows where it was not deliberately planted. It is an unintended consequence; it offends the deliberate order. The most effective weeds are virtually unstoppable by virtue of their rhizomatic spreading mechanisms, which “may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines” (9). I argue that “underground” literary movements and their periodic “flowerings,” or nodes, can “shake” the established order of literary and political hierarchies.

The *OED* suggests other useful, even provocative, metaphoric meanings that carry “node” beyond the mathematical or the botanical.⁶ On the one hand, some definitions evoke the physical site of the city as a “place at which roads, etc., meet; a junction; a

point of intersection or convergence” (“Node” def 9b). This evokes the geographic siting that is integral to node theory. In what follows, Vancouver will be this “junction,” “a point of intersection” for authors, manuscripts, editors, publishers and their networks. The city as a physical hub also dovetails with more recently minted *OED* definitions that describe a node as a communication hub, as “a junction in a local area network, a wide area network, or any similar system of components interconnected by telecommunication lines; a device occupying such a position” (“Node.” def. 9e).

On the other hand, a “node” may refer to “either of the two points at which two great circles of the celestial sphere intersect each other” (*OED* def. 4), an astronomical meaning that resonates with geometric usages, which conceive a node as “a point at which a curve crosses itself” (def. 6a). Metaphorically, these definitions are suggestive of not only heavenly, but female intersexions – as heavenly curvaceous as they are queer and complicated. Taken together, these multiple senses of “node” evoke the compelling human geography of queer women's communities and call up sexuality and its potential for resistance.⁷

Suitably, a node may also be a “knot or complication; an entanglement” (*OED* def 3), an all-too-human circumstance that describes the complex interrelationships between individual queer women and within and between various communities. These entanglements form the social ecology that is intrinsic to node theory. Chapter Five will trace the relevant relationships between authors, editor, publishers, and reviewers to materialize a network view of this node's Vancouver. However, this definition also suggests Foucauldian concentrations or resistances of productivity as lines of power that intersect and tangle. Foucault describes how “the network of power relations ends by

forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, [and] so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities” (*History* 96). The city (in this case, Vancouver), as a physical site of civil and state apparatuses and institutions, is, in a sense, brought into being by the moving web of power-knowledge interactions, even though these are now supplemented by interactions that take place in global cyberspace. Foucault’s points of density in the web and his “swarm of points of resistance” are node-like features, in terms of both his metaphor and social realities. In Vancouver, for instance, the women’s bookstores, the women’s newspapers, the women-only publisher, women’s dances, art-shows, readings, and parties form a social matrix, a densification of network connections that might be understood as a “swarm of points of resistance.” The literary node emerges at this point of densification in the web of power-knowledge. These concepts may, indeed, must, be deployed simultaneously because the graphical representation of the publication nodes (see Chapter Two), which show vertices that represent peak publication concentrations, also point to nodes or hubs of cultural communication within the rhizomatic communities that produce the texts.

Foucault sees a single text as a node because it is a point of intersecting lines of discursivity. He argues that “the frontiers of a book are never clear-cut . . . it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network” (*Archaeology* 23).⁸ This project’s primary novels may each be imagined as Foucauldian points of resistance within the “field of power relations,” where “the points, knots, or foci of resistance are spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in a definitive way, inflaming certain points of the body,

certain moments in life, certain types of behaviour” (*History 96*). However, I would extend this argument to add that these systems of references may be visualized as rhizomatic networks, which are integral to what Foucault calls the “complex field of discourse.” In node theory, individual Foucauldian text-nodes combine into a multiple-text node that is anchored in space and time. This is the matrix within which queer nodal structures are continuously emerging, being variously checked (in the sense of being under surveillance and prevented from taking action), but always re-emerging.

Foucault’s invaluable work explicating the ubiquitous and discursive character of power underwrites much of the thinking in this dissertation. I also rely on his use of “the term *genealogy* to [describe] the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today” (“Two Lectures” 85). In this way, my detailed investigation of the Vancouver node and its conditions is a form of genealogy that has political implications for the politics, ethics, strategies, and tactics of on-going struggles. Foucault is widely held to be a pre-eminent critic within Queer theory and, as previously mentioned, this dissertation situates itself at the too-seldom-named but oft-visited intersection of Queer and Feminist theories. However, Foucault is often critiqued for his inattention to both the material differences experienced by the female body in society and the discourses that surround “woman.”

Node theory relies on Queer theory’s interdisciplinarity and its disinclination to focus on literary themes or texts in isolation from their ideological and social contexts. Since my application of node theory requires me to observe the female writing body, as well as its body of work, I require theories that explain how authors access power while

inhabiting intersectionally specific female bodies that are subjected to hegemonic cultures. Fortunately, Queer theory offers a “genealogy” of strong feminist theory. As a term, “Queer theory” appears in its first scholarly paper freshly coined by Teresa de Lauretis, who states that it “was arrived at in the effort to avoid all of these fine distinctions [e.g., transgendered, bisexual, lesbian, gay] in our discursive protocols, not to adhere to any one of the given terms, not to assume their ideological liabilities, but instead to both transgress and transcend them – or at the very least to problematize them” (“Queer Theory” iv). The term began as a generalization and as an efficiency; I still find it useful for that purpose. However, it was also a critique of the existing politics that attended the expanding alphabetical catalogue of identities referred to as GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans).⁹ A decade later, de Lauretis explains that she thought that “theory would be queer . . . not for being about queers or produced by queers, but in its project of questioning, displacing, reframing or queering the dominant conceptual paradigms” (“Gender Symptoms” 257). However, Queer theory has disappointed de Lauretis. She distances herself from its mainstream and academic commercialization and deplors “the banality and shallow trendiness that has characterized the mobilization of queer in North American academic studies and so-called alternative media” (258). Her critique inspires me to undertake the close readings and archival work that give substance to node theory’s own queerness *vis-à-vis* dominant modes of literary history.

There are, however, contemporary Queer theorists, who, to my mind, are clearly feminist and avoid banality despite the popularity of their work. Although not cited frequently in this study, Judith Butler and Elizabeth Grosz act as background theoretical supports that keep me in touch with the female writing body within the discourse of

power that networks social relations and produces books. Their analyses of the body and its gendered, performative, sexualized, and racialized subjectivities are critical to the arguments and observations that follow, as is the intersectional perspective on subjectivities that emerged thanks to lesbians and feminists of colour and / or the working class.¹⁰ These queer and feminist perspectives reinforce each other and my own lived sense that identifications are always under construction, that they interlock or intersect, and that the effects of multiple oppressions or marginalizations are never simply additive. As Judith Butler warns:

It is not a matter of relating race and sexuality and gender, as if they were fully separable axes of power; the pluralist theoretical separation of these terms as “categories” or indeed as “positions” is itself based on exclusionary operations that attribute a false uniformity to them and that serve the regulatory aims of the liberal state. (*Bodies 116*)

Her argument is crucial in a study that has chosen to recognize cultural positionality as a necessary criterion of author-ity. Butler and Grosz not only guide my continuous shifts between the individual author or text and the social field, but also form a useful connective thread between European post-structuralists, such as Deleuze and Guattari and Foucault, and Canadian post-structuralist feminist thinkers, such as Barbara Godard.

Godard’s vision of the literary archaeologist (itself influenced by Foucault) summons the current project:

The literary archaeologist is concerned with the trajectory of the communal career of the woman writer, with the archive of women's culture. She is concerned with the systems of relationships that are used to

delimit a coherent ensemble and with the types of links established among the fragmented phenomena. . . . Paradoxically, her violent cutting and shaping of a field of study is a response to the previous violence of male institutions. (vi).

Godard's vision inspires my interest in "the systems of relationships" that intersect with the "communal career" of the queer author and her "cutting and shaping" finds its echo in my methods of materializing nodes. However, the field of Canadian Queer Women's Literature is too vast for an undertaking that examines context in the detail she suggests. Although the need to drastically reduce the project's scope precludes working with francophone texts,¹¹ the influence of that literature – often brokered by Godard – must be recognized.¹² In particular, Nicole Brossard's postmodern fiction theory is a profound influence on Québécois and Canadian literature and her lesbian feminist political writings a significant influence on North American (lesbian-)feminism. Her poetic invocation of what it means to be radical within hegemonic culture informs my idea of queer women's literary generation as a radical propagation of inspiration, strategy, and material product (*Aerial*). Moreover, Brossard's method of spiralling may be seen to operate in this work's layered discussion of creativity as a social activity (116-17).¹³

II

Node Methodology

The node is not only an integral feature of rhizomatic structures. It is also a "point of significance; a crux, a critical turning point; a focal point" (*OED* def. 8). The

nodal turning point in this section is away from the conceptual poetics of node theory to the more concrete practice of identifying and analyzing a node, a turning from the metaphoric to the material practices of *node-work*. The specific work that I undertake to materialize this literary node within minoritarian English Canadian queer women's literature is research intensive. I track down, count, graph and analyze this literature in order to establish a nodal starting point. From there I work on two levels that remain connected through allowing selected literary texts to guide my research. On one level, I localize and historicize the node; on another, I perform literary analyses of representative texts.

Thus, I investigate a social context that is brought into view through an exploration of the conditions of emergence of the node's representative texts, especially Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*. This social "ecology" level, in turn, informs my close readings of the texts. In the process, a fragile "moment" of literary history is materialized and preserved. Ann Cvetkovich argues "how perilously close to being lost even the recent past is, especially when it includes . . . gay and lesbian and activist histories, which are constantly being erased by resistance and neglect" (10). Ensuring that this history is not lost involves delving into the archives at Simon Fraser University and the National Archives in Ottawa and talking with Vancouver node authors, editors, and activists, as well as evolving a theoretical framework in which to present such a history. Finally, I permit myself the luxury of close reading the node novels. Node methodology involves moving back and forth between the book as a social artefact and the book as an aesthetic literary object.

While Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari help theorize nodal relationships

between authors, texts, and communities as well as provide broader understandings of power, more concrete theorists enable me to investigate the sites and communities to which node theory leads. Feminist critique supports this turn to the material. In its simplest statement, Virginia Woolf argues that “a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction” (*Room 4*). In other words, although she locates creativity within the writing subject, Woolf argues that *realizing* that creativity is dependent on external and material social conditions. For Woolf, “fiction is like a spider’s web, attached ever so lightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners . . . attached to grossly material things” (41). However, this observation does not constitute a methodology.

To turn node theory toward the *work* of materializing the node I draw upon contemporary actor-network theory (ANT) and note that this move, too, is prefigured by my dissertation’s key term. In this case, it is the etymology of “node,” which descends from “the same Indo-European base as NET,” that resonates with actor-network theory (“Node”). ANT provides a vocabulary with which to discuss the material agents (animate and inanimate) that convey discourse and meta-discourse. I use ANT to emphasize that the book is itself a participant that connects with people, technologies, and other material objects. As cultural geographer, Jonathan Murdoch, argues, “[ANT] theory makes the most of the Foucauldian insight that it is not a power per se that is important but the various materials, practices, discourses in which power relations are both embedded and transported” (58).

Murdoch explains that ANT owes its development to sociologists Bruno Latour, Michel Callan and John Law (56-58). I use Murdoch’s adaptation of it because post-

structuralist geography supports the spatial aspect of node methodology. Moreover, ANT expands on Foucault's "genealogical method[, which] pays particular attention to the relationship between power, knowledge, practice and space" (37). According to Murdoch, this perspective allowed Latour to develop an approach with which to investigate the power that scientific knowledge and scientists have accumulated in our society:

the actor-network approach focuses on the means whereby laboratories draw entities in from the outside, subject them to various processes of transformation, and then export them to the rest of the world in the form of scientific facts and artefacts. (57)

This concern may seem far from literary concerns; however, I argue that there is a counter-intuitive parallel between scientists and authors, books and scientific artefacts.

ANT's primary example involves the scientist, Louis Pasteur, who found the anthrax bacillus in the field, brought it to his laboratory, "a centre of calculation," where it was transformed into an vaccine, which was brought back to the French countryside. There, it transformed French agriculture and society. Within network theory, material objects (like immunizations or books) are at once created by a network, but also become active parts of that network. Material objects help stabilize a network; they make it more durable and also enable it to extend across time and space (65). To draw the unlikely analogy, Press Gang Publishers (PGP) "discovered" -- like most discoverers, they were led to -- Lai's manuscript, at a reading "in the field." They encouraged her to bring the manuscript into their "centre of calculation," where it was "transformed" into a published novel and introduced into Canadian society.¹⁴ There, as I argue in Chapter Four,¹⁵ it

continues to transform society by spreading ideas that offer readers some immunization against racism and homophobia.

Despite the fact that there are notable differences in these two examples, I argue that ANT offers useful analytical tools to the literary critic. In adapting ANT to literary purposes, I place less emphasis on a central actor or a rigid network structure. The networks I examine are of the type that Murdoch characterizes as “networks of fluidity and flux” rather than “networks of prescription” (99). Both network types operate similarly. To attain and deploy Foucauldian power/knowledge, networks engage in four basic activities with various entities. Initially, networks “enrol” allies (i.e., authors, editors, publicists) to increase their scope (66). Secondly, these extend outwards from specialized centres (i.e., publishing houses) to other locations in the society (i.e., bookstores, universities, book clubs). Thirdly, networks are able to combine space and action together through binding individually localized actors together across and within space, which enables them to act locally and globally. Telecommuting has increased this ability because authors, editors, publishers, and bookstores may connect despite inhabiting different locations; however, this is an increase in intensity not kind since the book has always been able to affect readers across time and space. Fourthly, and significantly, networks deploy “heterogeneously”; that is, they involve and deploy “differing [classes of] entities and resources” (i.e., people, books, emails) (61).

In this study, I am interested in how networks combine actors such as writers, editors, and political / cultural activists to create books, which then become integral to the networks and help to extend both network and network values and ideas into Canadian culture. In Chapter Five, I extrapolate from the idea of literary objects as active

participants in networks to develop a unique approach to identify the communities in which the networks that produce and support the representative text of the Vancouver node operate. I use the media notice of *Fox* (mostly typical literary mechanisms such as reviews) in combination with the inferred audience of the instrument (e.g., magazine or newspaper) to act as signposts to the communities that are most interested in *Fox*. I then trace how the major networks that support *Fox* interrelate around the novel and its author and discuss other actors that are closely related to the novel's conditions of emergence. This results in a kind of social ecology of *Fox*'s environment.

Latour's use of the word *translate* to describe the means by which subjects / participants are enrolled into networks accords well with Foucault's theory of how power moves as and through discourse, but it also has a literary resonance. Moreover, anyone who has ever participated in a political network will recognize the description, cited by Murdoch, of how an actor becomes part of a network and in exchange acquires the ability to speak for another or the group:

As Callon and Latour explain it: 'By translation we understand all the negotiations, intrigues, calculations, acts of persuasion and violence, thanks to which an actor or force takes, or causes to be conferred on itself, authority to speak on behalf of another actor or force Whenever an actor speaks of 'us', s/he is translating other actors into a single will. . . . S/he becomes stronger. S/he grows. (1981: 279).' (Murdoch 63)

Murdoch suggests that, implicit within Latour's idea of *translation*, is the idea that if "networks are to be extended through space and time, then actors of differing (natural and social) types must be 'interested' into the network – that is their goals must somehow

be aligned” (62). The process is similar to Althusser’s concept of interpellation in that a loyal network actor¹⁶ would recognize and respond to a hail from her network (“Ideology” 162-63). An aspect that makes *Fox* significant and successful, both as literature and as social action, is the *translation* of Lai into a pivotal actor in, not just one or two, but in six macro-networks or communities. Lai and *Fox* are ideal representatives of the Vancouver node, whose texts and authors all demonstrate multiple intersectionalities. The co-constitution of participant and network is, in my view, made possible, indeed inevitable, through the continuous interplay of Althusserian interpellations and Butlerian performances.

As a geographer, of course, Murdoch is primarily interested in ANT and its Foucauldian underpinnings for how space and geographic entities such as cities are socially constituted. This coincides with node theory’s contention that geographic location is a significant context for literary texts and authors. According to Murdoch, “Geographers now recognize that the human subject is not just implicated in meaningful action but is also implicated in embodied action. Thus, humans act within ‘spaces of embodiment’ and react to other embodied entities” (15). Node theory’s interest in the spatial as well as the temporal and the literary is related to feminism’s long-standing interest in embodiment, which has gained broad theoretical acceptance. By choosing to *site* nodes, node theory recognizes the interrelation of the spatial and the discursive as they co-evolve in a particular literature. Murdoch relates the inseparability of networks and space through recourse to the operations of the Foucauldian power-knowledge web:

As power relations come into being, discourses, knowledges and spaces gain shape – they co-evolve in complex ways, coiling around one another

until some kind of stability emerges. Thus, within these heterogeneous assemblages any separation of the discursive and the spatial becomes almost impossible to conceive: knowledge is materialized in practice, practice is materialized in the body, and the body is immersed in modes of organization that in turn ‘perform’ systems of knowledge. (56)

Interestingly, Murdoch also uses my key term, “node,” in the sense of city structures when he argues that “processes of localization will occur as network ‘nodes’ work to establish durable structures of centralization and peripheralization within the networks” (75). Because the discursive and the spatial are integral facets of network processes and production, Vancouver itself becomes a vital actant in this mid-1990s literary node. The activities of the communities, which are constituted by many overlapping and connecting networks, create points of densification in what might be characterized, in postmodern geographical terms, as the web that constitutes “Vancouver.”¹⁷ In this way, “Vancouver” is not just a geographical location, but rather as the post-structuralist geographers would have it, a place “where relations interweave and intersect. . . . spaces and places can be seen as ‘nodes in relational settings’. . . . [p]laces are bound to one another relationally” (21). It is also important, in this context, to stress that it is not only various queer women’s networks that intersect at this node of production. Queer women’s literary production has many allies whose support is crucial, particularly within feminist, racialized, and queer literary and political communities. Furthermore, “Vancouver” and the “West Coast” are socially, economically, and politically integrated into the larger set of networks that is “Canada,” which indicates that attention to Canadian nationality, like queer identification, is critical to a full appreciation

of the node.

These aspects of centralization and peripheralization, particularly the length of a network's extent, as opposed to changes in levels and tiers, create, not only spatialization and temporalization (more simply referred to as activities of "spacing" and "timing"), but also localization *and* globalization. Murdoch argues:

[A]s the actor-network grows, it will extend its influence and reach beyond a single locale into other locales, tying these together in sets of complex associations. There is, therefore, no difference in kind between 'macro' and 'micro' or 'global' and 'local'; in the view of actor-network theory longer networks simply reach further than shorter networks." (70)

As the "localized" reviews demonstrate, the Vancouver node, though spacialized, is not artificially cut off or insulated from other networks beyond the provincial or national despite being located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. For example, *Fox's* reviews connect the node to Asian American publications that, in turn have Pacific Rim connections, and to American lesbian and feminist publications.

One criticism of this approach is that it might be (mis)understood to airily ignore the power relations and very real oppression that some long networks inflict on shorter ones. However, Murdoch asserts that this "concern for strategies of localization allows actor-network theory to move beyond the micro-macro divide that ultimately proved problematic for Foucault" (71). I suggest that it accomplishes this by allowing power relations to be analysed in a manageable fashion, which does not assign more (metaphysical) power to any arrangement than its bare existence requires. Actor-network theory facilitates thinking and acting both globally and locally simultaneously while

working against underlying metaphysical assumptions. Such assumptions often haunt and undermine political thought and action and result in a kind of binary blindness: sides are taken and one side is often demonized, which leads to unskilful actions.

However, while Murdoch is interested in how networks create space, I am interested in how networks create books, specifically how networks participated in the production and distribution of *Fox*. For this purpose, ANT usefully argues:

Once an initial translation [enrolment of actor(s)] has been achieved, something more is required to turn the network into a durable whole. . . . [I]n the consolidation of the network, material artefacts [called immutable mobiles by Latour] play a key role. (64-65)

The book is a trenchant example of a material object that may be integral and necessary to a network's development and functioning. Moreover, the material objects involved in the production of a novel (manuscript and exchanges of edited versions) also strengthen network ties, especially those between author and editor. The reviews that point to *Fox*'s primary communities are also material objects that expand and strengthen networks. Reviews are capable of making new connections between networks and of beginning translation processes for enrolling new actors into the various networks that produce the reviews.

In addition, although Murdoch doesn't do this, I connect network theory to Pierre Bourdieu, whose assertion that "the essential explanation of each work lies outside each of them, in the objective relations which constitute this field [of cultural production]" also underwrites my sense that investigating the social context of the Vancouver node is critical to a fuller appreciation of its literary texts (30).¹⁸ Bourdieu also implicitly

invokes the importance of networks in his conceptualization of the cultural field, which asserts that relationships among the participants in a field contribute to the cultural capital that each participant-actor or agent acquires (132).¹⁹ In the literary field, cultural capital helps writers to find agents, editors, publishers, reviewers, and readers. In other words, networks move manuscripts from the private to the public sphere, where, as books, they are more able to influence the society they move within. Once this has happened, those writers then accrue further cultural capital and prominence within the cultural field. This connects back to the two Foucauldian principles that Murdoch acknowledges underlie ANT (besides that power is circulated through discourse, as noted earlier): “power is everywhere” and “power is productive” (74). These principles underwrite the possibility of an outburst of queer literature, but it is crucial to examine the networks involved to understand *how* any particular node emerges.

Bourdieu’s exacting analysis of the cultural field also facilitates the exploration of the social conditions and positionalities of authorship. His explication of the importance of the writer’s *habitus*²⁰ allows me to engage with relevant aspects of the author’s subjectivity in a way that reveals its social significance while avoiding Terry Castle’s “gossipy conundrums” (Introduction 5). Bourdieu’s analysis is also invaluable in “constructing the space of positions and the space of the position-takings . . . in which they are expressed” (30) because the emergence of a literary node occurs in the context of “an interaction with prevailing social actions and reactions” within a particular field of cultural and societal forces (Fox qtd. in Knutson Introduction 11). Position-taking, for Bourdieu, is an activity of both individuals and the cultural objects that they produce.

Bourdieu’s work is particularly relevant to two aspects of my investigation of

Lai's *Fox* as a position-taking. In the first place, his analysis structures Christine Kim's important study of Toronto's Women's Press and Press Gang Publishers ("Politics"). Her dissertation is invaluable to my own because she provides a detailed description of the feminist context of the time and the press that published *Fox*, *Cereus*, and *Sunnybrook*. In the second place, Bourdieu also underwrites my decision to use the inferred audiences of the media notices of *Fox* as signposts directing me to a more complete social ecology of the novel and node through his claim that there is

the possibility and necessity of understanding the work [in this case, the novel] in its reality as a fetish; it has to take into account everything which helps to constitute the work as such, not least the discourses of direct or disguised celebration which are among the social conditions of production of the work of art *qua* object of belief. (35)

My analysis of the reviews of *Fox*, which are part of the "discourses of direct or disguised celebration," as well the networks and communities that they led me to, add to the understanding of the novel and its social actions.

At its heart, this dissertation is essentially an argument and demonstration that a novel is not a discrete, static creation springing ready-made from the mind of an inspired individual writer. Node theory argues that both the written and the writer participate in rhizomatic communities that inspire, call forth, and materialize manuscripts. Networks and "centres of calculation" or centres of consecration, transform both writers and manuscripts. Writers become "author functions" and manuscripts become published textual objects. Both author and text are then able to convey network values over geographic distances and into other networks. In return, symbolic capital travels back to

the centres that initially transformed the writer and her manuscript. In this way, a novel may be seen to be a socially active product that, in turn, is capable of initiating and supporting social change.

However, although the tools of social science are excellent for answering the question of how nodes come to emerge, I turn back to literary theorists and critics to examine, not only the literary aspects of the text, but also how they achieve their rhetorical objectives. Some rhetorical objectives are related to social change as Carolyn R. Miller explains in her influential “Genre as Social Action,” which in turn rests on the work of rhetorician, Kenneth Burke. Burke’s insight that “[l]anguage is a species of action, symbolic action – and its nature is such that it can be used as a tool” underwrites my interest in the social (cultural) work that is performed by the literature of the Vancouver node (15). It also leads me to contextualize my study and the core node novels within recent queer literary critique.

III

Of Nodes and Constellations

In particular, I would like to consider how my concept of nodes relates to, but must be differentiated from the constellations developed by Dianne Chisholm’s *Queer Constellations*. Node theory is a type of constellation only insofar as it is an ordering of concepts. Chisholm defines constellation as “an ideal method of critical representation whereby concrete elements are arranged in the concept . . . [whose] ‘function . . . [is] to group phenomena together’” (34). Node theory is also an ideal critical approach that uses a macro conceptual rubric to group together a micropolitical network of concrete

phenomena (i.e., texts, events). In this way, the nodal approach, like the constellations of Walter Benjamin that Chisholm engages, aims to achieve “two things at a single stroke: the salvation of phenomena and the representation of ideas,” (34). Metaphorically, the core node texts might also be understood as a species of constellation – the ideal outline formed by their combined literary and social contribution is as informative as any of their phenomenal content.

However, there are key differences. In Chisholm’s deployment of the Benjaminian concept of constellation, there is an important element of monadology: constellation texts represent an era (“queer constellations image the city of *late* capitalism” [11, emphasis in text]). Node texts, on the other hand, represent a particular moment, a time in which *spatially situated* social forces converge to produce a publication concentration. From a temporal point of view, the constellation of node texts is, by definition, narrowly synchronic (i.e., 1995-96) while Chisholm takes a diachronic approach. However, it is possible, although beyond the scope of this study, to constellate on a macro level by taking a number of nodes across time, space, and culture. If the focus is kept on one particular set of interlocking cultural categories (such as queer female authorship), this would permit interesting comparative regional, national, or transnational insights, as well as permitting historical connections across time. This expanded constellation of nodes might well reveal monadic trajectories. Nodes might also constellate across spatial or cultural groupings if these share a particular nodal “moment.”

A more crucial difference between the two approaches lies in the determination of which texts form this novel node or constellation. Chisholm’s constellation of texts is

pre-selected by the critic while the texts of the node constellation are determined by an interaction between the critic and the literary “evidence” of node activity. This is not to claim objectivity for node theory. The framing node concept, the decision as to which node to study, and which literary genre(s) or representative texts to privilege are all a matter of critical selection and are, therefore, necessarily refracted through subjectivity. However, the nodal approach acts as a check on arbitrary decisions by the critic, who must, to some extent, take her lead from the material history as she materializes it. This dynamic is what distinguishes node theory as an emergent theory.

Of New Queer Narrative and Queer Thirdspace Narrative

Another point where my application of node theory to queer women’s texts intersects with Chisholm’s work in *Queer Constellations* is in the mutual desire to consider how our (differing) selection of texts relate to the phenomena of “The New Queer Narrative” as it is defined by Gregory W. Bredbeck in an eponymous article that appeared, intriguingly, in the key Vancouver node year, 1995. Bredbeck argues that “[m]ost, if not all, new narrative . . . incorporates violence and pornographic sex” (478). He also notes that new queer narrative demonstrates a familiarity “with postmodern theorists . . . an interrelatedness between prose and other modes of writing as well as other media . . . [with]in a reliance on pastiches, cut-and-paste techniques, and non-linear narratives” (478). Although Chisholm and I are both inclined to appropriate the term for our texts, we differ – significantly – in how we approach and justify that appropriation.

The Vancouver node authors and texts share many of the characteristics set out by Bredbeck. Although Lai’s *Fox* lacks gritty pornographic quality, it refuses, as does

Daphne Marlatt's *Taken* and Persimmon Blackbridge's *Sunnybrook*, to project an unproblematic "happy" alternative culture ending. Even Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night* presents only potential for change – it is certainly not utopic. Moreover, each novel challenges mainstream assumptions "to expose a system in its entirety *as a system*" (Bredbeck 480). They also expose, as *Taken* asserts explicitly, that "[w]e *are* complicit, yes. Folded into the wreckage of grief and power" (130). This critique of hegemony links the node novels firmly to Bredbeck's "queer critique" (in contradistinction to "queer activist" literature) which, in his exposition, is diagnostic of new queer narrative (479-80).²¹

While the Vancouver node texts are not as "gritty" as some new narrative, the narratives of the node novels all demonstrate what I call a "queer aesthetic." For example, Mary Condé observes that the narrative of *Cereus* "is composed of unchronological fragments which only form a coherent whole when they're reassembled in retrospect" (65). Chapters Four and Six demonstrate how each core novel is similarly layered and complex. For Bredbeck then, the four core node texts might easily come under the rubric of new queer narrative, since it is only "most" new narrative that includes violence and pornography. On the other hand, Chisholm's primary critique of Bredbeck is that although he does note that "[m]ost of the new narrative's practitioners hail from the urban centres of San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York – and a few from Montréal -- . . . as a result of personal diasporic movements from smaller towns" (Bredbeck 478), he "overlooks the city in their writing" (Chisholm 58). *Queer Constellations*, on the other hand, concerns itself solely with "queer city writing" (1). Despite the fact that Chisholm (somewhat disingenuously) asserts that her "intent is not

to define the genre,” she also asserts that she “would contest any description of New Narrative that omits the city” (57).²²

The inclusion of the city as *necessary* content for the new queer narrative appellation would be problematic for the Vancouver core node texts. There is no problem with Bredbeck: the core authors match his observation that writers of the new queer narrative “hail from the urban centres” (478). However, their texts do not fulfill Chisholm’s counter definition. *Cereus*, in particular, has no urban setting beyond the mention of far off urban centres into which characters disappear. On the other hand, although *Taken* describes both Australian and Malaysian cityscapes, these are neither “queer” nor central to the narrative. *Taken*’s queerness is nurtured by the rural environment of BC’s Southern Gulf Islands, whose ecology registers as a significant concern. *Fox* and *Sunnybrook* both deploy an urban setting that is recognizably “Vancouver” (a queer urban mecca of sorts, despite escaping Bredbeck’s notice); however, each spends much narrative time elsewhere – either in ancient or modern China or within the suburban institution of Sunnybrook.

Nevertheless, Chisholm’s assertion that “the space exposed by the cruising flâneur of queer constellations differs dramatically according to gender” opens up another line of argument (49). Her insight might be extended to argue that current definitions of new queer narrative may, themselves, be inadvertently gender-inflected (49). In particular, I suggest that the demand that gritty sex be foregrounded and that the city must be a central concern are biased towards the inclusion of texts by queer men and the exclusion of texts by queer women.²³ It is an unsurprising commonplace to say that men have a stronger positive relationship to pornography than do women and one that would

be equally unsurprising applied to queer communities. More surprisingly is that geographers assert that queer women and men maintain asymmetrical relationships to urbanity, which supports Chisholm's observation. This difference was initially based on the perception that gay men's bars and businesses were highly visible while "lesbians lacked similar territorially based communities," which led some critics to claim that women lacked territory altogether (Valentine 2).

Subsequently, "a host of studies of lesbian neighbourhoods. . . . all suggest that lesbians do create spatially concentrated communities . . . of lesbian households and sometimes countercultural institutions" (3) instead of higher profile bars and businesses. This coincides with the (social) geographic difference that Chisholm notes for her "[c]ruising *lesbian* flâneurs [who] stroll through space that is less propertied and proprietary, yet more diffuse" than that of their gay male counterparts (49). As she suggests, "different prospects pose different perspectives." I argue that queer women's "different perspectives" extend well beyond which neighborhood is inhabited and therefore described in literature.

The difference in interpretation of neighbourhood that overlooked lesbian space seems to find its parallel in definitions of new queer narrative that, while they do not overlook queer women entirely, do overlook significant differences in the concerns of queer women's literature. These differences are also parallel in that the new queer (women's) narrative of the Vancouver node demonstrate social concerns that mirror in literature the social service components present in the spatialized lesbian countercultural institutions noted in the urban studies. Thus, as well as, and perhaps instead of, pornographic sex, the core node texts examine interlocking identifications and

what qualities might allow people to live with difference in community in a positive and productive way.

In the end, though it counters Chisholm's critique of Bredbeck (while not at all detracting from the usefulness of her fascinating study of which it is but a minor part), I argue that the Vancouver node core novels must be considered new queer narrative despite their lack of urban content. Each, after all, presents a narrative that queers both realism and heteronormativity. Surely it is this aesthetic deployed by queer bodies, as Bredbeck argues, and not urban or sexual content, that makes narrative "queer" and "new." It may be that, for queer women's literature, concern about living "gritty" difference in unidealized communities is "new."

As Bredbeck observes, for "any genre, school or modality, what is in and what is out, as well as what is definitive and what is extraneous, are highly debatable" (477). In response to these concerns about the definitions of new queer literature, I offer a new sub-category to what started as "New Narrative": *thirdspace queer narrative*. This term could apply to novels that mostly fit the profile of new queer narrative, but which also deploy what I describe in Chapter Five as literary thirdspace, a critical term inspired by Homi K. Bhabha's theorization of "Third Space" ("Commitment"). Literary thirdspace, which underlies thirdspace queer narrative, seems also to build on the long-standing feminist desire to achieve a radical inclusivity of difference on the individual and social level that is explored in Chapter Three's discussion of the Telling It conference. Vancouver node texts point to important elements of kindness, safety, and acceptance that must supplement hybridity to create productive heterogeneous communities.

 Notes

¹ Node theory does not draw on Lacan despite coincidental translation of his “point de capiton” as “node.” Although in both cases there is a gathering of forces, the Lacanian node seems to be reserved for hegemonic gatherings, while the node of interest here is decidedly counter-hegemonic.

² Nichols makes this point in her discussion of the usefulness of using the various registers of “different ‘differences’” in the work of several authors including one of this study’s primary texts, Daphne Marlatt’s *Taken* (40).

³ For lay gardeners, bamboo and the bearded iris are perhaps the most familiar rhizomes. Deleuze and Guattari claim that the rhizomatic stem is “absolutely different from roots and radicles,” which is at odds with the fact that, botanically speaking rhizomes are both root and stem, as indicated in the *OED*: However, a generous reading allows that it is really the metaphoric use to which philosophers have put said trees and roots that is the underlying reason for their desire to distance themselves from roots in this slightly overzealous manner.

⁴ Although Deleuze and Guattari’s works are complex and academically inflected, corroboration of how apt this naming / theorizing is may be found at the community level of political and arts organizing. A fitting example is the 2007 opening in Vancouver of the Rhizome Café, whose operational strategy is described in the online community-based *Lesbian Quarterly*: “The name Rhizome refers to a root system. . . . [which] send shoots up from the nodes in the rhizome, creating what looks like many separate plants. These seemingly unrelated individuals are actually all connected, through a system that’s not immediately visible to the eye. The name summarizes the philosophy of the cafe, which is held as a place for progressive community groups to meet and hold classes, events, forums and film screenings. They also host performances and show the work of local artists” (Kelly <<http://www.sophiakelly.ca/lq/2007/02/27/challenges-together-vinetta-lenavat-and-lisa-moore-of-rhizome-cafe/>>). This community acceptance and appropriation of an academic construct lends further credence both to Deleuze and Guattari’s theories and also to my own node theory.

⁵ I note that Pauline Butling finds “rhizome” similarly useful in her discussion of Canadian poetic communities (29).

⁶ Whilst there is only one definition of “rhizome” in the online *OED*, there are ten definitions of “node” and many sub-definitions (“Node”).

⁷ Although aware of Foucault’s cautionary analysis, which demonstrates how sexuality can be appropriated by power to extend its control over the individual, it is significant that his theory also finds that power is available (even if in limited quantities) at all points in the power-knowledge grid (*History*). With these points in mind, I invoke Audre Lorde’s still-relevant article, “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,” to claim the resistance-value of sexuality.

⁸ Foucault’s use of “node” to refer to the book resonates with Deleuze and Guattari’s suggestion that the book “forms a rhizome with the world, [in that] there is an aparallel evolution

of the book and the world” (11). Both involve networks, lines, and discourses that converge at the edges of book and world.

⁹ In Kathleen Martindale's "What Makes Lesbianism Thinkable?: Theorizing Lesbianism from Adrienne Rich to Queer theory," Martindale asserts that de Lauretis “now rejects [this term] as politically problematic” (89). De Lauretis clarifies this: “I don't reject the term "queer" as such . . . it is much more "efficient" than . . . glbtq. . . . what I rejected for my work was the term "Queer theory" rather than "queer" as relating to people” (“Re: Queer”).

¹⁰ Linda Garber argues that “the work of working-class/lesbians of color prefigures postmodern insights about positionality, coalition, and multiply located, shifting ‘identity’” (*Identity* 185).

¹¹ Although excluding Francophone literature is an obvious first reduction for an Anglophone, even English Canadian queer women’s literature is too vast for the in-depth research suggested by Goddard. Node theory answers this challenge by focussing the research on a small publication concentration that is shaped by time and place, thus effectively moving from pan-Canadian literature to the literature of a particular time and site.

¹² Despite this debt, future references to “Canadian” will imply the more unwieldy “English Canadian,” unless otherwise noted.

¹³ Brossard provides a segue to what I might call the poetics of node theory, which are suggested by another heuristic definition of “node.” Both physics and electrical theory offer definitions of a node as a place where the periodic functions or current or voltage have a value of zero (*OED* def. 6a, b), which, despite presenting an unlikely starting point, suggest a rhizomatic “tie-back” with earlier lesbian literary criticism (Deleuze and Guattari 9). Although perhaps not strictly necessary to node theory per se, it is of interest to this particular application that two “foremothers” of queer critique and Deleuze and Guattari have made use of this idea of zero, which is defined as nodal, to theorize aspects of creativity. As a starting point, zero-ness recalls Deleuze and Guattari’s *Body without Organs* and its creative “matrix of intensity, intensity = 0” (Deleuze and Guattari 153). This, in turn, evokes Catherine Stimpson’s invention of the term, “Zero Degree Deviancy,” to describe a state where social pressures do not deflect the literary values of lesbian literature. (Stimpson takes the term “writing at the zero degree” from Roland Barthes’ *Writing Degree Zero*). Both ideas seem related to Virginia Woolf’s earlier invocation of the “incandescent” state as the “most propitious for creative work” (*Room 56*). The connection of node to a particular “point or line of absolute or comparative rest in a vibrating body,” a zero state that other critics and theorists relate to the creative work of human bodies, sanctions my own poetic appropriation of the “node” for a literary context (*OED* def. 6a).

¹⁴ For a history of the press, see “A herstory of a women's press: Press Gang Printers” (Giraud and Gilhooly).

¹⁵ My related article, "The Much Migrated Fox: Larissa Lai's Transformation of *Ecriture Au Féminin* in *When Fox Is a Thousand*," is published in *Migrance Comparée /Comparing Migration: Les Littératures Du Canada Et Du Québec / the Literatures of Canada and Québec*.

¹⁶ The role of “faithful” actor is probably the most salient factor in determining whether networks are “networks of fluidity and flux” or “networks of prescription” (99). In describing the single-actor network, Murdoch explains:

if all the enrolled entities remain faithful bearers of the facts and artefacts, then authority flows back up the network to the scientist: she or he comes to be seen as the ‘actor’, the ‘cause’ of the network effects. . . . all those faithful (natural and social) allies that have contributed to his ‘power’ simply disappear behind his ‘greatness.’ (62)

This is the great man model that feminism quite consciously works against, so it is not surprising that feminist networks do not require that sort of “faithfulness” nor do they nurture an individual “actor.” In the use of ANT within the literary context, Foucault’s author function may, in some cases, seem to operate as *the* actor.

¹⁷ This is a relational view of geography. Murdoch describes how, in this view, space, which is something we are accustomed to viewing as independent of sociality is:

made not by (underlying) structures but by diverse (physical, biological, social, cultural) processes; in turn, these processes are made by the relations established between entities of various kinds. As [David] Harvey (1996: 294) discusses, this relational perspective leads us into seeing discrete spaces and places as “dynamic configurations of relative ‘permanences’ within the overall spatio-temporal dynamics of ecological processes.” (19)

Murdoch presents an argument that might apply to a mountain range, a desert, a national park; however, it is especially easy to see how a geographic entity such as a city is created in this way. This approach to an understanding of “Vancouver” underlies my spatialization of the “Vancouver” literary node, which is similarly a product of overlapping networks.

¹⁸ Despite the fact that I do not believe that “objective” relations can hardly be genuinely objective since they are relations between subjects (and human institutions) nor that there is an “essential explanation” possible, this dissertation relies on Bourdieu for his meticulous analysis of the operation of the cultural field within which literary subjects, objects, and networks function.

¹⁹ For Bourdieu, interpersonal or even simple intertextual relationships are viewed as social relationality, which is similar to the concept of actor-networks. For instance, Bourdieu refers to “those characteristics which products [e.g., literary texts], as position-takings, owe to the *positions* of their producers within the system of social relations of production and circulation and to the corresponding positions which they occupy within the system of *objectively possible cultural positions* within a given state of the field of production and circulation” (132 Bourdieu’s italics). He further definitively states that “the artistic field is not reducible to a *population* . . . linked by simple relations of *interaction*” (35) because while Bourdieu considers publications to be “*position-takings*” (30) and ANT refers to inanimate artefacts as “‘immutable mobiles’” (Murdoch 65), both consider these material and / or natural objects to be integral to the *field* or to the actor-network associations (many of which would combine to create a Bourdieuxian *field*), respectively.

²⁰ Bourdieu’s “habitus” is a “system of dispositions” (71), which is inculcated through social agencies such as the family, school, peer groups, sports, religious training and so forth. These dispositions are embodied, “durable, generalized and transposable” (133), and together represent “schemes of perception and appreciation which constitute a habitus” (64), which he sees, therefore, as engendering “unconscious strategies” (133) in the agent’s activities. Nevertheless, Bourdieu allows social beings, such as artists, definite agency, which is socially

mediated. This corresponds to Foucault's insight that power is inherent through society, wherever there is discourse, although any particular agent has variable ability to mobilize it.

²¹ For Chisholm, this distinction is not as telling, since she asks, "does not New Narrative forge queer (and) *activist* critique?" (58). This complements her inclusion of a "return to the real," preferably in "a synthesis of gritty urban realism and experimental postmodernism," in her new queer narrative(24). My dissertation's oscillation between the theoretical and the material offers an alternative approach that, nevertheless, also engages the postmodern and the real.

²² In fact, Chisholm's project is not primarily about new narrative, but is an exposition on "queer city writing and its critical affinities with Walter Benjamin's city writing" (1). Nevertheless, her insistence that new narrative include city writing demands consideration here.

²³ I must pause to stress here that I do not think these differences are "essential" in any way. Women do fuck, and we are certainly capable of writing explicitly about sex and violence; however, generally speaking, social interpellation into female gender roles make queer women less likely to include Bredbeck's new narrative style "violence and pornographic sex" (478). *Cereus*, for instance, includes violence that is enacted sexually, but its depictions of incest do not incite the readers' libido as pornography might. Of the node novels, Persimmon Blackbridge's *Sunnybrook* is closest to the typical New Queer Narrative. Chisholm also seems to downplay the porn criteria since Gail Scott's *My Paris*, a key text for Chisholm, is no "sexier" than *Fox*.

Chapter Two: Identifying and Materializing the Vancouver Node

"Genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times." Michel Foucault ("Nietzsche" 76)

This chapter compiles, analyzes, and graphs data on Canadian queer women's literary publications in English in order to provide a broad context within which to materialize the publication concentration that I call "the Vancouver node." It is vital to "materialize" the conditions of the historical moment represented by the Vancouver node because knowledge of queer women's literary production history and the networks that enable it are at risk of falling out of social memory. I initiated a broad bibliographic study in order to determine if there were demonstrable grounds for my intuitive sense that there were concentrations or nodes within Canadian queer women's literature and to make these visible. As I began my investigation of Canadian queer women's literature in English, I could find no comprehensive material beyond Nairne Holtz's bibliography. Though Holtz's parameters differ from those of this project, her bibliography is invaluable in the data it compiles, which enabled me to add several authors to my own list ("Annotated"). My early bibliographic research consists of 303 publications in English authored by Canadian queer women from 1964 to 2003. Quantifying and graphing this research enabled me to identify provisional geographical and temporal concentrations of literary texts.

In what follows, I trace that initial work and discuss the benefits as well as limitations of using quantitative analysis for literary criticism. I use the quantitative data primarily to provide direction. Attending to it enables me to deduce points of departure

for later critical work that engages specific texts and contexts that are materially based. I do not present the quantitative data as a means of positively “proving” either node theory or the concrete existence of publication “nodes” in recognition of the limitations of positivist methodologies. Rather the data are suggestive and helped to narrow my focus to the single site of Vancouver. I then compiled the more exhaustive Vancouver bibliography, which, in turn, suggested the 1990s as the starting point for materializing the mid-1990s node.

Many complex issues arose as I developed criteria for determining which publications to include or exclude. Initially, there are the questions of inclusion that arise for any literature with a “national” focus in this era of transnationalism and which I must address since my subject is *Canadian* queer women’s texts. Identifying what counts as Canadian literature is as fraught as identifying what counts as lesbian literature (see Introduction). Must the writer be born in “Canada”? Is it enough that she has spent significant portions of her life in Canada? Which portions might count as significant (childhood years, adult years, writing years)? What about authors who hold dual citizenship or who are “naturalized” Canadians? What role, if any, does content play in determining what constitutes Canadian writing: for instance, are the Anglo-Indian novels of Sara Jeannette Duncan Canadian? Are there Canadian styles or themes and, if so, is writing that does *not* demonstrate those styles or themes Canadian writing?

Misao Dean notes that academics rarely set out criteria for the Canadian writers that they study; they simply write about writers that they believe may be “defensibly” categorized as “Canadian” and let others critique their work if they disagree. Indeed Dean’s anthology, *Early Canadian Short Stories*, does not address the issue and does

include Sara Jeannette Duncan (Introduction). An examination of several other anthologies reveals a similar lack of concern with the definition of “Canadian.”¹ In introducing *The Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English*, Margaret Atwood asks, “What, if anything distinguishes a ‘Canadian’ short story . . .?” (Introduction xiv). She readily answers, “Individually considered, probably nothing,” thereby handily rejecting content, style, author birthplace or adult residence as absolute defining criteria (xiv-xv). This is much the same conclusion that I reach after several decades of reading lesbian / queer and Canadian authors. I also echo her observations regarding both women and Western Canadian writers: a “large number of women writers . . . have, despite adverse social conditions . . . made contributions of a high order” and that an increasing number of the post-1930 writers are from the West (xv). I would add that, since 1964, when Jane Rule published the first “out” English Canadian lesbian fiction² (the groundbreaking *Desert of the Heart*), an increasing number of those western women writers have also identified as queer. It is these writers who attract my critical attention.

However, it is possible to set out the guiding principles used in creating the bibliography, which forms the basis for graphs which, in turn, offer visual indicators of the specific times and places (nodes) that suggest fertile starting points for further investigation. In my early research, which is not exhaustive, I graphed 303 publications, which I gathered from library searches based on my own knowledge of Canadian queer women authors and supplemented by Holtz’s bibliography. The principle I use to determine all three identification states (Canadianness, Queerness, and Femaleness) is simply that the author has lived a significant portion of her (or his) life in these states (and not necessarily simultaneously, though that is usually the case). The term “queer

women” in this study includes lesbian, bisexual, transwomen, and transmen, all of whom can lay legitimate claims to both queerness and femaleness. The bibliography might have been limited to works that were published only when an author was in all three states; however, this would result in excluding works by Daphne Marlatt that were published before she self-identified as a lesbian, those of Emma Donoghue before she moved to Canada, and those of Sina Queyras before she identified as a woman. To divide an author’s work in such a manner did not seem useful or in keeping with common practice. Furthermore, since Joni Mitchell’s and Leonard Cohen’s songs are still deemed Canadian despite their transnational migrations, as are the short stories of Mavis Gallant (who by now, surely must identify as Parisienne!), this scruple seemed needlessly to complicate a task that could never hope to be definitive in any case.

My early research is summarized in Figure 1 (below), a graph of Canadian queer women’s publications in English from 1964 to 2004, separated into groups of publications provisionally attributable to Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver, or Other (primarily Charlottetown, Edmonton or Calgary). This geographic attribution, like that of nationality, sex, or sexuality is based on the life circumstances of the author. In assessing these I consider a number of factors (such as where the author lives, works, visits frequently, publishes, has a writing group, goes to school, and / or writes), which considered overall, suggest a primary attachment to a particular site. As with the other elements of identification, and as the factors listed indicate, “site” is also problematic. It is not simply a traditional geographic term and my use of it reflects the influence of post-structuralist geography. Nor do I intend to invoke traditional literary approaches to “regional” literature although my study implicitly cites queer itself as a region.³ Instead,

I invoke Lisa Chalykoff's assertion, "that literary regions are nothing more and nothing less than the products of a regional mode of literary analysis" as I develop my own "regional" analysis of nodes and continue to prove what she termed its "malleable process" (2). My analysis, however, is more interested in "site" as relationally produced by and producing literature than it is in representations of "site" in literature.

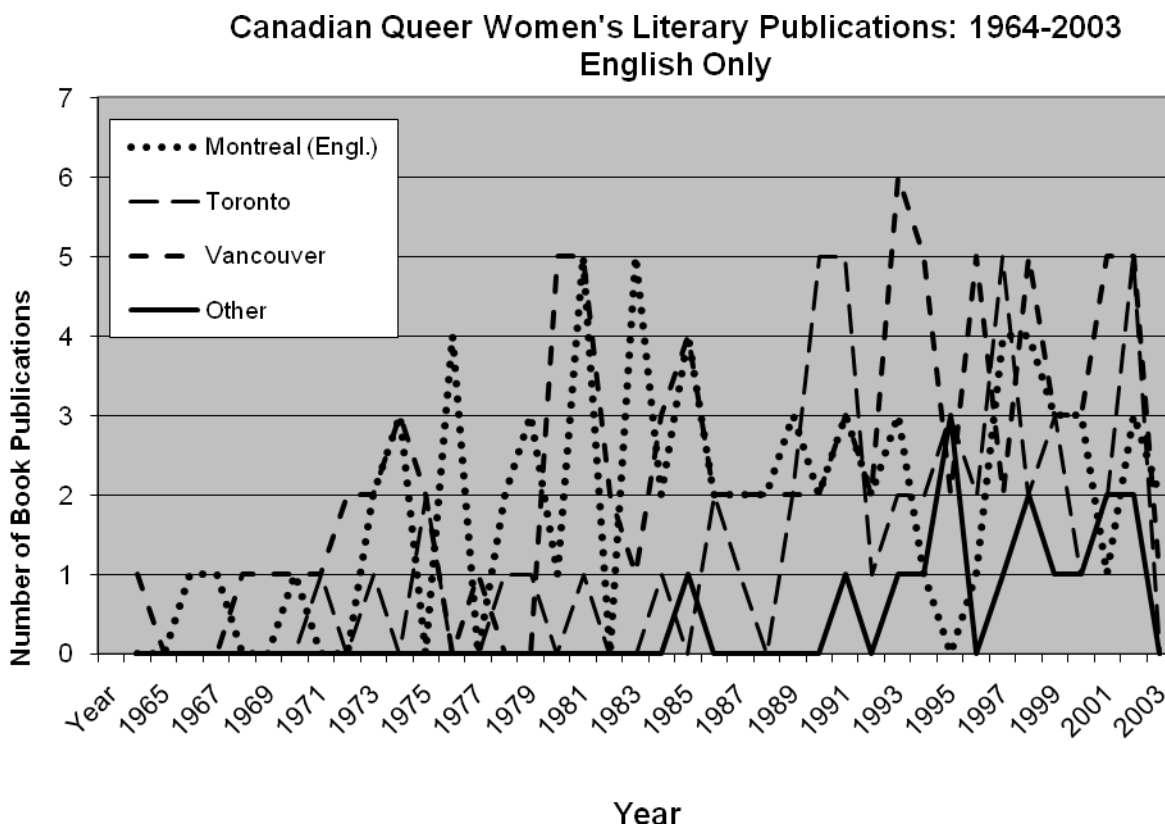


Figure 1 English Canadian Literary Texts by City (234 texts)

In the above graph each city site is assigned a different style of line,⁴ which extends horizontally by year and vertically by each text that was published in any particular year. Because this dissertation is focussed on English Canadian texts and influential Francophone texts in English translation, the above graph excludes French

language texts, but includes English translations. In it, Canada's three major cities exhibit similar output, although it is distributed differently over time. This early work encouraged me to follow my intuitive sense that concentrations of publications in Canada occur at certain times and in certain places. The high points on this graph (mathematical vertices), by definition, represent nodes in Canadian queer women's literary production. The graph, which summarizes a significant portion of the literary output of Canadian queer women in English in the last 40 years,⁵ has vertices that demonstrate quantitatively where and when publication concentrations (or nodes) occur. This quantitative exercise materializes nodes as visible phenomena, which provides material credence for the idea that such concentrations exist and that to investigate them might expand understanding of literary contexts and processes. Such materialization also buttresses a literature whose very existence is recent and, if Sappho's fragments are any indication, vulnerable to erasure.

In Figure 1, Montréal and Vancouver share a peak in the early 1980s while Toronto is closer to a Vancouver peak in the mid-1990s; the "Other" category also has its highest point in the mid-1990s. This provisional result suggests that the mid-1990s may be significant for queer women's literary production. Furthermore, the graph corroborates the common perception that urban centres are sites of greater cultural activity than rural areas. In common with past concentrations of queer women's literary cultural production (such as Paris in the 1920s), Canadian nodes are located in its primary metropolitan centres (Montréal, Vancouver, and Toronto). This is verified not only by the peaks in publication that can be attributed to those three major centres, but also by how few texts may be clearly assigned as arising outside these centres, in the "Other"

category. Moreover, many of the publications that fall under “Other” were written and / or published in other (albeit less populous) urban centres such as Edmonton or Charlottetown. This suggests that the urban environment is itself an important element in queer production, as indeed it is in literary production generally.

From a queer perspective, this urban link connects to other works in queer studies that focus on the relationship(s) between queers and the city. From Charles Kaiser’s *The Gay Metropolis* to Nicole Brossard’s evocation of the urban radical in *The Aerial Letter* (80-82), Gregory Bredbeck’s “The New Queer Narrative,” Dianne Chisholm’s *Queer Constellations*, and innumerable individual personal trajectories, queers have long recognized the importance of the city.⁶ This study concentrates on the relations between individuals and organizations within (and between) urban centres rather than either literary depictions of the city or the geographic entity itself. My focus is on human rather than physical or concrete geography though, of course, these are inter-related and co-generative. Jonathan Murdoch discusses the influence of post-structuralist thought on geography, which now also recognizes the importance of a more relational approach. Murdoch cites Nigel Thrift in his discussion of how geographers have integrated both Foucault and Deleuze to conceptualize

space and place as ‘territories of becoming that produce new potentials’ (Thrift 2004a: 88). Such potentials derive from the openness of space and place, from the way social relations and spatial relations intersect and combine: place is practised and performed in the same way that social identity and belonging are practiced and performed. (Murdoch 17)

Thus, the city as space and place, as well as the cultural relationships within it, are mutually constitutive and inter-dependent. From an ANT perspective, Vancouver itself is an actor / actant in its own right, as well as a personal social identification that I address in a manner consistent with the decision-making process I use for nationality, sex, gender, and sexuality.

This line of post-structuralist geographic thought, in company with the numerous logical challenges that my own thinking raised, proved most challenging to the quantitative aspect of my initial project of mapping / graphing Canadian queer women's literature. It indicates that even what presents as an easily determined factor, such as "city," cannot be taken for granted. Holtz uses the location of the author's publisher in Canada as a determinant for whether that author's publications might be considered "Canadian."⁷ That approach could be applied to the process of attributing authors to a particular city within Canada by citing the location of the author's typical publisher. I will critique this solution later in the chapter; however, some objections arise immediately. For instance, it seems foolish to assign Mary Meigs, an American immigrant to Montréal, whose subsequent writing life and primary relationships remained Montréal-based, to Vancouver; however, most of her books were edited by a Vancouver editor (Mary Schendlinger) and published by a Vancouver press (Talonbooks).

This complex situation is common in a country where travel and relocation are the norm amongst cultural workers generally speaking and perhaps even more so when those makers of cultural artefacts are queer and / or of colour because some Canadian locations are much more welcoming to those identifications than others. It might be possible to set

up a quantitative solution to resolve the dilemma this poses: say, a system whereby numerical weighting is assigned to each pertinent factor regarding each publication: publisher; editor; primary fictional locale; and each author: place of residence, place of work, and location of primary social supports. An overall score could then determine to which geographic location any particular publication belonged. However, to go to such lengths to satisfy a positivistic requirement is at odds with my belief that it is not possible or even desirable to develop an ultimate totalizing system.⁸

Nevertheless, the pertinent factors listed above are precisely those taken into account in general, subjective terms for all texts and discussed in detail for the node's representative text in Chapter Five. For the general data, it is preferable to avoid the pretence of certainty and instead to foreground the impossibility of a firm foundation: to accept the oddities, gaps, and exceptions, and to decide each on an individual interpretative basis, admitting from the beginning that there is a subjective element to this assignation and that others might assign differently.

At this point, my work intersected, most fortunately, with Murdoch's useful introduction to post-structuralist geography, which helped deter me from my Quixote-like pursuit of the phantasm that is the perfectibility of quantitative data. In particular, I was encouraged to reject this positivist trajectory by Murdoch's citing of Marcus Doel, who argued that geography suffered from "'pointillism' . . . the autonomy and primacy of the point'" (17). It was striking to me that this "pointillism" was attended by "three interrelated tasks: *enumerating* . . . *mapping* . . . *synthesizing*," the very sorts of actions I was performing on queer women's literature. Perhaps "pointillism" is not such a violence to commit in relation to a publication as it might be to a person or place, but

nevertheless, it seems that both subjectivity (in interpretation of information) and a certain violence to the text is required to achieve even this basic categorization of queer women's texts. Therefore, this study does not attempt to "prove" my points (these "nodes"). Rather, it seeks corroboration: the data that I present are suggestive and lend ballast to later analysis and allow me to materialize a literary history that might otherwise prove ephemeral. Figure 1 gestures quantitatively towards "nodes" of literary production. Theorizing these literary nodes and investigating one node (and its core novels) in detail provides interesting new vantage points on the literature as well as preserving a "moment" that is both fragile and ephemeral.

Node theory is chronotopic, stressing the importance of place as well as time. Vancouver recommends itself as a site for many reasons, one of which is my own involvement with queer women's culture there. It is most accessible to me geographically, temporally, and affectively and I know many of the authors and editors. Vancouver in the 1990s is already recognized as a location and time of particular interest by Canadian cultural scholar, Serra Tinic.⁹ Vancouver is also a Canadian urban centre that, like many North American cities, attracts and supports sufficient numbers of queer women with sufficient skills, freedom, and access to resources to produce female writers. "Numbers count" is a principle that my analytic method recognizes and Vancouver is also home to more Asian Canadians than any other part of Canada other than, perhaps, Toronto. That principle that "numbers count" may also be operative in the areas of mental and physical illness or disability as it is in areas of gender, racialization, or sexuality. Vancouver's climate, resources, and facilities have made the city one of the easiest places in Canada to live with mental and physical challenges.¹⁰ Thus, Vancouver

itself plays a significant role in the emergence of literary thirdspace, which addresses a lack in Canadian lesbian / queer literature, and in supporting the communities and actor-networks that combined produce the Vancouver publication node.

For these reasons, and because I can only analyze one node in detail, I narrow my scope to Vancouver texts. A more detailed investigation of those texts, in turn, indicates how to further narrow the focus to one Vancouver node and a core of representative texts from that node. In accepting this necessary narrowing, I relinquish the desire to research and expand the panCanadian data and instead focus on consulting more widely¹¹ regarding publications and the material conditions of publication attributable to Vancouver. The following compilations of data are based entirely on these “Vancouver” literary publications.

The rubric, “literary publication,” in this context, includes book-length texts: novels, poetry, drama, and creative non-fiction. The overall Vancouver bibliography includes collections of short fiction, provided the content is authored by queer women and where several authors/editors are attributable to Vancouver. Although the multi-authored collections are not included in the 1990s charts and graphs,¹² they remain in the 1964-2003 based charts and graphs because the number of non-Vancouver writers in each collection is not significant enough to outweigh the collections’ contribution to the wider context of queer publications in Vancouver during this longer time period (which includes significantly more texts than the decade alone). This decision is an example of how “fuzzy thinking”¹³ yields more “representative” mirroring of the human situation than would rigid and unchanging criteria. I do not include poetry collections of the work of more than one author, unless, as is the case with Betsy Warland and Daphne Marlatt,

both writers are queer and may be considered to be “Vancouver” authors. I also exclude chapbooks, children’s or young adult literature, and reprints, alternative, and new editions of previously included publications.

Figure 2 is a graphic representation of the Vancouver bibliography (available in full as Appendix 2), which summarizes four decades (1964-2003) of publications by queer women that may, plausibly, be attributed to Vancouver.¹⁴

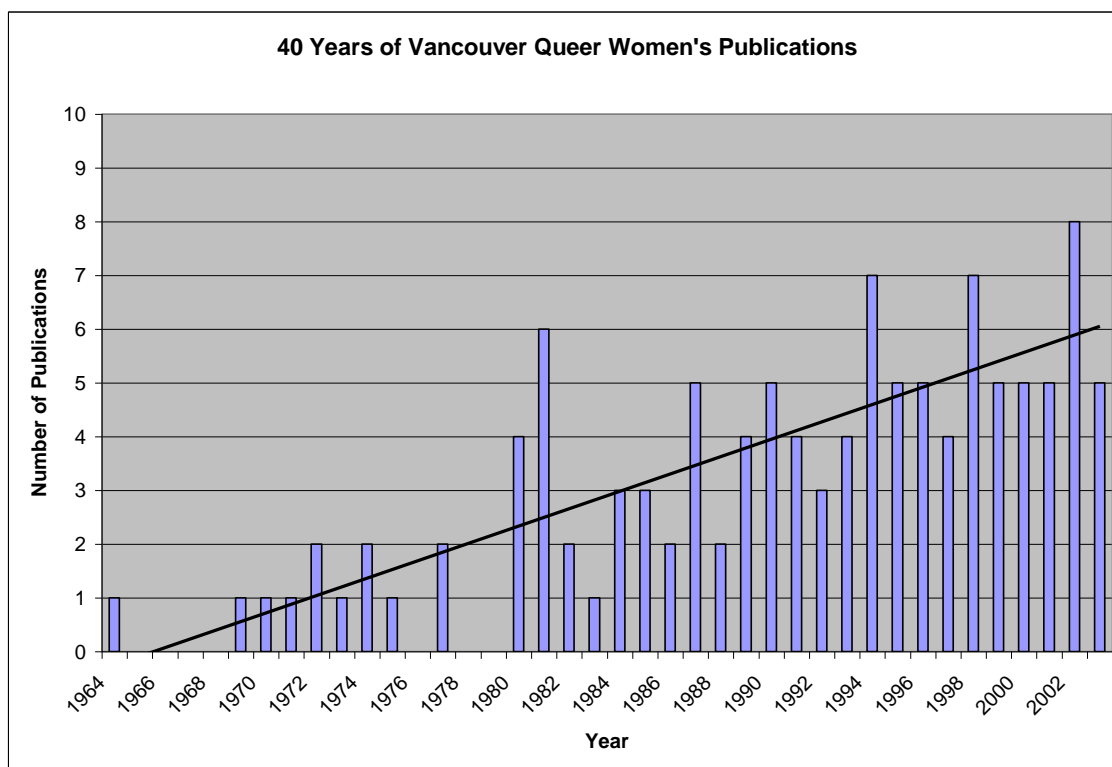


Figure 2 Vancouver Literary Publications from 1964 – 2003 (116 texts).

Although Figure 2 is based on more texts than were included in the Vancouver segment of the panCanadian graph, its overall profile is similar to the Vancouver data in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows several high points (on a line graph, these would show as vertices or nodes), but two of the highest occur in the mid-1990s, which suggests the mid-1990s as the focalization point of “the Vancouver node,” the multiple intersection of time, space,

communities, and texts. Figure 2 also shows, in addition to bars that represent the number of publications in each year, a straight line that is referred to as a “trendline.” The trendline shows the rate of increase¹⁵ in the number of publications and suggests a future direction. The trendline in Figure 2 makes the future of queer women’s literature look extremely promising; however, this may be misleading. Since Figure 2 stops at 2003, the trendline might change if the following years show decreases rather than increases in publications. Although, I was not able to extend the graph to the present, Figure 3 (below) extends the timeline by the addition of texts published up to and including 2006. The resulting trendline, though still positive, is noticeably different.

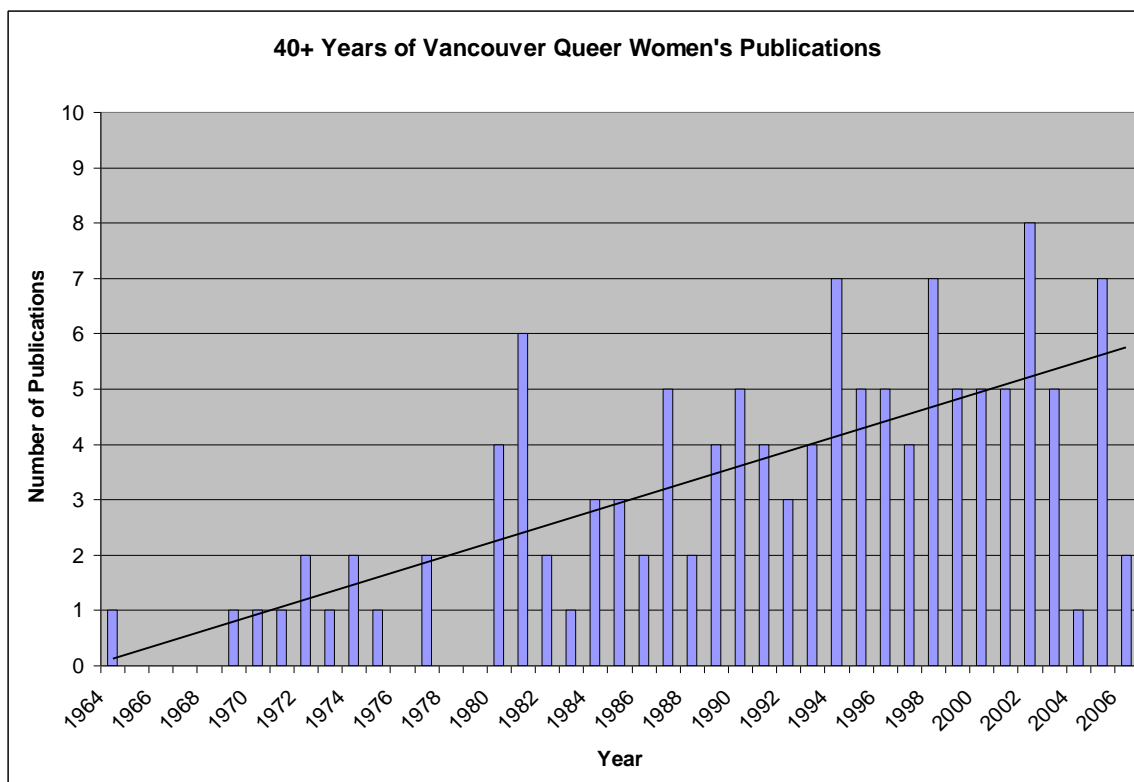


Figure 3 Vancouver Literary Publications from 1964 – 2006 (127 texts).

Although it is too soon to determine whether or not the declines that this chart

exhibits represent the reversal of a trend, Figure 3's trendline already does not attain the same height as the line in Figure 2 and its slope (and steepness, indicator of the all-important rate of increase) is slightly flatter.

Figure 4 (below) explores the time just before the Vancouver node and the decade following it. The publication data and the endpoint are the same, but take 1990 as a starting point.

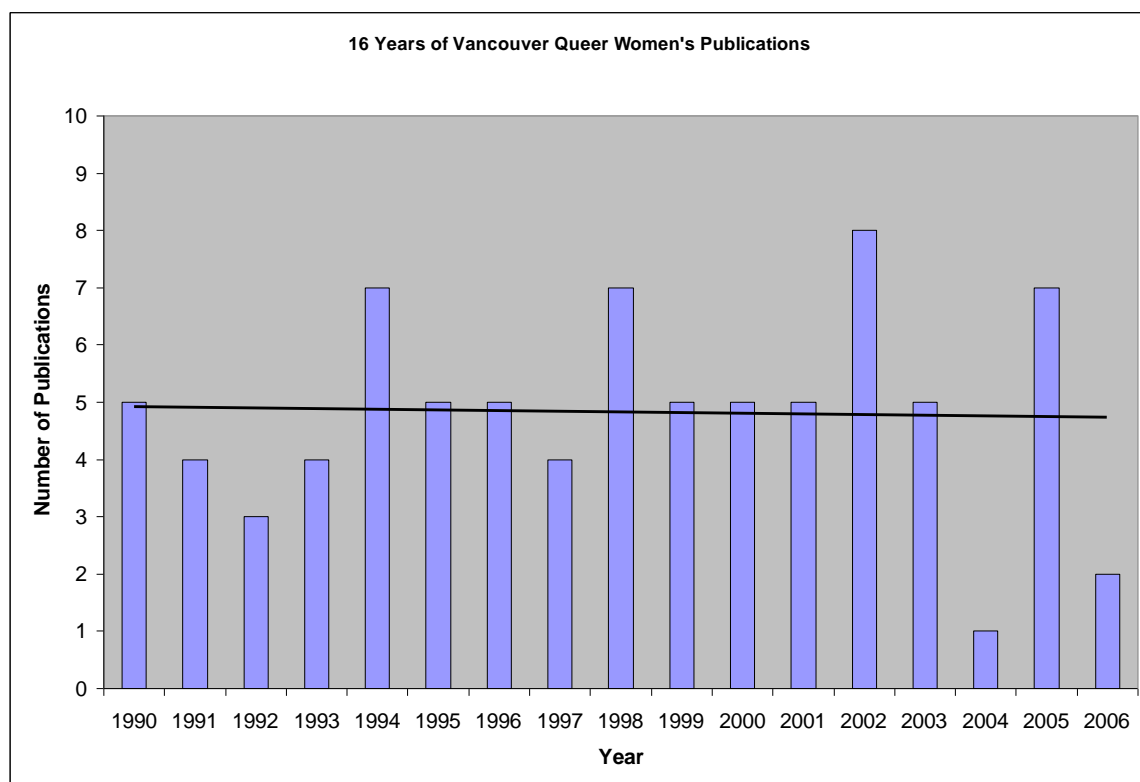


Figure 4 Vancouver Literary Publications 1990-2006 (82 texts)

It is significant that this trendline shows a rate of growth that is slightly negative, which is an indication that a peak for queer women's publications may have already been reached. It might be argued that the low numbers of 2004 and 2006 are "outliers," whose presence casts doubt on this conclusion; however, that is not the case. If the final three years are averaged, the possible "outliers" only rise to 3.3 publications, which puts it at

about the lowest previous level (1992) and the trendline is basically unaffected. The fact that publications tend to be “in the works” for over a year and that publishers try to plan for consistent output makes it more likely that two low years so recently and so closely grouped does indicate a negative trend. This possibility gives greater urgency to understanding the high publication rate in the 1990s because it implies not only that the future of queer women’s literary production is uncertain, but also that it may be possible to learn useful information from the more robust mid-1990s publication moment.

At this point, it is useful to return to the deceptively simple questions that determine the shape of each graph: Who is a Vancouver author? What criteria does this involve? As noted previously, bibliographer Holtz uses place of publication as a determiner of textual or authorial nationality in deciding which authors would be included in her Canadian bibliography. Since this choice is an implicit suggestion that “Vancouver” texts might be determined by the location of the text’s publisher, I return to the material data to evaluate the practicability of this solution.

The publisher of each text and the location of each publisher in the Vancouver bibliography (Appendix 2) is foregrounded in the table found in Appendix 3. The key findings of this analysis are presented in Table 1 (below), which gives the location of each of the top six publishers of Vancouver queer women’s literary work and later in Table 3, which appears in relation to production. Although, intuitively, it might seem as if the top cities and top publishers would be lists that overlap so significantly that there would be no point considering them separately, this is not the case. This is primarily because while the majority of the fifty publishers involved published only one or two books each, they are concentrated in only several centres.

Table 1 Sites of Production of "Vancouver" Queer Women's Publications 1964-2003

Site (of 21)	# of Publications (116)	Percentage of Total (100%)
Vancouver*	41	35%
Toronto*	21	18%
Madeira Park, BC*	19	16%
Charlottetown	5	4%
New York	5	4%
Montréal	3	3%
Total of Above Six Cities	94	81%
Total of Top Three Cities*	81	70%

In the location table, the proportion of texts published in the top six locations (81%), and especially the top three locations (70%), is dramatic. In fact, it is remarkable that only 116 texts involve 50 publishers in 21 sites,¹⁶ which suggests that it is difficult to find a publisher for queer women's literary work so that authors must look far afield for a publisher. It is not, however, surprising that Vancouver is the site of publication for slightly over a third of the publications that I am considering as "Vancouver" texts. It is perhaps also not surprising that Toronto, long considered a major hub of Anglophone culture in Canada, is the second primary publication site for "Vancouver" texts; however, Toronto produces less than half of what is published in British Columbia.¹⁷

Charlottetown, as the home of Gynergy, one of the two women's publishing houses in the top six, publishes as much, in this context, as New York City. Similarly, women's publishers (Women's Press, Second Story, and Sister Vision) make up 35% of Toronto's output. The prominence of women's presses will be given more attention shortly.

However, looked at another way, if only 35% of the texts that my “fuzzy logic” has ascribed to Vancouver are published by presses located in the physical location named “Vancouver,” then either I am overly generous in my attributions or the location of its publisher is not a good indicator of what is a “Vancouver” text. I suggest that both possibilities are in play. Although it seems clear that publication location is not a good defining criteria since, besides the data from Table 1 above that argue against it, as unassailable a “Vancouver” writer as Daphne Marlatt¹⁸ has been published by presses in Toronto, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Los Angeles, Red Deer, and Lantzville, as well as Vancouver (see Appendix 2).

In fact, it is worth listing most of the authors from the Vancouver bibliography who were published in Toronto: Daphne Marlatt, Jane Rule, Betsy Warland, Anne Cameron, Nancy Richler, Larissa Lai, Lydia Kwa, Karen X. Tulchinsky, and Jane Eaton Hamilton. It is true that all of these authors have lived elsewhere besides “The Coast” (of BC). Furthermore, to my knowledge, at least Nancy Richler and Betsy Warland have lived in Toronto. Nevertheless, each of the Toronto-published authors has significant ties to Vancouver and are commonly associated with Vancouver and the West Coast. Several are considered paradigmatic Western writers. Thus, besides satisfying interest as to where our literature is published and by whom, this tabular analysis also functions as an aid in evaluating potential criteria for determining author inclusion.

In this case, not only does Table 1 (above) indicate that the location of publication is not an effective defining criteria, but the startling prominence of Madeira Park, a small town on the Sechelt peninsula and home of Harbour Publishing, who published 16% of the texts in the Vancouver bibliography, also causes me to further interrogate my own

practice. Since all of Harbour's texts are authored by Anne Cameron, the data move me to investigate more fully whether or not her texts ought to be included in the Vancouver node decade data, which derives from the larger Vancouver bibliography. I share this exercise in evaluating the potential location assignments for authors to demonstrate how problematic is any such categorization (see Introduction). Interestingly, although Table 1 (above) implies that Holtz's place of publication criteria is unsound, it also, upon investigating the situation of Cameron, implicitly acknowledges the reasonable impulse behind Holtz's contention. In Cameron's case, the author's choice of publication locale¹⁹ is of some significance. Cameron's possible motivations formed part of a discussion I pursued with two Vancouver editors while deciding whether or not to include Cameron in the Vancouver bibliography.

Esther Shannon, Editor of *Kinesis* from 1985 to 1989 ("Re: Question" 2 Nov.), cites Cameron's feminist connections in Vancouver, including her decision to publish with Press Gang Publishers (PGP) to buttress her argument that Cameron should be included ("Re: Question" 30 Jan.). Shannon had no doubt that Cameron should be considered a "Vancouver" writer:

Cameron is easy. She's a yes. At a certain point, she certainly spent time in Vancouver . . . but more, she was taken up by the VWM [Vancouver Women's Movement]: she even sparked a controversy about PGP,²⁰ which is, after all, a women's publishing and printing establishment based in Vancouver and run exclusively by lesbians.

Mary Shendlinger, Managing Editor at Harbour for ten years ("Re: Yr Title"),²¹ responded to my question with similar vehemence:

Anne doesn't have much connection to Vancouver in either her life or her work, although she may have had in her earlier work. For at least 20 years she has written from elsewhere -- mainly the upper Sunshine Coast (around Powell River) and Vancouver Island -- quite pointedly, and in the local working-class idiom." ("Re: Editing Anne Cameron?")

It is likely this rural "Coastal" identification that encouraged Cameron to seek a rural and coastal publisher such as Harbour. A move from the urban centre and feminist presses would also have been reinforced by the controversy that surrounded her First Nations-based work, especially the very popular *Daughters of Copper Woman*.

Both Shannon and Schendlinger are knowledgeable and advance good reasons for either decision. Moreover, it is tempting to include Cameron in the Vancouver node because she is a recognized and prolific writer. Her contribution to the Appendix 2 bibliography is remarkable and would certainly make the Vancouver node more robust, as the following table attests.

Table 2 Impact of Most Prolific Authors on Publications 1964-2003

Author (of 30)	# of Publications (of 116)	Percentage of Total (100%)
Cameron, Anne*	26	22%
Marlatt, Daphne*	18	16%
Rule, Jane*	11	9%
Tulchinsky, Karen	8	7%
Armstrong, Luanne	6	5%
Warland, Betsy	6	5%
Total of Above Six Authors	75	65%
Total of Top Three Authors*	55	47%

Table 2 demonstrates that Cameron is responsible for nearly a quarter of all the texts included in the Vancouver bibliography. This is even more remarkable because most of her texts are novels, which are usually longer-term projects than short story or poetry collections. (It is important to note that this bibliography does not include Cameron's children's literature, which would raise her percentage even higher, though it does include her mythological works under the rubric of creative non-fiction). As Table 2 (above) and Figures 5 and 6 (below) show, Cameron's importance as a BC Coastal lesbian writer, who has had significant connections to Vancouver (those mentioned by Shannon), should not be underestimated.

Figure 5 is a reproduction of Figure 2, which shows the totals and the trendline for Vancouver publications from 1964-2003. It is repeated below to make it easy to compare it to Figure 6, which is based on the same bibliography, but with Cameron's texts removed.

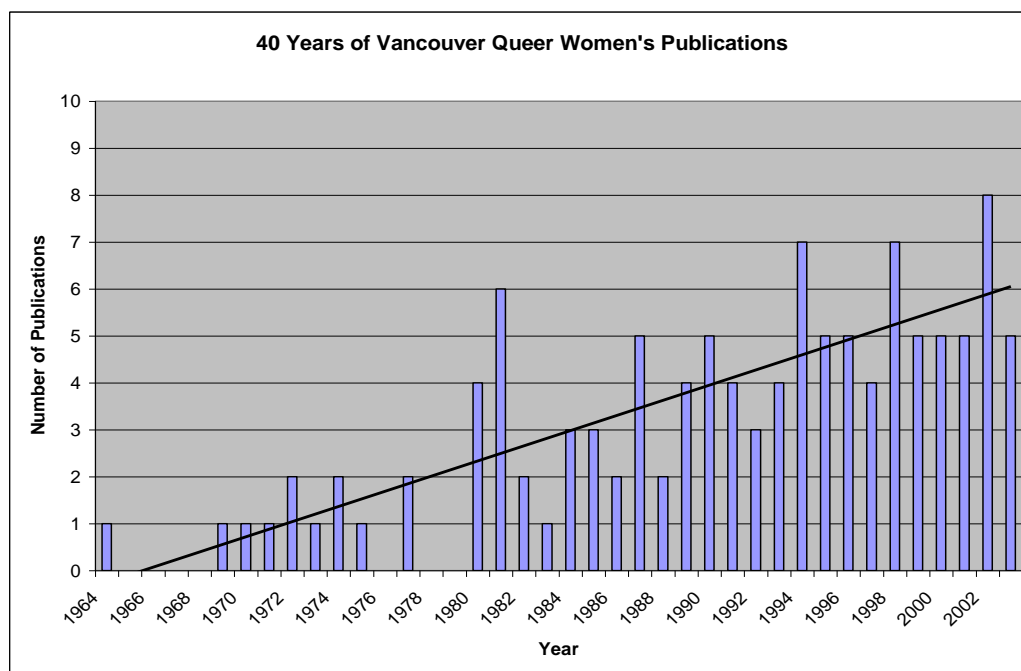


Figure 5 Vancouver Bibliography including Anne Cameron (116 texts).

Here is what that graph and trendline look like without Cameron's contributions:

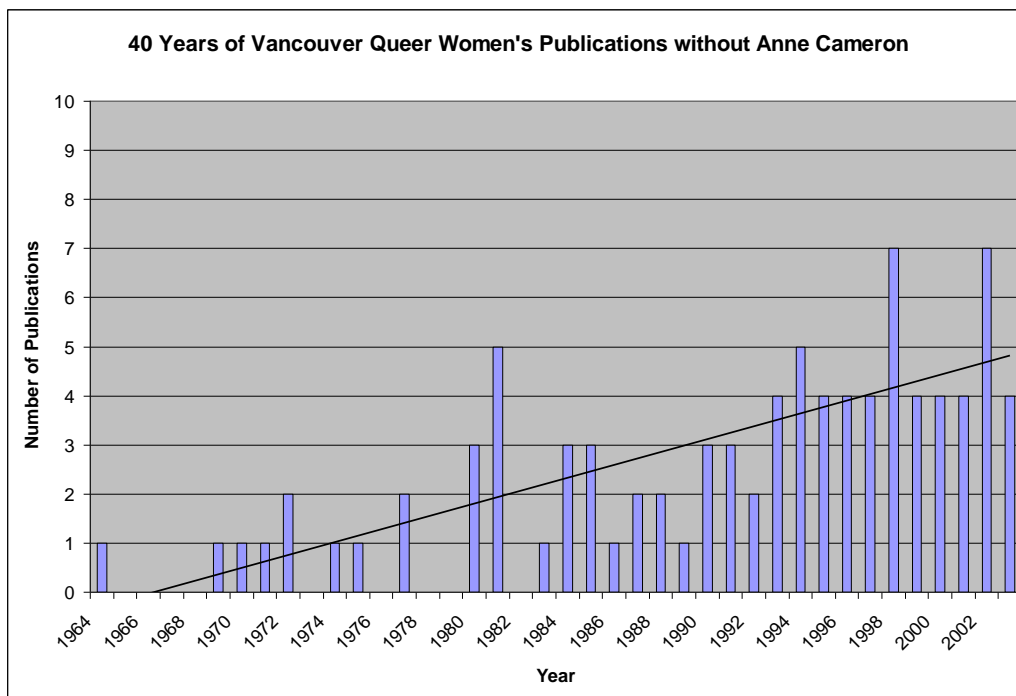


Figure 6 Vancouver Bibliography excluding Anne Cameron (90 texts).

The preceding two graphs enable visualization of the effect of removing Cameron's 26 literary texts and also suggest alternative possibilities for materializing queer women's literary history that are dependent on underlying choices like these, which, most often, go unacknowledged and unexamined. The difference in the graph is quite startling: most of the bars are shorter, and there are extra "gaps" (years where there would be *no* "Vancouver" texts published). Most significantly, the endpoint of the trendline drops down one full publication mark and the slope flattens appreciably. It is also obvious from the data presented in Table 2 (above) that removing Daphne Marlatt's work would have a similar effect because she is responsible for 16% of the Vancouver bibliography. Another noteworthy aspect of this table is that, once again, the top three producers have contributed, by far, the largest proportion of the works under

consideration – nearly 50% of the total. In fact, the top two producers here produced nearly 40% of the texts while the top six have produced 65% of the texts. While not as dramatic as the table of location of publication (the top six locations have 81% of publications), this prominence of the heaviest producers is an interesting trend, and one that is also observable in the next table.

Table 3 (below) reviews the numbers of texts published by the most prolific publishers of Vancouver queer women's literature.

Table 3 Impact of Prolific Publishers of Publications 1964-2003

Publisher (of 50)	# of Publications (of 116)	Percentage of Total (100%)
Harbour*	19	16%
Press Gang*	18	16%
Arsenal*	7	6%
Coach House	5	4%
Polestar	5	4%
Gynergy	4	3%
<hr/>		
Total of Above Six Publishers	58	50%
<hr/>		
Total of Top Three Publishers*	44	38%

The above table shows that out of 50 publishers, the top three published nearly 40% of the texts. More remarkably, the top two publishers were responsible for thirty-two percent, nearly one third of the total output. It appears to be paradigmatic in the Vancouver bibliography that the top three of any of the categories examined (city, author, or publisher) are responsible for a preponderance of texts.²²

In the case of the publishers, it is disturbing that the top two, who produced nearly a third of the books, are Press Gang (PGP), which has gone out of business, and Harbour, whose contribution to this bibliography consists solely of books by an author who may not be a “Vancouver” author. Moreover, of the top six, three are no longer operating. Both women’s presses, PGP and Gynergy, have closed while Polestar has been taken over by Raincoast (though its imprint remains).²³ It is particularly disturbing in light of the Figure 4 trendline that forecast a diminishment in queer women’s literary textual production and reinforces the urgency in materializing the Vancouver node since publication of the literature itself seems somewhat precarious.

An advantage of starting with a quantitatively-based analysis is that re-presenting the data in various ways reveals unexpected and useful perspectives. In response to the previous table, for instance, I was moved to consider the impact of women-only publishers directly. The result is summarized in Table 4 (below).

Table 4 Impact of Women-only Publishers on Publications 1964-2003

Publisher (of 50)	# of Publications (of 116)	% of Total (100%)	% of 32
Press Gang*	18	16%	56%
Ragweed / Gynergy*	5	4%	16%
Women's Press*	4	3%	13%
Lazara	2	2%	6%
Second Story	1	1%	3%
Sister Vision	1	1%	3%
Spinsters / Aunt Lute	1	1%	3%
Total of Above Seven Publishers	32	28%	100%
Total of Top Three Publishers*	27	23%	84%

Table 4 is a little more complicated, but it shows that women-only presses are responsible for 32 of the 116 texts published over the forty year period – over a quarter

(28%) of the titles. It also expresses (as a percentage) the contribution of each press to both the 116-text total and the 32-text total. In Table 4, the top three producers are responsible for just under a quarter (23%) of the overall total of 116 texts, which translates to an extraordinary 84% of the women-only publisher titles. Press Gang Publishers alone accounts for 56% of the women-only output and for over 15% of the total production. It is worth reiterating here that both PGP and Ragweed / Gynergy²⁴ are now defunct. On a more positive note, in terms of Canadian publishing, all but the American Spinsters / Aunt Lute (a merger of two presses) are Canadian. Of course, that means that the loss of PGP and Gynergy are also Canadian losses, a reminder that Canadian publishing is vulnerable within the North American marketplace.

The importance of women-only publishers generally and Press Gang specifically is more stark when the publishers of the 1990s novels are tabulated separately.

Table 5 Publishers of Vancouver Queer Women's Novels in the 1990s

Publisher	# of Novels	Percentage of Total
Press Gang*	8	53%
Ragweed/Gynergy*	2	13%
Caitlin*	1	7%
Polestar	1	7%
Douglas & McIntyre	1	7%
Anansi	1	7%
Turnstone	1	7%
Totals	15	100%
Totals Women-Only Publishers*	11	73%

In Table 5 two women-only publishers,²⁵ Press Gang and Gynergy, account for two-thirds (66%) of the total number of publications. These two publishing houses,

although they operated as women's presses and published feminist work across a broad spectrum, were run and staffed almost exclusively by lesbians. Although it may be obvious that lesbians are the people most likely to be interested in publishing lesbian / queer women's writing, analyzing the contribution figures suggests just how disinterested other people / publishers seem to be. In combination with the demise of Gynergy and PGP,²⁶ these tables reinforce the indication that a peak for queer women's publications may have already been reached that was first evoked by the trend line of Figure 4. Fragility haunts all literary work in the margins; in this case, the demise of PGP and Gynergy may, in part, account for the decrease in publication of Vancouver queer women's texts. This is the material reality that underlies the switch from a positive to a negative slope in the trend lines. Another change that the 1990s Table 5 makes visible is that the contribution of American women-only presses, many of which also went out of business in this decade, disappears completely; there are no American publications of Vancouver queer women in the 1990s.

Quantitative data can present interesting information regarding not only site, author, and publication of texts, but also about genre. (A table of publications listed in order of genre and year is included as Appendix 4). This information is of interest in and of itself; however, it also serves to highlight the relationship between time, place, and genre. Therefore, before leaving the 40 year data (and the final decision about Anne Cameron) behind to focus solely on the 1990s, Figure 7 re-presents the Vancouver bibliography in terms of genre. Each year's literary publications are represented by a bar that is divided into sections that indicate the number of poetry texts, novels, collections of short fiction, and "other" texts (creative non-fiction and drama) published.

Vancouver Queer Women's Publications by Genre

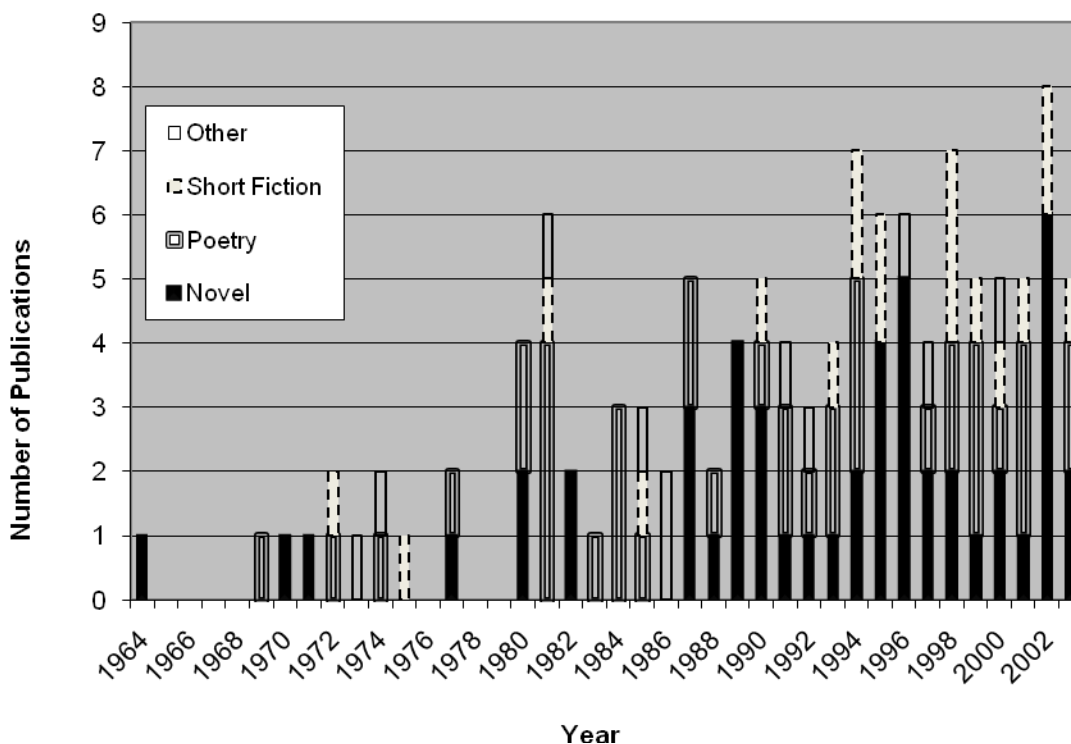


Figure 7 Vancouver Literary Publications from 1964 – 2003 by Genre

This graph materializes the unexpected information that for Vancouver queer women's literature during this period, texts of poetry and novels are surprisingly equally represented. The fact that two of the most prolific authors publish primarily poetry during this period no doubt affects this ratio. Although I do not have access to precisely similar data for mainstream titles, Bowker's "Canadian Book Publication, 1999-2001" suggests that a more typical ratio is twice or three times as many serious fiction publications as poetry publications (Grabois).²⁷ This seems to be a greater differential than might be explained by the presence of Marlatt and Warland and may reflect a trend that Linda Garber identifies as "a cultural shift of emphasis [that] has taken place within feminism – certainly within the academy – to theory and away from poetry" (170-71). Of

course, I am not looking at the academy, theory, or poetry *as* theory here (which Garber does), but there is clearly a movement away from poetry in the Vancouver bibliography. Although the shift may be economically driven, that explanation begs the question of how such a high ratio of poetry managed to sustain itself initially. Whatever the cause, Vancouver queer women's publication output seems to be moving toward the mainstream genre pattern where the common perception is that novels out-publish poetry by a considerable margin.

The following two tables give more detailed information about the genres of Vancouver publications. Table 6 gives the total number of publications of each genre (expressed as both figure and percentage) for the time period from 1964 to 2003.

Table 6 Genres of "Vancouver" Queer Women's Publications 1964-2003

Genre	Number of Publications (116)	Percentage of Total (100%)
Novel*	47	41%
Poetry*	39	34%
Short Fiction*	19	16%
Creative Non-Fiction	5	4%
Drama	4	3%
Mythology	2	2%
Total of Above Genres	116	100%
Total of Top Three Genres*	105	91%

It is remarkable that the number of poetry texts published in these forty years is only 7% less than the number of novels and poetry doubles both the number and the percentage of short fiction published. It is also of interest that creative non-fiction (5%), drama (4%), and mythology (2%) are so poorly represented. Although this table lists

only six genres (the only literary categories that I include in the Vancouver bibliography), once again, the top three entities comprise the bulk of the texts enumerated; in this case, an astonishing 91% of them. Furthermore, the top two account for 75%; that is, three-quarters of queer women's publications (over these forty years) were novels or poetry.

Table 7 presents the data for the top three genres separated into two columns that compare the number of texts published from 1964 to 1989 and those published from 1990 to 2000, which reveals an interesting divide in the timeline of the bibliography.

Table 7 Genres of "Vancouver" Queer Women's Publications pre-1990s & 1990s

Genre	# of Publications 1964-1989	# of Publications in 1990-2000
Novel*	16	22
Poetry*	18	16
Short Fiction*	4	11
Total of Top Three Genres*	38	49

Most notably, there are one quarter more texts published between 1990 and 2000 (49 texts) than in the previous twenty-five years (38 texts). This is clear evidence of the rise of queer women's, and specifically lesbian (because most of the authors identify as lesbian), literature. Also significantly, the trend where poetry outnumbers novels in the earlier period reverses in the decade of the 1990s. Table 7 also shows that short fiction became a force to contend with in the 1990s, which is a direct reflection on the popularity of Tulchinsky's *Hot & Bothered* series of erotic short fiction. Similarly, short fiction collections aimed at particular identity sub-sets of "Queer," such as femme (Rose and Camilleri) and trans-identified queers (Brandeis, Rose and McDonald) appear in this decade. Although this information is suggestive for future research directions, for this

study, it is enough to establish that the novel gains definite ascendancy starting in the 1990s, which indicates that both that decade and that genre are the proper focus my more detailed examination of the Vancouver node.

Although the focus on this decade proceeds from my own mapping of Canadian queer women's literary works, the 1990s are recognized as a significant period for lesbian writing in a number of other ways that cross borders of nationality.²⁸ While lesbian criticism may not be a definitive indicator of "creative" literary production, a research project that I undertook in 1996 also found the 1990s to be a time of significant increase in critical publications. In 1996, an initial MLA search for articles of lesbian literary criticism yielded 332 citations from 1981 to 1995. A subsequent 1996 search from 1989 to 1995 produced 269 citations. Remarkably, approximately fifty percent (50%) of the time period published eighty-one percent (81%) of the articles. As Garber notes of the two decades prior to 1989, "'What had never been' has become a force to contend with" (*Annotated* 342).²⁹ The increase Garber found from 1981 to 1989 was significant, but my own research notes that the growth of lesbian literary criticism increased exponentially through 1995 ("Reaping" 1).³⁰ The *Journal of Lesbian Studies* produced a special issue, edited by Gabriele Griffin (co-published as a critical anthology) called, '*Romancing the margins*': *lesbian writing in the 1990s*, which again highlights this decade as a watershed for lesbian publications.³¹ Even more pointedly for this study, Griffin's collection contains "Flagrantly Flaunting It?: Contesting Perceptions of Locational Identity Among Urban Vancouver Lesbians" by Jenny Lo and Theresa Healy. Clearly, Vancouver, lesbian / queer writing, and the decade of the 1990s, each attracts academic interest, although this may be the first study to combine interest in all three.

However, now that my focus has narrowed to the 1990s and the novel, it is imperative to decide the question of whether or not to include Anne Cameron's novels. Again it is useful to materialize the effect of either choice visually. The next two figures graph two alternative versions of "the Vancouver Node" novels published in the 1990s, the first with Cameron's novels and the second without them.



Figure 8 Vancouver Novels Including Cameron 1990 – 2000 (22 texts)

Figure 8 is suitably and substantially mountainous and shows a peak in the mid-1990s while Figure 9 (below), which shows the same decade's worth of novels, but excludes Cameron's work, has terrain that, although still mountainous and still peaking in the mid-1990s, is not nearly as substantial or lofty.

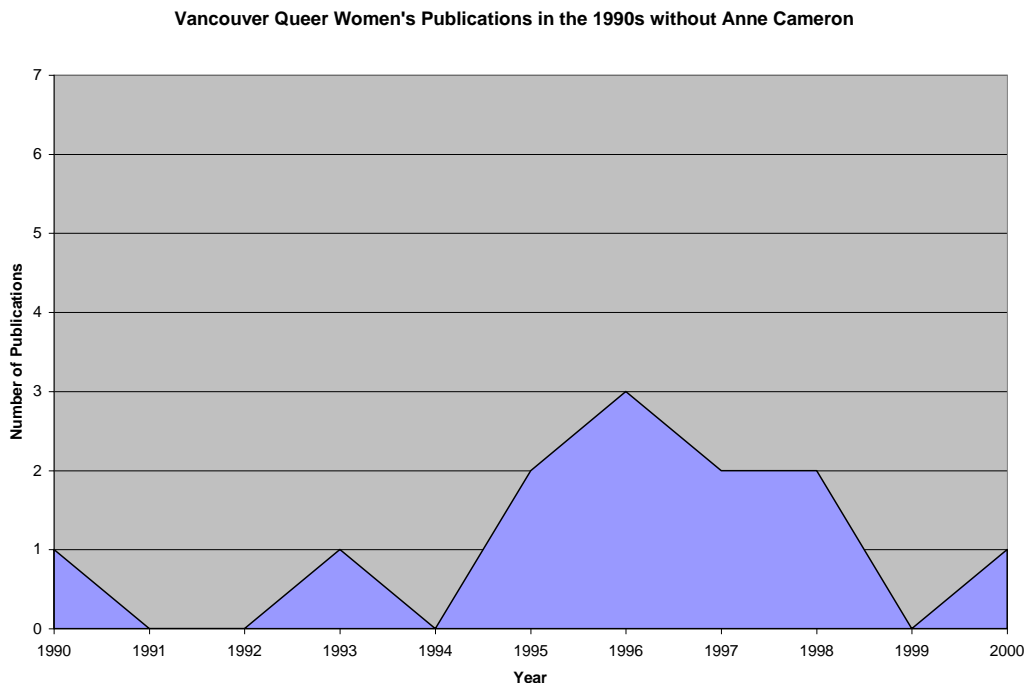


Figure 9 Vancouver Novels Excluding Cameron 1990 – 2000 (13 texts)

The decision in favour or against can each be defended; each of the points of view expressed by the two editors is worthy of consideration: there are ways that Cameron is a Vancouver writer and ways that she isn't. This is precisely the sort of "membership" situation that demonstrates how any materialization is contingent, based on exclusions and inclusions. Moreover, it is the sort of decision best made by "fuzzy logic," which again underscores the contingent nature of materialization. Therefore, without taking recourse to assigning numerical values for various aspects of her history (which assignment itself would be subjective), I apply the same methodology that I apply to the identifications of nation, sex, and sexuality. These are the criteria that ask not only "Has she spent a significant part of her life in the Vancouver?" but also: "How does Cameron view herself?" and "What was and is her self-identification?" The fact that Cameron has lived in Vancouver, contributed to the political debate in the overlapping feminist and

queer communities there, been published by PGP (a *de facto* lesbian-feminist publisher and press, as Shannon notes), and that some of her novels (especially *A Whole Brass Band*, published in 1992) have Vancouver content argue in favour of including her. As well, her commitment to portraying working class lives, writing BC working class dialect, and her unflinching integration of lesbian lives into her portrayal of Coastal communities make her an attractive writer to include.

Against these reasons, there is the more compelling argument that, as Schendlinger (one of Cameron's editors) notes, Cameron seems "quite pointedly" opposed to what I might call the urbanity of the metropolis. This attitude is reflected in her choice of Harbour Books, a decidedly non-urban publisher, and in the tone and philosophical viewpoint of a number of her novels (e.g. *A Whole Brass Band* and *The Whole Fam Damily*), which are set in rural BC locations. Finally, though Cameron's work has interesting connections to the texts of the Vancouver node, it seems to do violence to her self-positioning and to her oeuvre to call her a Vancouver author. Respect for Cameron's geographic identifications precludes her inclusion in the Vancouver node, despite the double bind that her equally obvious relationship to it presents. However, it is easier to accept this result because Cameron's novels rely exclusively on realist narrative strategies whereas the literary focus of this work is the intersection of queer bodies and queer aesthetics. Nevertheless, Cameron's ex-centricity in combination with "fuzzy logic" that ultimately excludes her, suggests that this investigation of the Vancouver node, like all histories, remains incomplete. Table 8 (below) presents the list of novels that remain in the 1990s bibliography after Cameron has been excluded.

Table 8 "Vancouver" Novels Published in the 1990s

Year	Author	Title	Publisher
1990	Lee, SKY	Disappearing Moon Cafe	Douglas & McIntyre
	Williams, Jana	Scuttlebutt	Press Gang
1993	Chase, Gillean	Triad Moon	Gynergy
1995	Armstrong, Luanne ³²	Bordering	Gynergy
	Lai, Larissa	When Fox Is a Thousand	Press Gang
1996	Marlatt, Daphne	Taken	Anansi
	Mootoo, Shani	Cereus Blooms at Night	Press Gang
	Richler, Nancy	Throwaway Angels ³³	Press Gang
1997	Blackbridge, Persimmon	Prozac Highway	Press Gang
	Jones, Lizard	Two Ends of Sleep	Press Gang
1998	Armstrong, Luanne	The Colour of Water	Caitlin
	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Love Ruins Everything	Press Gang
2000	Kwa, Lydia	This Place Called Absence	Turnstone

There are a number of interesting points raised by Table 8. Firstly, without Cameron, the 1990s include only 13 texts instead of the 22 that are listed in Table 6, which includes her novels. Secondly, of this coven of novels, over 50% (7) are published by PGP, while two more are published by Gynergy. Thirdly, the 1 novel published by Douglas & McIntyre was obtained and edited by Saeko Usukawa, a lesbian editor, who became friends with SKY Lee when they both worked on the MAKARA Publishing and Design Collective in Vancouver (Usukawa). Although a far cry from “she who controls the printing press controls the world,” this situation seems to give credence to Abbott Joseph Liebling’s observation that “Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one” (714).

Of primary significance here is a difference between Table 2, where there was a notable absence of racialized women among the six top producing authors, and Table 6, which shows a robust presence of Asian Canadian authors.³⁴ The decade begins with SKY Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Cafe*, the first published novel by a queer Asian Canadian woman that includes queer content. It ends with Asian Canadian Lydia Kwa’s, *This Place Called Absence*, a novel with an even more pronounced queer presence. Mid-decade, at the heart of the node, there are novels by Larissa Lai (*Fox*) and Shani Mootoo (*Cereus*). In fact, 4 out of 15 (over 25%), of the decade’s novels are authored by Asian Canadians. This is a significant change from the 40 year statistic and I take it as an indicator of the importance of intersectionality to this node – a useful insight.

I locate the heart of the Vancouver node in the years 1995-96. This time-frame captures the greatest concentration of publications and also the multiple and interlocking non-hegemonic subjectivities that are the primary characteristic of both the authors and

texts of the node. Most of the novels, including Cameron's and Armstrong's working class, rural novels, are by authors whose social positioning involves at least three differently marginalized identities that are also represented in the concerns of their novels. The node marks Canadian queer women's literature reaching both critical mass and coming of age as the decade's published authors and texts are not only female and openly queer, but also racialized, ethnicized, and / or differently abled. They write from lives disrupted by sexism, homophobia, racism, and / or the trials of immigration and / or mental and physical illnesses. Lai's work is anti-racist as well as anti-sexist and anti-homophobic, as I discuss in Chapter Four. Persimmon Blackbridge's novel challenges ableism as it describes living and working with physical³⁵ and mental illnesses and learning disabilities.³⁶ Of course, it is not the presence of these personal or social conditions, but the presence of negative hegemonic responses to them that creates both the identifications and the social difficulties. The novels work to expose this and to demonstrate an ethical interest in how to live with and through difference in community.

Quantifying, graphing, and tabulating queer women's literary texts presents information in a manner that raises new questions and permits new perspectives. Again, it is an obvious insight, but a node exists only if there are lower numbers (fewer texts) on either side of it. One of the original questions that informs this dissertation is "What were the material conditions that supported the emergence of this node?" This caused me to focus on explaining only the publication concentration itself; however, two other questions are equally pertinent: "What caused publication levels to drop?" and "What caused levels to rise?"

My own analysis of the data shows that both women's presses and

intersectionality, especially as it is represented by Asian Canadian authors, are prominent features of the Vancouver node. J. M. Chen, in a recent Call For Papers (2008 ACCUTE conference, coincidentally held in Vancouver) notes a “surge of Asian Canadian literature in the mid-1990’s,” which, in concert with my own research, suggests that the Vancouver node might be a product of the emergence of Asian Canadian literature and its intersection with existing feminist publishing structures.³⁷ As Carole Gerson notes, “During the 1970s, second-wave feminism propelled a number of young women not only into print but also into the entire process of production in order to issue feminist and lesbian books for adult readers, and non-sexist books for children” (321). This infrastructure was still in place during the first half of the 1990s, which is also when Asian Canadian literature developed a “queer” component. I imagine this intersection as two sine waves meeting in phase: the amplitude doubles when this occurs and presto! the node appears. I suggest that the dissolution of significant portions of the feminist infrastructure by the end of the decade³⁸ precipitated the drop from the richness of the Vancouver publication node.

Moreover, situating the heart of the node in the mid-1990s allows me to follow Deleuze and Guattari’s injunction to “manifest this rhizomatic direction” and to proceed “from the middle [of whatever one is examining], through the middles, coming and going rather than starting and finishing” (25). In the following chapters, I will place myself in the middle of conferences, texts, and communities to get at the specifics of the general insights offered by the analysis of this chapter. I argue that it is useful to recognize how fragile minoritarian literature is and also to find out what literary and social factors contribute to making it robust. While it may be true that, once published and recognized,

“marketable” marginalized writers will be picked up by corporate publishers, it is also true that a literature requires a certain critical mass (and not just a few stars) in order to flourish. It is not yet clear that mainstream publishers will provide this for queer women. All literatures need infrastructure that provides the material conditions and relationships that aid literary production. The feminist and literary concerns about racialization and homophobia that inform the Vancouver node were already apparent at the 1988 Vancouver conference convened by Daphne Marlatt: *Telling It: Women and Language Across Cultures*. A discussion of this conference in the following chapter begins to contextualize and historicize the Vancouver node.

Notes

¹ Neither Weaver and Toyé's *The Oxford Anthology of Canadian Literature* nor Lecker and David's *The New Canadian Anthology: Poetry and Short Fiction in English* show any interest in defining Canadian or sharing their (perhaps unconscious) criteria regarding nationality. More recently Denise Chong's collection, *The Penguin Anthology of Stories by Canadian Women*, while it does not address the issue of establishing criteria for determining which writers are women or Canadian, does specify that content was her primary determinant. In this regard, her work is reminiscent of the methodology that I note in lesbian anthologists (see Introduction). Chong assures readers that she wasn't looking for a "feminine voice . . . but rather stories in which women figure as central characters. . . . in Canada" (xiii). Interestingly, two other collections, *The Notebooks: Interviews and New Fiction from Contemporary Writers* and the more recent *Likely Stories: A Postmodern Sampler* (Bowering and Hutcheon), do not even mention Canada in their titles though both are exclusively Canadian. This bold approach, which implies, linguistically, that "Canadian" is to be assumed, is continued in the introductions, which also do not attempt to define Canadian (though *Notebooks* does imply that it is "Canadian" to "have strong connections abroad" even though it seems to be only the authors who experience "national ambivalences" as a result). Oddly, a popular American lesbian magazine, *Girlfriends*, problematizes what counts as Canadian more than these representative anthologies. In a review of k.d. lang's *Hymns of the 49th Parallel*, Lori Selke argues, "One could debate the provenance of the album's 'Canadian' material – Cockburn still lives on the northern side of the title longitude, but [Joni] Mitchell, [Neil] Young, and [Leonard] Cohen are all expatriates, just as lang herself is. But the point is probably moot" (22).

² According to Holtz, the first Canadian novel with lesbian content was published in French in 1963 (Louise Maheux-Forcier's *Amadou*) ("Bibliographer " 280). The first novel by a self-identified Canadian lesbian would also be from Quebec, but published in 1959 (Marie-Claire Blais' *La Belle Bête*, which was published in English as *Mad Shadows* in 1960).

³ In this, it recalls Betsy Warland's introduction to *Inversions*, where she explains that the "texts in 'Site Reading' [a section of the book] are concerned with reading (as in sight reading music or an archaeological site) cultural, political, creative and philosophical practices generated out of our particular embodied voices" (*Inversions* xiii). Warland is arguing that the queer body itself is a site that inflects, perhaps inverts, literary practices (vii). This is similar to claiming that queer might qualify as a "regional" literature, which, in consideration of Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities," seems quite possible.

⁴ This graph is easier to read if the city site lines are in colour, but Canadian dissertation formatting rules require all graphs and figures to be reproducible in black and white. A colour version will be available through the University of Victoria at <<https://dspace.library.uvic.ca>>.

⁵ It is not possible to append a bibliography that lists only the texts I found and counted to obtain the original data for this panCanadian graph. The original data exist on paper, but its information was converted to an electronic list that superseded itself as I added new data. Since the additional data focusses primarily on Vancouver, it would skew the graphs to rework them without paying as rigorous attention to the other areas (i.e., contacting publishers, editors, and writers as well as integrating Holtz's data, and performing additional library searches). While this would be a worthwhile activity, it is not necessary to the current function of the graphs, which is to be suggestive rather than definitive. The expanded Vancouver bibliography (1964-2003), which forms the basis for the other charts and graphs, is provided as Appendix 2.

⁶ Although the city is obviously the matrix that facilitates all the relations that it contains, the field of urban studies has grown exponentially in the last decade and cannot possibly be summarized here. However, I echo sociologist Kath Weston's contention that "[t]he part played by urbanization in the creation of a homosexual subculture is already well established" (32).

⁷ In her manifesto, Nairne Holtz does set out criteria for inclusion in her Canadian bibliography, which is that the author be "an individual who has roots here as reflected in the content of his or her work, or who has chosen to be published in Canada" <<http://www.canadianlesbianliterature.ca>>. This reflects a similar concern with content as the defining feature that prompted her to move from a bibliography of Canadian lesbian and bisexual authors to a bibliography of Canadian literature with lesbian content. Inconsistently, this concern has not prompted her (yet) to move to a bibliography of literature that has Canadian as well as lesbian content. While I am sympathetic to the desire for both Canadian and lesbian content and to a recognition of the due importance of the publisher, the inconsistencies in Holtz's position underline the impossibility of establishing adequate absolute criteria.

⁸ I also came to believe that if I wanted quantitative data to "prove" my point in positivist fashion, I would have to demonstrate that the "nodes" of queer women's literature were different than the nodes that would appear if I were to graph Canadian literature in its entirety; however, this seemed to take me unreasonably far from the literary project I had in mind.

⁹ Tinic's *On Location* "contextualize[s] the Vancouver television industry within a specific time and place – the 1990s and the confluence of political, economic, and social processes that have been engaged in the larger strategy to construct Vancouver as a 'world class city'" (8). Although television and literary production are sites of separate networks and different (but overlapping) discourses, both are concerned with cultural production and consumption that affect identifications, whether these be individual, communal, local, national, or international.

¹⁰ On the simplest level, one is less likely to freeze to death if one is homeless or malnourished or cannot afford heat. Vancouver was one of the first Canadian cities to bring in dropped curbs at intersections, which greatly facilitate wheelchair use.

¹¹ In part, this is also because Holtz's annotated bibliography makes that work less necessary, although the website bibliography is selective rather than exhaustive and there are theoretical differences between her approach and my own. Instead, I chose to focus on making the Vancouver bibliography as exhaustive as I could. I utilized my own rhizomatic connections and sent early versions to Barbara Kuhne, former managing editor of Press Gang; Esther Shannon, former editor of Kinesis; and Penny Goldsmith, editor-publisher of Lazara, who all kindly provided feedback. I also consult with Carellin Brooks, managing editor of New Star Books; and Mary Schendlinger, publisher's assistant at Talonbooks and senior editor of Geist Magazine. In addition, I performed numerous library searches myself and integrated Holtz's bibliographic information, where it did not counter my own criteria.

¹² For the 1990s bibliographies and charts, I include only single author collections of short fiction because the multi-authored collections all include at least some authors who are definitely not Vancouver authors even though, as with Karen X. Tulchinsky's *Hot and Bothered* series, the collection itself may be edited by a Vancouver queer writer and published by Arsenal, a Vancouver publisher.

¹³ Here I am extrapolating from the mathematical concept of “fuzzy logic,” where “[m]embership in fuzzy sets is expressed in degrees of truth. . . . a system of approximate reasoning,” a system developed precisely to deal with the human situation, which is never as exact as idealized mathematics (“Fuzzy Logic”). Although I haven’t gone to the length of defining and sharing to what degree each text belongs in any of the categories I use, theoretically, this could be done and then quantified using mathematical operations pertinent to “fuzzy sets.” I do not attempt this because I am not making a positivist argument. I use the term here as a reminder that the underlying selection criteria have soft, permeable, or “fuzzy” boundaries.

¹⁴ This point will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter, particularly in regard to Anne Cameron.

¹⁵ Rate of increase is always indicated by the steepness of the slope of the line.

¹⁶ The use of the word “site” here is more appropriate than the more typical “City” because Madeira Park, BC, a small town on the Sunshine Coast hardly fits the “City” designation.

¹⁷ Vancouver presses also publish authors from other major centres (e.g., Press Gang published Toronto author, Makeda Silvera, and Talonbooks has published Montreal writers Mary Meigs, Marie-Claire Blais, and Gail Scott).

¹⁸ Although Marlatt lived on Saltspring and in Victoria for a number of years, she grew up in North Vancouver and has worked and lived in Vancouver for most of her adult life. She has made numerous cultural contributions to the Vancouver feminist and literary networks (notably as a key organizer of the first Women and Words conference) and to the conditions that created the Vancouver node.

¹⁹ Although Cameron publishes most of her work with Harbour in Madeira Park, she earlier published *Daughters of Copper Woman* with PGP in Vancouver.

²⁰ This is the well-known controversy regarding appropriation that surrounded the publication of *Daughters of Copper Woman* in which Cameron, a White woman with significant ties to Coastal First Nations, recounts stories of Native mythology, apparently with the permission of the elders who “gave” the stories to her. For further information, I refer readers to Christine Kim, who discusses this controversy and the stories themselves at length in her dissertation (“Politics” 126-161).

²¹ Mary Schendlinger is an excellent example of a feminist who, though not identifying as queer herself, has been extremely helpful to many queer authors. She has edited both Anne Cameron (Harbour) and Mary Meigs (Talonbooks), to name only two.

²² Although beyond the scope of the current study, it would be interesting to compare these tables and trends to similar compilations for all of Canadian literature.

²³ PGP also sold to Raincoast, which still distributes some of its titles. Raincoast itself is a Vancouver publisher that gained much of its economic power through its role as the Canadian distributor of the Harry Potter novels.

²⁴ I include Ragweed with Gynergy here because although not a merger, Ragweed's owner, lesbian-feminist editor, Libby Oughton, sold Ragweed to Lee and Louise Fleming (sisters), who renamed it "Gynergy."

²⁵ Caitlin Press's one publication in this context does not merit the long explanation that would be required to outline its mixed & changeable ownership history.

²⁶ In 1999, PGP joined forces with Polestar and both sold to Raincoast in 2000. Raincoast did not agree to take over all of PGP's titles nor the royalty debts owed to authors. PGP declared bankruptcy in 2002, owing royalties to a number of authors. Ragweed / Gynergy was sold to Bulmer in 2000.

²⁷ Statistics Canada does not separate publications by genre; however, Bowker's website offers "industry Statistics compiled by Andrew Grabois (Grabois). I used Grabois' categories to compare "Poetry, Drama" to "Literature," which I have referred to as "serious fiction," and found that the former averaged about one-half of the latter; however, that ratio includes drama, so poetry alone would be less. I excluded Grabois' "Fiction" category, which is very significantly larger than poetry, drama, and literature, even when these are taken together.

²⁸ Arguably "Queer" always already operates without, across, and beyond borders. This may take the perspective of Bertha Harris', "The More Profound Nationality of their Lesbianism" and Jill Johnson's radical invocation of "lesbian nation" (which Bonnie Zimmerman cites as occurring in *The Village Voice* in October 1971 (*Safe 250 n1*)), or contemporary transnational analyses that preclude unitary identifications.

²⁹ Garber is here acknowledging Bonnie Zimmerman's ground-breaking 1981 article, "What Has Never Been: An Overview of Lesbian Feminist Criticism."

³⁰ My research also showed that 85% of the articles that formed the eventual basis of my own annotated bibliography were published between 1990 and 1993, which may indicate a post-1993 shift towards the umbrella of "queer" (rather than "lesbian") critique on the part of some critics. I suggest this because it doesn't seem as if female same-sex critical interest has waned significantly and women's contributions to queer criticism do seem to have increased. It might be interesting to revisit the project and extend the quantitative research in this area, though it is clearly beyond the reach of this study.

³¹ Griffin is primarily interested in what lesbian academics are writing about in the 1990s. Not surprisingly, the works collected are largely concerned with the key concepts, "postmodernism and queer" (1) and "with border figures, with writings that explore the indeterminacy of identity" (3). However, neither literary works written by lesbians in the 1990s nor literary criticism alone is the sole focus of the "lesbian writing in the 1990s" that Griffin explores. Although no Canadian texts are examined by the contributors to the collection, the interest in lesbian writing, borders, and marginality, postmodern and queer theories, linked with the decade of the 1990s, reinforces my own sense of centrality of this time-frame in queer women's studies.

³² After completing this work, I was able to finish reading Armstrong's novels and to interview her. In particular, there are remarkable similarities in character, setting, style, and plot between Cameron's *The Journey* and Armstrong's *Annie*. Since Armstrong also writes children's literature, I had initially excluded *Annie* from the Vancouver bibliography because I had, wrongly

assessed it as juvenile literature. Armstrong's attachment to place, however, remains ambiguous. Although her commitment to rural BC and the working class is similar to Cameron's, while Cameron moved resolutely away from Vancouver, Armstrong moved to Vancouver and maintains a positive relationship to it. Again, as with Cameron, it would be defensible to include or exclude her. However, although her novels run the gamut from the Western, *Annie*, to the science fiction of *The Bone House*, most lack the queer aesthetic that is my focus here. On that basis, I chose to leave her in the bibliography, despite excluding Cameron, but have not added *Annie*, once again underlining the contingent nature of materializing the Vancouver node.

³³ Although *Throwaway Angels* might be read as a mystery, it is more a meditation on the layered relationships that constitute Vancouver's downtown eastside and Commercial Drive areas. Moreover, it was an editorial suggestion (from Nancy Pollack) that convinced Richler to add the "detective" inflection, according to Kuhne (Personal Interview). The significance of the novel is enhanced by the fact that it is one of the first cultural instruments to attend to the missing women of the downtown eastside. Although its gesture towards genre literature and its realist style preclude a close reading of *Throwaway Angels* in this project, it contributes to the overall sense of intersectionality as a key characteristic of the node.

³⁴ The presence of Jewish writer, Karen X. Tulchinsky, in both tables complicates this statement somewhat since some Jewish people identify as racialized; however, this only complicates the point, it does not invalidate it. I also note that of the larger group of 30 writers there is one other Jewish author, Nancy Richler, and one First Nations poet, Connie Fife.

³⁵ Lizard Jones's novel also deals with living with physical disabilities; however, because it is published in 1997, it is beyond the range of the node and so doesn't receive a close reading.

³⁶ Although I avoid the fallacy of conflating author, author function, narrator, and protagonist, this is a case where my personal knowledge of the writers is useful because it allows me to assert the invisible marginalizations that affect Blackbridge and Jones with the same confidence as I note the visible signs that, within Canadian culture, are linked to the racialization of Lee, Mootoo, Lai, and Kwa.

³⁷ While earlier feminist writing included writing by racialized women, there were no novels by racialized queer authors that I could attribute to Vancouver before the 1990s. I also did a rough count of the "Asian Canadian Publications" compiled and offered on the Asian Canadian website, <www.asian.ca>. Of these, approximately 25% (15 books) of the fiction, poetry, and literary anthologies (63 books in total) were published in 1995-96 (Asian Canadian Multimedia Inc.). This offers some material confirmation of my sense that it is the conjunction of Asian Canadian and queer feminist publications that led to the increase that created the Vancouver node.

³⁸ This infrastructure includes not only publishers, but bookstores and other cultural producers. Vancouver's Ariel Books closed in 1993 and The Vancouver Women's Bookstore closed in 1996. Similarly, Everywoman's Books in Victoria closed permanently in 1997 (Yaffe). *Kinesis* reports that the National Film Board's Studio D also closed in 1996, which is an indicator that feminist networks productive of feminist culture, in general, suffered this dissolution ("The Death" 26). This is confirmed by the Rose Norman website that claims, based on Feminist Bookstore Network 2001 figures, that "[s]ince 1997, 30% of feminist bookstores in the U.S. and Canada have closed for good, down from 107 to 74" <<http://www.uah.edu/english/wip/>>.

Chapter Three: A Telling (It) Conference: Event Reception Effect

“What emerges out of this is something we might call a genealogy, or rather a multiplicity of genealogical researches, a painstaking rediscovery of struggles together with the rude memory of their conflicts.” Michel Foucault (“Two Lectures” 83)

I start my excavation of the Vancouver node at a site that, initially, may seem far removed from 1995-96 – in 1988 at the downtown campus of Simon Fraser University (SFU). A full decade before “queer postcoloniality” attracted academic interest, SFU sponsored a ground-breaking conference, organized by Daphne Marlatt, then the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair of Women's Studies. The conference brought together writers and performers from what Marlatt had deemed to be “the three largest groups of marginalized women in British Columbia. . . . Native Indian, Asian Canadian and lesbian” (Marlatt Introduction 12). *Telling It: Women and Language Across Cultures*¹ was, in Marlatt's words, “designed to be a celebration of the work by these writers. . . . [and] to provoke discussion that seemed long overdue about difference . . . not the least of which are the rifts of race and sexual orientation.” This chapter discusses the conference and its eponymous book in detail because it demonstrates the concerns that occupied women's literary cultural communities leading up to the 1990s (more so, for instance, than conferences where men were the majority of presenters and participants). Since the Vancouver node is, in part, characterized by its Asian Canadian authors, it is also notable that, according to Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn, “Asian Canadian writing emerged to critical attention by the late 1980s” (Introduction 6).

I argue that the combined feminist concerns of racialization and sexuality conditioned the social matrix out of which the Vancouver node precipitated. During this time period, Canadian literary feminists were actively and publicly working on issues of racialization and transnational feminisms. Larissa Lai refers to this period as

the identity politics movements of the late 80s and early 90s. . . . [which] were largely focussed on foregrounding historical violence against people of colour and First Nations people in Canada, and in pondering strategies for the construction of 'empowered' identities for marginalized people within the context of the nation state. ("Future Asians" 168)

This work often took the form of racialized women challenging the underlying assumptions and power imbalances that structured events organized by (primarily) non-racialized women. In response, many White feminists sought to educate themselves and to work for similar changes within White-dominated organizations. I suggest that this public discourse was instrumental in the Vancouver node core novels being equally authored by Asian Canadian and White writers.

This chapter is itself a product of that discourse. In part it grows out of my long residence in Vancouver and my pleasure in hearing many of the conference writers read at various (other) times and venues. Although I missed the conference, my appreciation of *Telling It* and Press Gang Publishers (PGP) no doubt owes something to the fact that I share many of their concerns as well as the subject positions of age, gender, sexuality, non-racialization, and, very broadly interpreted, the lesbian-feminist politics of the majority of Press Gang workers as well as the organizer(s) of the conference. This combination of factors positions me near them in Bourdieu's "field of cultural

production”(29ff) and inclines me to see, to care, and to desire to “render apparent the point[s] at which a certain type of discourse is produced and formed” (Foucault "Prison Talk" 37). Thus, I read the Telling It conference as one of the points that helped produce the material expression of Asian Canadian Queer Women's discourse as a significant part of the Vancouver node. However, foundational critical articles in Asian Canadian literature by respected scholars such as Roy Miki ("Asiancy"), Donald C. Goellnicht ("Protracted"), and Guy Beauregard ("Emergence") mention neither conference nor book, nor do they attribute any role to it in their readings of the development of Asian Canadian literature.²

My “personal stake” in the Vancouver node makes neither it nor my own work less worthy (as is sometimes argued when a subjective connection may be demonstrated). Instead, it makes it easier to understand why I notice the event and insist on its importance to the broader cultural field of Asian Canadian literature while Goellnicht and Beauregard overlook it.³ Goellnicht situates the beginning of Asian Canadian literature (which beginning he defines as “the clear identification of an ethnic minority literary tradition in English and the academic study of it as such” [(2)]) in the spring 1994 special issue of *Canadian Literature* on Asian Canadian writing. Clearly a sticking point for him in regards to Telling It is “the academic study of it as such.” However, while Goellnicht does mention other significant non-academic conferences (such as *Appropriate Race and Writing Thru Race* [49n]), neither the Telling It conference nor its book are mentioned and PGP appears only in a footnote (27n 34). I would suggest that the difficulty lies in Telling It's liminality: it was a conference that was all about borders. Firstly, as Marlatt says, “It was something of an anomaly: a conference organized within an academic

structure, but designed as a non-academic, community-focussed conference, or rather communities-(in the plural)-focussed” (Introduction 12).⁴ Nevertheless, the conference has very concrete academic links and deserves recognition as one of the many events that helped to support the rise in Asian Canadian literature in British Columbia (BC) and to awaken an excited academic interest in that literature. As noted in the last chapter, the rise in Asian Canadian literature contributed significantly to the increase in Vancouver queer women’s writing that led to the emergence of the Vancouver node.

Telling It’s academic links are demonstrable. Firstly, Marlatt’s position at SFU required her to hold a conference that would be sponsored by SFU. This gave her time and money to put towards the project (Marlatt). While it is true that universities sponsor a number of events that are not considered “academic,” these non-academic events (e.g., football games) do not reproduce academic forms to the same extent that the structure of this conference did (i.e., it had panel presentations and produced a publication similar to a proceedings). Moreover, despite Marlatt’s determination to make it a community event, faculty members of SFU’s Women’s Studies Department served as Marlatt’s planning consultants (rather than members of the community), the Departmental Assistant managed the conference, and SFU students and staff taped and took notes on the proceedings. SFU’s sponsorship extended to providing the primary conference funding, which was augmented by the Federal Government, the Canada Council and the Koerner Foundation.⁵ I would argue that this alone constitutes academic recognition of the minoritarian literatures involved. Moreover, the discussions of cultural identifications and author-ity that are presented in the book are not only academically relevant, but also constitute studying those literatures and how they are produced. In fact, I argue that the

conference gave proactive encouragement to Asian Canadian, First Nations, and Lesbian literatures and their authors, which I suggest is one of the tasks of literary criticism. As such, *Telling It* is deserving of discussion in a study tracing the emergence of any one of those literatures.

Perhaps the fact that it was not, a gathering of *only* academics,⁶ but rather the authors themselves (some of whom, of course, do have academic connections⁷) explains Goellnicht's neglect of this conference. Or does the conference seem less significant because it was a conference of only women, or because it was *not* only Asian Canadian authors, or because one of the identifications named was “othered” by sexuality? Or does *Telling It*'s anomalous foregrounding of community irredeemably contaminate its academic credentials? Of course, Goellnicht is not alone in this oversight -- Guy Beauregard similarly neglects both conference and book in his “The Emergence of ‘Asian Canadian Literature’: Can Lit’s Obscene Supplement.” In fairness it must be said that his article is primarily concerned with examining the differences between the earlier American development of Asian Studies and its positive effect in developing what he calls a panAsian American literature as opposed to Canada's later development of Asian Canadian literature.

Nevertheless, Goellnicht's article is such a comprehensive resource that this particular omission seems “telling” of some bias. It doesn't seem to be simply another example of what Roy Miki calls “[t]he divorce of the academic sphere from contemporary cultural praxis, particularly that of minority writers and artists, [which] has brought into focus a conspiracy of silence that implicates mainstream CanCrit in a neocolonialist perspective” (“Sliding” 153 6n). Since Goellnicht seems very aware of

many significant examples of Asian Canadian cultural praxis,⁸ his silence seems related to the particular bodies involved. Do the equally community-oriented conferences, *Appropriate Race* and *Writing Thru Race*, seem more important because “important men” presented there? Is some homophobia at work in that, although he mentions (in a footnote) that PGP and Douglas and McIntyre (D & M) have published East Asian Canadian literature, he doesn't mention how much of it has queer content, which is surely of literary interest. Or does a Toronto-centric bias become visible when Goellnicht contrasts South Asian literature that is published by what considers “mainstream commercial publishers such as McClelland and Stewart,” (13 and 27n) with West Coast East Asian publications that are not?⁹ Isn't D & M a mainstream commercial press? These slights read oddly in work that is meticulous and community conscious enough to mention the Strathcona neighbourhood's fight to prevent a freeway from bisecting the area surrounding Vancouver's Chinatown (9).

Perhaps *Telling It* is easy to overlook because it was borderline well beyond the academic / community divide. Its primary fault seems to be that it presented only women writers. Secondarily, it stretched the limits of the minority literary tradition by including an identity based on sexuality rather than race or ethnicity. Thirdly, its borders were drawn in unusual places; it didn't include all of anything. It was not about only First Nations writing nor was it about all of First Nations writing. Similarly it wasn't about only or all of Asian Canadian writing. It also wasn't about queer writing in general or women's writing or White women's writing or the writing of women of colour in general, but only about the writing of Native and Asian women of any sexuality, and lesbian women of any racialization or heritage. In this, it was hopelessly and asymmetrically

specific. Perhaps it is easy to ignore because it was specifically *not* about Canada's two most culturally dominant groups since no male or heterosexual White female authors fit into the conferences parameters. Whatever the reasons for the neglect of *Telling It*, the neglect alone makes a compelling case for its detailed examination here.

Telling It might have faded from individual and collective memory; however, after the conference, four key participants (SKY Lee, Betsy Warland, Lee Maracle, and Marlatt herself) worked together as editors to materialize and extend the conference's discussion of racialization and sexual orientation in the less ephemeral artefact: *Telling It: Women and Language Across Cultures*, the book. Marlatt describes *Telling It* as “not so much a proceedings as it is the transformation of a conference” (Introduction 9).¹⁰ The book was published by PGP, which makes that publisher a significant network participant in the on-going conversation and in this chapter.¹¹ PGP was a (mostly lesbian) feminist enterprise in Vancouver, whose operators donated the business' papers to be housed in the archives at SFU when they sold to Raincoast Books in 2001. It is therefore possible, not only to read the book, but also to research the context of its publication, which the latter half of this chapter will do in some detail. The book enables that “telling” 1988 conversation to continue to attract interested participants across time, geographies, and communities. One of *Telling It's* communities of interest currently lies within the academy, most typically in English, Women's Studies and Cultural Studies.¹² This chapter is my contribution to the on-going conversation.

Telling It is an important marker and symbol of its time, as well as an influence in its own right, not only upon queer women's literary communities in Vancouver, but also on Canadian literature in general and Asian Canadian, women's, and queer literatures in

particular. Its neglect in the academy is a “telling” omission that deserves to be addressed. Christine Kim's 2004 dissertation, "Politics of Print," begins this process by addressing the conference at some length and, recently, Pauline Butling's brief mention at least credits Telling It with being an “important *oral* research site. . . . the first conference to address the intersections of gender, race, and sexuality” (33). It appears that women, especially feminists, are more likely to notice a conference that showcased women writers (although participation was open to both men and women).¹³

Although the Telling It conference was experienced as difficult, even painful, by many of the participants – a “failure” in terms of enjoying a mistakenly idealized (and illusory) solidarity – this chapter argues that its long-term effects have been positive. Lee Maracle observes that the conference was “[d]ifficult because the women came from so many different cultures” (“Ramparts” 161). She claims that this was difficult because practice still lagged behind theory and intention when it came to dealing with difference in racialization and sexuality. As Maracle put it, “[W]e are still telling it, not moving with it” (171). Telling It might be read as a climax of frustration that had been simmering for many years, and whose epicentre was located at the intersection of two issues: racialization and lesbophobia, fear of two effective identities that have been the abject, not only of White heterosexist North American mainstream society, but even of some sectors of early second wave mainstream feminism.

The discussion is on-going and my examination of some of the conference's positive effects is meant to demonstrate the productive nature of failure and to act as an encouragement to continue to attempt the difficult tasks of communicating across cultural differences. My work, then, is admittedly revisionist: a re-reading of the productive

difficulty of that Canadian discussion's most public beginnings. Interestingly, the difficulty itself erupted in a particular moment that disrupted the conference. It created a little silence at the time, an important interruption that, in *Telling It*, became an *aporia* – a Derridean marker (unwittingly telling) of its own importance.

However, before discussing this moment in its particulars, I want to further historicize the conference as one key condition of the Vancouver node. In an interview with me on March 18th, 2006, Marlatt describes how she and her then partner, Betsy Warland, discussed how to best utilize the requirement (and funding opportunity) presented by Marlatt's position at SFU. The couple had been instrumental in planning the 1983 Women and Words conference, which Warland had initiated and where Marlatt had been the Program Chair. According to Marlatt, the 1983 Women and Words conference, widely known for being a watershed in Canadian feminist writing and theory, was “the first women's conference in Canada where racism was openly addressed” (Introduction 16). Disturbingly, a follow-up conference (to be held in Toronto) was abandoned because “the organizing committee splintered on this exact issue.”¹⁴ Moreover, The Telling It conference followed fast on the heels of the Third International Women's Book Fair, where racism had also become an issue before the event convened. During the Book Fair's planning stages, the Congress of Black Women of Concordia University called for a boycott on the grounds of “inappropriate primary structures in planning, insensitivity and racism” (qtd. in PGPF “Letter to Fair”). However, other women of colour, most notably Lee Maracle, discouraged the boycott, using a metaphor that she would revisit in *Telling It*: “Let us not burn bridges after someone takes the trouble to build the ramparts because the design is not our own.” The Book Fair went ahead in June

of 1988 in Montréal and became another important forum for discussions about racialization, racism, and appropriation.¹⁵

The appropriation issue would have been an especially important issue for PGP. Anne Cameron's *Daughters of Copper Woman*, the text that sparked this particular articulation of the controversy, was one of PGP's best-selling titles (with its author royalties going to support Native women's writing), but also there were no women of colour or First Nations women on staff at PGP at that time. At the Telling It conference, Jeannette Armstrong continues the appropriation conversation, and discusses how to learn from and share each other's cultural heritages without engaging in cultural appropriation (*Telling* 50). Another event that took place in the summer of 1988 that affected both the conference and PGP was the split over issues of racism that occurred within the Women's Press of Toronto.¹⁶ Although PGP, as a sister publisher, would have been most deeply affected, that split reverberated throughout Canadian feminist circles and would have also influenced the Telling it conference.

Furthermore, the watershed Women and Words conference gave Marlatt and Warland the opportunity (through their participation as a lesbian couple) to become more aware of the importance of publicly addressing heterosexism as well as racism.¹⁷ Coming to grips with being women, lesbians, feminists, poets, and activists gave them a personal stake and understanding of marginalization through their own experience of what Marlatt deems "homophobia" (Personal Interview).¹⁸ As she says, "At that time, lesbian-feminist women were still not too openly declaring ourselves . . . in feminist discussions because there was still a lot of backlash against that. It was pretty clear that a lot of the active work was being done by lesbian women who were not declaring

themselves as lesbian women because they were afraid of alienating the straight women.” A sense of how long that issue had been simmering may be inferred by juxtaposing Marlatt's statement, which referred to both the 1983 and 1988 conferences, with an early lesbian-feminist article that describes how, at a 1969 meeting of the U.S. group, the National Organization of Women (NOW), lesbians were referred to as “the Lavender Menace” and had their organizations forcibly closeted (expunged from the record) by the heterosexual leadership so as not to undermine feminist credibility (Abbot and Love 614). Calls for the North American women's movement to become more anti-racist were also long-standing and found unmistakable expression in the 1981 text *This Bridge Called My Back*.¹⁹ Both issues were proven inflammatory material and it is to Marlatt's credit that she chose to dedicate important cultural space to each at the Telling It conference.

Marlatt's determination to bring these issues forward for public discussion remained strong enough after the conference to initiate the process of producing *Telling It*, even though many other conference participants were “dismayed by the emotions winging around the room” (Personal Interview).²⁰ Marlatt co-ordinated the editorial group, who worked with transcripts from the conference to share and to theorize the conference and its difficulties. The “Voice(s) Over” section and Introduction, in particular, transform (as Marlatt characterizes it) or “translate” (as Kim has it), the debates that began at the conference (“Politics” 264-65).

Although *Telling It* may be seen as continuing both the Women and Words and the Montréal Book Fair discussions, it differed in that it *overtly* engaged the issues of racialization and homophobia and put them *together* in a clear example of

intersectionality. Marlatt's determination in this regard was not an isolated desire; in comparing the two conferences, Kim observes that “[b]y the time the Telling It Conference took place . . . the priorities of the feminist community had shifted . . . to focussing on specific issues of community and difference” (“Politics” 260). Marlatt deliberately solicited writers and storytellers of specific racialized groups and sexual orientations within the context of creative literary production. She mentioned that it had been hard to find Asian Canadian women writers for the Women and Words conference, and, since people of Asian heritage form the largest visible minority group in British Columbia,²¹ it seemed that there ought to be many Asian Canadian women writers. She saw Telling It as another opportunity to seek out those writers. Similarly, Marlatt specifically sought²² First Nations women writers to bring their work and perspectives to the conference because she felt that theirs too were voices that were numerous, but rarely heard outside of their own communities.

Fortunately, Marlatt already had numerous contacts to draw on in the Lesbian community -- although perhaps that made those choices too easy. She comments later that choosing two lesbian writers who were both White “contributed to an unfortunate erasure of lesbian women of colour” (Introduction 15). Perhaps because it was harder for her to find and co-ordinate the First Nations and Asian writers, Marlatt was relieved to have Warland (a well-known spokeswoman for lesbian writers) close at hand, and Barbara Herringer (poet and co-editor of *The Radical Reviewer*)²³ available in Vancouver. These “easier” choices did not use up valuable (and scarce enough, always) conference resources for travel or accommodation and, because they were well known to her, Marlatt could have confidence in their talents and politics. However, since the

Women's Studies Program materials held in the SFU Archives show that there were only two lesbian writers invited as opposed to three each of First Nations and Asian writers, choosing so close to home (and to her own subject positions) did not allow the conference writers to reflect the diversity of lesbian writers in BC (WSH "June").

A conference organized as much around racialized and sexualized identities as it was around writing offered a matrix within which arose flashpoints that challenged participants to focus on and rethink issues of identification and also to reconsider coalitions of communities. This, of course, is a trajectory that queer postcolonial studies continues. The mixing of issues of racialization and sexual orientation was a radical move in 1988 partly because it implicitly placed these forms of identification, each of which has its separate oppression / liberation histories and practices, in parallel. As Feminist Bookstore News reported, "It's the only conference / dialogue . . . in the literary community to recognize 'lesbian' as a community parallel with ethnic communities" (Seajay 87). In itself, that action implies a political position: that to fight the hegemonic forces that marginalize female cultural workers based on racialization, sexism, and heterosexism requires strategies of coalition-building and support (as well as necessary separatisms), on the part of those so marginalized.

However, there are additional confusions in this parallel that stem from the ways that these identifications are lived differently in the world. For instance, while sex and colour are typically visible, sexual orientation is often considerably less so. Though there have always been people who "pass" as male or White, generally, it is easier to pass as heterosexual. The psychic and social wounds attendant on "being" racialized, female, or sexually queer are each quite different, despite the fact that all three identifications

occupy the marked (and negatively so) position in western culture's binary pairs, where the normative standard is male, White, and heterosexual.

The syntax of the English language itself contributes to the difficulty of discussing all three in an interlocking manner. As participant Barbara Binns, who, as she says, is “not a writer . . . not a lesbian, but . . . a woman of colour,” criticises: “the first statement in the [conference] brochure . . . [by] saying women of colour and lesbian women . . . presupposes that women who are of colour are not lesbian” (“Panel One: Audience” 47). This wording does present a serious problem. Of course, given that SKY Lee and Marlatt knew each other as writers and lesbians before the conference, it seems safe to assume that Marlatt herself did *not* mean the identifications to seem mutually exclusive; however, English does not offer easy ways of recognizing several subjectivities at once. Thus, the selection of the participants implied a parallel that was not easily communicated even in the language itself, which both reflects and enforces narrowness and singular identification. English “naturally” moves even aware speakers in the directions of unitary categorization, hierarchy, and hegemony. As Dionne Brand poetically contends, *No Language Is Neutral*. Moreover, only previously culturally determined normatives can “go without saying” as I discuss in Chapter Four.

Nevertheless, the fact that the conference was organized by a White woman who consulted primarily with her White partner and within the SFU Women's Studies program, which at the time was all White, inevitably “tainted” the conference with the trappings of White privilege and its obverse, White oppressiveness, as Marlatt herself recognises. The flashpoints were not anticipated, but in hindsight Marlatt reassesses:

Although i feel that the TELLING IT conference was a necessary step in an attempt to form a meeting ground on the very fractured margins we inhabit, i would not again presume to organize a conference, even in part, *for* women of colour. The time is overdue for women of colour to have organizing power themselves. (Introduction 15, Marlatt's italics)

I believe that the frustrations that many women of colour experienced at the Telling It conference encouraged them to do just that. The following year saw women of colour²⁴ organize Invisible Colours (1989)²⁵ and, in subsequent years, work with men of colour to convene both the Appropriate Voice (1992) and Writing thru Race (1994). These conferences, which will be discussed, briefly, in Chapter Five, contributed to the rich cultural activity that became the social and material context of the Vancouver Node.

Telling It's radical invocation of parallels and confusions sets the scene for what might be called the conference's "failure." The a priori assumption of any congruity between these three specific, and overlapping, groups of marginalized women (Asian, Native, and Lesbian) was challenged most immediately and most definitively during the opening panel. This challenge, this interruption, which I argue may, retrospectively, be revisioned as a productive event, took the form of a question that was asked by a woman of colour. The woman is, by request, unnamed in the book, a request that I continue to honour (though my archival research has identified her); however, her racialization is pertinent to the narrative since it affected the reception of her comments. Lee Maracle gestures towards this difference when she prefaces her discussion of the incident by saying, "I wish the remark had come from a white woman" ("Ramparts"). In *Telling It*, the woman's question and other comments in "Panel One: Audience Discussion" are

indicated by ellipses that are footnoted to explain that the “speaker has asked to be deleted from the transcript of the audience discussion” (44). This is the *aporia* that I engage. In her comments, “she questioned the inclusion of lesbian writers in the conference. She wondered how lesbians could constitute a culture since lesbians lack their own language.” Lee Maracle quotes her as asking “Is Lesbian a Culture?” (“Ramparts” 166).²⁶ The conference's research assistant, Jill Stainsby, quotes the speaker as saying that naming women writers as “lesbian” was discriminating among women on the basis of “themes” (WSH “Proceedings”).²⁷

During the conference, the speaker's comments provoked many participants and presenters to address the question of what the relationship between language and culture might be, as well to discuss the relationship between sexuality and culture. These enriching discussions continue in *Telling It*; however, the book also reaches beyond the conference, beyond literature and language, to address the politics involved (though language, literature, and politics are always mutually constitutive) and to offer some assessment of these. This is the “translation” effect noted by Kim, who finds such an approach “useful for considering the way in which feminist politics are able to circulate between the spaces of the conference and its proceedings as value [in a Bordieuxian sense]” (“Politics” 264). SKY Lee recounts how her friend, writer Jamila Ismail, read transcripts of the conference and said of the woman who asks the question: “This woman is brave. . . . She timidly, shakingly²⁸ laid an offering out in front of the conference. This offering was a split” (Afterword 187). This comment puzzled me and forced me to look for the benefit within what seemed, initially, to be only a negative: a homophobic questioning of lesbians' right to claim “culture.” I cannot be sure what Ismail meant, but

I theorize that the “split” is to the twinned (and falsely monolithic) structures of hegemony and oppression. My thoughts here are informed by Foucault's analysis of power-knowledge that argues that no institution is monolithic and that power is to some extent fluid and operates everywhere, albeit differently, within interlocking systems of discourses (*History* 92-97). Therefore, discourses may exploit various fissures and disjunctions to either stabilize or destabilize situations that appear fixed. The interplay that results is also similar to the movements of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces as explicated by Raymond Williams.²⁹

In this context, SKY Lee discusses a split as something many writers had already internalized in the form of split loyalties and identities (such as “dutiful daughter or self-centred writer”) and then says of the split engendered by the questioner: “she left, without offering any way of reconnecting. There is a gaping hole of silence in her wake because she censored both our words and her words” (Lee Afterword 188). In this sense, the title of Panel One (“Across the Cultural Gap” [21]) and panellist Betsy Warland’s exploration of “gap” seem almost prescient as they set the context for the questioner to “**open the gap**, [and] give access to” a space as yet unrealized by the conference participants, presenters, and organizers (33, Warland's emphasis). As Marlatt says, “[T]he trouble with idealism . . . is that it can overlook the pain of real differences in oppression for the sake of some fantasized solidarity” (Introduction 13). The blow, the conference's failure, was to this idealized solidarity. There was a split in the fantasy of “universal” solidarity based on gender alone. The rupture was subsequently reified by the questioner's request to be left out of the book. This brings readers up against the same blank wall faced by conference participants. In the book, it is an *aporia*, which, perhaps precisely *because* it

is an echo of her leaving, continues to act as a demand *for* connective action from both women of colour and White women, and particularly on the part of lesbian / queer women.

Telling It's specificity, which may have been its strength, was also explicitly criticized (from the community side) at the conference. The conference did not include all women of colour and was critiqued, especially, for not including Afro-Canadian women.³⁰ In fact, the speaker who could not accept the concept of lesbian culture, eventually gave the conference's limited inclusivity (of presenters) as her primary reason for not appearing in the book. In a letter, dated January 25, 1990, and addressed to SKY Lee in her role as editor, the speaker writes that she does not "feel ethically comfortable to collaborate [her]self as a writer in . . . a collection which might be indirectly discriminating against certain groups of women writers" (DMF "Letter"). In *Telling It*, Marlatt responds directly, if only implicitly, to this critique: "a conference of its size could not have represented more communities without becoming a collection of 'token' women" (Introduction 13). Indeed, some of the evaluations of the conference note the importance of having strength in numbers for the First Nations and Asian Canadian writers on the panels and in the workshops even if those proportions weren't reflected in the demographics of the audience (WSH "Evaluations").

Similarly, *Telling It* did not call upon all queer women, but only lesbians. During the audience discussion that followed the second panel, Dorothy Livesay challenged the panel: "I represent a group that's probably not here at all, the androgyne, the bisexual, and I just wonder to what degree this group . . . respects and understands a person who is built that way?" ("Panel Two" 117). Transgender authors were also not invited. However,

perhaps Marlatt exercised wisdom when she restricted the presenting writers to such specific self-identifications. This seems to have ensured that there were enough writers present from each designated group to enable the presenters to feel enough support to speak their minds about the issues raised. The very specificity, which accorded respect (instead of tokenism) and allowed strength in numbers, may have been the deciding factor that gave this conference, which witnessed a failure in universalizing solidarity (untenable in any case), success in terms of the long-term discussion of the interweaving of sexism, racism, and homophobia.

The conference and its rupture seem to have heightened an awareness that alliances based on only sexuality or racialization are an insufficient support for women who live more complexly interlocking identifications. The postmodern academic insight regarding the illusory nature of unitary identity played out here in the body-minds of the women at the conference. The women who remained, remained with questions beyond the academic and faced the reality that people who are oppressed in one aspect of their person may yet wield hegemonic values oppressively in another.³¹ The painful irony of the event is that the question was most hurtful to queer women of colour because the questioner seemed to imply (as had the brochure) that all lesbians are White, which shattered the solidarity of women of colour. Lee states that she “came with [her] woman of colour context and felt very much at home there” (Afterword 186); however, the woman's questioning defamiliarized that home. As Lee explains, “She left me wounded because I am a lesbian of colour” (188). The split that resulted resembles the cleavages Foucault describes: “often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting

regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds” (*History* 96).

The question marked off the irreducible region of Lee as a lesbian of colour.

However, this splitting of solidarity along lines of sexuality also drew attention to sexuality as a possible point of connection across lines of other cultural differences. This reorienting and reaching for connection is argued persuasively by Elizabeth Grosz on the level of the individual body, but her analysis has such a striking similarity to Foucault's “fracturing . . . [and] regrouping” that it may usefully be extrapolated to the volatile social body in this situation. Grosz says that:

human bodies have irreducible neurophysiological and psychological dimensions whose relations remain unknown and that human bodies have the wonderful ability, while striving for integration and cohesion, organic and psychic wholeness, to also provide for and indeed produce fragmentations, fracturings, dislocations that orient bodies and body parts toward other bodies and body parts. (13)

At *Telling It*, queer women in particular had the opportunity to reflect on how necessary as well as how hard it might be to respect and reach across asymmetrical differences. That reflection would be refracted differently according to everyone's varying subjectivities, of course, because “[b]odies are always irreducibly sexually specific, necessarily interlocked with racial, cultural, and class [and other] particularities” (Grosz 19). In this case, racialization and class positionings were the primary particularities that were interwoven with an enhanced shared queerness. The failure and pain of the conference raised political consciousness amongst the (necessarily mixed and

fragmented) queer women's literary *communities* represented at the conference. I argue that this consciousness coalesced into a generalized determination to attend to the words of racialized queer women in particular. One material indication of this trajectory, which I note as part of my research into the Vancouver node of queer women's publications, is that PGP is the publisher for five out of seven of the Asian Canadian books published in the 1990s. Shani Mootoo's *Out On Main Street* and *Cereus Blooms At Night*, SKY Lee's *Bellydancer*, Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*, and Rita Wong's *Monkeypuzzle* were published by PGP while SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café* and Lydia Kwa's *This Place Called Absence* have other publishers.

It seems reasonable to theorize that the writings of queer women of colour provided concerned (largely White) publishers and editors with an opportunity to work on connection between racialized and White queer women. Publication is a concrete way of attending to authors, and one that solicits further social attentiveness (from readers). PGP and several Asian Canadian authors put writing into the gap that became "telling" at the conference. But perhaps the most obvious connection between PGP and Telling It is their decision to publish *Telling It*, the book. Marlatt sought (and did not find) academic funding to support the work of producing *Telling It*. Nevertheless, she secured a contract with PGP. Barbara Kuhne, PGP's Managing Editor, affirms that the Telling It conference aims were in alignment with PGP's values, which is why they wanted to publish the book as a way of making sure the interlocking issues of racism and homophobia remained in the forefront of Canadian feminist concerns (Personal Interview). They were "immediately enthusiastic" about publishing and offered the editors a contract even though the project was only at the proposal stage. Kim notes the

importance of PGP's publication of *Telling It* and argues that it demonstrates that PGP's political concerns remained aligned with those of the increasingly diverse feminist communities in Vancouver and their concerns with issues of racism and racialization ("Politics" 262-63). Kim cites Bourdieu to support her analysis of how authors and PGP "legitimize each other" through the reciprocal creation of cultural capital (263).³² Feminist writing communities give "symbolic credit" to PGP and PGP "consecrates" feminist writers. However, this role requires a trusting relationship between writers and the press, which PGP had been working on since its inception.

As the archival material demonstrates, neither the Telling It conference nor its book was the beginning of PGP's anti-racist perspective. The "1995 Catalogue" contains a quotation from a *circa* 1984 history of the publishing arm of Press Gang, which states: "the policy is no sexist or racist material but beyond those parameters the word is 'eclectic'" (PGPF).³³ The press published its first book in 1975:³⁴ *I'm Not Mad, I'm Angry: Women Look At Psychiatry* edited by Dorothy Smith and Sara David signalled what would be PGP's long-standing support for women's mental health issues. Concern for these issues is also represented in the Vancouver node. In 1981, PGP published its first book based on First Nations stories (Anne Cameron's controversial *Daughters of Copper Woman*), another area of long-term interest for them. PGP's commitment to lesbian issues is emphasized by its 1984 publication of the lesbian feminist workbook, *Stepping Out of Line*, which also contains advice on how to deal with racism and classism in the section on "Creating Communities" (Hughes, Johnson and Perreault 168).³⁵

Moreover, the archived minutes of PGP meetings make it clear that, by September 10, 1985, PGP had already embarked upon pro-active anti-racist moves.³⁶ At that

meeting, the collective committed to publishing a book by a “Native woman,”³⁷ particularly, “a book-length manuscript” (PGPF “Meetings, 1984-85”). At the Sept. 30, 1986 meeting, the initial prospect for this project seems to be faltering and they consider soliciting something from Chrystos,³⁸ a contact of PGP’s Financial and Marketing Manager, Della McCreary (“Meetings, 1986-87”). At this time, PGP begins to pay for their members to attend Unlearning Racism workshops and the press also makes direct donations to the workshops. Chrystos was also invited to read her poetry at several of these local workshops, which reinforced her reciprocal relationship with PGP and Vancouver. Kuhne informed me (as she had earlier told Kim [“Politics” 257-58]) that the Unlearning Racism workshops that the press attended provided the strongest impetus to become anti-racist in their publishing (Personal Interview).³⁹

However, it took some time for PGP’s efforts to come to fruition. In their February 1986 meetings, they discuss advertising for new volunteers giving “particular encouragement to women of colour,” but the next year the minutes still express concern that they are all White women (PGPF “Meetings, 1986-87”). Despite their previous attention to the issue, they ask themselves, “When will we look at the issue of racism within our collective, will we do anything about the fact that we are an all white women group?” They again express desire to publish women of colour, especially First Nations and women of Asian heritage.

These efforts culminate in two significant changes, one declarative and one symbolic, that occur between the 1986 and 1987 catalogues. In an undated catalogue, whose content implies that it is from 1986, PGP’s symbol is a woman’s fist within a circle atop an equal-armed cross (“Catalogue 1986”). (The symbol, on the left in the image

below, is based on the Western scientific symbol for woman). PGP identifies itself as “a feminist, anti-capitalist publishing collective. . . . publishing books . . . whose range and accessibility reflect the vitality of the women's liberation movement: non-sexist kids' books, issues ranging from psychiatry to union organizing to lesbianism/feminism.”

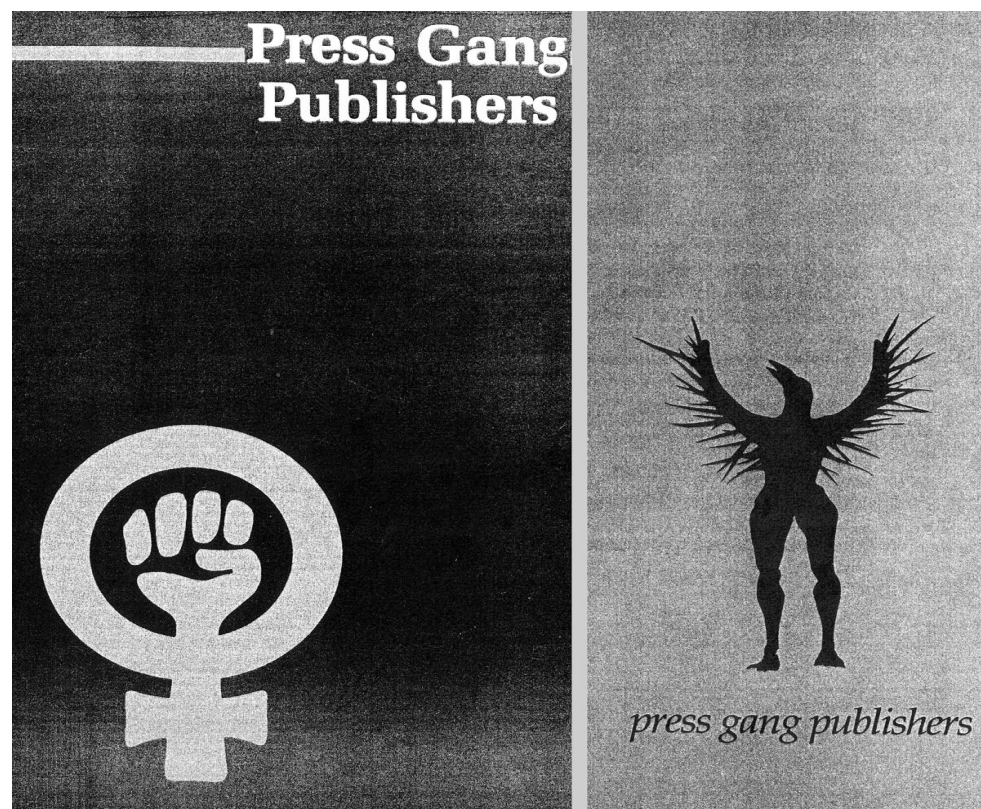


Figure 10 Press Gang Publishers' Logos

In the 1987 Catalogue, the overt references to capitalism and lesbianism disappear. Moreover, for the first time, racism is named as a significant concern in their opening statement: “We are striving to better understand the overlapping issues of racism and classism and how they affect our lives” (“Catalogue, 1987”). In the same catalogue, they announce, “[W]e take special pleasure in presenting our new logo! . . . Crow

woman is loud, unladylike, raucous – defiant and proud. Our goal is that you feel her spirit in each of our works.” Based on Persimmon Blackbridge’s crow woman artwork, the new logo moves away from the original “second wave” style logo of the woman’s raised fist in a symbolic distancing from a movement that had been critiqued for being racist, middle-class, and anti-sex. In concert with the inclusion of anti-racism in PGP’s new mission, the logo implies a public realignment of the press’s priorities.

Finally, PGP’s 1987 catalogue publicly promises First Nations books by First Nations women: “[W]e will be publishing an anthology of Indian, Métis and Inuit women’s writing called *Celebrating Survival*.” Although this book does not come to fruition, PGP’s 1988 catalogue “continue[s] in the challenge to better understand the issues of racism and classism” (“Catalogue, 1988”). That fall, they publish Chrystos’ *Not Vanishing*, the first of a number of significant PGP First Nations texts. By this time, PGP had published 17 books, several by queer women, but this is the first by a First Nations or otherwise racialized woman. The publication date of Chrystos’ poetry volume, coinciding as it does with the Telling It conference, speaks to the timeliness of both the conference and PGP’s publication. Both events reflect the broader feminist struggles against racism (external and internal) and homophobia at this time.

This, then, is the context in which the three principal operators of PGP: Barbara Kuhne, Della McCreary, and Val Speidel, Designer and Production Manager attended the Telling conference.⁴⁰ Although Kuhne says that she didn’t “see [Telling It] as a pivotal point in shaping [PGP’s] publishing program” (E-mail “Re: Questions for You”), she acknowledges that the conference contributed to their commitment to an anti-racist publishing direction (Personal Interview). PGP’s archived files confirm their interest in

the aims of the conference and their attendance intensified rather than redirected their anti-racist efforts. Indeed, in 1988, PGP's concern was integrated into the day to day business of the press by being given its own file: "Anti-racism work 1988 - 1996" (PGPF). In the September 2, 1988 meeting, there are two more indications of Press Gang's commitment to anti-racist policies. The first is the rejection of a manuscript by a White woman because she is writing fiction about women of colour. The rejection letter explains that PGP "prefer[s] to publish writing *by* Women of Colour rather than writing that tells their stories second-hand!" ("Meetings 1987-89," emphasis in minutes). The exclamation mark speaks to the intense feelings that the collective had about this issue. The second is that the next item in the minutes of that same meeting is the affirmation that they "need to discuss the issue of establishing anti-racist guidelines."⁴¹

The split at Women's Press of Toronto over issues of racism resulted in the formation of a new publisher run by women of colour, SisterVision, with whom PGP also formed a close relationship. The split reinforced PGP's determination to develop a more clearly articulated anti-racist approach. Kuhne declares that the Women's Press split was "instrumental in us wanting to hire women of colour and publish women of colour" in hopes of avoiding that kind of division (Personal Interview). As Kim notes, "In the latter half of the 1980s, women of colour and lesbians demanded that the women's movement become more inclusive" ("Politics" 172). Telling It was one of several signal events, including the more mainstream passage of Canada's Multiculturalism Act,⁴² that occurred in 1988 to make it a most significant year, especially in terms the intersection of the interlocking identifications of lesbian, feminist, and racialized women with literature and feminist publishing.

PGP was very much involved in this moment. On November 30, 1988, the PGP meeting discusses potential contracts with Dionne Brand and for SKY Lee's manuscript of *Disappearing Moon Café* (PGPF "Meetings 1987-89"). The April 1989 minutes record PGP expressing concerns about two upcoming books. One on child sexual abuse is problematic because it does not include a discussion on "racial and cultural differences and how they affect women's experience of child sexual abuse." Another, an anthology by the Disabled Women's Network (D.A.W.N), has insufficient material by women of colour and needs to solicit more.

PGP's later catalogues offer more concrete evidence that *Telling It* and the other events of 1988 strengthened PGP's commitment to anti-racism and reinvigorated their commitment to lesbian writing. Certainly, if the 1988 events were an influence on PGP's publication strategies, it would be reasonable to expect an increase in publications by women of colour (and especially by queer women of colour) by 1990. Chapter Two shows this increase and it is significant that PGP began the next decade with the 1990 publication of *Telling It*, which was edited collaboratively between White women and women of colour. (The editorial collective mirrored the conference in that it included writers who were lesbian, Asian Canadian, and First Nations). The fact that PGP offered Marlatt a contract before the book was begun underscores their interest in the on-going anti-racist discussion as did their attendance at the conference ("Meetings 1987-89"). Over the rest of the decade, as PGP's anti-racist publishing directions had time to work their way through the press and to emerge as books, PGP's commitment to publishing racialized women becomes increasingly visible in their catalogues. No less than 25% and sometimes, as in 1993, as much as 60% of each year's output was authored by racialized

women.⁴³ PGP continued its interest in First Nations writing, writing by women of colour, and lesbian / queer writing, which prompted them to publish five books by Asian Canadian queer women, which made a significant material contribution to the mid-decade Vancouver node.

To the extent that the Telling It conference contributed to this direction, it must be considered a success rather than a failure. Despite the pain, Telling It publicly aired the challenges that Canadian women cultural workers faced (and still face) in communicating with and supporting each other across cultural differences. Publication of these texts seems, finally, to respond materially to Maracle's critique, to finally be "moving with it" rather than just "telling it." PGP's publications also demonstrate how the material text, as an "immutable mobile," works to solidify networks (Murdoch 65). In this case, the publication of *Telling It* and a significant number of literary texts by women of colour and First Nations women provided feminist communities and their allies assurance that PGP's anti-racist policies were not simply rhetoric.

However, it is not only the final product that is telling. In consulting with Larissa Lai, I learned that PGP's McCreary offered her a contract after hearing her read once (Personal Interview), even though she had only written about 80 pages of what would become *When Fox Is a Thousand*. PGP's response to *Fox* mirrored their response to *Telling It*; both contracts offer an unusually proactive expression of faith and commitment – though one perhaps more typical in small, politically motivated presses. This is one reason small presses are so important, especially for emerging writers and emerging literatures. However, participating in the publishing process with White lesbians was also a leap of faith for Asian Canadian and First Nations writers. PGP

recognized this and, in an attempt to be responsive to women of colour usually made an attempt to solicit editors of colour for at least part of the process. For instance, in a letter to Daphne Marlatt, PGP's Kuhne mentions that Lee Maracle is "very happy" that Beth Brant, a Bay of Quinte (Ontario) Mohawk author and editor⁴⁴ will provide editorial direction as Maracle shapes her contribution to *Telling It* (PGPF "Kuhne Letter 18 Dec. 1989"). Similarly, in the September 14, 1994 meeting, PGP discusses getting an (outside) woman of colour editor for Lai's *Fox* (then referred to as *Ripe Creatures*) ("Meetings, 1994-95").

The *Telling It* conference strengthened not only PGP's commitment to, especially, lesbian women of colour, but also a general sense of a shared need for solidarity amongst queer women across cultural differences. Together, it seems to have led to a resolve to work in concert to make bridges out of books.⁴⁵ Most of the writers that PGP published subsequently were not at the conference itself, as Lai was not, but all benefited from the work, attitudes, and alliances encouraged and reinforced at the conference. In *Telling It*, Maracle writes, "We all struggled to build bridges . . . at the conference. Too bad they weren't located in the same spot directly across from each other" (171). It seems fair to say that, following the conference, First Nations and Asian Canadian authors and PGP together lined up at least some of those ramparts, put their bodies, energies, and words across the gap, and produced books that have enriched Canadian literature.⁴⁶ This literary production is the success that hard and co-operative feminist work salvaged from a (perceived) failure of communication.

I want to pause here to stress that I am not positing a theory of origins or causality here. The *Telling It* conference must be seen as one of many conferences and events that

have affected the consciousness of writers, readers, editors, publishers, and academics in Canada.⁴⁷ If the Women in Words conference of 1983 may be seen as a step leading to up to it, then the productive gap created at Telling It became a place to pause, take one's bearings, to choose new beginnings, new directions. Other writers' events such as the meetings of the Asian Canadian Writers' Workshop, the Appropriate Voice and the Writing Thru Races conferences also led in important new directions and will be discussed in Chapter Five. Not only is Telling It not an origin, but neither are PGP's publications by Asian Canadian queer women the beginnings of that discourse in Canada's published literature: SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café*, published by D & M and edited by Saeko Usukawa, is the first novel by a Asian Canadian queer woman to show a distinctly queer twist.⁴⁸ Nor do I want to make PGP heroic. Though their production of ground-breaking texts is critical, especially for Canadian queer women's literature in English, and their tenacity admirable, their demise undermined much of the trust that had been built between the press and racialized and First Nations authors. A number of PGP authors did not receive royalties to which they were entitled and not all of PGP's titles were backlisted by Raincoast, the publisher with whom PGP negotiated its final sale (Wong "Press"). It was hard for authors who had felt part of the feminist project that was PGP to have no input into the final decisions, which were largely dictated to the remaining PGP members⁴⁹ by the institutionalized rules of bankruptcy (Kuhne Personal Interview).

However, the authors themselves were able to create something positive out of even this failure. Instead of simply accepting that some PGP authors would lose their royalties, author-activists Rita Wong and Betsy Warland organized the successful reading

and fundraiser, Benefit for Press Gang Authors (Benefit), to raise money towards the unpaid royalties <<http://www.womennet.ca/news.php?show&528>>. Held on May 24, 2003, this was an event that brought many PGP authors together, including several who had been present at the Telling It conference and all of the *Telling It* editors. Maracle assesses the Benefit, the Telling It conference and PGP's demise:

What that evening and the work that went into it did was something of a milestone. I have done anti-racist, pro women of color, anti-homophobic (among heterosexuals) work for decades now and that evening marked the first time that women organized on behalf of two aboriginal women and Ivan E. Coyote without us having to lead the struggle. . . . Telling It, began the opening [of] doors for many many writers of color and of course Lesbian writers (of color and white writers). . . . It [PGP's demise and the PGP / Raincoast default on royalties] was a tragedy that should never have occurred, we all knew it, but we all dealt with it with honor, dignity aplomb in this gracious and wonderful sharing by an entire community. The feeling that we were never going to have to stand alone as women of color, as lesbians, as Aboriginal women, was amazing. ("Re:)

Betsy Warland experienced these interlocking issues as entering the awareness of English Canadian women's literary communities' at the Women and Words conference, peaking at the Telling It conference, and resolving, for her, through organizing the Benefit (E-mail). Despite the awkwardness of the situation, the Benefit was also a visible demonstration of the significant role that PGP had played in bringing a diversity of authors into print. The comments by both Maracle and Warland reinforce my contention

that *Telling It*, both book and conference, deserves remembering and crediting as an important site where Canadian women continued the difficult work of creating literature in a society that is built on racism, sexism, and homophobia. I re-vision the question that was raised regarding the existence of “lesbian culture” as an interruption that occurred at a particularly potent intersection of identifications and the ensuing pain as a useful indicator of dis-ease. A split or a gap was created through which different realities were glimpsed. The ensuing silence⁵⁰ became, I suggest, a blank page on which queer women (both racialized and non-racialized) worked together to produce literature.

Telling It achieves the goal that Marlatt says its editors shared: “to stand as a more developed [than the conference itself] contribution to the discussion that has been raging in various communities across the country on what kind of relationship might be possible between cultures of colour and white culture, between lesbian culture and heterosexist mainstream culture” (Introduction 17-18). Both conference and book have combined to give that discussion a long shelf-life, theoretically speaking, and also seem to have contributed to a joining together of queer women of colour and PGP to produce many books worth celebrating. In revisiting and re-valuing the *Telling It* discussion within the academic context, I hope to ensure that the interruptions and pregnant pauses in that discussion are not erased and that its short-term failures are recognized for their significant influence on longer-term successes.

 Notes

¹ The titles of the conference and book are the same but are distinguishable throughout by formatting: the conference, Telling It, appears in normal font while the book, *Telling It*, is italicized.

² Telling It's absence is most understandable in the context of Miki's discussion of the writer of colour's "struggle for such empowerment and liberation from the imposed signs of 'race,'" which is more of an exploration of the imperatives of Asian Canadian writing than it is an overview of the milestones in that literature's development ("Asiarcy" 138).

³ In fairness, the "community" also seems to have overlooked the conference, perhaps because it seemed too academic. I could find no reviews of it in *Kinesis*, for instance, which might be expected to have reported on it. Of course, "community" doesn't commit to exhaustive research and it is also possible that it was too difficult to write about directly after the conference.

⁴ Kuhne felt that this anomalous positioning affected community attendance and reporting. She observed that, from a community point of view, it looked like an academic conference: "The Telling It conference was not grassroots in the same way as Women and Words was, as it was sponsored by SFU" (E-mail 10 Apr.). Tellingly, although neither the Appropriate Race nor the Writing Thru Race conferences were academic (although also attended by academics), they are acknowledged by both Goellnicht and Beauregard and many others.

⁵ SFU provided \$7000, Secretary of State: Multiculturalism, \$2000, the Koerner Foundation, \$1000, and the Canada Council \$400 (WSH Telling It).

⁶ Nevertheless, academics were involved in the conference. The registration list notes a number of academics that I recognized personally, including professors Christine St. Peter (UVic) and Lynne Hissey (SFU) as well as emerging scholars, Jill Stainsby and Michelle Valiquette, both of SFU (WSH "Registration List."). No doubt there were others that I wouldn't know or who were not on the original registration list. As well, Marlatt consulted SFU professors Kathy Mezei and Maggie Benston while planning the conference (Personal Interview).

⁷ It is common knowledge that Canada (perhaps more so than more populous countries) has a higher than usual correlation between artistic and academic circles – many individuals are in the overlap zone. NeWest Press' *The Writer As Critic* series, edited by Smaro Kamboureli, features book-length critical works by such noted writers of fiction and critique as Frank Davey, Fred Wah, Aritha van Herk, Stephen Scobie, Stan Dragland, and the ever-liminal Daphne Marlatt. Anyone familiar with Canadian literature could list many other fiction writers who are also academics (e.g., George Bowering, George Elliott Clarke, Jack Hodgins, Robert Kroetch, Carol Shields, Lorna Crozier, to name just a few).

⁸ For instance, Goellnicht cites Jim Wong-Chu's discussion (in "A Brief History of the ACWW") of early organizing at UBC in Vancouver ("Protracted" 10).

⁹ While Goellnicht recognizes that "presses such as Douglas and McIntyre and Press Gang have published East Asian Canadian writing," he seems unaware that PGP also published South Asian writing, notably Mootoo's two books, *Out On Main Street* and *Cereus* (34 n27).

Although Goellnicht claims that the CAWW retained its focus on East Asian writing even after changing its name from the Chinese Writers workshop, and locates South Asian writing exclusively in Ontario, Mootoo's novel (and her previous collection of short stories) demonstrates that this generalization does not hold entirely true (11-13).

¹⁰ Christine Kim's argument goes further, suggesting that the book might be considered not only a transformation but a "translation" of the conference ("Politics" 264). Kim cites Lydia H. Liu's discussion of translation to illustrate the sense in which translation might apply to *Telling It* as: "a desire for meaning as value and a desire to speak across, even under least favorable conditions" (Liu 34) rather than a simple "exchange of equivalent meanings" (Kim "Politics" 264). The conflict at the conference certainly held the possibility of unfavourable conditions. Moreover, *Telling It's* attempt to give meaning and permanent value clearly couldn't involve "equivalent meanings" because of the *aporia* and because of the vehicles themselves (orality versus writing), which confer different emphases, different strengths.

¹¹ For a history of the press, see "A herstory of a women's press: Press Gang Printers" (Giraud and Gilhooly).

¹² The book may appear on university reading lists within these disciplines and has an important on-going effect on students that cannot be adequately measured. However, the strength of the student response is hinted at by Kim's dissertation, by mine, and by comments made to me by feminist scholars at the 2006 ACCUTE conference, where I presented an early approach to this chapter. Julie Rak declared *Telling It* a significant influence early in her scholarly career and Smaro Kamboureli mentioned a student who intends to make it the sole focus of a dissertation. At the 2009 ACCUTE conference, Andrea Beverley also discussed the significance of what I am calling *Telling It's aporia*.

¹³ Here *Telling It* differed from the earlier Women and Words conference, where daytime participation was limited to women. Although Joy Kogawa's father seems to have been one of the few men to have availed himself of the opportunity to hear so many wonderful writers speak and read at the conference ("From the Bottom" 95), *Telling It* was not "closed to men, it just didn't attract men," a consequence Marlatt attributes to the fact that the panels featured women writers exclusively (Personal Interview).

¹⁴ The Dialogue Conference / Collogue Dialogue (York U. 1981) did important feminist work as "one of the first conferences on literary criticism to be held in Canada" (Godard i) and in utilizing a collaborative approach to bridge the gap between Francophone and Anglophone writers (iii). Although *Gynocritics*, the book that came out of the conference, has content by both lesbians and women of colour, those issues are not the focus of the discussion. The conference was more academic than community based and more involved with criticism than fiction, poetry, or politics.

¹⁵ Marlatt discusses how at the Book Fair Lee Maracle, famously (see *Broadside* [Dec. 1988], *Trivia 14*, Julia Emberley (79-80, 94-98), Kim [130-36], and this is not exhaustive!) challenged Anne Cameron (and non-First Nations writers generally) to "stop using Native culture and sacred stories in her [their] books and to move over and make room for Native writers who are writing out of their own experiences and traditions" (Marlatt "Introduction" 16). In Maracle's own words: "we asked her to move over, and because she is a great lady, she moved. That is empowering for Anne, for Canadian women and for Native women" ("Moving Over" 10). Maracle also placed herself in solidarity with both the Black women of Concordia and the

organizers of the Book Fair, while suggesting that the organizers, like Anne, needed to “move over.”

¹⁶ Kim analyzes this split, which occurred over the short story collection, *Imagining Women*, and, specifically, over whether or not the short story “Guatemala” was an example of cultural appropriation and whether it should be excluded on that basis (“Politics” 173-94)

¹⁷ The conference also laid the groundwork for *Telling It* in another way. Barbara Kuhne remembers:

We offered a contract for the book *Telling It* based on knowing the editors: Daphne Marlatt, Betsy Warland, SKY Lee, and Lee Maracle. I had attended the Women and Words Conference back in 1983, and that conference was certainly instrumental in my joining Press Gang (initially as a volunteer and then as a staff person), and that's where I met Betsy and Daphne. (“Re: Questions for You”)

¹⁸ I use this terminology (by convention) as well, but suggest that, in relation to these two conferences, “lesbophobia” might be the more accurate term. The rarity of this term in comparison to the ubiquitous “homophobia” (which term is, technically, inclusive of all same-sex relations, but which nevertheless invokes male relations more strongly) is an example of how hard it is to pay attention exclusively to women.

¹⁹ Interestingly, the Canadian anthology that served similar functions, *The Other Woman: Women of Colour in Contemporary Canadian Literature*, appeared in the same year (1995) as the Vancouver node’s representative novel, *Fox*. It was, however, preceded by the Canadian *Piece of My Heart: A Lesbian of Colour Anthology* that appeared in 1991. Both texts are edited by Makeda Silvera and published by Toronto’s Sister Vision Press. These publications speak to the successful 1990s efforts by racialized women in Canada to bring their stories into print.

²⁰ I would suggest that one of the sources of this pain was the impossibility of responding adequately to competing network hails.

²¹ The 1996 Canadian census was the first to track visible minority self-reporting <<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/feb17/vmbc.pdf> [“Visible Minority Population”]>. Although the time period I am discussing is roughly ten years earlier, the fact that in 1996 the combined numbers of Chinese, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Japanese, and Korean people in BC add up to 532,510 persons out of a total visible minority population of 660,540 persons is certainly an indicator that even eight (1988) and thirteen (1983) years previously, people of Asian heritage were likely the largest visible minority in BC (see Appendix I). This compares to 23,275 people who are classified as Black. In the census, visible minorities do not include First Nations people; however, it is also reported that there was an aboriginal population of 139,655 in BC in 1996 <<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/jan13/bc.htm> [“Aboriginal Population”]>. All of these numbers are somewhat suspect since even the government urges caution in their use; however, I cite them to support Marlatt’s sense of which are the largest groups of marginalized women in BC. There are, as of this writing, no census reports on the number of lesbians in BC.

²² The SFU Archives holding of the Women’s Studies Program materials from the Telling It conference contain numerous letters soliciting suggestions as to which First Nations and Asian writers might be invited to present. The academic support for this conference, which enabled Marlatt to offer funds for writers to travel to Telling It, and which provided a paid organizer (the

Women's Studies Program's administrative assistant, Sandy Shreve), made these efforts much easier than they would have been for a community rather than an academic conference.

²³ *The Radical Reviewer* was a (lesbian) feminist literary newspaper published in Vancouver between 1981 and 1983. Its first two issues were published as literary supplements to *Kinesis*, but it became a stand-alone publication with Issue 3.

²⁴ Although I sometimes mention First Nations peoples separately from various other peoples of colour (as a sign of respect for their unique ancestral position in the lands they occupy), I do not intend to exclude them when they are not so mentioned. First Nations peoples are racialized, considered “of colour,” within mainstream Canadian culture.

²⁵ This significant conference was not included in Butling and Rudy's valuable chronology (134), perhaps because of the conference's focus on film.

²⁶ The question is implicitly discussed in my Introduction. My focus here is to examine an event, to follow the threads of its discussion as they begin to weave a context that affects which books are published when and by whom, which is of interest in the emergence of the Vancouver node.

²⁷ I found this point of view an interesting convergence with my examination of lesbian anthologies, which have often taken a thematic approach to lesbian writing (an approach that I critique in the Introduction). In both cases, the issue seems to be one of wanting to avoid dealing with “lesbian” as a cultural identity, though perhaps for different reasons.

²⁸ This is also an example of how the book “transforms” (as well as “translates”) the conference. Ismail was not at the conference and this is her interpretation of the transcript. Marlatt remembers that the question was anything but tentative: there was “a lot of anger there” (Personal Interview). This was confirmed by other conference participant(s), who remember the question being asked “loudly and strongly, with anger” (St.Peter). SKY Lee says, “It might as well have been a bomb” (Afterword 187). Nevertheless, Ismail's interpretation is brilliant. Perhaps having the opportunity to read the words dispassionately, without (the apparently traumatic) memory, may have made it easier for Ismail to see the interruption as a gift.

²⁹ According to Williams, these two tendencies always already inform each other because “the dominant culture . . . produces and forms its own forms of counter-culture,” which, by definition, are also always already co-opted (114). Foucault's more nuanced perceptions of power are useful because, although the concept of hegemony clarifies the uses of power, Williams tends to restrict the discussion of its operation to its effects on class, which is not as useful in discussing groups that cross class lines or for formulating strategies to work with power to change oppressive circumstances for such groups. Nevertheless, it is useful to be able to discuss who has hegemonic power at any given moment or location within the competing discourses.

³⁰ It is important to note that the specifics of inclusion referred only to the presenters; the conference audience was open to all participants. Nevertheless, most of the participants were White women. *Morena*, a U.S. women's newspaper declined to review *Telling It* because it had no Black or Latina content (the focus of the paper) and was attended primarily by White women (DMF: *Morena*).

³¹ The valuable “Voice(s)-Over” section of the book, which contains reflections and analysis by all of the editors except Marlatt (whose introduction contains her commentary), explains how this phenomenon worked at the conference. Maracle describes how the questioning of lesbian culture occurred in a context where some White lesbians had “wrongfully accused [women of colour] of calling them 'names, labelling them WASPS, hurting them” and no other White lesbians had risen to correct what was an unjust and inaccurate accusation (apparently Dorothy Livesay had used the WASP word in reference to herself and people had missed this) (166). That is, it was a context that demonstrates that, despite our own oppression, White lesbians can draw on the privileges of White hegemony to be oppressive to others, in this case, women of colour. Similarly, that a heterosexual woman of colour rhetorically denies lesbian culture demonstrates that despite oppression through racialization, heterosexual women of colour can draw on the privileges of heterosexuality to behave oppressively towards queers.

³² Although this dissertation gives significant contextual information about PGP, the discussion is limited to aspects that I find relevant to the publishing and distribution of *Telling It, Fox* and other texts relevant to my study of the Vancouver node. For a more detailed discussion of PGP’s business and political evolution, I direct readers to Kim’s dissertation where she “foregrounds the multiple systems, cultural, economic, and political, through and against which Press Gang became both the producer of texts and a product of institutional processes [and explores] the negotiations between Press Gang texts, authors, and publishers and mainstream institutions, large publishers, academic institutions, literary institutions, and prizes” (“Politics” 243). I am grateful to her for setting out the larger context for my own analysis, which is, generally, in accord with her excellent explication of the role of Feminist presses in the Canadian cultural and literary field.

³³ In another fond in Press Gang’s materials, I unearthed a short, “Early History,” attributed to Pat Smith, wherein Smith notes the success of PGP’s venture into feminist publishing: “Formed in 1970 as a left-leaning printing group, it became a feminist collective in 1974. Ten years later and to a wider audience, Press Gang is known also as a feminist publisher” (PGPF). This document resides in a folder entitled “Sample Catalogues -- 1986 and earlier, 1977-1986” and the somewhat ambiguous reference to “[t]en years later” suggests that the anti-sexist, anti-racist policy was at least internally “official” by 1980 or 1984. Moreover, one suspects that overtly racist material would always have been rejected by a press that, from its beginnings, prided itself on being progressive.

³⁴ I must clarify that, although I am grateful that Kim has compiled a list of PGP’s publications (“Politics ” 312-15), which list is also available through Press Gang Publishers Complete Catalogue (Fall 1998), this study does not rely on either of those lists entirely because the Catalogue itself is misleading. For instance, I suspect the Catalogue’s citation of Makeda Silvera’s novel, *The Revenge of Maria*, as being published in 1998, understandably, led Kim to cite that text in her list. In fact, that novel was never published by PGP; the manuscript was withdrawn and later became *The Heart Does Not Bend*, published by Random House Canada in 2002 (Kuhne “Letter Plus ”). Because of such potential pitfalls in using secondary sources, my research uses primary sources, which I have often verified with appropriate individuals, unless otherwise noted.

³⁵ Although Kim lists two publication dates for this book, perhaps based on its appearance in the Fall 1981 Catalogue and bibliographic information in the text itself, Barbara Kuhne explains that it took longer than anticipated to finish and so was not actually published until 1984 (E-mail “Re: Stepping”).

³⁶ Kim also notes a number of these initiatives though she places them in the late 1980s, closer to the Telling It conference, rather than the mid-1980s (“Politics” 257-65).

³⁷ The terms used to refer to ethno-racialized cultural groups especially in work that concerns identity, as the authors of *Challenging Racism in the Arts* note, is a constantly shifting terrain (Tator, Henry and Mattis 10-11). My approach is to try to use, when the old term hasn't become positively offensive, the term in use by the people involved at the time. For my own use, currently, I chose the term that I understand the people involved to currently prefer, knowing that it, too, is provisional.

³⁸ Chrystos is a lesbian author of Menominee and Lithuanian/Alsace-Lorraine heritage, who has spent most of her life living on the U.S. West Coast (*In Her* n. pag.).

³⁹ Kuhne also noted the significant anti-racist influence of their later relationship with Sister Vision Press, which was based on a friendship between Makeda Silvera and McCreary (“Re: questions for you”).

⁴⁰ Other editors also attended: Ann Decter of Women's Press; Barbara Pulling of D & M; and Pat Feindel, a former editor of *Kinesis*. Each is named in the registration list for Telling It WSH "Registration"). However, in an evaluation that was sent to the Secretary of State: Multiculturalism, Sandy Shreve, Telling It's program coordinator writes, “The only component that was less successful than we had hoped was meeting publishers as not as many publishers attended as originally indicated they would” (“June 21”). PGP was the most thoroughly represented publisher at the conference (with all three principals registered). This show of support and PGP's feminist politic, in combination with the publisher's Vancouver location seem likely enough reasons for Marlatt to first approach PGP to publish any kind of proceedings. However, in their July 4, 1989 meeting PGP discusses feedback from Marlatt telling them that Viola Thomas had expressed “dismay” that neither Theytus Books or Write-On Press (both indigenous publishers) had been offered the book (PGPF “Meetings, 1987-89”). Subsequently, PGP explored co-publishing with these presses; however, Theytus felt that co-publishing was too arduous and Write-On thought they'd be more interested in buying / distributing rather than publishing (“Kuhne Letter to Marlatt”).

⁴¹ Presumably, they would be able to give these to interested authors ahead of time and thus save themselves the trouble of writing such rejection letters. This would have been important because, despite the fact that PGP was actively soliciting manuscripts by this time, they were still “rejecting 99.9% of the submissions [they] were getting” (Kuhne Personal Interview).

⁴² The significance of 1988 and The Multiculturalism Act will both be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

⁴³ In 1993 PGP published: *In Her I Am* by Chrystos; *Out On Main Street* by Shani Mootoo; *My Grass Cradle* by Joanne Arnott; *Unruly Women: Essays on Confinement and Resistance* by Karlene Faith; *In Conflict with the Law: Women and the Canadian Justice System*, edited by Ellen Adelberg and Claudia Currie. Chrystos and Arnott are First Nations while Mootoo is South Asian.

⁴⁴ I have taken this information from the author biography in Brant's *Writing as Witness*, which, being published by Women's Press in Toronto, is a further indication of the importance

and geographic reach of the feminist networks that made so many publications possible. This lesbian grandmother also published *Food and Spirits* with Press Gang in 1991.

⁴⁵ This perception comes from my reading of *Telling It* and from my contact with several conference participants (Marlatt, Maracle, Warland, Kuhne, and Barbara Herringer).

⁴⁶ Starting in 1988, PGP published Chrystos and Maracle extensively as well as work by other First Nations and Métis women. If, during this time, Chrystos had made her home in Canada or Maracle identified as a lesbian, this concentration of queer women's writing in Vancouver would have been as strongly marked by First Nations publications as it is by Asian Canadian ones. This, of course, demonstrates the weakness of a national focus or indeed any focus based on identity; however, I have used these as a necessary limit on the range of my study. The criteria reflect both disciplinary interest in national literatures and my own interests. They do not imply a political or aesthetic value judgement on the intrinsic worth of unselected publications. On the contrary, I believe these First Nations texts warrant further study.

⁴⁷ Butling and Rudy offer excellent, though not exhaustive, annotated listings of these as well as other events of significance to Canadian literary communities in "Chronology 2 (1980-2003)" (127-40).

⁴⁸ PGP lost the opportunity to publish *Disappearing Moon Café* to Lee's friendship with D & M editor, Usukawa, with whom Lee had worked at *MAKARA* (Usukawa 17 Jan.). *MAKARA* was a Vancouver feminist literary journal that published from 1975 to 1978, although the *MAKARA* Publishing and Design Collective continued until 1983 ("Makara Calls"). Barbara Kuhne adds that D & M was also able to offer Lee an advance (Personal Interview). This gestures towards the material bases of publication, although Usukawa points out that D & M did not offer large advances and suggests that the money wouldn't have been as significant motivator for Lee as the trust and respect the two had already developed and the fact that she had already given Lee feedback on the manuscript (Usukawa "Memories").

⁴⁹ PGP Board of Directors meetings in early 1997 discuss the restructuring that will be required by Kuhne's imminent departure (PGPF "Board . . . 1995 [*sic*]"). Speidel had resigned from the Board in May of 1996. This left McCreary as the last of the three principals.

⁵⁰ As Sky Lee reports, "There was a shocked silence, then a polite recovery, but incredibly, no anger" (Afterword 183). Because the woman who questioned was a woman of colour, and that she did so, as Maracle noted, within a context of White racist defensiveness, everyone felt silenced: White women were afraid of being or appearing racist; women of colour didn't want to either attack or seem to attack a sister ("Ramparts" 167).

Chapter Four: Larissa Lai's Transformation of *Écriture au Féminin* in *When Fox Is a Thousand: A TransCanada Internodal Migration*

“Urban radicals invent fictions which mirror them infinitely. . . . What they conclude about reality transforms itself into a thinking perspective which is the very texture of the texts they produce.” Nicole Brossard (*Aerial* 81)

Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*¹ is my primary representative text of the novels worth celebrating that make up the Vancouver node and which were published, to a significant extent, through the joint efforts of queer women of colour and Press Gang Publishers. *Fox* is a good representative because it was produced and supported primarily by self-identified queer and / or lesbian feminists, although this is also true of *Cereus Blooms at Night* and *Sunnybrook*, two other node novels published by PGP. The next chapter will examine the social context that conditioned its emergence while this chapter focusses on *Fox*'s literary strategies, whose affective impact on readers furthers the feminist, anti-racist, and anti-homophobic values of both author and publisher. *Fox* emerges mid-decade (fall 1995), five years after the inaugural text of Asian Canadian Queer literature, SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café*. *Fox* is a Queer Asian Canadian postmodern novel that establishes a new *line of flight*, a successful *detrterritorialization* of the novel genre, which is always, according to M.M. Bakhtin, receptive to the new and to changes in form, content, and interpretation.²

Roy Miki's contention that “textual production becomes a survival tactic in the construction of the imaginary that enacts the actual in our lives” also finds a useful representative in *Fox* (“Sliding” 150). Miki's comment underlines the inextricable link

between queer aesthetics (“textual production”) and queer bodies and their social networks (“the actual in our lives”), which is the linkage that drives the oscillating methodology of this dissertation. Reading these two chapters together demonstrates how *Fox*’s literary strategies and content reflect the material and political contexts that conditioned both its emergence and the emergence of the Vancouver node. In particular, this chapter shows how *Fox* contributes to creating “actual” social cultural space through creating queer, female, and Asian identifications as the default in literary space for groups that the dominant culture has marginalized.

Fox is characterized by its challenges to the conventions of realist writing, part of what Linda Hutcheon calls “[t]he postmodern 'different', . . . [which she sees] starting to replace the humanist 'universal' as a prime cultural value” (ix). Lai employs a non-linear, disrupted narrative with three distinct character-narrators, separated by time, place, and species: 9th century Chinese poet, Yu Hsuan-Chi; her late 20th century incarnation, Artemis, an Asian Canadian University of British Columbia student; and the Fox,³ a “queered” version of Chinese folktale character, who has the ability to assume human female form and to transport herself across time and space. The Fox's migrations are the shuttle that allows Lai to weave her complex narrative design that connects “ancient spirits and ancient bodies with contemporary student life” as she visits both Yu Hsuan-Chi and Artemis (Morris 71). There are a surprising number of parallels between the ancient Chinese and the modern Vancouver stories. Besides each character’s on-going relationship with the Fox, unceasing until the Fox reaches her one thousandth birthday and gives up her haunting intercourse with humans, a close companion (the poet's

maidservant and Artemis' best friend) of each woman dies under mysterious circumstances. Furthermore, all three narrators are, arguably, "queer" (another take on Hutcheon's postmodern "different"), which complicates their relations within the societies around them. Interlocking relationships are central to Artemis' story, which might be read as a coming-of-age or coming out narrative. Artemis searches for community and explores her racialized and sexual identifications. Within each narrative, Lai disrupts the conventions of sex, gender, romance, work, marriage, history, violence, race, and sexuality.

Fox's postmodern engagement with the historical figure and times of Yu Hsuan-Chi and contemporary Vancouver marks it as historiographic metafiction, which Hutcheon defines as "fiction that is intensely, self-reflexively art, but is also grounded in historical, social, and political realities" (13). This characteristic is one that *Fox* shares with other novels published in the 1990s by queer Asian Canadian women in Vancouver such as *Disappearing Moon Café*, *Cereus Blooms at Night*, and *This Place Called Absence*.⁴ *Fox* is also consciously and overtly intertextual. Self-consciously situating itself in the field of cultural production and in the context of other cultural artefacts, it enacts an intersection of genres as well. When Robyn Morris refers to "the generic intertextuality of *Fox*," the genres she references are film and literary text, but *Fox* also challenges genre boundaries within the literary, as it combines myth, folktale, history, and fiction narratives ("Re-Visioning" 80).

This chapter investigates, not so much *Fox's* challenges to literary genre, which are significant, but its challenges to a more fundamental "generic" – that which goes

unmarked in discourse, the “default settings” (or generics) of Western culture, that which is inscribed in, and by, the structural workings of language. In *Narrative in the Feminine*, Susan Knutson discusses “the grammatical masculine generic [that] extends far beyond sentence grammar to govern gender structures in discourses of all kinds” (23). This means that in any discourse the masculine is what “goes without saying”: “[t]he female is always marked for gender, and only male human subjects have access to the unmarked generic” (26). Knutson defines disruption of the masculine generic by creating a female generic within language and narrative as the primary task of *écriture au féminin* (193-95). *Fox* undertakes this task, but extends the strategy to disrupt White and heterosexual generics as well.

Fox also sounds an autobiographical note as it echoes, in part, the author's familial migrations (Lai's parents moved from Hong Kong to Canada via England and California [Personal Interview]). Not surprisingly, issues of migration are central in Lai's *Fox*, which situates itself at the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality. As Bennett Yu-Hsiang Fu observes, the *Fox* and the novel's human characters continually cross the borders of both identities and nation-states (160). The hybridities explored by *Fox*, and its namesake narrator also link this representative text to what I have called new thirdspace queer narrative, which is discussed in Chapter Six in relation to three other representative node texts. However, this chapter focusses on how *Fox*'s literary techniques also enact a transCanadian migration of ideas and literary strategies from Montréal to Vancouver. Lai's text is structured by migrations through time, space, cultures, species, sexes, and sexualities, but narrated using strategies of *écriture au*

féminin, which challenge the “generic” of discourse. I argue that Lai adapts these from Québécoise lesbian writer, Nicole Brossard,⁵ arguably the mother of *écriture au féminin*, and the most significant influence on even the Montréal English publication node observed in the early 1980s (see Figure 1), which includes English translations of Francophone texts.

The Montréal node of the early 1980s has its roots in the feminist Francophone writing community in the late 1970s and in *écriture au féminin*, which was also a product of the convergence of poststructuralist and lesbian-feminist thought – another early precursor to 1990s queer theory (albeit one not noted by Linda Garber). Many other scholars have noted this concentration of publications that centred in Montréal in the late 1970s and the 1980s. As Karen Gould states: “the literary efforts of Nicole Brossard, Madeleine Gagnon, Louky Bersianik, and France Théoret to approach writing through a feminist consciousness and in a different voice have signalled a major shift in focus in women's literary production in Quebec” (3). The influence of this key Francophone development spread to Anglophone writing communities by the 1980s through specific collaborations (such as that between Brossard and Daphne Marlatt [e.g., *Mauve*] and Barbara Godard [via translations of Brossard as well as studies of her work]); conferences (e.g., Dialogue Conference / Collogue Dialogue, 1981, and Women and Words 1983); journals (e.g., *Tessera*); and innumerable private conversations and correspondences (such as those between Erin Mouré and Bronwen Wallace). Most recently, Marie Carrière and Maria Santoro have published important book-length studies on *writing in the feminine* as a literary movement. However, as Carrière observes, most

single articles focus on Marlatt and Brossard, so that “the actual scope of the movement of writing in the feminine, especially in its Anglophone context and from a comparative perspective, is still not accounted for and indeed demands further attention” (16). Her study, which focusses on Brossard, Marlatt, Di Brant, Erin Mouré, and Lola Lemire Tostevin goes a long way to addressing the deficit in comparative studies; however, it does not address the full range of the movement's influence in Anglophone Canada, a range which I extend to Asian Canadian writers through this examination of Lai's *Fox*.

Although this study confines itself to a discussion of only *écriture au féminin* and, specifically, how its strategies are extended by *Fox*, it is necessary to clarify a number of potential points of confusion in terminology. Firstly, *écriture au féminin* is also known as *fiction-theory* and as *writing in the feminine*. I use all three terms interchangeably. *Écriture au féminin* originated with Brossard's “[t]héorie fictive” in *L'amèr* (7), later evolved into “fiction theory,” and still later into “écriture au féminin” (Knutson 194). Secondly, it is crucial to distinguish *écriture au féminin* from the similar-sounding, “*écriture féminine*,” which originated with Hélène Cixous. The nature of this distinction is the subject of much academic debate, which is usefully summarized by Knutson (11-17). It suffices for the current project to state my own position, which posits one key and crucial difference. My reading of Cixous' “*écriture féminine*” finds that it rests on the implicit foundational idea that there *is* an essential feminine from which is derived a “feminine” writing style. “*Écriture au féminin*” makes no such argument for an essential feminine, but instead strives to inscribe material women, in their bodily specificities, into the symbolic order by engaging in inventive counter-hegemonic literary practices. In my

interpretation, *écriture féminine* situates itself within the discourses of essentialist humanism while *écriture au féminin* is compatible with post-structuralist projects. Other critics, including Carrière and Santoro, sometimes argue the reverse, and occasionally seem to conflate the two strategies.

While a detailed discussion of these differences would take the current project too far afield, for current purposes, it is most relevant that Carrière connects *écriture au féminin* to ethics; that is, to the field of action rather than the field of ontology. She argues that the basis for this “positive dialectic between same and other [is found] in the mother-child dyad. . . . conceptualized as an already linguistic, social relation, a core component of language (Kristeva, Cixous) and, by extension, a model of social, ethical relationships and selfhood (Irigaray, Oliver, Benjamin)” (5). She further posits that “[t]his maternal model underlies constructions of female subjectivity” and connects this theoretical view to writing in the feminine. Interestingly, although I argue that *Fox* engages the strategies of writing in the feminine, it does not, on the level of content, explore the mother-child dyad except, perhaps, in its absence.

It might, however, be argued that it is the very absence of mothers in *Fox* that both calls up the Fox and sets the daughters on their impossible quests for identifications and community.⁶ At the very least these differences suggest that, although *Fox* shares “a self-conscious theorizing and poetic rendering of female selfhood,” with the works examined by Carrière, it is *not* “modelled on the mother-daughter bond,” a commonality she finds in the texts she examines (51). Nevertheless, *Fox* is primarily concerned with

subjectivity and relations between the self (same) and other, the critical ethical component that Carrière, quite rightly, discerns in writing in the feminine.

Lai's project of putting "women identified women of Chinese descent living in the West at its centre" ("Political" 149) is similar to the project of Brossard's *Picture Theory*, which Knutson analyzes, in that *Fox* establishes "a discursive female generic by representing a world in which women and women's points of view are constructed as default and normal" (195). This ethical move marks texts as writing in the feminine or fiction theory, which Barbara Godard usefully defines as "a narrative, usually self-mirroring, which exposes, defamiliarizes and/or subverts the fiction and gender codes determining the re-presentation of women in literature and in this way contributes to feminist theory" (59). *Fox* not only executes this move, but exceeds it by also establishing a discursive generic space for Asian and Queer subjectivities. In this way, Lai's *écriture au féminin* in *Fox* contributes to postcolonial, queer, and feminist theory.

Lai's novel represents not only a migration of literary strategies across Canada, but also a migration between and within some of Canada's many cultural groupings: East, West, French, English, Euro-Canadian, Asian Canadian, female, and queer in a rhizomatic spreading of ideas and practices. *Fox* represents an expansion of *écriture au féminin* by extending its generic challenge to issues of racialization. This broadening of *écriture au féminin* is necessary because, as Knutson has pointed out, rather than a solely grammatical feature, "the generic is a cultural mechanism which defaults to the 'normal,' or privileged, term along the axes of gender, race, sexual orientation, (dis)ability and class; it is often independent of grammar, and never limited to gender" (26). Although

the task of inscribing a female generic is itself extremely ambitious within the (still) patriarchal late capitalist environment, it is also, when focussed on gender exclusively, unable to successfully challenge the complex cultural hegemonies that underwrite the masculine generic of discourse. In part, that is because the masculine generic is buttressed by the many interlocking hegemonies that it in turn supports: racialization, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and capitalism among them. Knutson notes that “the encounter with anti-racism produces a potent effect in feminist linguistics and further exposes the mechanisms of the generic” (29). This is useful because insights gained from Lai’s anti-racist challenge to the generic increase our understanding of the simultaneous and complex interaction of the various vectors of privilege and oppression, which are never simply cumulative. Judith Butler confirms this *necessarily* interrelated aspect of the generic. She argues that “[t]he order of sexual difference is not prior to that of race or class in the constitution of the subject; indeed, that the symbolic is also and at once a racializing set of norms, and that norms of realness by which the subject is produced are racially informed conceptions of ‘sex’” (*Bodies* 130). Butler’s use of ‘sex’ here includes an awareness of sexuality as similarly racially informed, as does Lai’s queering of normative racializations and gender. Linda Garber notes that this awareness of the interlocking nature of oppressed subjectivities is also evident in 1970s American Black lesbian and feminist writings by Audre Lorde and the Combahee River Collective (*Identity* 99-100).

Writers such as Lai, who write from politically and academically sophisticated positions, and who access several racialized and sexualized communities, stage a meeting

between *écriture au féminin* and anti-racism that imbue the former's writing strategies with a postcolonial and global sensibility. This creates a new, an "Other," literary space that opens, not only to the generic female, but also to an Asian and queer generic, which challenges the hegemonic, *taken for granted* linguistic privilege of the generic in discourse. As Knutson suggests, "To identify the operation of a generic in the place of, say, discrimination, sexism or ill will is to move away from a confrontation of essences into a postmodern field of interactive possibility, because the generic in itself is a mechanism, a semiotic technology, which is context-dependent, subject to manipulation and relatively responsive to social pressure" (27). As well as delineating one of the ways in which *écriture au féminin* works against essentialist practice, this description of the generic also discusses writing in the feminine as a means by which writers may effect social change. Placing "others" at the generic centre challenges not only the hegemonic position of the masculine, White, and heteronormative constructions, but also challenges the linguistic mechanism of the generic itself by making it visible even though it is not possible, within language, to evade its practices. The social potential of *écriture au féminin* as a literary practice is vital to Lai as an activist cultural worker who is "aware of trying to normalize things that don't regularly get normalized" ("Interview with Morris" 26). Moreover, Lai's queer "CanAsian"⁷ use of *écriture au féminin* also implicitly complicates the Canadian Anglo/Franco binary by introducing Chinese-ness as a third term.

To some extent, Lai's work against mainstream language generics also challenges the presumed connection between Euro-culture and its canonical Greco-Roman

foundations. An early indication that this is a conscious strategy is found in how Lai has named her characters.⁸ Lai's contemporary human protagonist is named Artemis, after the Greek hunter-goddess. The Fox, one of the novel's three narrators, addresses potential mainstream reading responses directly: "You say: A funny name for a Chinese girl. I will correct you. Chinese-Canadian" (20). The Fox then underlines the name's relationship to a diasporic community that is imbricated with the appeal of Western culture: "Make no mistake, because her name is a name that marks a generation of immigrant children whose parents loved the idea of the Enlightenment and thought they would find it blooming in the full heat of its rational fragrance right here in North America" (20). The effect of this naming is enhanced and highlighted by being doubled. The novel's charismatic "bad girl" (who intrigues and ensnares Artemis, among many others) is a "gifted twister of the truth" named Diane (148). "Diane" is, of course, the name of the Roman incarnation of the Greek goddess, Artemis. Greek myth is again evoked when Artemis meets the widow and daughter of an old business contact of her adoptive father while she is visiting Hong Kong. The daughter is named Leda and she, "[l]ike her namesake [in Greek mythology]. . . spans the gap between cultures" as she translates her mother for Artemis (126).

Other characters' names carry biblical weight: Eden, Mercy, Angel, and Saint invoke important elements of Christianity. As Fu notes, "Names in Lai's novel are so symbolic that the text reads, at times, like a fable or an allegory that fuses Judeo-Christian texts with Hellenic and classical Chinese mythology" (160). In particular, Fu discusses Mercy's personal transformation to Ming, which represents not only a move

towards (re)claiming Chinese heritage, but also signals, in its Chinese character, both the sun/male and the moon/female, the “androgynous coexistence of two genders” (161). Mercy’s name change reflects her character’s change from dutiful Chinese daughter and student to rebellious CanAsian dyke artist.

Lai’s inclusion of past and present myths, tales, and conventions always contains a significant deviation from the “original,” which allows her to simultaneously introduce and undermine tradition. For instance, in traditional Chinese Fox myth, the Fox is female and haunts men while Lai’s Fox is female, but haunts women (Afterword 255-57). Morris argues for “the importance of the past in the formation of a bicultural identity in a specifically mono-Canadian present” (“Re-Visioning” 71),⁹ a contention that Lai reinforces when she states that *Fox* “was deployed very much in the context of national belonging” (Afterword 258). In placing contemporary Asian Canadian women at the Greco-Roman-Christian roots of Western culture and by inscribing Asian traditions and culture onto contemporary Canadian culture, Lai’s (re)inscription migrates forwards and backwards through time and across space. The performative nature of naming and Lai’s transgressive re-ordering of myth help readers to recognize and value female queer Asian Canadian bodies in a “radical rearticulation of the symbolic horizon in which bodies come to matter” (Butler *Bodies* 23).

Another writing strategy that Lai uses in her translation of *écriture au féminin* involves the simple, but reversed presence or absence of linguistic markers for dominant or non-dominant groups, which confuses readerly expectations. Readerly expectations may be generalized because even readers of marked, unprivileged groups tend to read

unmarked terms as belonging to the dominant group unless they are practised “resisting readers” (Fetterley). Several examples will demonstrate how Lai deploys this strategy. The first occurs when Diane invites Artemis to visit her while she is staying in a very comfortable house that is elaborately decorated with Chinese and Persian rugs. When Artemis arrives, Diane asks her, ““You like this house?’ . . . [then adds] ‘It belongs to white girls’” (65).¹⁰ Here Lai directly challenges *what goes without saying*, the hegemonic, *natural order* of things, by putting in a positive marker (the adjective, “white”) when “white” is not “normally” noted in English, though readers do expect a marker for categories that are racialized. Lai’s reversal of the normative use of “white” has the effect of racializing Whiteness, which decentres white readers, who may expect the text’s imagined audience to be White. This usage can feel somewhat hostile to White readers,¹¹ which seems odd – until one realizes that this seemingly innocent deployment of an otherwise neutral descriptive adjective transgresses the generic and in doing so implicitly informs readers that White is not the norm in this textual environment or in the extra-textual environment of the imagined audience.

When an author alters the amount and type of information expected by readers, this may be experienced as a transgression of the tacit contract between writer and reader.¹² As such, it may produce an emotional response in readers because, as Kenneth Burke argues, “[l]anguage is a species of action, symbolic action – and its nature is such that it can be used as a tool” (15). Breaking a contract is never a neutral act. In this case, Lai’s transgression of the generic may be recognized as an action taken *against* the current hegemonic status of Whiteness, since “[d]iscourse transmits and produces power;

it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it,” according to Foucault (*History* 101). If one is attached to Whites maintaining hegemony, then materializing White racialization may well be taken as a hostile act, since it challenges the privilege of Whites to be the originator of the gaze from which others are seen as deviations from the White standard. When Whites are racialized it implies a decentring of the colonizing gaze. Moreover, Diane’s use of “girl” reinforces the challenge to White dominance since dominance demands subservience (or respect) which is refuted by “white girls,” which demonstrates an assumption of equality or superiority in both terms since “girls” can also seem trivializing. This reinforces the discomfort for normative White readers because literature is capable of producing “real-life” affect in response to its events, which operate on the axis of language and form as well as though narrative content.

The above example shows how Lai subverts the generic in a positive way, by naming what normally *goes without saying*; however, in *Fox*, she also challenges the generic by using negative discursive space -- that is by *not* marking what is usually marked. The following example is necessarily long in order to capture the subtlety of this strategy. As she was in the situation with Diane, in this scene Artemis is seeking to house herself. Both she and readers meet the landlord, Marlina, for the first time when Artemis discusses renting an apartment from her:

“It’s hardwood underneath,” said Marlina. “You could easily remove it.”

She beamed encouragingly at her prospective new tenant. Artemis smiled down at her, taking her in. Marlina was tiny. It must be hard to get people

to take you seriously when you are that small, Artemis thought to herself, having had some experience of that herself. But the acid-washed jeans, frilly white shirt, and denim vest with large denim flowers flopping over the front panels didn't help. "Any repairs you want, within reason, my father-in-law will take care of them," said Marlina. Her voice was her saving grace, firm, friendly, and businesslike. (161)

Although the narrator reveals many details about Marlina, she does not racialize her and, in the absence of marking, and despite the "clue" that "tiny" might represent, many readers may normatively assume that Marlina is a "generic" character; that is, White. Not racializing Marlina creates "a mental space," of which readers are not yet aware, but which "little by little will become invested with . . . subjectivities" (Brossard *Aerial* 111). This space gives authors space to play on (and undo) readers' assumptions. According to Brossard, women's "multiple and different" subject positions allow urban radical writers, such as herself and Lai, to work with "polyvalent and multi-directional words" to unfix the rigid interpretations (Brossard's "*sens unique*" or one-way sense) of identities that our culture inculcates through various symbolic means, language among them.

Directly following the introduction to Marlina, readers accompany Artemis to a party in Eden's loft, where she is staying while she looks for an apartment. At the party, Artemis takes a joint from "a tall woman with white-blond hair," who asks her if she speaks English. Since Artemis is holding a toke (and her breath), she can't respond verbally, but nods. The woman says to her "equally tall, equally blonde friend": "I don't

think she understood me,” and then politely addresses Artemis in Mandarin (161-62). Artemis walks away in disgust at the woman’s incorrect and annoying assumptions, which ride roughshod over Artemis’ nod.

This scene may be read metafictionally as a cautionary tale that encourages reflective readers, especially if they happen to be blonde (or tall), to check their own recent assumptions – about Marlina for instance, who, quite pointedly, reappears in the next paragraph. After a few comments, Marlina says to Artemis, “Since you are Chinese I’ll let you have it for five hundred dollars, instead of five hundred and fifty” (162). This might prompt readers to wonder if Marlina herself is Chinese since this could be an in-group offer. However, Marlina might simply be a White woman who holds the common stereotype of Asians as an exemplary minority group, who will, therefore, be “good” tenants. Next, Marlina’s husband Feltham is introduced to readers “clutching his cell phone. . . . [and wearing] gray wool pants that were several inches too short, revealing gray socks sagging around skinny ankles.” Still, Lai uses no positive racial markers.

Finally, readers meet Joanne, the other new tenant, who uses stereotypes of Asians in general and Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong, in particular, as she cautions Artemis: “You be careful of those two. They’re pretty sly. And if they ever ask you about the two cedars out front, tell them you absolutely love them. I’m almost positive they’re scheming to cut them down” (162-63). Joanne elaborates: “Landlords are scum . . . all of them. . . . Next time I move, though, I’m gonna make sure the landlord is White” (163). Now readers know that Marlina and Feltham are not White, but are only sure they are Chinese if sufficiently aware of Vancouver politics to interpret Joanne’s topical racist

comments.¹³ Four pages later there is further confirmation as Marlina discusses her family's immigration / business strategies, and readers meet “the son of Feltham Chan” and his grandfather Mr. Chan (167).

In this case, *not* marking the landlords as Asian makes Asian the standard within the literary space of the novel. Lai's manipulation of the readers' generic expectations rearranges power relations in a manner similar to, but translated from the francophone-based *écriture au féminin* into English pragmatics and towards anti-racism. The text, literarily, compels readers to become conscious of, and to re-arrange, at least temporarily, the default settings of Canadian English, which are “felt” as personal settings for normative Canadian readers. In short, the text changes minds, albeit within a limited sphere. This raises readerly consciousness regarding the more subtle aspects of racialization and racism, which are often felt and expressed unconsciously. Most significantly, by making Chinese heritage the norm, Lai gives Asian Canadian readers a rare opportunity to occupy a hegemonic position and to observe the racialization of White characters. *Fox* also acts as a subliminal encouragement towards anti-racism by enabling White readers to experience *for themselves*, through the pragmatics of language, the non-hegemonic position and the cultural practices that underwrite overt racist acts. As Lai herself says, “If the effect of my fiction is to centralize somebody of my description, it would be interesting if whiteness did become marginalized as a sort of side-effect. But I don't think the language is constructed that way. It might be interesting for whiteness to find itself not at the centre of a narrative. But this is not the primary motive of my work” (“Interview with Morris” 28).

I would argue, along with Susan Knutson (26ff), that, in fact, language is constructed just that way. Moreover, though Lai claims to be conscious only of how she re-creates the centre, making new centres, inevitably, creates new margins as well as demonstrating the contingent nature of “centre.” As a White critic, I say it is salutary for Whiteness to find itself in those still existing margins. Lai's stated intention not to marginalize Whites no doubt rests in a desire to challenge the centre / margin binary. However, the binary of margin / centre is perhaps even less easily overturned than who occupies which position, which is, of course, more easily achieved in literature than in our actual lives. Nevertheless, *Fox* gestures in this direction in Lai's generosity towards all her inevitably culturally conditioned readers. After her initial universalizing move, Lai generally gives textual indications that allow readers to “(re)orient” themselves to the particulars. Manipulation of discourse to produce a new generic in *Fox* is a gentle, but active and useful, political intervention.

I want to stress that the narrative focus in these seven pages is on Artemis renting an apartment and going to a party. This reading focusses on the presence or absence of markers of race solely to demonstrate how Lai impels consciousness of generally unconscious expectations of what is marked and what is not to challenge and deepen readerly awareness of the more subtle aspects of racialization. Her design weaves itself into the narrative seamlessly; it is not obtrusive. However, upon careful examination, Lai's strategies can be seen to follow Godard's description of how writers might establish a discursive female generic through the techniques of fiction theory:

This narrative works upon the codes of language (syntax, grammar, gender-coded diction, etc.), of the self (construction of the subject, self/other, drives, etc.), of fiction (characterization, subject, matter, plots, closure, etc.), of social discourse (male/female relations, historical formations, hierarchies, hegemonies) in such a way as to provide a critique and/or subvert the dominant tradition that within a patriarchal society has resulted in a de-formed representation of women. All the while it focuses on what language is saying and interweaves a story. It defies categories and explodes genres. (59-60)

In the previous example, Lai works both with and against “the codes of language,” to critique the dominant (mis)representation of race. She uses a similar strategy to challenge the generics that encode gender. Initially, a figure is introduced without any gender marking, which allows readers to assume a gender. Most readers will choose male automatically, in the absence of linguistic instruction to the contrary, because the generic default is for male in the absence of contrary marking. In these cases, readers don’t usually have to wait long to be corrected. In one passage, the Fox tells Artemis a story about a nun walking to a temple with food for her sisters: “On the way through the woods, a fox [readers assign gender here] crossed her path, waving a bushy tail. / ‘Where are you going, and what have you got in that bowl?’ *she* [and are corrected here] asked” (218, italics mine).

In another scene, the Fox shares one of her memories with readers: “I still remember the first time I ever saw a dead fox [assign gender]. I was young. It was still

years before I'd even heard of such things as rope and poison, of brown bottles and pig's bladder. By the bank of a river, fishing for trout, a fox [assign gender again] had taken a hunter's arrow in *her* [correction] side" (223, italics mine). Earlier, the Fox tells readers, "My cousin, the one we called Stump Tail, was incorrigible. *She* . . . continued to terrorize the merchant's wife" (87, italics mine). It is even more telling (and rather droll) that these creatures tend always to be female even if they have stumpy tails and are engaged in anthropomorphically typical "male" activities (such as fishing and terrorizing). By repeatedly introducing female characters who are often initially unmarked as such, the text requires readers to become aware of the habitual defaults for gender. To some extent, this literary action operates to retrain the cultural generic by frustrating its trained reflex. Lai thus universalizes both gender and racial categories that are usually minoritized. In *Fox*, because of Lai's reversals of the generic, whenever a character is not marked, it is safest to assume that that character is female and of Asian heritage.

Authority is also gendered differently in *Fox*, and this may be seen as textual engagement at the level of what Godard identifies as "social discourse." Most of the religious figures in the novel are Buddhist or Taoist and nuns (as opposed to Christian and male religious figures). When Artemis attends the morgue to identify the body of her friend, Ming, she is greeted by a "tall [and, therefore, perhaps non-Chinese] policewoman" rather than the more typical authority figure of the *policeman* (221). Male authorities do appear in the novel, but their appearance tends to prefigure trouble, and,

usually, there is a female alternative, who often provides some resolution. When Artemis and Ming cross the U.S. / Canada border by bus, we see this literary strategy at play:

One of the customs officers was a white man in his fifties, heavy and smelling strongly of drugstore deodorant. . . . he pumped the questions out brusquely, not for a moment doubting his ability to inspire terror. . . . The other customs officer was a young woman, sturdy-looking in her blue uniform. [In an expression of the novel's default to a homosocial generic, i]t was she whom Artemis and Ming chose and as she questioned them . . . she smiled with the conspiratorial smile of someone who understands this ordeal the same way they do. (139)

Lai is not, however, utopian in her deployment of female authority figures. In this case, choosing to go to the female customs officer does not result in the characters speeding through the checkpoint. After the woman has cleared them, the older White man holds up all the passengers until he finds the owner of a roach that was found on the bus. Ming and Artemis are prime suspects, although they are eventually cleared when a young man claims the marijuana. Despite the existence of female authority figures, male authority is still a controlling factor. However, while recognizing male hegemony in the events of the novel, Lai's text, also operates similarly to Brossard's "*Picture Theory*[, which] constructs a female generic in the context of a feminist discourse and as a result of the fact that the main characters are all women" (Knutson 195). While not all Lai's authorities are female, the strategy of typically providing a female authority privileges female readers and offers women the benefit of an interruption of the generic.

Interestingly, Lai does not stress the gender of the novel's most colourful figure, the Fox. Perhaps it is easier for Western readers to accept this “trickster figure” (Fu 159) when they are not too often reminded of her sex. But lest we doubt the strength of the generic and the difficulty of inscribing an alternate generic, an astute reader as Lynne Van Luven refers to Lai's Fox as “he” a number of times (270).¹⁴ This is a reading that the novel repudiates, even though the Fox is only explicitly gendered twice. Both times are of interest. The first occurs as the Fox discusses why other foxes shun her. The Fox describes them running back to their “animal carcasses and shallow dwellings as though to say, 'See, here are the things that make us civilized, here are the things that make us *not like her*'” (27, emphasis in text). As Fu observes, “they chastise the Fox for ‘haunting women,’ in other words, for being a lesbian and transgressing sexual normativity” (158).

The second instance in which the narrative is definite about the Fox's sex is also a good example of the occasional ambiguity of the Fox's gender. Both Artemis (103-05) and the Fox cross-dress,¹⁵ which allows each character to migrate across sex and sexuality. Although the Fox does not change “into male or female bodies alike,” as Susanne Hilf asserts (130), she does slip into and out of masculine and feminine genders that conventionally signify, and are *read* (demonstrably), as male and female. However, the example Fu cites (162), where the Fox's “feet, their phallic length” reassures the courtesans or nuns she visits that their visitor is indeed male, ends with the Fox saying, “If they discovered later that I was a woman after all, by then it did not matter so much” (109). This is a convincing textual indicator of the Fox's femaleness, which abides whatever gender she sports, and an indicator of her sexuality and her sexual prowess.

To reinforce the point of the Fox's sex and the fluidity of gender and sexuality, Lai has the Fox narrator explain that “occasionally [she] made errors” in her visiting. The Fox then describes an intellectually “hot” poetic encounter with a woman that she initially takes for a “lonely scholar” (109). The content of their game of challenge couplets is read by Hilf to demonstrate Lai's emphasis on the fluidity of culture (121). However, it also suggests Lai's position regarding the “natural” ordering of sex, gender, and sexuality. The woman first writes: “The order of nature is never fixed / the west is moving, the east cannot be still,” to which the Fox replies: “The nature of order is never still / it moves not with the wind but with the will” (110). More than the end rhyme in the Fox's reply “smacks suspiciously of [the] Western influence” that the woman notes. The idea of “will” changing even the nature of order, as opposed all change being ordered by fate, the gods, sacrifice, ancestors, or even nature itself also owes more to Western than Eastern philosophy. The couplet also hints that the order of psycho-social identity is fluid as well and, perhaps, can also move “with the will.” Yet more revealing of the queer aesthetic at work in the novel, its transgression of convention, and its disruption of appearances and their certitude, is the culmination of this scene:

But at the same moment we placed our hands in that telltale place between the legs and I discovered that she had something that I had not, and she discovered, since I had no olisboi with me that night, that I lacked something which she had. Being good natured creatures, we both fell to laughing and went on with what we were doing. (112)

This “good natured” acceptance is perhaps the ideal stance towards life, literature,

and their surprises that Lai's text models for readers. *Fox* certainly provides many opportunities for practice.¹⁶ As the Fox and the woman are surprised in this example, so are readers surprised by many other “queer” turns in the text.

Lai's presentation of her characters' sexuality parallels her literary strategies in undermining the generics of “race” and “sex.”¹⁷ Characters that readers might “naturally,” through the operation of the heteronormative generic, assume are heterosexual (because essentialized sexualities are intrinsic to the generic), rarely are heterosexual or rarely remain exclusively heterosexual. This, too, may be read as interrupting what Godard refers to as “codes of language . . . of the self” (59). Readers' conventional expectations and expectations of the conventional are continually frustrated. However, perhaps the biggest disruption of convention occurs in the relationship between Eden and Artemis. Very early in the novel, readers encounter the two behaving like friends who are falling in love – Artemis breaks a date with her female friend, Mercy, to help her male friend, Eden, on a photo shoot. When afterwards “[i]n the cool darkness, he kissed Artemis between the eyes like she was a small child and breathed in the smell of her hair,” readers may be forgiven for feeling that a typical romance plot has commenced (26). Eden subsequently invites Artemis back to his place where they sprawl on his king-sized futon to watch a rerun of *Blade Runner*.¹⁸ A little later the contemporary narrator informs us that Eden has “hooked a leg over hers, turned his head and smiled. His leg weighed into hers, water into water. He leaned over and brushed his lips against her neck.” Both literary and generic convention tells readers, “Here are two heterosexuals engaged in preliminary mating ritual behaviour – young love!”

However, twenty-five pages later, readers find Artemis standing up Mercy again, and this time going home with bad-girl Diane, “after a good day's worth of sophisticated delinquency” (51). Then, following an intimate conversation,¹⁹ “[t]hey leaned closer towards one another and their lips caught like a sudden match flaring in the dark” (53). Although Diane says, “That was weird,” and the incident seems dismissed, the intensity of the moment hints at queer things to come and hijacks the conventional heterosexual love interest plot. This is particularly so because the moment occurs at the end of Part 1 – endings, like beginnings, are always important moments in narrative.

Part 2 begins with the 9th century poet, Yu Hsuan-Chi, meeting the woman with the lantern,²⁰ who mentions that her husband is acquainted with the poet's work (57). Subsequently, the poet begins to be visited by a “male” scholar. As what seems like a courtship ensues, the poet senses something familiar about the scholar. When he arrives one night drenched and cold, the poet offers to bathe him. The poet is made to promise “that whatever [she] saw, [she] would not hate him” (58). Curious, the poet peeps from behind a screen and sees “the body of the woman with the lantern” in the bath. After some discussion and some sexy soaping, Hsuan-Chi “bent over the tub and kissed her. . . . [and is] pulled into the water” (59). Given the proximity of these two scenes, their love-play reads almost as the culmination of Diane and Artemis' kiss. Certainly, the two bring queer sexuality, and, specifically, lesbian desire, to the fore.

These scenes also make it less surprising for readers that Artemis tells Eden, after another very sensual (but not sexual) night with him, “We shouldn't do this anymore” (82). Eden's response echoes Diane's response to the kiss she shared with Artemis: “I

know. It's weird, isn't it?" (82). I cannot resist saying that it is the queerness of the "heterosexual" attraction between Eden and Artemis that drives Artemis from (the garden of?) Eden. After she leaves, Eden discovers his sexual attraction to men. He subsequently introduces Artemis, in turn, to gay (male) culture and rhapsodizes about "his evenings as if they were something magical, a journey into a forbidden country" (103). On a cruise night out with Eden, Artemis meets a young man that she later beds. In the context of this hetero and sexual encounter, Artemis discloses "the unexplainable airless nights on Eden's bed . . . [and] the whole mess with Diane" (108). The young man suggests that Artemis should try sleeping with a woman.²¹ Artemis' sexual questing is a trope that brings a queer aesthetic to the content of queer bodies to challenge conventional fixed identifications, whether those be of human sexuality or other essentialisms.

By now the heterosexual romance plot has been thoroughly queered, an interruption of expectation that in Godard's description works "upon the codes of . . . fiction" (59). Readers are fully exposed to the somewhat promiscuous and questioning world of young people, who are exploring and discovering the sexual identifications available to them in the late 20th century. Diane sleeps with the pretty White boy, Saint; Artemis also sleeps with him. This configuration rewrites the more generic (male) homosocial arrangement in fiction, which Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes in *Between Men*, where the woman's body enables the more important relationship between the men. In *Fox*, Diane and Artemis have the more significant relationship. In addition, Artemis embarks upon a tempestuous lesbian relationship with Claude, who herself has had a

difficult relationship with Diane. Mercy, the dutiful, studious, and church-going daughter, changes her name to Ming, shaves her head, starts producing erotic art, and, with sad results, also falls prey to Diane's charisma. As Lai puts it, "I wanted to explore the difficult landscapes of weakness, betrayal, sorrow, and longing" (Afterword 253).²² By using the strategies of *écriture au féminin* to frame her exploration, she comforts as well as challenges readers who share the identifications of her characters and ensures that even hegemonic readers are challenged to experience "the difficult landscapes" rather than (re)colonizing or othering them.

One might expect that focalizing much of *Fox* through a queer Asian Canadian woman (Artemis) would make Asian, female, queer subjectivities, the identities that *go without saying*. However, because non-privileged groups are required to become competent in the dominant culture, it is not unusual for a text, even one authored by a marginalized narrator, to pander to the expectations of dominant discourse. Indeed, this is the norm. By refusing, at least in part, this unspoken demand, Lai removes the burden of translation from Asian, female, and queer readers while interrupting dominant culture assumptions and expectations. It is very pleasant, almost illicit, when unused to the experience, to find even part of one's own interlocking set of identifications occupying the linguistically hegemonic position. In using the strategies of *écriture au féminin* in *Fox*, Lai takes the Brossardian spiral, migrates through it, and pushes the spiral outward through another turn. Her novel may be read to overtly link Chinese traditions to Brossard's spiralling *sens* when the Fox, about to depart for the "Islands of the Blest" on the morning of her thousandth birthday, informs readers that "if you know how to travel

it, the world is not round at all, but a spiral that keeps circling outwards” (234-35).

Unfortunately, there seems to be a cost for making readers realize experientially what Lai has said is her “one great wish for readers[, which] is that they understand writing as a practice rather than as the production of an inert, consumable text” (“Political” 148). As a comestible, *When Fox Is a Thousand* does not always “go down easily” for hegemonic readers. In fact, disturbingly, Morris observes that “given the quality of Lai’s prose, her superb storytelling devices and the fact the novel was short-listed for the Chapters/Books in Canada First Novel Award, critical response to *Fox* has been negligible” (78).²³ Drawing on Miki, Morris argues that this is because of the novel’s inherent hybridity of genre and character, which makes it less palatable than a more realist novel such as Joy Kogawa’s *Obasan* (“Making” 78). In a similar vein, Christine Kim notes that Mootoo’s *Cereus* “was embraced by literary institutions [with an ease] that suggests that a logic of normalizing and containing difference within specific frames is at work [while] Lai’s text is hindered by the relatively recent entrance of Asian Canadian literature into the academy” (“Politics” 31). She suggests that this is because institutions had a greater interest in the postcoloniality of *Cereus* than in the Chinese Canadian setting of *Fox*. However, this does not explain why *Fox* attracts so much less critical attention than Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Café*, for instance, which shares *Fox*’s Chinese-Canadian setting. All three novels share a hybridity of both character and genre, which would appear to rule out these issues as factors.

However, another factor that might make *Cereus* of greater academic interest is its engagement of the queer to the near-exclusion of the lesbian. *Fox*, on the other hand,

while it emphasizes the queer fluidity of sexuality has a specifically female and lesbian focus. More significantly, *Fox* challenges literary cultural hegemony at the formal level through challenging the generic. This inclines dominant culture readers, including academic readers who are often at least one of male, White, or heterosexual, to be unable to appreciate the quality of Lai's writing. There is a tendency to assume that the interruptions in the flow of readerly understanding are produced, not deliberately, by artistry, but accidentally, through authorial inadequacy. Readers who are not aware of how interruptions to the generic affect them might find that the text just "reads a little awkwardly." It is perhaps easier for scholars, professional reader-writers, to attribute that awkwardness to the text than to self-interrogate and risk locating the "awkwardness" within. Perhaps Pierre Bourdieu provides a clue to the institutional neglect of *Fox* in his observation of "[t]he brutality with which a strongly integrated intellectual or artistic community condemns any unorthodox attempt at distinction" (117). Lai's unorthodox method of changing the defaults in of the English language may contribute to an academic discomfort that results in *Fox* being condemned by faint or absent praise and neglected in course syllabi.

So, in the main Morris is right. The text's experimental nature makes it less acceptable even within the academy, which is ironic since professional readers ought to be among those most capable of appreciating experimental writing. It is a pity that the disorientation effect that academics praise in works already recognized as avant-garde seems to escape notice as a conscious strategy in Lai's text.²⁴ Roy Miki sounds the warning for writers such as Lai, while, nevertheless, encouraging the use of literary

stratagems as part of social action:

The act of ‘deterritorialization’ through writing is perhaps a viable method for resisting assimilation, for exploring variations in form that undermine aesthetic norms, for challenging homogenizing political systems, and for articulating subjectivities that emerge from beleaguered communities – even at the risk of incomprehensibility, unreadability, indifference, or outright rejection. ("Asiancy" 145)

Miki draws attention to the political necessity for activist authors to queer hegemonic aesthetics and to articulate “beleaguered” subjectivities. I would extend his argument to suggest that it is necessary to recognize and write lesbian / queer bodies in order to articulate, as fully as possible, lesbian / queer subjectivities. In other words, it is necessary to engage both queer aesthetics and queer bodies to “resist assimilation,” a concept that, with the advent of institutionalized gay marriage, is now also an imaginable risk for queers.²⁵ The following chapter will provide a detailed examination of the networked bodies in community that supported the emergence of *Fox* while Chapter Six will return to reading the queer aesthetics of the Vancouver node.

 Notes

¹Although Press Gang's initial publication of *Fox* was of paramount importance, I have chosen to use the 2004 Arsenal edition because it is the more readily available and because it includes a useful afterword by the author.

²Bakhtin argues that “the novel is the only developing genre” (4).

³Although there is some confusion possible because a number of “foxes” are in play, the conventions help differentiate them. The Fox as character is in plain text and is capitalized while *Fox*, the novel, is capitalized and in italics. All other foxes, with the exception of my own name, are treated as common nouns.

⁴Hutcheon’s further claim that historiographic metafiction is the quintessential Canadian postmodern form, makes these texts quintessentially Canadian (73).

⁵Lai's use of multiple narrators and her re-telling of folk tales also gesture towards Jeanette Winterson, who practices similar interruptions of the generic (cf *Written on the Body* and *Sexing the Cherry*), as another important (and acknowledged, along with Brossard) influence on *Fox* (Personal Interview). However, in this thesis, I focus on Brossard alone to highlight the transCanadian internodal connection.

⁶Mothers are barely present in *Fox*; however, given Carrière's analysis, their absence itself may be suggestive. Like Brossard's *Mauve Desert*, *Fox*'s narrative culminates in the death of Artemis' friend, Ming (formerly Mercy), who is found dead under the hollow tree in Stanley Park. What might it mean that Ming is the only character that readers observe interacting with her mother? What is the impact on a theory of ethics that the Fox's seduction / haunting of Artemis is predicated on the Fox luring her to her one thousandth birthday tête à tête by *pretending* to be Artemis' biological mother? It might be interesting to posit that the mythic Fox takes the place of the missing mother. Although this line of thought is tangential to the current project, it suggests the generative power of the absent mother. This is creatively theorized by Arleen Paré: “in any kind of fairy tale the mother is gone: . . . /story is about the / fact of gone / real-gone / a real real-there-mother protects a child from story / which is always a bad story / bad things always happen in a story.”

⁷I was inspired to use this term by its use in an unpublished article by Rita Wong in which she discusses both *Fox* and *Cereus Blooms At Night*. Wong's precise usage is “queer (can)asian,” which I have adapted slightly (“Queerly” 1). However, further research shows that the term’s first use seems to have been by the “Canasian Artists Group” that Terry Watada helped found “in the fall of 1982 . . . [with] seven other Asian Canadians. . . [to] “promote Asian Canadian art rather than artists” (F 184-6-0-3-137 Press Gang Fonds). The neologism seems to reflect the insertion of Asian culture into mainstream Canadian culture that *Fox* and a number of other Asian Canadian literary texts effect.

⁸Brossard, too, uses her characters' names to help establish a new ordering of discursive space. In Brossard's *Picture Theory*, published in 1982, for instance, the sisters Dérive seem to be named for the positions they take in the novel. Their last name suggests the activity of the

flâneur, drifting, off-course, or something derived from something else. Florence evokes the Roman / Italian roots of canonical Western thought and so names the Western intellectual while Claire is the clear-seeing, perhaps on-the-edge lesbian (see Knutson 149 for an expanded reading of “Claire Dérive). However, Lai’s strategy more closely resembles Brossard’s *Baroque At Dawn*, where the characters have names such as “Cybil [from Greek myth] Noland” and “Occident” [as opposed to Orient], which draw attention to women’s long-vexed relationship to nation on the one hand and the importance of one’s starting reference point on the other. That *Fox* shares this allegorical aspect in its naming has an interesting convergence: although *Baroque At Dawn* was published in 1997, the original francophone text, *Baroque D’Aube*, was published, like *Fox*, in 1995. The convergence implies that ideas migrate aerially and / or rhizomatically, and yield strategies that take similar trajectories. This results in synchronicities that are often noted in the scientific community, where discoveries are frequently made simultaneously, but discretely.

⁹I might quibble that Artemis’ identity is more multiple than bicultural and that the Canadian present is not now (and has never been) monocultural except in illusory and self-serving hegemonic thought. However, clearly Lai is theoretically astute and deliberate in her uses of the past to challenge the racist, sexist, and homophobic assumptions of the unsatisfactory present.

¹⁰It is interesting that the confusion as to how and which identity “houses” which characters arises as the characters themselves, analogously, attempt to house themselves. Thus the story level replicates what is happening on the level of pragmatic discourse. For instance, Diane has no fixed address, but rather houses herself by house-sitting, visiting her parents’ home, or staying with various friends or lovers. Diane’s migratory approach to her housing replicates the novel’s concern with migration and its effects generally, which may be read as a trope for the shifting nature of identity itself and for Asian diaspora.

¹¹Several White readers have told me that this strategy did make them feel uncomfortable as they were reading because they had the impression that while the novel talked *about* them, it wasn’t talking *to* them, which neatly describes the effect of the generic. It also underlines the fact that most books published in North America and Europe *are* addressing them, insofar at least as they are White. White women are always already adjusted to reading as if they were men (a necessary strategy for most canonical literature), and so don’t necessarily notice when texts assume (or create) male readers; however, we are unused to reading as racialized subjects.

¹²Expectations in this regard are discussed in detail in “Pragmatics and discourse context” by Gillian Brown and George Yule in their useful *Discourse Analysis* (27-35).

¹³In the 1990s many neighbourhood disputes in Vancouver centred around the perception that recent Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong cut down too many trees on property that they purchased. The City passed a by-law to regulate tree-cutting on private property in response to this “crisis.”

¹⁴Van Luven also refers to the characters as “Artemis Wong, Mercy/Ming Lee, Claude Chow, Diane Wong, who becomes Artemis’s lover, and a young male photographer named Eden” (270). In fact, it is not clear that Diane and Artemis ever do become lovers (despite kissing once and living together briefly); whereas, Claude and Artemis definitely do have a *sexual* affair, which breaks up during the course of the novel (153). Moreover, Van Luven does not inform her readers that the call that she claims “happens to be a call from [Artemis’] biological mother”

(271) is not actually from Artemis' biological mother. It is from the Fox, who impersonates Artemis' biological mother as a ploy to entice Artemis to her one thousandth tête à tête birthday party. When Artemis arrives, she says, "You're not my mother, are you?" to which "The woman [who later turns into the fox] shook her head gravely" (216).

¹⁵Fu comments on "Fox's game of dressing [that] underscores the motif of transvestism" in the novel (162).

¹⁶These many changes in subjectivity also help Lai to avoid the pitfalls that Trinh T. Minh-ha has noted may haunt the deployments of subjectivity of those who are positioned as the "inappropriate other" (Minh-ha 375). In and of herself, the Fox character demonstrates that the novel's practices of subjectivity are not "unaware of its continuous role in the production of meaning." Furthermore, Lai actively forestalls potentially colonizing "automatic and arbitrary endowment of an insider with legitimized knowledge about her cultural heritage," which might make of the writer (in Min-ha's example, a filmmaker) "an insider, merely," instead of an artist (374). Lai rejects the "insider" role in the bibliographic apparatus of the book, both when she acknowledges that "the history of transliteration also marks the history through which writers such as [herself] have to . . . access part of [our] own history through various specialists" (8) and also when she reveals the specific resources (251-52).

¹⁷Although "race" and "sex" are terms that can be strategically useful, especially in anti-racist and anti-sexist work, it must be recognized that, in significant ways, neither is based in any essential difference (cf Paul Gilroy on "race" and Thomas LaQuer on "sex").

¹⁸See Morris' "Re-Visioning" for a detailed analysis of the significance of *Blade Runner* in Lai's novel.

¹⁹This conversation also has a queer twist since Diane describes her beloved and paragon-like brother, who, after dating many smart, attractive women in Vancouver, dies at the hands of gay-bashers in Toronto's High Park (52). Interestingly, a typo initially refers to "Hyde Park," which conjures an oddly mainstream perspective on his life and death as Jekyll and Hyde-like.

²⁰Tellingly, the lantern symbol always signals the poet's narration in this edition. In the first edition, her narration was indicated by the figure of a woman in a classical Chinese robe. The earlier icon seems to evoke the poet herself, while the later icon unequivocally invokes her muse, which demonstrates the centrality of that relationship.

²¹This, again, implies that Artemis has *not* made love with Diane.

²²In one of *Fox's* many clever intertextualities, the relation of Eden's nocturnal adventures create in Artemis "a well of longing" (103) which recalls one of the Ur texts of lesbian becoming, Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*. No wonder that, in this edition, the symbol for the contemporary narrator is a book! In an oddly related manner, the symbol in the earlier, Press Gang Publishers edition is a tree, that inarticulate, involuntary provider of paper. The tree might stand for many aspects of the contemporary story, the most chilling being Ming's body in Stanley Park's Hollow Tree. Christina Swindells writes, "The icon for the contemporary narrator is a tree with its roots showing. This image reflects the isolation of Artemis, Diane, Mercy and Claude, all young Chinese-Canadian women. . . . Their isolation parallels the isolation of Hsuan-Chi's life. Hsuan Chi's mother died when she was born; Diane, Mercy and Claude are separated from their

mothers by pop culture and the tragic family secrets that pull their roots out from under them” (4). It is interesting that Swindells also notes the importance of the absence of mothers in *Fox*.

²³Happily, *West Coast Line* has now devoted an entire issue to Lai, playfully entitling it *West Coast Lai*.

²⁴It is worth noting that Santoro claims that the founders of both *écriture féminine* and writing in the feminine “deserve to be granted the status of the last avatar of the avant-garde in the twentieth century” (6). Unfortunately, while modernist avant-garde texts are praised for their experimental ways, which are “difficult,” challenges to literary conventions at the level of the generic, such as those mounted by *Fox*, go underappreciated by the academy.

²⁵Gayle Rubin finds that lesbian relationships are particularly vulnerable to assimilation in her ground-breaking article “Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality.”

Chapter Five: (Re)Viewing the Node: Materializing a Network “Ecology” of *Fox*’s Reception & Production

“The production of discourse (critical, historical etc.) about the work of art is one of the conditions of production of the work.” Pierre Bourdieu (*Field* 35)

The previous chapter discusses how, on the micro level of grammar, texts can work to “change minds.” However, in order to change minds, texts must first be produced and disseminated. This chapter takes a two-pronged approach to bringing into view the queer bodies whose micropolitical networks constitute the social ecology that created and empowered Larissa Lai’s *When Fox Is a Thousand* as an agent of social change. Section 1 demonstrates a new strategy that is related to, but distinct from, reception study. In it, I focus on the bibliographic information from the media notices of *Fox*, circa its launch, rather than on the content of the reviews or articles themselves as is more common in reception studies. I discovered most of the notices when working with the Press Gang Publishers (PGP) archives that are housed at Simon Fraser University (SFU)¹ and developed a strategy that uses the notices as “signposts” to direct me towards “communities” that have a demonstrable interest in *Fox*.

My interest in these communities is a corollary to the argument that the creative process and its artefacts are collective and social as opposed to individual and solely personal,² a position that is in keeping with Pierre Bourdieu’s explication of the cultural field. Section II, therefore, is a significantly longer section and offers a detailed discussion of the human and material conditions of *Fox*’s emergence. The chapter relies on Bourdieu to conceptualize and describe the fields, but also on ANT to argue that it is

discursive power moving through and within these community networks that produces both *Fox* and, more generally, the Vancouver node. The shift from attending to the aesthetics of *Fox* to attending to its social ecology allows me to contribute to Canada's literary history and to present a valuable case study that offers useful pedagogical possibilities to the academy.

I

An analysis of the reviews, interviews, and photos / notices³ that mention *Fox* and appear between 1995 and 1997 underlies a strategy by which literary artefacts (the novel and its reviews) can be used to trace the *Fox*'s networks. These networks form the communities that both call the novel into existence (through anticipated interest, which has a relationship to book publication) and support the novel's production and dissemination materially (through media interest and readership, which have a relationship to book sales). This chapter focusses on the numbers of reviews, the periodicals in which they appeared, the inferred primary audience of the periodical, the places of publication, and the dates to infer both the "communities" interested in *Fox* and their level of interest. The method draws attention to the patterns of print media attention, which demonstrate how interest in *Fox* was socially produced and expressed, rather than performing a literary reading of the content of the reviews. The strategy follows both Bourdieu and Vancouver node contemporary, Rita Wong, who argues, "Writing does not exist in a vacuum; by looking at reviews, publishers, prizes, one may get a sense of how our society places some of this writing and how this in turn influences

our own readings” (“Jumping” 120). As an heuristic that leads to the relevant networks, the inferred audiences of the periodicals provide useful indicators of the networks that, rhizome-like, extend and connect, and, as part of their own process, create space for *Fox* and the other novels of the Vancouver node.

Except in one or two cases of academic reviews in journals, the media notices are ephemera, as are the contingent and shifting networks to which they point. One of the forces that drives my work is fear that queer women’s publication opportunities may prove precarious and equally ephemeral. Even so, Christine Kim’s observation that “[t]he transformative potential of ephemera lies in the possibilities it poses for creating new practices of remembering” encourages my attempt to re-member *Fox*’s community as an alternative mode of literary history (“Cultural”). My use of reviews creates one new practice of literary remembering.

The first step with each review was to evaluate each journal, newspaper, or magazine in which a review appeared between 1995 and 1997 and to decide which “community” name would best describe its inferred primary audience. After establishing the communities, I analyzed the bibliographic information of the reviews. Next, I quantified the data to create tabular presentations so as to observe and discuss the insights and trends that arise directly from this comparative analysis. Although this Section I analysis leads to some interesting information, the key use of the reviews is the derivation of the communities themselves, which provides the basis for Section II. My relative indifference to content throughout this process distinguishes my approach from reception theory approaches and its quantitative aspect gives the work a greater similarity to media analysis.

This approach may be perceived as overly empirical or taxonomizing; however, I developed the methodology precisely to avoid the dangers of relying solely on my own potentially colonizing gaze in my attempt to materialize the networks and communities that were connected to Lai and to the publication and distribution of *Fox*. The strategy attempts to avoid hierarchy and to follow advice that Deleuze and Guattari give in the context of building a “body without organs,” another strategy devised to avoid hierarchy:

Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there. . . . Connect, conjugate, continue. (161)

Lodged in the PGP fonds at SFU that related to Lai and *Fox*, I continuously read and made connections. Years later, when I began to conjugate *Fox*'s communities, I remembered the journal or newspaper reviews as literary prompts, which could “lead” me to the communities that evinced demonstrable interest in the appearance of *Fox* and were therefore most likely also to have been involved in its emergence. Of course it would be an academic fallacy to suggest that these communities and their networks could be isolated or named in a way that would accurately portray “reality.” Naming is a form of simplifying and schematizing. I recognize that the choice of “community” as a collective descriptor under which to organize the networks that supported the production and distribution of *Fox* risks many errors.⁴ Nevertheless, it is useful to mindfully schematize reality on occasion, to facilitate discussion. In this case, the naming permits me to tease apart the interwoven network threads so that they can be examined and noted separately.

The tables in Section I sort the media notices of *Fox* by the inferred audience of

the periodical in which it appears rather than by the inferred audience of the review or the reviewer⁵ in cases where these seemed different. On this basis, I begin to materialize six different communities. Each community is discussed in detail in Section II, alphabetically,⁶ as I list them here: Academic, Asian North American,⁷ Feminist, Literary, Mainstream, and Queer. Not only are these communities inseparable in “reality,” but each “community” is made up of many sub-communities and networks that may exhibit greater differences from other networks within their community than they might from a network in a different community.⁸ Moreover, the method used to determine the inferred audience of any media instrument might be the subject of an entire study. Since my choice of inferred audience determines which communities are examined and, therefore, the outcomes of my analysis of the data, I will give two examples of how I handle typical issues that emerged during the decision-making process.

In particular, it seems likely that an audience of scholars might object to the inclusion of academic journals and student newspapers under the same umbrella community. Certainly, each offers divergent registers of discourse and levels of ephemerality. Neither is their primary audience unitary. Moreover, although I classify the *Ubyyssey* within the Academic community, the network of students that produced that paper, at that time, might have had more in common with the producers of Vancouver’s Feminist community newspaper, *Kinesis*, than with the producers of UBC’s *Canadian Literature*. But despite this, a student newspaper represents a Bourdieuxian position-taking within the Academic sector of the cultural field and it is part of the institutional training of academics to take up positions in that sector. Most importantly, the *Ubyyssey*’s

primary inferred audience would be university students, who are a *sine qua non* component of the academic community. The inferred audience of *Canadian Literature* falls more intuitively into the academic community, but that audience, too, is composed of professors and students. The academic community thus holds both media most comfortably.

Rice Paper presents a slightly different quandary. As an Asian Canadian literary periodical, it might have “counted” under the literary community, where I also discuss it. However, I inferred that *Rice Paper* is probably more frequently read by non-literary Asian North American readers than by non-Asian literary readers. Therefore, it is categorized and tabulated under that community in Section I, despite its relevance to both communities, which results in me referring to it (in different contexts) under both communities in Section II. The fact that a case could be made for either community and that it can be usefully cited under both emphasizes the arbitrary nature of focussing on any one aspect of identity or community.

The work of this chapter is yet another instance where it is necessary to maintain, as Gayatri Spivak suggests, the “awareness that what we are obliged to do, and must do scrupulously, in the long run is not OK,” but that it may be a strategically useful (45). To claim any identification is always a provisional and strategic activity, but it is often necessary in order to pay necessary attention to what Roy Miki called “beleaguered communities” (“Asiancy” 145). Power inheres in naming, which is one reason that the issue of identification remains relevant and contested. In this case, to sort the reviews by communities to which I assign a provisional identification enables me to uncover and present useful information about *Fox*’s reception and production. Although others might

view a periodical's inferred audience differently than I have, I trust these examples demonstrate that I have approached the task mindfully – neither entirely arbitrarily nor simply subjectively.

The nodal approach in general and the use of reviews to trace networks materialize only a small cross-section of a moving set of social relations in a particular moment: it is photography not taxonomy. This snapshot produced, however, is of interest to anyone concerned with the social conditioning of, and the social work that may be performed by, literary works. The sorting by inferred audience to arrive at community provides a framework for a social ecology of *Fox* that will be investigated in Section II while this section first draws a number of conclusions from the quantitative data itself.

The following analysis separates the review data into two tables for clarity. The first, Table 9 (following page), totals the reviews by community and by year of publication. This gives an overview of which communities demonstrate interest in *Fox* (by publishing a review), to what degree that interest is expressed (determined by the number of reviews), and how immediately or belatedly that interest is expressed (determined by the year of publication).

Table 9 Media Notice of *When Fox Is a Thousand*: Community and Year

Community	# of Notices	Year:		
		1995	1996	1997
Academic	5	0	3	2
Asian N.American	6	0	6	0
Feminist	6	2	3	1
Literary	8	2	6	0
Mainstream	6	1	4	1
Queer	5	1	3	1
Totals	35	6	25	5

In analyzing the total number of reviews attributed to each community, I will also share some of my own process to illuminate the benefits of quantifying this material rather than proceeding on the basis of intuitive interpretation alone. Before I established the communities of inferred audience, attributed the reviews, and counted them, I had a sense that *Fox* received most attention from the Asian North American and Feminist communities, followed by the Queer community. However, that assumption, a perfectly “reasonable” one, turned out to be at odds with the concrete data: the Literary community publishes the greatest number reviews – eight of them. On reflection, this isn’t so

surprising. *Fox* is, after all, a literary work; therefore, it ought to be of primary interest to the literary community. However, that interest may be bestowed or withheld somewhat independently of a text's literary worth. Interest is, by no means, a given.⁹ However, here my focus on Lai's non-hegemonic identifications as a queer feminist Asian Canadian woman had deflected my attention away from her text's more hegemonic identifications, which are with the Academic and the Mainstream, as well as the Literary community.

Since the Literary community has the most reviews, my evolving expectations were satisfied that the Asian North American¹⁰ and the Feminist communities followed, with 6 reviews each. On the other hand, I was a little surprised to find that Mainstream, Academic, as well as Queer media follow closely with 5 notices each. This level of interest implies a fairly high level of presumed acceptance of the novel in all these communities. Surely, it is significant that a novel with substantial Feminist, Chinese, Asian Canadian, and Queer content seems to enjoy, at least quantitatively, nearly as strong a reception from the Mainstream as from the more restricted communities that share specific non-hegemonic identity features with *Fox* and its author. In fact, contemplating this counter-intuitive result led me to recall Raymond Williams' caution that the dominant culture itself "produces and limits its own forms of counter-culture" (114). Academic institutions and the mainstream marketplace have shown themselves quite capable of incorporating and commodifying many challenges and the results of my analysis seem to reflect its increasing interest in diversity.¹¹

The timing of the review publications, which is also shown in Table 9, is as interesting as the totals. Fastest off the mark, and publishing two reviews each in 1995,

were the Feminist and Literary communities. I interpret this as an indication that these two groups have the networks most immediate to *Fox* because the novel launch took place very close to the end of the year, on November 18, 1995 at Press Gang's 20th Anniversary Celebration in Vancouver (PGPF "Bio & Promo"). Queer and Mainstream communities also note *Fox*'s appearance in 1995, but with only one review each. It is not until 1996 that all communities show their greatest interest. Lai made a number of book tours that year and gave readings in Washington, Oregon, California, and in Central Canada. Most reviews and interviews coincide with her appearances, which indicates a positive relationship between the reviews and the tours. In Montréal, Lai read at McGill on March 25, 1996 and *The McGill Daily* ran articles both before and after her appearance.¹²

However, even in 1996, the number of reviews remains highest in the Literary community, which boasts six reviews. This number drops to zero in 1997, which reflects that community's primary interest in works that have been newly released. Predictably, the Mainstream follows the same pattern. The Asian North American notices all appear in 1996, which is also the first year that the Academic community comments. Interestingly, and reflective of the pace of scholarly thought and publishing, the academic community has the highest number of reviews of any community in 1997.¹³ Academic articles that critique rather than review *Fox* appear later and have their own trajectory, which is crucial to *Fox*'s acceptance into a Canadian canon and its long-term dissemination (especially in intellectual circles); however, that part of the investigation is beyond the scope of this study.

Table 10 (below) displays the reviews in terms of community and geographic

location. Observing how the review data break down geographically allows me to comment on a community's network length or "sets of relations, some long, some short," which is how actor-network theory (ANT) describes the distance over which a network can function (i.e., can exert influence or power) (Murdoch 27). I suggest that differences in network length grow out of the intimacy, intensity, and density of the relations involved between Lai, *Fox*, and the communities.

Table 10 Media Notice of *When Fox Is a Thousand*: Community and Place¹⁴

Community	# of Notices	City:		
		Vancouver	Other - Can.	Other - U.S.
Academic	5	3	2	0
Asian N.American	6	4	1	1
Feminist	6	3	1	2
Literary	8	5	3	0
Mainstream	5	3	2	0
Queer	5	2	1	2
Totals	35	20	10	5

According to a postmodern geographic perspective, Vancouver (the site of *Fox*'s publication and the majority of its reviews) is a relational entity that is produced by relations in and amongst networks that consist of material objects and animate beings.

This relational nature means that “Vancouver” is not isolated by local or national, physical or political, borders. The geographic presentation of the review data provides a good example of how network theory enables me to bring the global and the local together for consideration in the same plane. The reviews, in turn, demonstrate how network length translates into both geographic distance and social connection.

The non-hegemonic, identity-based communities’ reviews cross the Canadian-U.S. border and are thus more “international” (North American as opposed to simply Canadian). The U.S. reviews demonstrate connection and speak to the extensive network that links, not only Asian Canadian literary activist-writers, but also and overlappingly, Feminist and Queer literary cultural workers.¹⁵ Generally speaking, the Academic and Mainstream communities have more and more powerful international connections than do Feminist or Queer communities. However, here, the Feminist and Queer networks involved transmit over longer networks and therefore, in this limited case, demonstrate a greater discursive reach. Similarly, the Asian North American media also has one non-Canadian review, which, like one of the lesbian Queer reviews, is based in Seattle. In network terms, which are a-nationalistic, Seattle is “local” to Vancouver. The Feminist U.S. reviews, on the other hand, extend from San Francisco to Boston. Within Canada, but well beyond Vancouver, the Feminist community also publishes a review based in Winnipeg and both the Asian North American and the Queer communities have reviews in Toronto. Unlike other communities, where nearly all of the reviews arise in direct relation to Lai’s book launches and tours, the Feminist community also has one review (based in Boston) that is not directly related to a tour and which is not local to Vancouver. The more widespread Feminist network may be interpreted as an indication

that *Fox* is of special interest to that community. It also points to the fairly extensive North American networks feminists developed to support Feminist publishing in the 1970s and 1980s and which, despite declining in the 1990s, remained sufficiently active to support *Fox* from manuscript through production, promotion, and distribution.

On the other hand, the three communities that are not identity-based (Academic, Literary, Mainstream) publish all their reviews within Canada. In fact, approximately double the number of reviews in the Literary and Mainstream media are based in Vancouver, itself, over all other locations. For the Literary community, the three other reviews come from Toronto, which accords with Toronto's role as a major Canadian cultural centre. It is also predictable that the Mainstream reviews that are outside of Vancouver remain relatively local; one review is based in Victoria and another on the Sunshine Coast (Gibson's Landing). The reviews from the Academic community are restricted to Vancouver and Montréal, and are primarily, but not exclusively, related to Lai's book launch and tour. It is an interesting phenomenon that, in this limited case study, the networks of communities seeking social change have longer networks than the more hegemonic communities. This translates to a demonstration widespread interest, not greater power, since it represents geographic reach only and does not consider circulation numbers.

Using this method to investigate public attention to Lai's novel brings a postmodern relational approach (through ANT) to the literary context to perform an analysis of the bibliographic information of these 35 media notices. This allowed me to identify the communities and networks in which *Fox* is an active agent and to somewhat counteract my own culturally determined assumptions and to respect the social nature of

the production of texts in my production process as well as my product. My point here, in addition to citing the actual information, is to observe the usefulness of adding quantification to the literary critic's toolbox, and to note also that the numbers do not conform to what might be typical assumptions. More importantly, it is necessary to be able to name the communities because it is through connections with various networks that individuals are inspired to write and it is the networks that enable such literary work to get published, distributed, acclaimed, and read. The reviews, those "discourses of direct or disguised celebration," provide important linkages to unknown networks and readers, as Bourdieu notes (35). They widen the novel's discursive reach and enhances its ability to influence, or as Deleuze and Guattari would put it, "deterritorialize," its social environment (11). The next section traces the emergence of *Fox* into discourse.

II

Section II builds on the work of the previous section to explore how Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*, and by extension, the Vancouver node, emerged into discourse by examining the networks involved in the communities¹⁶ that were derived through tracing reviews of *Fox*. The social landscape of the six communities (Academic, Asian North American, Feminist, Artistic, Mainstream, and Queer) provides the background for the micropolitical networks that had direct and indirect effects on the production of *Fox*. I focus on the individuals who are part of the networks within communities, but also the "material things" that Virginia Woolf notes are integral to both literary production and reception (*Room 41*). The materialities involved in the processes of publication and

reception begin with Lai's queer writing body, but extend to *Fox's* editor, publisher, distributor, and to various journals, magazines, newspapers, reviewers, bookstores, scholars, and activists. *Fox's* emergence is, in part, due to Lai's remarkable ability, not only to seem conscious and comfortable in her own interlocking multiple identifications, but also to survive multiple translations and to thrive within multiple networks. These networked communities act in concert to bring into material presence, besides *Fox*, other literary texts, complex literary actants such as bookstores and presses, and literary events such as readings and conferences. This analysis also attends to the material elements that supported Lai specifically in the writing and publishing of *Fox*. Historical and geographical contextualization broadens understanding of *Fox's* production and reveals the political aspects of Lai's literary project and the Vancouver node. It is genealogical in Foucauldian terms in that it materializes political implications that, as well as being of historical interest, may also usefully inform the politics, ethics, strategies, and tactics of on-going struggles.

To some extent, these communities are all convenient, but changeable fictions, not monoliths with essential, unitary or uncontested identities. Network actors / actants and enrolled allies / entities travel within and across communities, so that any labelling is a false fixing of many sets of relations that are always in flux. One useful aspect of the nodal approach, however, is that it provides an immanent occasion for "fixing" on a certain time, which is neither arbitrary nor pre-determined nor fully controlled by the researcher. Inferring communities, labelling and naming them, and tracing networks of relations within and between them, historicizes these movements and participates in the creation and the continuance of the communities. However, I try to avoid colonizing the

communities both through the Deleuzian strategy of embarking “through the middles, coming and going rather than starting and finishing” (25) and by developing research methodologies that help interrogate intuitive assumptions. This is all the more important because I, myself, have a place somewhere in the middle (or on the edge) of many Vancouver communities. Thus, some of the social environments are familiar; some network pathways more obvious. It is, therefore, useful to work against that “insider” knowledge as well as to take advantage of it. In Deleuzian terms, the micropolitical networks and the broader communities may be viewed as a social ecology of intersecting rhizomes that support the Vancouver node. Although Lai’s activities in this context are critical to the process of producing *Fox*, the following discussion is not about Lai’s private self, but about the development of “Larissa Lai” as an author function.¹⁷ Moreover, the production of *Fox* as an artefact, a physical manifestation of human interaction, furthers the aims of the networked communities and not simply those of its author or author function.

My approach also utilizes Nicole Brossard’s suggestion of spiralling as a methodology that helps to incorporate what has been ineffable, unthinkable “non-sense,” into “sense” (*Aerial* 116-17).¹⁸ Thus, certain topics recur throughout the dissertation and even within this chapter. These returns are *not* simple repetitions. One return is to 1988, the year of the Telling It conference, but which further research reveals as a year of uncommon significance for most of the six communities. The concretion of 1988 events, although only partially explored in this work, suggests that year as a place, not of origins, but of many awarenesses, which came together to create the supportive environment that enabled the mid-1990s node. Similarly, Press Gang Publishers (PGP), as the

predominant publisher of the Vancouver node, is also revisited often as a subject, as it is, in detail, under two community sections in this chapter. Each visitation of a time, event, organization, editor, or author differs in intent and effect; each return involves a different focus, a different context; each spiral adds new information. Reiteration also implies the possibility of further iterations in other contexts and so consciously releases and *does not* contain the material. Numerous iterations avoid totalizing because perspectives change from each vantage point. This approach prevents the identification, categorization, and description from becoming rigidly taxonomic while it enables me to preserve valuable and insecure historical information.

Communities are made up of individuals who often identify with more than one community – the personal and intersectional is significant throughout this study. The personal might be taken to emphasize the actor in the actor-network, but in the flexible networks I explore, although Lai remains a primary focus, the other individuals are not merely participants in her network. Within the networks of the Vancouver node, Lai herself is participant as well as actor. The fact that several of the *Fox* reviews are by people who, to my knowledge, are connected to Lai through various network relations underlines the importance of personal relations to networks and to cultural production and reception in all communities.

Academic Community Networks

The Academic institution, a community and a collection of academic networks, plays an important role in the literary cultural field in at least three ways. It encourages developing literary production or “position-taking” in potential producers, “ensure[s] the

production of competent consumers,” and produces perceived value in the literary texts that it consecrates (Bourdieu 118-120). In other words, the academy produces and certifies competent writers, readers, and critics. It also sometimes employs and subsidizes cultural workers. As such, it is not surprising that fifteen percent of *Fox*'s reviews have their provenance in the Academic community. However, from a relational point of view, it is worth noting Lai's personal connections within this community.

Lai's parents both held doctorates in Philosophy by the time she was born. As she grew up, her father was a professor of Philosophy at Memorial University in Newfoundland, where her mother also taught occasionally (Personal Interview). From a Bourdieusian perspective, these intimate connections would contribute significantly to the formation of Lai's "habitus, as systems of dispositions" – the sets of attitudes and behaviours that are idiosyncratic to each individual as a result of the sum of the conditions the individual encounters (71). Lai herself is aware of this. In my interview with her, she says, "There was not a lot of philosophy talk in our house, but I think they were thinking a lot – thinking about how to raise me . . . I'm sure I grew up with some awareness. Not knowing the theory but feeling them putting it into practice." Lai's literary work provides a good example of how well she internalized the concept of "thinking" theory and "putting it into practice." Similarly, her academic trajectory (from writer-in-residence to a doctorate in English at the University of Calgary followed by a tenure track position at UBC) suggests a habitus that is highly compatible with the Academic community, despite her political misgivings about its social role.

Interestingly, the Academic community reviews that discuss *Fox* and Lai in the greatest depth appear in two student newspapers, UBC's *the Ubysey* (Cho) and the

McGill Daily (Swindells; Vitt). It seems fitting that students are the earliest and most attentive academic reviewers of *Fox* since Lai began her Academic enrolment as an undergraduate at UBC, where she completed a degree in sociology and creative writing. The other two reviews (one a brief mention only) appear in *Canadian Literature*, an academic journal, which is also based at UBC. The more substantial academic review is by Guy Beauregard,¹⁹ who was also a student when it was published ("Myths"). Beauregard reviews a group of four Asian North American novels that include *Fox* and Wayson Choy's, *The Jade Peony*.²⁰ Provocatively, Beauregard finds that making "connections across gendered, sexual, ethnic, and racialized positions" is a key element of both novels, but declares Choy's writing "distressingly pluralistic" while asserting that Lai's work "completely rejects pluralism" (163). Thus, the Academic community comments on *Fox* on the meta-network and political level by bringing the novels' implied political positions (as interpreted by Beauregard) into current academic debates regarding multiculturalism, racialization, identity, and nationalism.²¹ It is perhaps fitting that the last (minimalist) comment is by UBC professor (and venerable Canadianist) WH New, who endorses *Fox* in his retrospective "Reading 1995," firstly by noting the novel's existence, and secondly by allowing that he "enjoyed" it (203).

New provides an appropriate segue to Lai's connection with another UBC professor, George McWhirter, who taught Lai in a creative writing poetry workshop, but as importantly, introduced her to Jim Wong-Chu, founder of the Asian Canadian Writers Workshop (ACWW), an important producer and advocate of Asian Canadian writing (Lai Personal Interview). McWhirter's introduction demonstrates how individuals act as agents who connect various networks in the course of doing the work of their primary

network. As an academic worker in what Bourdieu would call “the restricted field” of literature, McWhirter’s move increases both his own and Lai’s cultural capital. In addition, he sets up a situation which (potentially) acts to reproduce the literature of the field by encouraging Lai’s development, production, publication, and consecration as an author within the field (115).

Asian Canadian literature has evolved strong ties to academia as have most Canadian literatures. Wong-Chu’s brief history of the ACWW demonstrates this as it describes the early organizing that supported the development and emergence of Asian Canadian writing in Vancouver. Wong-Chu explains how “a group of UBC students, inspired by a radicalized visiting Asian American professor began the process of re-examining their history and identity” (1). This group named themselves “the Asian Canadian Coalition, hosted a conference and created historical exhibitions on campus.” By the mid-1970s, this organization began to provide “a creative outlet for its writers.” Lien Chao claims that “the Writers’ Workshop created the first generation of Chinese Canadian writers” (147). Despite the connections that this early group had to the academic environment and the involvement of universities in early conferences and publications,²² neither Donald C. Goellnicht’s useful history, “A Long Labour: The Protracted Birth of Asian Canadian Literature” nor Guy Beauregard’s “Emergence” credit these activities as constituting academic institutional interest.²³

In fact, Goellnicht seems to create a false dichotomy when he purposefully divides the mutually supportive academic and artistic communities to “stress that academic institutions are [his] focus here rather than artistic communities” (1). He refers repeatedly to “the delayed development of Asian Canadian literature as a coherent field

of study” and attributes this delay to a lack of race and ethnic studies in Canadian universities (23). This argument seems specious, given that this admitted lack has not prevented several prominent spokespeople for Asian Canadian literature from speaking with an authority that is buttressed by their academic institutional position (Roy Miki, Ashok Mathur, Rita Wong, and Fred Wah spring to mind) and given that Asian Canadian literature was treated as an area of academic study since 1993-94, even by Goellnicht’s standards.²⁴ By 2008, the field seems relatively well established although there are still no U.S.-style departments of ethnic studies at Canadian universities. This suggests that while having these departments and programs might have hurried and increased academic involvement, they are by no means the determining factor in Asian Canadian literature’s “protracted birth.”²⁵ More compelling is Lien Chao’s assertion that “century-long racism” prevented the Chinese Canadian community from producing significant quantities of writing in English until the 1990s (146). The rise in scholarly work on Asian Canadian literature follows closely on the increase in publication of that literature, which seems to support her contention. Moreover, their shared political concerns regarding social equality for racialized subjects argue for a strong connection between the academy and the community.

In the November 4, 2004 public event, entitled, *Conversation*, and hosted by Ashok Mather at The Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (ECIAD) between Suzette Mayr and Lai, Lai refers to the 1990s as a decade concerned with cultural race politics. She also cites her graduation in 1990 as her own jumping off point that occurred “just at that catalytic moment, when everything, politically, was just catching fire” (Personal Interview). By mid-decade, important articles by Canadian academics appear (Roy

Miki's "Asiancy" and Lien Chao's "Anthologizing the Collective"). 1995 is also, significantly and not coincidentally, the publication date of the Makeda Silvera edited collection, *The Other Woman: Women of Colour in Contemporary Canadian Literature* and, of course, Lai's *Fox*. Although cultural race politics did attain a certain "critical mass" mid-decade (not co-incidentally the time of the Vancouver node),²⁶ neither these articles, nor Goellnicht's 1993 MLA panel (where Chao first presented "Anthologizing"), nor *Canadian Literature's* 1994 special issue represent the "birth" of "Asian Canadian literature," or even the beginning of its academic disciplining. Rather, these events constitute a continuation of a political, artistic, and academic movement that had been operative both within and without the academic institution for well over a decade.

On the other hand, as early as 1984, Anthony B. Chan argues that "Asian America provided the model for Asian Canadian writers" (Chan 70), an argument that is taken up by Goellnicht and Beauregard. Wong-Chu's brief history also provides validation for Chan's assertion. All critics seem to agree on the importance of the exchange between Americans and Canadians of Asian heritage. Rita Wong refers to "crossing borders between asian canadian and asian american because our american cousins have so much to offer" ("Jumping" 120, lower case in Wong). U.S. academies have well-developed Asian American studies, Queer studies, and Lesbian studies, as well as more extensive Women's studies, because even a minority within the larger U.S. population has enough absolute numbers to make it worthwhile for the institution to offer the programs. These academies helped *Fox* directly since, in distributing and publicizing the novel, PGP relied on U.S. Academic (as well as Feminist and Queer) bookstores and connections to host Lai's readings and to market the novel. In 1996, as part of the *Fox* book tour, Lai

presented to university classes in Asian Lesbian Studies (University of California at Los Angeles), Asian Women's Studies (Stanford), and to an Artist as Writer class (University of California at Irvine) (c.v.). While it's possible that in Canada in 2008, a course in Asian Women's Studies might be offered, it is quite unlikely that a Canadian university, with its increasingly corporate concerns, would risk attracting sufficient "customers" for an Asian Lesbian Studies course. In fact, Canadian universities seem headed in the opposite direction as, for instance, the University of Guelph cut its Women's Studies program altogether in 2009.

However, since women are the majority of the Canadian population, it was possible to establish Women's Studies courses, and even departments, in some Canadian Universities starting in the 1970s. In Vancouver, SFU Women's Studies program began in 1975 <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/collections/policies/womens_studies.htm> while UBC first offered courses in 1971 and offered an undergraduate program in 1991 (Archibald). Generally, the existence of Women's Studies increased academic support for feminist projects across the university. Thus, by 1988, a signal year, feminist literary studies had achieved sufficient "critical mass" that there was enough of both support and critical material to allow Michelle Valiquette and Wendy Frost of Vancouver's SFU to publish the substantial (867-page) *Feminist Literary Criticism: a Bibliography of Journal Articles 1975-1981* in the academically respectable Garland Reference Library of the Humanities series. Seven years later (at Goellnicht's "beginning"), critical mass was also building for Asian Canadian literature. The combination of these two supports provided an academic atmosphere of substantial encouragement for Lai's early literary work.

Lai's direct connection to the Academic community was strengthened by the

publication of *Fox*, which was a primary factor in her appointment as the Markin-Flanagan writer-in-residence at University of Calgary in 1997 (c.v. 7). During this residency, Lai read from *Fox* at a conference in Taiwan based on the “Importance and Situation of Multicultural Discourse in Canada,” which resulted in *Canadian Culture and Literature and a Taiwan Perspective* (Tötösy de Zepetnek and Leung), an edited collection that includes one of the few critical articles to focus on *Fox* (Van Luven). Lai’s research and experience writing *Fox* also contributes to a paper that she gave at the 1998 University of Victoria conference, *Making History, Constructing Race*. This paper evolved into the significant article, “Political Animals and the Body of History.” Lai’s academic career has moved well beyond these direct connections to *Fox*, but her doctoral dissertation and other publications continue to demonstrate her interest in issues of subjectivity, culture, racialization, and literature.

Asian North American Community Networks²⁷

While Lai’s habitus is strongly influenced by the Academic community, its formation had less opportunity to draw upon an Asian North American community beyond her immediate home environment. As Lai notes, a childhood spent largely in Newfoundland isolated the family from other Asian Canadians and, as a result, she “grew up without a lot of Asian Canadian friends” (Personal Interview). Nevertheless, the Asian North American community eventually became as important as the Academic community to Lai’s intellectual development. As Lai put it, once George McWhirter introduced her to Jim Wong-Chu and the Asian Canadian Writers’ Workshop (ACWW), “I had enough of a sense of myself to recognize myself there.” As well as being a literary

contact for Lai, Wong Chu was also an important community link. He introduced Lai to Vancouver's Asian Canadian political and artistic networks. Lai stresses that the support she felt for her writing came from the whole "Asian Canadian community, not just the [Asian Canadian] Writer's Workshop" (Personal Interview). For instance, it was through Wong-Chu that Lai met Paul Wong and Elspeth Sage, who organized the Yellow Peril exhibit, which showed (exclusively) twenty-five Asian Canadian visual artists.²⁸ Lai joined them as Assistant Curator and it seems that this work marked a turning point for her. As Lai stresses, "It was really exciting to . . . be part of it, to feel power in yourself: kind of bratty, kind of cool to make people mad . . . it was the first moment in my life when there was this possibility of radical Asian identity" (Personal Interview). Although Lai's overall cultural work shows an interest in the well-being of a range of publics, and a range of voices, her connection with Asian identity politics early in her career was clearly exhilarating. Mounting Yellow Peril satisfied a need for political activism, but also showed that such work could attract support from community and government. This seems to have influenced Lai's career direction and encouraged her to get her own views before the public.

The importance and interrelationship of intellectual and community work is apparent when Lai says, "I've never taken any philosophy courses. I did read some Hegel for my candidacies . . . but actually I learned a lot of dialectics from my community work" (Personal Interview). Lai's concern with praxis – the joining of theory and practice – echoes her earlier perception of her parents: they didn't necessarily "talk philosophy," but thought about it and put it into practice in their parenting. The priority Lai gave to community political work, previous to and during the time of writing and

publishing *Fox*, is apparent in the brief biography that appears at the beginning of the *Rice Paper* piece by Karlyn Koh.²⁹ It states, and the order is telling, that Lai “works as a community activist, writer, editor, and critic” (3). Lai performed most of this early work in support of Canadian visual artists of colour prior to writing *Fox*; however, once she reached the stage of wanting “to do something on [her] own,” she turned to her strongest medium: language (Lai Personal Interview). She observes, “I think if I’d had any visual art skills whatsoever, I would probably have done that, but all I could do was words, so I wrote.”

For Lai, writing became what Miki calls “[c]ultural praxis . . . itself a performance of the political” (“Sliding” 151). *Fox* draws on ancient Chinese history and myth and integrates it into contemporary Canadian culture while also describing the quotidian lives of contemporary Chinese Canadian queer women in Vancouver. Koh says that *Fox* helps her “to think about what has separated women” and Lai responds: “I don’t think this novel provides any solution in terms of how to create community given all the ghosts we carry about with us. What I hope it does is provide a little magic to catalyze action in that direction” (16). Lai’s desire to contribute to the Asian North American community, especially within its networks of women, is reflected in *Fox*’s literary strategies that place Asian, female, and queer subjectivities at the centre of culture and language.

Habitus enters the discussion of the Asian Canadian community networks in another way. Christine Kim, drawing on Goellnicht’s work, argues:

[W]hile South Asian writers in Canada may not necessarily have possessed the symbolic capital granted by North American cultural institutions, they did possess cultural capital – the knowledge and

competencies – that could be converted into celebrity in Canada.

Conversely, the lack of this kind of cultural competence meant that East Asian Canadians did not have the same kind of habitus that would let them negotiate the cultural field. (“Politics” 298)

Goellnicht and Kim both suggest that East Asian Canadians did not have this kind of “cultural competence” because the earlier East Asian immigrants were working class and remained so as they gained Canadian citizenship. Lai’s success does not invalidate this line of reasoning, although it does suggest that attention needs to be paid to a significant shift in East Asian immigration patterns because increasing numbers of individual exceptions to the cultural position of South and East Asians exist. Recent East Asian immigrants to Vancouver come, largely, from the more highly cultured and economically privileged Hong Kong rather than from the poorer rural mainland China that journalist, Denise Chong, writes of in *The Concubine’s Children*, a family memoir published in the same year as *Fox* (1995).

Lai’s parents preceded the latest group of Hong Kong immigrants by a quarter of a century and arrived a century or so after the first Chinese immigrants.³⁰ Nevertheless, they too, as holders of doctorates, arrived with cultural capital. Although Lai’s father converted his degree into a tenure track academic career rather than “celebrity,” doctorates exemplify certificates of competence and bear the kind of cultural capital mentioned by Kim. Lai’s position, however, reinforces Kim’s underlying argument, which is that middle class privilege informs habitus and writing and is a predictor of literary success across racialized minorities.³¹ I would add that, in common with most immigrants, Chinese parents encourage their children to “better themselves” by going to

school and moving into the middle class professions, *once this becomes a viable opportunity*, regardless of their place of origin. Thus, by the 1970s there were many not only second, but third and fourth generation East Asians who had acquired the symbolic capital to which Kim refers. No doubt this social circumstance also contributed to the development of political and artistic networks within the East Asian communities, which in turn support Asian Canadian literature.

Asian North American Community: 1988

However, the politically active networks in Vancouver's Asian North American community did not develop strong artistic networks in a vacuum. The 1988 Telling It conference was an early site that brought together racialized, gendered, and queer subjects. 1988 is also a very significant year for Asian Canadian communities. In particular, 1988 marked the success of the Japanese Canadian Redress movement (centred primarily in Vancouver and Toronto) in obtaining some restitution and an apology from the federal government to both the community as a whole and to individual Japanese Canadians, who suffered the institutionalized theft of their properties and the forced relocation and internment of their persons during WWII.³² Although the movement to attain redress involved primarily Japanese Canadians, some of whom are prominent writers and critics (e.g., Roy Miki and Joy Kogawa), the organizing and the success energized Asian Canadian communities across the country, and nowhere more strongly than in Vancouver.³³ This too encouraged the emerging body of Asian Canadian literature that became more prominent in the 1990s. At the Telling It conference, Kogawa theorized about the community-building that occurred within the redress

movement:

[W]hen you struggle with an intentional community, you struggle from a base of ideals and that becomes the community that means a very great deal to you. Now it happened in the redress movement that two identities got meshed. It was an intentional community as well as an ethnic community and that made it quite powerful. ("Panel Two " 123)

The phenomenon that Kogawa refers to -- the powerful connection that arises within intentional communities and how that may be reinforced by additional shared subject positions – is the source of much of the energetic creativity behind repeated waves breaking upon the North American literary shores since the nineteen sixties, when the civil rights movement in the United States caught the imaginations of oppressed groups throughout North America.³⁴ Roy Miki discusses how, in 1981, several members of the Japanese Canadian Centennial Project (JCCP) joined together with “like-minded sansei” to establish the JCCP Redress Committee ("Redress" 25). Again the link to American movements is stressed as Miki adds, “At the time we eagerly followed the hearings of the US Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to investigate the issue of redress for Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II. Couldn’t there be redress for Japanese Canadians?” This transnational Canadian-American connection is further reflected in the reviews of Lai’s *Fox* from the Seattle-based newspaper, *The International Examiner*. It is partly because of the importance of the transnational influence that this community section is more appropriately named “Asian North American” rather than simply “Asian Canadian.” Lai, herself, has a personal American connection since she was born in La Jolla, California, which enabled

PGP to publicize *Fox* as a novel by an Asian American for the U.S. market.

In addition to cross-border links, the redress movement forged links between specific Asian cultural communities and networks within Vancouver. The Redress movement inspired other groups to consider redress for wrongs committed against their communities by the Canadian government. These included the infamous Chinese Head Tax, the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the internment of Ukrainian men during World War II.³⁵ Lewis Chan hints at this broadening of concerns during his speech at the Ottawa Redress Rally on April 14, 1988, when he says, “Given that certain communities have faced injustices in Canada in the past, be it resolved that the Canadian Ethnocultural Council Redress Committee continue to work regarding past injustices against various communities” (124). His reference to “various communities” at a rally specifically concerned with redress for Japanese-Canadians indicates an awareness of injustices that involve other racialized communities.

These cross-cultural alliances were reflected in the language people used to describe themselves. For instance, Miki says there was a shift in usage that occurred in the late 1980s from the more specific terms “Japanese Canadian” or “Chinese Canadian” towards the more inclusive term “Asian Canadian,” which emphasizes solidarity between Canadians of Asian heritage. This solidarity, like the Redress movement, extends across Canada, and may be observed in Lai’s many readings at various Asian heritage events. For instance, when Lai was promoting *Fox* in May of 1996, she read at Asian Heritage Month events in Toronto. The set of reviews of *Fox* also offers an example of connection between specific Asian communities in Vancouver. The special Literary Supplement to the Vancouver-based *the bulletin: a journal for and about the nikkei community*, a journal

aimed specifically at Japanese Canadians, carries a review of *Fox*, a novel by a Chinese Canadian author that includes both Chinese and Chinese Canadian content. The personal also plays a role in these network connections, which are carried out primarily by individuals, although it is important to recall that material objects also bind networks together. It is not coincidental that the reviewer, Hiromi Goto, shares many interlocking subjectivities with Lai (female, Asian, queer) as well as a position in the literary community as an author and as a worker within the Academic community as a writer-in-residence at Vancouver's Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (ECIAD) in 2003-04 and at SFU in 2008-09, a position Lai held in 2006. Goto's first novel, *A Chorus of Mushrooms*, like Lai's first novel, *Fox*, appears in 1995 and is one of several key texts worth exploring as "ex-centric" to the Vancouver Node.

Interestingly, although the review in *The International Examiner* in Seattle is primarily aimed at a mixed audience of men and women, the emphasis in the final paragraph is on the female-centredness of the book:

Ultimately, what's really nice about Lai's book is that its focus is on women, between whom all of the meaningful relationships take place. . . . beautiful imagery, engaging stories and a focus on the lives of women.

(Wah and Au)

The authors of this review show an appreciation for *Fox* that is distinctly woman-centred. There are similar overlapping political and cultural sensibilities in all the communities that express an interest in *Fox*. It may be a typical of nodes to emerge from disparate, but intersecting, networks and communities. In these reviews, each community is apt to comment on an aspect of *Fox* that is less commonly raised in their home community. In

the reviews attributed to the Feminist community, the woman-centredness of *Fox* is often taken for granted and its Asian-centredness is foregrounded.

Feminist Community Networks

Fox was produced (author to publisher) and supported (through an internship at Hedgebrook cottages and an Astraea Foundation Award) primarily by self-identified queer / lesbian feminists. However, personal habitus formation also plays a role in Lai's position-takings within Feminist community networks. Lai explains, "My mother was a feminist – I grew up with Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer books in the house" (Personal Interview).³⁶ In keeping with Bourdieu's analysis, having a feminist parental role model helps to integrate the feminist position into one's personal *habitus* so that feminism then seems "natural." This psychic comfort provides a basic foundation upon which to develop a feminism particular to one's own time, place, and networks. Lai's feminism attracted strong support for her work from the Feminist community, which became the material producer and distributor of *Fox* and of the author function, "Larissa Lai." Vancouver's feminist newspaper, *Kinesis*, not only reviewed *Fox*, but was also an important support for Lai's development as a political activist, author, and arts reviewer. After *Fox* was published, Vancouver's Women in Print bookstore hosted a launch of *Fox* as did Everywoman's Books in Victoria. The key element of *Fox*'s production, its publisher (PGP), was also a Feminist organization that was a good fit with Lai's habitus.

Feminist Community Publisher: Press Gang Publishers

The *Georgia Straight* article that discusses *Fox* informs readers that "[w]hen the

local feminist publishing house Press Gang offered to publish her first novel . . . [Lai] was ‘happy to be seen in their repertoire’” (Pantzar 45). Furthermore, even though Lai later began “to feel the gap” between the kind of distribution and publicity that an alternative press could provide and that provided by a large commercial publishing house, she still affirmed that “she had no regrets about her decision to go with a smaller press and one that she felt ideologically aligned with.” It is not surprising that Lai appreciated PGP since they offered her a contract for *Fox* when she had only written “80-90 pages, if that” (Lai Personal Interview). PGP also facilitated Lai’s completion process by suggesting writing residencies and providing editors. Finally, they published and marketed the novel in both the U.S. and Canada. The Feminist community’s production of *Fox* is representative of a complex series of interactions that similarly produced other texts in the Vancouver node. PGP was the primary publisher of the node.

This section focusses primarily on the background to PGP’s publication of *Fox* and on Lai’s connections with PGP. As noted in Chapter One, PGP acts as what ANT calls a “centre of calculation” that is capable of enrolling authors, volunteers, editors, and producing texts (a type of “immutable mobiles”) such as *Fox* (Murdoch 65). The enrolled authors gain author-function status and both authors and texts become “delegates” that expand PGP’s influence and acquire symbolic capital for the publisher. The mobile texts and authors not only bring influence / symbolic capital / power back to the centre, but enable the centre to become “able to act effectively on many other dispersed spaces,” which is part of the mandate of a centre of calculation (64). PGP was able to achieve this through the affective impact of its publications on individual reading / reacting consciousnesses, which, in turn, contributes to long-term social change in

accordance with PGP's feminist, anti-racist, and anti-homophobic values. (*Fox's* literary contribution to this system is discussed in Chapter Four).

Here, the focus is on the networks and motivations that inclined the press to solicit and publish *Fox*, in particular, rather than on the nuts and bolts of its production. The complexity of the networks that make up community is indicated by the first problematic of this discussion, which is: under which community "ought" PGP to be discussed. As a publisher of numerous other literary works besides *Fox*, PGP might logically be discussed within the Literary community. However, the archived 1981 PGP brochure-style catalogue states that they publish "books and posters whose range and accessibility reflect the vitality of the women's liberation movement itself: non-sexist kid's books, issues ranging from psychiatry to union organizing to lesbianism/feminism," which argues for their deeper commitment to the feminist community. Even though the press was embracing more literary works a decade later, its political commitment remained stable. PGP's feminism is also observable in their archived meeting minutes and in the perspectives presented by the literary works that they published, which demonstrate both literary quality and feminist values.

Alternatively, since PGP was run almost exclusively by lesbians, it might be discussed within the Queer community. This again raises the issues of self-identification, author-ity, and audience that have become guiding principles throughout this study. Of self-identification, Barbara Kuhne says that PGP was "never technically defined as a 'lesbian' press; it was always, technically, 'feminist'" because it was the feminist component that was most important (Personal Interview). Kim, whose dissertation analyzes both PGP and Toronto's Women's Press from a Bourdieuxian perspective,

frequently cites “the feminist community, [as] a key audience for Press Gang books” (“Politics” 257). Moreover, Press Gang catalogues emphasize the feminist contents of their publications, which confirms Kim’s assertion. To place PGP under the Queer heading would ignore both self-identification and audience and perhaps also overlook PGP as one example among the many that could be cited that demonstrate the importance of lesbians to, at least, Western feminism.

Lai’s decision to “go with” a press that she felt shared at least some of her politics confirms Bourdieu’s assertion that “[t]he manuscripts a publisher receives are the product of a kind of pre-selection by the authors themselves according to their image of the publisher” (133). In the case of *Fox*, however, this pre-selection worked both ways. Press Gang actively recruited Lai and her first novel. Lai’s image appealed to them as did her manuscript and its explicit politics. This appeal was based on a variety of motivations. In ANT terms, her recruitment fulfils the requirement that a “centre of calculation” be able to “‘bring home’ relevant features of the places and peoples of concern” (Murdoch 65). Certainly, the *Fox* manuscript qualifies as a relevant feature. Furthermore, Lai, herself, represents “peoples of concern” for PGP. It was not a coincidence that *Fox* was a manuscript that PGP could perceive as a novel about Vancouver and lesbians of colour, by a lesbian of colour. Vancouver was the place, and women of colour and First Nations women, the people, that PGP was most concerned with integrating into their publishing program. Using “multicultural” language that perhaps ignores Audre Lorde’s warning that “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House,” Kuhne recalls PGP’s agenda: “[W]e desired to have a multicultural publishing program” (Personal Interview).³⁷ The recruitment of Lai and *Fox* was a

network move that helped establish PGP's position as a centre of calculation.

A number of other factors inclined PGP to actively solicit, especially, more fiction manuscripts. Kuhne joined PGP as a volunteer in 1983 and took on the paid half-time Managing Editor position in January 1984. Her appreciation of fiction drove a shift in focus for PGP, which, up until that point had been "eclectic" (PGPF "Short"). PGP had published children's books, poetry, and texts of feminist political analysis, but did not publish its first full-length novel until 1992 (Ann Decter's *Paper, Scissors, Rock*). *Fox* was not only one of PGP's first Asian Canadian texts (a short story collection, *Out on Main Street* by Vancouver node author, Shani Mootoo, preceded it), but was one of Press Gang's first novels, period. PGP's interest in publishing novels was communicated to the Vancouver Feminist and Asian Canadian communities in that "telling" year, 1988, when Kuhne approached SKY Lee to express early interest in the manuscript of *Disappearing Moon Café*. The PGP minutes' record of the exchange is instructive:

SKY Lee asked Barbara why we're interested in her book – she wouldn't have thought of us as a publisher for it. Barbara said that we are actively looking for fiction manuscripts and the local writing community doesn't know much about us as a publisher, hence we must seek out things when we hear of them. (PGPF "Meetings 1987-89")

The shift towards fiction, and especially literary novels, is reflected in Press Gang's catalogues. By 1994 the (by now much more substantial) catalogue avows that Press Gang "is committed to producing quality books with social and literary merit. . . . [giving] priority to Canadian women's work and . . . writing by lesbians and by women from diverse cultural and class backgrounds" (PGPF "Catalogue, 1994"). This change

retains the earlier concerns with racism and class, though both concerns are now expressed in language that is more literary (and less revolutionary) in tone. PGP's editorial drive had turned to fiction, especially fiction that served an anti-racist agenda. Lai's manuscript was an excellent vehicle for furthering both drive and agenda.

Despite PGP's in-house determination to provide authors of colour the option of working with editors of colour, Lai chose to work with White editor, Jennifer Glossop, who had done previous successful work with Press Gang. Glossop subsequently edited another novel, Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*. Kuhne herself usually performed a final copyedit on the manuscripts, even if an outside editor had done the substantive edit (Personal Interview). The importance of the informal rhizomatic spreading and gathering of the many individuals and varied networks within the Feminist community is notable here. Kuhne credits Pat Smith and Penny Goldsmith,³⁸ who worked both worked at Women's Press and Press Gang with helping her learn to be an editor. The editing network and its importance can be traced even further to note that Saeko Usukawa (an editor first at MacMillan in Toronto, then with *MAKARA Magazine* and Douglas and McIntyre in Vancouver) gave workshops in editing to Women's Press in Toronto prior to 1973 (Usukawa "Conversation 20 Apr"). When Press Gang Printers became a feminist press and moved into publishing, Pat Smith and Sarah Davidson (primarily a printer) asked Usukawa to give similar workshops to PGP.³⁹

Although PGP was able to determine which manuscripts to solicit and to manage the editing process, the production and dissemination (marketing and distribution) of the finished books into society were also vitally important and could not be achieved by any small publishing house in isolation. However, important aspects of *Fox's* dissemination

remained within the Feminist community at the time of the Vancouver node. To try to reach *Fox*'s audience and maximize sales required PGP to work with a distributor, a network of booksellers, and also to find other means of "spreading the word." Spreading the word meant attending conferences and conventions, advertising in various types of periodicals, and arranging launches and book tours. Once PGP produced the texts as material objects, the artefacts themselves

become 'delegates', able to carry 'rationalities of rule' generated by the centre [PGP] out to all the localities enrolled in the network. However, these delegates . . . must do more than this: they must also carry aspects of the enrolled localities back to the centre. (Murdoch 65)

The "rationalities of rule" here would be the values of the Press: anti-racist, anti-homophobic, and socialist feminist values mixed, by the time of *Fox*'s publication, with strong literary values. *Fox*, as a representative "immutable mobile" that carries these values very effectively, brought to PGP, as a "centre of calculation," credibility and connection from the Asian North American community, in particular, as well as from the Feminist community. The book is distributed, reviewed, and read; the symbolic capital flows back through the network to the author function, "Larissa Lai," and to PGP. Kuhne remembers that publishing *Fox* strengthened the press's connection to Jim Wong-Chu (Kuhne Personal Interview). This was important because Wong-Chu then directed authors he considered a good match towards Press Gang.⁴⁰

However, to be successful, Vancouver node immutable mobiles such as *Fox* must travel beyond their short Vancouver networks in order to accrue significant symbolic and / or monetary capital. At the April 27, 1996 PGP Board of Directors meeting, which

occurred during the time that Lai was going on book tours on the West Coast of both Canada and the U.S., the Directors met to discuss PGP's "General Marketing Strategy" (PGPF "Board").⁴¹ Their approach shows that the Feminist community, as well as the Academic and Asian North American communities, gained strength through having significant connections with like-minded communities in the United States. The minutes state:

Since the outset, PGP has operated from the perspective that strong marketing to the Canadian *and* U.S. markets has been and *is* a matter of survival for a small CDN feminist press, and that essential for effective marketing is a strong and reliable distribution system (such as we have been part of in Canada, the U.S. and the UK since the late 70s). For a small CDN publisher, we have unusually high U.S. sales (approx 60% of total) and this is not unrelated to our marketing efforts. (emphasis in minutes)

In press releases and advertising to the U.S., the "American-ness" of Lai is often emphasized. For instance, a press release bearing the headline, "Larissa Lai 1996 Tour," states "Asian American author to read in Western U.S." (PGPF "West"). There is no mention of Canada, which contrasts strongly with *Fox*, a text whose emphasis on Canadian-ness is apparent in this early comment by its protagonist, Artemis: "You say: A funny name for a Chinese girl. I will correct you. Chinese-Canadian" (*Fox* 20). The gap between the American-ness that PGP attributes to Lai and the national specificity of Lai, *Fox*, and the novel's contemporary characters is the very space of marketability.

It is a commonly held view in Canadian book marketing circles that it is necessary

to foreground “America” (preferably in content and marketing) for a book to sell successfully in that country. PGP was “savvy” about this, as their 60% U.S. sales show. The review in *Feminist Bookstore News (FBN)* further demonstrates PGP’s strategic wooing of the larger American market. In a PGP notice that appears in *FBN* “From Our Own Presses” section, PGP’s offering introduces *Fox* by stating, “**When Fox is a Thousand** by Asian American writer Larissa Lai earned her a 1995 Emerging Writers Award from the Astraea Lesbian Writers Fund” (Morgan 78, emphasis in text). “Asian American” is again used to describe Lai and the award mentioned is from an American organization, the Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice, whose website states that the award is “for emerging lesbian poets and fiction writers within the U.S.” <http://www.astraea.org/PHP/Grants/DeadlinesAllGrants.php4#writers_fund>. ⁴²

These examples underline the influence of the U.S. market, which relies on the same population numbers that allowed U.S. universities to start and continue so many minoritarian studies programs. They also point out the importance of the network connections between Feminist community publishers, periodicals, and booksellers. These connections are implicit in the Feminist community’s “long” geographical networks that were noted in Section I. However, the feminist networks were attenuating in the 1990s. Although PGP was still attending booksellers conferences in the U.S. (often sharing a booth with other publishers such as Toronto’s Sister Vision), the meeting minutes begin to question whether the press could afford to continue this on a yearly basis. By 1996, in her review of *Fox*, Kathy Prendergast exclaims: “Yikes. Remember when there were so many feminist publishers we could hold a conference.” The situation was similar for feminist bookstores, which were a vital part of the distribution network.

Feminist Community: Bookstores

Bookstores may be seen as important communication junctions or nodes whether they are viewed through the lens of Deleuzian rhizomatics or ANT.⁴³ In their minutes, PGP states that their 1995 marketing strategy, which supported *Fox*, was

designed with 2 equally important objectives in mind:

- (1) to ensure that feminist booksellers *and* consumers are made aware of our books and how to get them and
- (2) to encourage general interest bookstores and consumers to become more aware of and interested in PGP books. (PGPF "Board")

This strategy indicates the special importance of feminist bookstores in the marketing of feminist and lesbian texts in general and *Fox* in particular. Not only did the Feminist Bookstore Network's (FBN) newsletter spread the news of *Fox*'s publication, but member bookstores bought the book, advertised it, and some also hosted readings. PGP contributed financially to Lai's March – May 1996 tour of Canada and the U.S. West Coast, which is of no small significance because small publishers often do not offer support of this kind. Lai did readings in many bookstores, the majority of which were feminist and on the West Coast. In particular, readings of *Fox* took place at the following feminist bookstores and locations (and perhaps others): Women in Print in Vancouver, BC; Everywomans⁴⁴ in Victoria, BC; Mother Kali's in Eugene, Oregon; In Other Words in Portland, Oregon; West Berkeley Women's Books in Berkeley, California; and Mother Tongue Books in Ottawa, Ontario (PGPF "West").

The support from feminist bookstores also suggests that lesbian community

networks gave support for *Fox*, Lai, and PGP since so many bookstores, like PGP and other feminist presses, are at least in part, owned and operated by lesbians. Although I cannot speak with certainty of the ownership of the American bookstores where Lai read, two of the Canadian bookstores that hosted her readings were jointly owned by lesbian and heterosexual feminists (Evelyn Huer, with Laura Rayner in Ottawa; and Louise Hager, with Carol Dale in Vancouver) and the collective that ran *Everywomans* in Victoria included many lesbians.

Geographer Gill Valentine argues that “alternative bookstores” are one of the “countercultural institutions” that contribute to the “quasi-underground character” of lesbian neighbourhoods (3). This “quasi-underground” nature reflects a network system that relies more heavily on personal connections and a feminist interest in collectivity than it does on typical capitalist business structures and materials. Since Murdoch argues that it is material objects that stabilize a network and make it more durable across time and space (65), this may, in part, account for the dissolution of the Feminist networks when challenged by technological change and the bookstore giants, such as Chapters, that changed the way publishers and bookstores interact. In Vancouver, *Women in Print* [WIP], the bookstore that hosted *Fox*’s launch, opened in 1993 and closed its storefront in 2005. Although its online business continues, WIP was the last feminist “bricks and mortar” bookstore in Vancouver. Vancouver’s Ariel Books, which was owned by two lesbians in succession (Cedar, followed by Margo Dunn), closed in 1993 and The Vancouver Women’s Bookstore, run by a collective of women of varying sexualities, closed in 1996.⁴⁵ Similarly, Victoria’s *Everywomans Books* closed permanently in 1997 (Yaffe). The Rose Norman website presents interviews with feminist booksellers and

publishers and claims, based on FBN figures as of 2001, that “[s]ince 1997, 30% of feminist bookstores in the U.S. and Canada have closed for good, down from 107 to 74” <<http://www.uah.edu/english/wip/>>. The timing stands in ironic juxtaposition with the apparently positive queer outburst of the Vancouver publication node.⁴⁶ It also underlines the fragility of the conditions that produced the Vancouver node and the importance of this node work as a microhistory.

Feminist Newspaper: Kinesis

Kinesis was important for the publication and reception of *Fox* for several reasons. Firstly, the feminist newspaper helped to promote women’s (and especially, lesbian) writing to its audience, which consisted largely of Vancouver-based feminists. Secondly, the newspaper, like PGP, had become aware that its practice had not kept up to its anti-racist principles and therefore began actively encouraging more women of colour to contribute by writing articles and reviews and by joining the editorial collective. By 1990, Terrie Hamazaki’s name appears regularly as part of the editorial group and in 1991, the names of other women of colour also appear (Agnes Huang, Gladys We, Fatima Jaffer, and Anne Jew, to mention only the names that I recognize on the 1991 mastheads). Thirdly, *Kinesis* participated directly in Lai’s development and stature as a feminist activist and writer by publishing her work. Lai’s involvement also increased her points of connection within Vancouver’s feminist networks since the newspaper, bookstore, printer, and publisher networks had significant overlap of members, the majority of whom were queer.⁴⁷

Lai credits her involvement at *Kinesis* in the acknowledgements section of both

editions of *Fox*. In the PGP edition, she acknowledges:

This work would not have been possible without the support, friendship, and committed politics of the writers, activists, and artists involved in the publications for which I worked while writing this book: *Kinesis: the Newspaper of the Vancouver Status of Women* and *Front Magazine*.

Moreover, Lai informed me that during the time she wrote and published *Fox*, she was involved with “lots of queer stuff . . . [including] the gals around *Kinesis*, who were really important. [She] did a lot of review writing for them, which was at least as important as the ACWW was for [her]” (Personal Interview). *BC Bookworld* echoes the importance of Lai’s *Kinesis* work by singling out for mention only her birthplace, her current residence, and that she is “a frequent contributor to *Kinesis*” in their brief notice of *Fox* (12). Oddly, a PGP press release in the archive cites Lai’s contributions to *West Coast Line*, *Rungh*, *Fuse*, and the anthology, *Many-Mouthed Birds* and doesn’t mention *Kinesis* (PGPF “Press”).⁴⁸ Certainly they were aware of Lai’s involvement with *Kinesis* since Emma Kivisild, a former *Kinesis* editor, was PGP’s publicist during *Fox*’s launch period and arranged the promotion tours and press releases. Kivisild’s position(s) further exemplify the interpenetration of the various community networks.⁴⁹

The welcoming environment of *Kinesis* encouraged more content by and about women of colour and resulted in the formation of the aptly named the “Not Just Another Page Collective” (La Flamme). Lai was part of this collective and, in 1993, contributed 4 reviews to *Kinesis* (c.v.). Lai was also interim editor for *Kinesis* in the spring of 1994. Finally, Lai’s involvement in *Kinesis* connected her beyond these immediate Vancouver-based networks to the struggles of feminist writers of colour and First Nations writers

across the country and internationally. Lai played significant roles in a number of Canadian conferences that were organized by and for (primarily) cultural workers of colour including First Nations peoples. One of the conferences that Lai helped organize, InVisible Colours: International Women of Colour and Third World Women Film and Video Festival and Symposium, was held in Vancouver in November of 1989. As reported in *Kinesis*, InVisible Colours was “the first major Canadian tribute to films and videos by women of colour and Third World Women” (“Invisible Colours”). Although it was specifically feminist, others, like the *Appropriate Voice* and the *Writing Thru Race* conference, were not gender-based and focussed on the literary. These will, therefore, be discussed further under the Literary community section.

Feminist Community: 1988

The Telling It conference, the first to raise issues of sexuality and (post)colonial issues together, was one of a number of outstanding events that made 1988, arguably, as important a year for feminists as it had been for Asian Canadians. On Jan. 28, 1988, the Supreme Court of Canada

ruled that Doctors Henry Morgentaler, Leslie Smoling and Robert Scott must be acquitted on charges of 'procuring' a miscarriage' – that is performing abortions. . . . [because] the section regulating abortion in the Criminal Code, violates . . . the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. (“Through the Lens” 20)

The long struggle for control over our own bodies, for reproductive freedom, had united most feminists. The decision, based on the fact that juries would not convict despite the

evidence not being in dispute, demonstrated that the government could not maintain abortion as a criminal act. This in turn encouraged provinces to develop more appropriate medical guidelines concerning termination of pregnancies, which was an important development in safeguarding the health and reproductive freedom of queer and heterosexual women.

Daphne Marlatt describes the zeitgeist in words that recall 1988 as a time of literary as well as political realization. Literarily inclined feminists were manifesting dreams that had taken years to materialize through establishing our own networks of publishers, bookstores, and readers. Marlatt recalls: “There was so much going on at that time. That was the wonderful heyday of feminist publishing when anyone who was a feminist would get excited about a new book of feminist poetry” (Personal Interview). Among other important literary events in 1988, such as the publication of Chrystos’ *Not Vanishing*, was the publication of Marlatt’s own *Ana Historic*, a novel that imaginatively placed White and First Nations women in the early days of Vancouver’s founding as a colonial city.⁵⁰

Perhaps the most important shift in the Vancouver Feminist community was an increased awareness of the need for anti-racist work, which came from both women of colour networks and also from networks that enrolled actors from various racialized backgrounds, but which had been dominated by White women. In some cases, as in *Kinesis*, women of colour took on leadership roles, but more often in the mixed groups there was an improvement of consciousness and atmosphere without sufficient critical mass to change leadership dramatically. The most important work in this area continued to come from groups that were exclusively or primarily women of colour. The

November 1988 issue of *Kinesis* reports on events that demonstrate how active the interest in anti-racism was in Vancouver at this time. The paper reports on an important precursor to the InVisible Colours conference that was organized by Sadie Kuehn: “Making Ourselves Visible: Breaking Barriers of Racism and Art,” which took place at Women in Focus (17-18). The same issue also contains a review of a play by and about Latin American woman (*I Wasn't Born Here*) (19). Moreover, the Bulletin Board posts a notice for a “Fabulous Yard Sale,” whose proceeds go towards Unlearning Racism Workshops, as well as a final notice for the Telling It conference (22).

Literary Community Networks

Most of the networks that involve Lai or *Fox* intersect in the Literary community. For instance, PGP and the ACWW have a strong presence in both communities. The shared interests in literature coupled with a strong commitment to social justice issues likely contributed to the development of what Kuhne experienced as a warm supportive relationship between the two actants (Kuhne Personal Interview). Their relationship was strengthened through literary events such as ACWW or PGP-sponsored readings, which were mutually attended, as well as through PGP’s publication of Lai and other Asian Canadian authors.

The boundaries of the Literary community are further blurred because Lai’s visual arts connections are as important, even to her literary work, as her literary connections. Again, I take a lead from Rita Wong who, in another context, exclaims that “autobiography, visual art, rear their beautiful heads, broadening that category of ‘literary’ into the interdisciplinary” and discuss the visual arts connections under this

literary heading ("Jumping" 120). Moreover, in continuing to "follow the networks," I return to the point where the Academic and Asian North American communities intersected and note that moment's connection to the Literary community. In the *Rice Paper* interview by Karlyn Koh, Lai mentions that Jim Wong-Chu was preparing the Chinese-Canadian anthology *Many-Mouthed Birds*⁵¹ at the time that McWhirter introduced them (3). This significant collection subsequently gave Lai one of her earliest publications, the poem, "Eighty Years Bathing" (47).⁵² The publication of "Eighty Years Bathing" is but one tangible example of what Lai characterizes as the "incredibly useful and really productive" benefits of being enrolled in the ACWW and the Asian Canadian literary arts network in general (Personal Interview).

Literary Community: Visual Arts & Writing Group

Lai's role in this network involved work as an assistant curator and also as a critic (Lai *c.v.*).⁵³ As Lai says, she was "doing a lot of review writing . . . based on visual arts" (Personal Interview). It was through these connections that Lai met Monika Kin Gagnon and Shani Mootoo. The three women formed a writing group that met regularly to critique and support each other's literary work.⁵⁴ The members of this small writing group had strong connections to the Asian Canadian, Feminist, and Literary communities in Vancouver. Each woman worked with both literary and visual arts. In the author biography that follows the text of *Cereus Blooms at Night*,⁵⁵ Shani Mootoo is described as "a multimedia visual artist and video-maker whose paintings and photo-based works have been exhibited internationally" (*Cereus* n. pag.). Similarly, Gagnon was an editor of the arts magazine, *Parallelogram*, and curator of Artspeak, the Vancouver art gallery

that shared a space with the Kootenay School of Writing for a time (Lai Personal Interview). Lai herself spent a year editing the arts journal for the Western Front Society, *Front Magazine*, and with Wong and Sage mounted “Yellow Peril” in the Western Front space (Lai c.v.). The overlap of visual and textual arts communities is particularly noticeable in Vancouver’s restricted field of cultural production, which contains “alternative” cultural works that conjoin the radical political field.

The writing group the three women formed was of paramount importance to Lai throughout the period in which she wrote *Fox*. In the PGP edition acknowledgements, Lai allows that she is “indebted to these two sisters for support, encouragement, and community.” Similarly, in the Arsenal Pulp Press edition, she claims that Mootoo and Gagnon “mid-wifed this book.” Not only does Lai publicly acknowledge the importance of her enrolment in this mini-network in both editions of *Fox*, but in her interview with me, she goes so far as to say, “I don’t think it would have been possible for me to write that way if it hadn’t been for that support.”

In a 1998 interview with Ashok Mathur, Lai affirms that her “fiction is an extension of [her] activism” and no doubt Gagnon and Mootoo, whose work is also politically inflected, supported her in this <<http://www.eciad.bc.ca/~amathur/larissa/larissa.html>>. However, the group’s synergy was powerful beyond simply supporting each other’s political positions. Lai perhaps describes their creative and productive relationship best when discussing Gagnon’s insightful essay on Mootoo’s work in Gagnon’s *Other Conundrums*. In the foreword, Lai reflects on the relationship between critic and artist, a relationship that the group continuously provided for each other: “Both writer and artist are conscious of their interrelationship and conscious of the

fantastic fertility of their dialogue with one another, and indeed with a larger moment and a larger movement of which they are both creators and created” (19). Productivity and usefulness seem to be touchstones for network connections for Lai.

The group also provided one another with important connections to each other’s networks. One of the most important of these was a connection to PGP that was made through Mootoo’s connection with visual, performance, and literary artist, Persimmon Blackbridge. All three authors, Blackbridge and Mootoo as visual artists and Lai as critic, share many similarities on the macro level of community and on the micropolitical level of networks. Blackbridge played a key role in recommending both Mootoo’s and Lai’s manuscripts to PGP through her relationship with PGP’s Della McCreary (Kuhne Personal Interview). (Blackbridge’s relationship to PGP also made it easy to promote her own work). Significantly, for *Fox*, Blackbridge suggested that PGP’s McCreary attend the reading by Heroines in Black Boots, a one-performance reading group that Lai formed with Anne Jew and Lydia Kwa. The Heroines read at W.I.S.E. Hall in Vancouver’s Commercial Drive area as part of the Women in View arts event in January 1994 (c.v.).⁵⁶ PGP moved towards offering Lai the contract for *Fox* based on McCreary’s response to this reading.

Sharing many similar identifications, talents, and interests brought Mootoo and Lai into many overlapping networks. This chapter would have involved similar communities had I used *Cereus* as the node’s representative text. In John Kozachenko’s photograph, the two authors hold up each other’s award-nominated books, which illustrates the close connection of authors and texts.⁵⁷ The novels used the same editor⁵⁸ and the cover and text for each was designed by PGP’s Artistic Manager Val Speidel.



Larissa Lai (left) and Shani Mootoo hold each others books at a fundraiser for Write Out West. Mootoo's novel *Cereus Blooms at Night* was shortlisted for the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and the Chapters First Novel Award. Lai was nominated for the same awards for *When Fox is A Thousand* in 1996.

Figure 11 Photo of Lai and Mootoo from *Angles* (June 1997)

In an interesting convergence, Kim argues that “the publication of certain texts is key to understanding the presses” and that for PGP, *Cereus* and *Fox* are those texts (“Politics” 14). These two novels are also most vital to the Vancouver node and this dissertation argues that as well as signalling a shift in the ideological commitments of

PGP, they also signal a similar shift in the ideologies represented by Canadian queer women's publications.

Mootoo also shares, with this work and Lai, a philosophy of artistic production that contests the concept of writing as a solitary act:

It is often assumed that writing is a solitary occupation, a one-person show. Yet if it weren't for a number of people who encouraged and supported – and even distracted – me, *Cereus* would still be inside me, wrestling to be released. (Mootoo Acknowledgements [271])

Lai's relationship with PGP, in turn, linked her to other literary networks. For instance, when Lai was having trouble finishing the *Fox* manuscript, PGP suggested that she apply to Hedgebrook, an American writing retreat for women, located on Widbey Island in Washington State, for one of their literary residencies.⁵⁹ Lai was successful and obtained a Hedgebrook residency from February to April in 1995 (*c.v.*). The residency included housing and meals, and was key to her manuscript completion; however, that was not the residency's only benefit. The retreat centre has a number of writer's cottages and Lai's literary networks were expanded by the other queer authors that she met there. One of these writers⁶⁰ suggested that Lai ought to apply for Astraea's Lesbian Writers Fund. Again, Lai was successful. The Astraea award (\$17,000 US), was not tied to any particular project, but given to further the writer's work in whatever manner she deemed best. Although the *Fox* manuscript may have helped Lai obtain the award rather than *vice versa* it shows the reciprocal nature of writing and awards and the importance of transnational networks. The Hedgebrook residency and the Astraea award demonstrate the potency of the intersection of the feminist and literary networks, in particular, and

also the importance of the Canadian-American connection to Lai's career. As Lai says, "It was great to get the recognition and the money!" (Personal Interview).

Literary Community: Conferences

In her foreword to Gagnon's *Other Conundrums*, Lai cites several conferences including, InVisible Colours, The Appropriate Voice (TAV), and Writing Thru Race (WTR) as being of primary importance for cultural workers of colour (17). For literary networks, no doubt the WTR conference and TAV, its "historic Planning Session (May 21-24, 1992), which took place in Orillia, Ontario," were most significant (J. Hall 10). Lai played important roles in both conferences. Resolutions passed at the TAV conference spoke against cultural appropriation (the issue that Lee Maracle had raised so effectively at the 3rd International Women's Bookfair in 1988) and in favour of mounting a "Race and Writing" conference in Vancouver in 1994. The Writers' Union of Canada (TWUC) approved a \$5,000 expenditure towards "exploring the feasibility" of that conference, later renamed WTR. TAV was also significant in that it formalized the Racial Minority Writers' Committee as a standing advisory body within TWUC.

Lai was a member of the Conference Planning Committee for the WTR conference, which took place in Vancouver from June 30 – July 3, 1994, sponsored by TWUC (J. Hall 1). The strong connection between visual and textual arts that I have discussed was also highlighted in its program. The concluding plenary session was held at Artspeak Gallery (where Gagnon was curator) "to enable conference participants to view the art exhibit, 'Racing Thru Space,'" mounted to complement the sessions (4). WTR brought together "180 First Nations writers and writers of colour" at Vancouver's

Coast Hotel located near English Bay. Participation in the conference's daytime events was restricted to writers of colour and First Nations writers while the evening sessions were open to the public. This policy sparked a media furor that largely ignored the importance of such a gathering for First Nations authors and writers of colour and instead claimed that the organizers of the conference "perpetuate racism" (Fulford) and engage in the "cultural dismemberment of Canada" (Valpy). The "controversy" raised objections that were similar to those raised in connection with the *Women and Words* conference (Jun 30 – July 3, 1983, Vancouver)⁶¹ and also to the objections raised regarding the *Yellow Peril Revisited* exhibit.⁶² Because WTR had a national profile, the media-generated controversy resulted in Canadian Heritage Minister Michel Dupuy withdrawing federal support of about \$22,000 that had been earmarked for the conference on the (ironic) basis that he was "profoundly against discrimination as a principle" (O'Neil). Fortunately the Canada Council and TWUC maintained their funding and support while other unions and individual donors eventually contributed more dollars than the federal government had withdrawn.⁶³ Ultimately, as Cyril Dabydeen later commented, the government's action "unwittingly gave the event a sharp focus, a voice and presence it might not otherwise have had."

In the "Forum on the Conference" held at TWUC before the conference, "Lai talked about historical precedents for this conference within the film and video and visual arts communities the coalition building . . . [and the] need to focus on the work of First Nations writers and writers of colour, and on the mechanics of bringing that work into public view" (J. Hall 16). However, in Lai's "Notes in Conclusion" following this panel, she expresses her understandable frustration that the focus of the forum itself "had

become whether or not the [WRT] conference was justified, with no real concern as to what actually might go on in it” (17). Intercommunity network support was also apparent at the forum where “[s]upport seemed to come largely from white women who had been working in the feminist movement,” although, disappointingly, even these supporters sometimes overlooked the fact that “the feminist movement and the anti-racist movement are not mutually exclusive” (16).⁶⁴

While the Telling It conference has been largely forgotten or ignored in critical conversation, the Writing Thru Race conference is consistently well-recognised as an important turning point, not only for First Nations writers and writers of colour, but also for the Canadian discussion of racism, anti-racism, and culture generally. There is at least one thesis on the conference⁶⁵ and numerous articles⁶⁶ and books that note both the conference itself and the controversy that was mounted in the media. Mainstream reporting focussed almost exclusively on the “exclusion” of Whites from the daytime programs and ignored the inclusion of Whites as audience members for the evening programs. *Challenging Racism in the Arts* gives a comprehensive overview of the internal concerns of the conference, which are worth noting in some detail, particularly since these concerns were largely ignored by the mainstream media:

Identity and difference were the two central themes of this conference, which provided a forum for exploring a number of critical issues: the fluid and transforming nature of identity; the ways in which these various selves serve as a critical resource in the creative process; the potential conflicts and tensions between an individual’s various identities (including race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation) that the writer / artist must

negotiate; the boundaries and barriers of colour and difference that limit the range of possibilities and opportunities; and the need for writers of colour and first nations writers to define their own issues, agendas, priorities, visions, and values, instead of simply responding to the interests and demands of the dominant culture. (94)

As was noted in the pre-conference forum, these concerns are similar to the concerns raised by women (both racialized and not) at conferences such as *Women and Words* and *Telling It*. Excluding members of a dominant group, particularly from conference sessions, seems to reflect a common need of marginalized peoples to meet separately in order to feel more comfortable. The issues raised at the conference are the issues faced by authors of colour, but there are similarities in the issues faced by other marginalized authors. The Asian Canadian Vancouver node authors who attended these conferences experience triple and interlocking marginalization as queer women of colour. The misconceived media controversy nevertheless benefitted Canadians as a whole by making visible the gap between Canada's espoused state multiculturalism, which strives to contain difference (while preserving or asserting the dominance of English or French culture) and critical multiculturalism, which "challenges the political and cultural hegemony of the dominant class or group" (Tator, Henry and Mattis 260).⁶⁷ Ironically, the "controversy" that completely distracted the public from the actual activities and issues of the conference also effectively demonstrated how necessary it was to exclude Whites -- no doubt White presence would have taken up precious conference space and time by raising these concerns in the sessions as well as in the media. Instead, the energy raised at these conferences combined with energy in the feminist literary community to

create significant momentum for the emergence of Vancouver node.

Mainstream Community Networks

Besides the indirect consciousness-raising created through their misguided and self-righteous outrage over the WTR conference, the Mainstream hegemonic and public network newspapers contributed directly to the Vancouver node by publishing reviews of *Fox* that spread awareness of the publication throughout a very broad web of networks. As the WTR example demonstrates, although these journalistic instruments purport to aim at “everyone,” in the Canadian context, that “everyone” is an inferred audience that is generally assumed to be White, straight, Anglophone (at least in BC), and to inhabit a social stratum between the upper working and the upper middle classes. In Vancouver, this is certainly true for newspapers such as the *Vancouver Sun*, but it also holds for the alternative news and entertainment newspapers, which for the purposes of this study are counted as Mainstream.

In the case of *Fox*, despite the several reviews that did appear in the Mainstream press, Lai comments (in the *Georgia Straight*) that “she feels very frustrated. ‘My book has been largely ignored by the mainstream media’” (Pantzar 45). Lai attributes this state of affairs to the fact that *Fox* was published by an alternative publisher, PGP.

Nevertheless, PGP’s marketing strategy was designed with “2 equally important objectives in mind”: to promote feminist awareness of their books, but also “to convince an increasing number of general-interest booksellers and consumers that Press Gang books and authors will enrich their lives and that they are readily available” (PGPF "Board"). These objectives demonstrate that even an alternative press that doesn’t

assume mainstream readers must court the Mainstream. Without PGP's active courtship, *Fox* might have received even fewer mainstream reviews.

Mainstream Community: Canada Council of the Arts (CCA) Block Funding

PGP's desire to make inroads into the mainstream market was not based solely on a desire to promulgate feminist values and texts, nor to simply increase the direct profits from book sales – it was also a strategy to ensure that PGP would have access to programs and funds from the Canadian government. Once PGP obtained block funding, it was those funds that made it materially possible for them to publish *Fox*, *Cereus*, and *Sunnybrook*, among other texts. The CCA document, “Block Grants to Book Publishers,” demonstrates how the CCA influences publishers to target mainstream audiences (PGPF). The archived document shows a hand-drawn box around part of the following section that someone at PGP clearly thought deserved special attention: “The Canada Council provides assistance to professional publishing houses which maintain an ongoing publishing program of trade titles aimed at a general audience and made available to the public through normal book channels.” The box surrounds the phrase “aimed at a general audience.” Similar marks of emphasis highlight several entries listed under “Ineligible Categories of Titles.” It would be reasonable to suppose, on the basis of this document alone, that the criteria for achieving Block Funding played a significant role in the development of PGP's marketing and manuscript selection strategies. Specifically, this seems to be the impetus for PGP's dual emphasis on *both* feminist and general interest (i.e., Mainstream) bookstores (“normal book channels”) and audiences. In conjunction with PGP's marketing policy, the document makes these suppositions

conclusive.

This is where PGP's alternative position in the restricted section of the cultural field intersects with the Canadian government's hegemony over the political field as a whole. Christine Kim cites Bourdieu to claim that "Press Gang, given its perception of itself primarily as a producer of social art, [occupies] a position located 'at the intersection of the literary field with the political field' (Bourdieu 166)" ("Politics" 263). This interstitial space is the place where counter-hegemony and hegemony together create change largely through a process of continuous co-optation. It is important, though difficult, as Raymond Williams explains, to recognize that

any hegemonic process must be especially alert and responsive to the alternatives and opposition which question or threaten its dominance. . . .

The most interesting and difficult part of any cultural analysis, in complex societies, is that which seeks to grasp the hegemonic in its active and formative but also its transformational processes. (113)

CCA Block funding offers an opportunity to observe these often invisible processes. On the one hand, the publication of an alternative or radical text (e.g., *Fox*) transforms hegemonic society by presenting new points of view. On the other hand, by encouraging publishers to target the mainstream ("general") audience, hegemonic institutions ensure that the transformation will be limited because it requires the alternative group consciously to engage, and not simply challenge, the hegemonic. The injunction to target the mainstream, obviously affects advertising and distribution strategies (e.g., PGP's marketing strategy), but might similarly affect acquisition and editorial strategies. In this manner, "the dominant culture . . . at once produces and limits its own forms of counter-

culture” (114).

Kim observes that the press’s political and business agendas were often at odds (“Politics” 4). However, following Bourdieu, this is also true of the press’s cultural motivations, which were primarily about symbolic capital, and their business motivations, which were primarily economic. In PGP, these agendas and motivations worked simultaneously, and often at cross-purposes. Nevertheless, I argue that these forces, despite their contradictory trajectories, combined to make PGP one of the most powerful factors in the creation of the 1995-96 publication node. At the October 11, 1988 meeting, PGP began to discuss obtaining CCA Block Funding (PGPF “Meetings 1987-89”). Although this was the earliest mention of block funding that I found, several previous meetings display an increasing anxiety around soliciting manuscripts. The timing is contemporaneous to the Telling It conference and the split at Women's Press, both of which reinforced the anti-racist processes that PGP had already set in motion. However, the anxiety around soliciting particular manuscripts might also relate to anticipation of their Block Funding application, which intersected with their desire to establish PGP as an anti-racist, literary publisher that could appeal to “general” readers.

The October 11 minutes note that, to qualify for Block Funding, publishers must have published sixteen books already and continue to publish four books per year. Committing to this as a goal marks a serious departure from Pat Smith’s 1984 description of PGP as publisher:

The publishing schedule is unhurried, averaging one or two books a year and maybe some posters. Almost all of the projects are printed by women

working in the collective and it is this involvement in the nuts and bolts of it all that gives Press Gang its particular aura. (PGPF "Short")

PGP succeeded in being admitted to the Block Funding program in 1991, which gave them a Block Grant of \$20,100, a huge boost for a small impecunious press. The CCA letter (15 Apr. 1991) rings with approval: “[t]he jury was pleased with your 1990 list and the role that you play in Canadian publishing” (PGPF).⁶⁸ However, by this time the printers and publishers were no longer one collective.⁶⁹ In addition, publishing the required four books a year (rather than the “unhurried” two) doubled the workload of the breakaway publishing collective (Kim “Politics” 247). The letter from CCA that announced the 1996 grant was based on the “eligible title production over the past two years” and praised Press Gang’s evolution (PGPF). Out of the \$54,200 awarded that year, \$38,358 came from “bonus points” that were based not only on their own production but also on a comparative evaluation of their application with those from other publishers. PGP was deemed to be “the pre-eminent feminist press in Canada, with well designed and edited books, strong writers, elegant presentation, and good distribution,” a description that implies the criteria that influenced the CCA decision. The push to achieve this recognition and funding meant that PGP was motivated for new reasons to find “strong writers” as much as those writers were motivated to find a publisher. PGP continued to receive funding based on their success in soliciting and publishing novels like *Fox*. They desired to maintain their new status, which required them to maintain the increased pace and quality of their literary output.

This increased thrust pushed PGP to move from being primarily a Bourdieuxian “capital of consecration” (75) within feminist communities, to becoming a more powerful

“centre of calculation,” which is related to its ability to appeal to and affect the Mainstream community. Most significantly, by the time PGP was preparing *Fox* for publication, Block Funding had given them the financial strength to hire an excellent editor, have high quality art and production values, and to be able to market *Fox* effectively. Marketing involved organizing and paying for book tours, advertising, and attracting media attention that extended beyond PGP’s immediate feminist networks. These efforts, which all cost money that would not have been available without Block Funding, contributed to the strategy that resulted in the many and diverse reviews, interviews, and notices that featured Lai and *Fox*.

Mainstream Community: CCA Exploration Grant

Governmental expression of the Mainstream community operates at the individual level as well as at organizational levels. Lai’s manuscript development benefitted from “an Explorations Grant from the Canada Council for *Fox*” (Lai Personal Interview). Lai’s application process illustrates the importance of artistic networks in terms of her literary production. She explained that her friend, writer Anne Jew, had an Explorations Grant, as did a number of other Vancouver artists, so she was encouraged to apply. Lai credits both the micropolitical networks and the mainstream grant for their support, which was “so important” (Personal Interview). She speaks of the “[o]lder people, a little more established, part of the scene, who would help younger people, make them part of things, give them jobs – incredible generosity. . . . and [her] peers.” But she also stresses the importance of the Explorations Grant: “When I got the grant that was a huge deal: you’re 25 years old and somebody gives you nine thousand dollars to go write a book.”

The CCA support encouraged Lai to continue with her writing career, which allowed her to integrate her political activism instead of being forced to find more traditional employment. Had she not been given the wherewithal to begin *Fox* at this key cultural moment, the opportunity to write a novel that does the particular cultural work of *Fox* would have disappeared.⁷⁰

The importance of CCA Block Funding for PGP and of the Explorations Grant for Lai argues that the Mainstream community must be considered as one of the primary, and especially financial, supports for artistic networks and for the production of material works of art, including texts. In this respect, it is a matter of concern for future production that not only is the publisher that produced *Fox* no longer in business, but during the time between the first and second editions of *Fox*, Canada's Explorations Grant Program was also terminated. In the revised edition's acknowledgements, Lai gives "[t]hanks to the now-defunct Explorations Program of the Canada Council." It is also important to note that although this dissertation is focussed on a local example, the effects of governmental actions on comparable networks have similar ramifications both nationally and internationally. In the same issue of *FBN* that reports on *Fox*, The OnlyWomen Press of London (England) writes, "Some FBN subscribers may have noticed how little we published in our 20th anniversary year, 1994. That's when we lost arts' grant funding, commissioned a logo symbolizing lesbian-feminism's tenacity, delayed promised titles and pared down to essentials" (Morgan 77). The year of *Fox*'s publication, 1995, was Press Gang's twentieth anniversary and it wasn't long after that they encountered financial difficulties, which led to their demise.

Mainstream Community: 1988

1988, already significant for Asian Canadian and Feminist communities, is also significant for the Mainstream community, primarily because multiculturalism became official policy. Although, as Eva Mackey explains, Canadian multicultural policies began with Lester B. Pearson's Liberal government in 1971 and were included in the repatriation of the constitution by Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government in 1982, there was no Multicultural Act until 1988 (63-67). Despite the fact that the Act remains "primarily concerned with mobilizing diversity for the project of nation-building, as well as limiting that diversity to symbolic rather than political forms," it nevertheless committed to "the idea that everyone, including the government, is responsible for changes in our society. This includes the elimination of racism and discrimination" (67). Among other effects, this meant that funding was more readily available for cultural projects that described racialized realities and did so in ways that might enhance the Mainstream community's understanding.

In this context, the government's funding policies may be seen to work synergistically, if opportunistically, with the anti-racist initiatives that came from racialized and feminist groups in the 1980s and 1990s. This synergy was an important factor in the publishing node that appeared in Vancouver in the mid-1990s, which was significantly authored by queer / lesbian feminist Asian Canadians and published by PGP using Mainstream community funding support. However, the mainstream success of, for instance, Mootoo's *Cereus*, might reflect Mackey's observation that in 1988, "multiculturalism is a national resource in the context of global capitalism" (70).⁷¹ McClelland and Stewart were able to enhance their status and bottom line by

commodifying the postcolonial “different” that *Cereus* represents in the global market.⁷²

British critic Coral Ann Howells may demonstrate the government’s effectiveness in mobilizing multiculturalism as a resource when she states that “From my perspective as an interested outsider, what makes Canada so distinctive in its representations of postcolonial nation is its official commitment to the ideology of multiculturalism” (10). For Howells, “official” multiculturalism seems to make Canada more credible as a “postcolonial nation” that is then entitled to export its multicultural products. However, Kim notes that, in “the Canadian context, the dire economic circumstances of small publishing houses devoted to the production of alternate voices contrasts sharply with the proliferation of minoritarian discourses (“Troubling” 170). It would seem that once the small presses have served the purpose of “finding” the initial authors and demonstrating that there is a market for what might be called the literature of difference, supporting the small presses became a lower priority for the Mainstream community.

Queer Community Networks

My discussion of this community is short because most of the queer and lesbian networks that were involved with *Fox* and *Lai* have already been discussed under the Feminist and Literary communities. Not only were PGP and the FBN primarily lesbian feminist, but many of *Lai*’s Asian Canadian visual arts community network connections were also queer. To some extent, reality, in this case, mirrors the stereotypical view: most of the feminists discussed *are* lesbian and most of the artists (male and female) *are* queer. However, I will discuss here how the Queer community picks up the thread of the transnational Canadian-American connection that has been observed in the previous

communities. Some of these are uniquely queer.

Although it is commonly recognised that mainstream American culture has a strong influence on mainstream Canadian culture, American influence is especially important for the smaller activist communities in Canada. Queer community reviews of *Fox* include one from the Lesbian Resource Center Community News (Seattle) (Schaberg) as well as a very early review (Dec. 1995) in *The Advocate*, a gay newspaper based in San Francisco (Bok). This is fifty percent of the queer reviews, which, as noted earlier, speaks to the geographically long networks that are linked to Queer, Feminist, and Asian North American communities.

Queer Community: 1988

Cross-border connections between Asian North American queer women, especially, were reinforced by a pioneering event that occurred in 1988, a year that has been consistently important across the communities. The U.S.-based Asian Pacific Lesbian Network (APLN) was formed in 1988 and immediately began to plan a first retreat, which took place September 1-4, 1989 (Hom 301). Alice Y. Hom quotes one of the organizers of the network describing the volatility and difficulty of the retreat: “People were angry, people were defensive, people were crying There was a whole big misunderstanding” (305). This is distinctly reminiscent of the difficulties that arose at the Telling It conference, a similarity that is underscored by Hom’s assessment that “[r]epresentation alone could not combat historical inequities caused by ethnic, class, and generational privilege.” In another similarity, Hom is also able to see strength and benefit in women being “able to speak their minds instead of suppressing their opinions

for the sake of community cohesion” (306). Although the differences at this retreat centred around a perceived inadequacy of outreach to the American South Asian lesbian community as opposed to the question of the existence of lesbian culture, the responses of participants seem similar, largely involving a clash of differing privileges. Again echoing the Telling It conference, Hom notes “[t]he struggle of Asian Pacific lesbians to be recognized in the fullness of their multiple identities, and their attempt to identify the privileges that divide them, marks the growing maturity and changing composition of the Asian Pacific lesbian movement” (307).

Importantly, APLN includes Asian Canadian lesbians. In the landmark special issue of the Canadian periodical, *Fireweed*, “Awakening Thunder: Asian Canadian Women,” there is a poem called “Retreat 1989” by Torontonians, Mona Oikawa that is dedicated to “the twenty-five women on the mailing list of Asian Lesbians of Toronto and to the 175 women who attended the First National Asian/Pacific Lesbian Network retreat in Santa Cruz, California (104). Oikawa also contributed an article called “Safer Sex in Santa Cruz,” which is preceded by two pictures of Canadians who attended the retreat (30). I recognize a number of these participants as Vancouver dykes, including Lily Shinde, a long-time Vancouver activist, and several other members of Asian Lesbians of Vancouver (ALOV, the most desirable acronym). Although this conference preceded Lai’s political involvement, she later became involved with both ALOV and MONSOON, which grew out of, and replaced, ALOV. Both Lai and Mootoo benefitted from the development of Asian North American lesbian networks as well as the specific Vancouver Feminist networks.

However, while it benefits Asian Canadian texts to be promoted within the

American market, that occurs sometimes at the cost of losing the national aspect of their identification. For instance, in the important, “Landmarks in Literature by Asian *American* Lesbians,” not only does Karin Aguilar-San Juan refer to the Canadian “Awakening Thunder,” but she also asserts that “Vancouver-based writer SKY Lee is certainly the most promising Asian *American* lesbian novelist to date” (938, my emphasis). While her comment may produce a certain cognitive dissonance in Canadians, it is fairly typical for Americans to subsume Asian Canadian writers.⁷³

It is, therefore, surprising that both Schaberg and Bok refer to *Fox*’s contemporary characters as “Chinese-Canadian” in their American-based reviews (Schaberg 10; Bok 55). Eva Tihanyi, on the other hand, in *Books in Canada*, refers to *Fox*’s central character as “Artemis, a young Asian-American woman living in contemporary Vancouver” (35). It is an ironic juxtaposition that reveals the extent to which Canadian thinking has been “Americanized” at the same time that it shows politically aware Americans recognizing Canadian cultural autonomy. This indicates not only the influence that the American Asian movement has on the Canadian movement, but implies that CanAsians are also influencing Americans. Nevertheless, it also demonstrates the need for a term such as Asian North American, which recognizes the U.S.-Canadian connection, without appropriating either side.

Networks Under Stress

Overall, several themes arise from my examination of these six “communities.” American influence and support is demonstrably important in each. Each community also demonstrates the importance of networks and especially networks based on

friendship relations and shared political goals. The primary networks involved in the production of “Larissa Lai,” as author function, and *Fox*, as immutable mobile, were often related to equity-seeking for interlocking marginalized identifications, which linked different communities as well as enhancing individual community interests.

Interestingly, important foundations for the node seem to have been laid down in 1988 in most communities. While no doubt events of importance occur every year, the events of 1988 (Japanese Redress, the Morgentaler decision, the Telling It conference, the founding of the APLN) seem particularly significant for community-building that provided many network supports for queer women’s writing and publishing in Vancouver in the mid-nineties.

The Academic, Asian North American, Feminist, Literary, Mainstream, and Queer communities each played significant roles in the manuscript production, publishing, and distribution of *Fox* and the Vancouver node that it represents. However, the supportive interaction of literary networks within the Asian Canadian and Feminist communities, especially, seem to have been most crucial. In particular, the activities of PGP demonstrate its primary role in the production and support for *Fox* and other queer women’s novels throughout the 1990s and to the Vancouver node in particular. After PGP closed down, there was no other comparable publishing venue for lesbian / queer women in Vancouver. The descriptive, qualitative discussion of the social “ecology” of *Fox* reinforces the conclusions of the quantitative analysis of Chapter Two: the Vancouver node is, primarily, the result of two developments. The first, which accounts for the increase in publications, is the increasing productivity of the Asian Canadian literary network, which itself seems to peak mid-decade,⁷⁴ working in concert with the

existing Feminist literary networks. The second, which accounts for the decrease in publications, is the diminishment of feminist literary networks.

One of the useful aspects of approaching the social networks of *Fox* and *Lai* through the heuristic of the reviews is that I would not have thought about investigating the Mainstream as a “community” had my methodology not forced me to account for the mainstream newspaper reviews. This led me to think about how Mainstream support was expressed beyond the reviews, which in turn made me more aware of the role that government funding played in both the success and demise of PGP and the Vancouver node. The financial support from the Mainstream (in the form of arts grants to *Lai* and PGP, and to the Academic community generally) accounts, to a significant degree, to the emergence of the node at this time and place.

However, the most important aspect revealed by exploring these community networks is the importance of the relations that form the networks themselves because these are adaptable to changing circumstances (such as whether or not the government provides funding). In “Premature Gestures: A Speculative Dialogue on Asian Pacific Islander Lesbian and Gay Writing,” Alice Y. Hom and Ming-Yuen S. Ma note the important role networks within communities play in the diffusion of a literary work, especially a radical literary work, which would be a position-taking in Bourdieu’s restrictive literary field:

Through this network of making friends in API [Asian Pacific Islander] lesbian communities around the country, the editors were able to bring the anthology [*Between the Lines: An Anthology by Pacific/Asian Lesbians of Santa Cruz, California*] directly to API women. The personal ties and

contacts further the kind of networking that takes place in distributing and making visible API materials. (26)

Although Hom and Ma refer to an American anthology, their comments apply equally well to other marginalized texts and communities. The networks they discuss and those discussed in this chapter are similar to the scientific networks that Murdoch argues create the structures that make it so that “scientific facts and artefacts can spread outside laboratories in conditions which ensure their proper functioning” (62). The community networks of this chapter form a literary version of “long narrow networks that make possible the circulation of scientific facts” (Latour qtd. in Murdoch). In this case, the networks enable the circulation of literary artefacts and ideas. Both facts and artefacts change the societies in which they circulate.

However, it is instructive that Hom and Ma refer to “making friends” and “personal ties” because these form the basis of the networks in the six communities. Lai’s writing group, PGP, the APLN, the Astraea Foundation, and the cottages at Hedgebrook are all groups of (mostly) queer / lesbian and feminist women.⁷⁵ Each networked group provided notable support for the production of *Fox*, but also provided a needed context, even a context of need, that inspired and invited the literary work. In particular, lesbian / queer Canadian authors, editors, and publishers created and joined networks that developed organizational strength and benefitted from mutual collaboration *across communities*. However, the diminishment of, especially, feminist networks demonstrates the vulnerability of these networks and communities. This fragility underlines the importance of this micro-history, which becomes itself an immutable mobile that helps to strengthen and continue networks that are clearly stressed. Similarly,

Lai designed *Fox* to contribute to the building of community between women, and especially for young Asian Canadian queer women. The next chapter explores the grouping of queer women's novels that join *Fox* in forming the core of the Vancouver node.

 Notes

¹ A bibliography of these reviews may be found in Appendix Five A: Media Bibliography. Although my review of reviews may not be exhaustive, it reflects all of the reviews that Press Gang Publishers collected and placed in the SFU Archives ("Lai, Larissa: When Fox Is a Thousand – Reviews"). In addition, I have located and added other reviews from that time-frame to provide a substantial overview of the interest shown by various networks in the mid-1990s, just after the novel's publication.

² Lai seems to concur with this view. In *The Gauntlet* interview, which coincides with her Markin-Flanagan writer-in-residence position, she explains, "I think a lot of people think writing is a solitary thing. For me, in a lot of ways, it's not" (Lindsay).

³ To avoid tedious repetition and because the majority of these three types of media notices of *Fox* are reviews, I refer to these, collectively, as "reviews."

⁴ Not least of these issues is the unitary nature of the both the word "community" and whatever other identifying name, such as "Academic" or "Feminist" that I choose to describe my ordering of the Section II discussion of *Fox*'s social ecology. I argue that choosing to approach "communities" through the heuristic of the inferred *primary* audience of the periodical, which speaks to whose attention is being solicited, addresses these concerns adequately. Appendix Five B offers a full table of the reviews listed by community.

⁵ The *Kinesis* review, written by Sook C. Kong, provides a good example of why this distinction is important. Because Kong's intersectionality overlaps Lai's in four community areas of which I am aware, I could have categorized her review under the Academic, Asian North American, Feminist, or Queer community. (Both Kong and Lai were members of the *Kinesis* Not Just Another Page collective at the time the review appeared and, I am aware that, like Lai, Kong has significant connections to the academy and the Queer community). However, I "count" Kong's article under the Feminist community because that is the primary audience of *Kinesis*, the self-identified feminist newspaper that published the article. This is the strategy I use throughout, which also has the effect of helping to integrate the personal and public networks within each community. My choice of where to place particular connections does not imply a priority of one community connection over another, but simply that the connection occurs in the community that is the inferred primary audience of the relevant media instrument.

⁶ I present them alphabetically to strengthen the non-hierarchical, yet orderly, presentation I intend. By including the Mainstream and Academic communities, for instance, as simply two among six, I work against their colonizing hegemony. Similarly, the other four are simultaneously asserted to be equally notable and authoritative.

⁷ I use Asian Canadian as a term when I am dealing with only Canadians; however, the reviews include a number of U.S.-based periodicals. Interestingly, one of the reviewers, Christina Swindells, also uses "Asian North American" in *The McGill Daily* (4), nearly ten years earlier than Eleanor Ty and Donald C. Goellnicht argue, cogently, for its use (Introduction 1-14).

⁸ Intersectional theory recognizes this overlapping in each individual as well (Dill, McLaughlin and Nieves), which is another reason that I use the inferred primary audience of the journal rather than of the review, or an assumed identifications of the review's author or the content.

⁹ Bourdieu argues convincingly against the idea of objective "value" in the "*space of literary or artistic position-takings*. . . . [which he claims is not only] a *field of forces*, but it is also a *field of struggles*" (30 Bourdieu's italics). I suggest that the extent of involvement of any network in the promotion of a text is related to the "inside" content of that text, which is part of its position-taking, as well as to the positions of its author and other actors that are involved in its production. The level of interest in *Fox* is an implicit commentary both on *Fox* as an entry into the cultural field and a commentary on the field itself. The number of notices is dependent on the text, its production, potential audiences, the author, and the interlocking networks that these mobilize, rather than on inherent literary value. This is one reason why the content of the reviews is not necessary to my analysis.

¹⁰ I initially counted only those media reviews that were in English, which led to a surprisingly low number of reviews attributable to the Asian North American community. However, because I was not focussed on content, I was later able to also include three Canadian Chinese language reviews that were in the PGP archives because there was enough contextual information for me to know that they were about Lai and *Fox* and to reasonably determine that the primary audience of the periodicals was Asian North American. This doubled the initial number of reviews counted and allowed a better appreciation of that community's interest in *Fox*.

¹¹ Kim argues this persuasively in the case of Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night* ("Troubling" 168-71).

¹² A review of *Fox* appears in the March 21-29 issue (Swindells) while an article based on a CBC interview graces the following issue (Vitt).

¹³ If the purpose of my study was to observe the reception of *Fox* longitudinally, it would require an extended time-frame and would also include specifically scholarly articles. In that case, I suspect the academic numbers would continue to rise whilst the others would drop to zero. However, the object here is to find a literary and material pointer to the networks that had an interest in *Fox* close to its time of publication. I have also excluded media notices that originate at the University of Calgary (UC) in 1997 because, although *Fox* is mentioned, the focus of the notices is Lai's writer-in-residency at UC, which she took up in the Fall of 1997, rather than *Fox*. Including these would lead away from the purpose in tracking the reviews.

¹⁴ Appendix Five C offers a tabulation that includes the specific individual cities, as opposed to Table 10, which groups all cities other than Vancouver as only Canadian or U.S.

¹⁵ Tseen Khoo underlines the importance of the U.S. when she argues that "[b]ecause of the necessary deployment of Asian-American criticism in contemporary literary studies, an understanding of ethnic literary community relations and multiculturalism for Asian Canadians and Asian-Australians needs to be juxtaposed with those of the United States" (91). In fact, most Canadian "communities" have important networks relations that extend into the U.S. Although a full exploration of those connections is not possible in this work, they are discussed, briefly, in the following section. For further information on Asian North American networks, I direct

readers to Khoo and also to Guy Beauregard, who usefully examines differences and similarities in the development of Asian Canadian and Asian American Literary Studies ("Comparative").

¹⁶ This is, of necessity, a limited view of only certain aspects of these six complex communities. To deal with each community fully would require six full-length studies, which cannot possibly be précised into this chapter. Where possible, I refer readers to relevant, more expansive studies.

¹⁷ Neither am I independent of the processes of this investigation, which translates my private self into an authorized "critic function" as my words seek certification within the Academic community and become part of Bourdieu's field of "restricted production" (39).

¹⁸ The method is schematized in *The Ariel Letter*, which was published in 1988, a key year for this study (Brossard 116-17).

¹⁹ Beauregard's doctoral dissertation deals with the work of prominent Asian Canadian writers, SKY Lee, Joy Kogawa, Hiromi Goto, and Fred Wah. His articles on Asian Canadian literature, especially "The Emergence of 'Asian Canadian Literature': Can Lit's Obscene Supplement?" inform my understanding of *Fox*'s context.

²⁰ It is fairly typical to find *Fox* and *The Jade Peony* mentioned together. Lynne Van Luven also critiques both in her 1998 article.

²¹ Choy also works in the academy, teaching at Humber College in Toronto. As a queer Asian Canadian from Vancouver, his work is closely related to the Vancouver node. His 1995 novel, *The Jade Peony*, fictionalizes Vancouver's historical Asian Canadian community.

²² For instance, SFU hosts the literary periodical *West Coast Line*, which published an issue focussed on Asian Canadian writing in 2000 (33.3), and also sponsored its predecessor *West Coast Review*, which had an Asian Canadian issue in 1984 (no. 16). *Many-Mouthed Birds* was co-published by Vancouver's Douglas & McIntyre and the University of Washington Press.

²³ A similar oversight is noted in Chapter Two in relation to the Telling It conference.

²⁴ Goellnicht seems to locate the beginnings of Asian Canadian literature as a field of academic study at his own "special session entitled Asian Canadian Literature: Classification, Identity, Nation at the 1993 MLA convention in Toronto" (Goellnicht 1). He also cites the spring 1994 issue of "the oldest and most established critical journal in the field, *Canadian Literature*" as another beginning (1). However, he notes that many of the articles in that issue are written by White male scholars (2) and mourns having "no 'originary' event to look back to with nostalgia as the 'founding' moment of Asian Canadian studies" (23). Perhaps both search and mourning are unnecessary and misleading.

²⁵ Despite my questioning of certain aspects of Goellnicht's argument, I am grateful for his useful historicizing of Asian Canadian literature and also for Beauregard's follow-up article: "What Is at Stake in Comparative Analyses of Asian Canadian and Asian American Literary Studies?"

²⁶ Goellnicht further argues that another reason “Asian Canadian literary studies have languished in the wilderness” is because there was not a comparable Black movement in Canada (3). (In this he follows Anthony Chan [58]). This leads Goellnicht to ground his argument “on the working assumption that for a racial minority literature . . . to emerge with a clear identity there needs to be a strong accompanying and reciprocal national political-social movement focussed on identity politics or the politics of difference” (3). It is not clear whether Goellnicht considers the Canadian “cultural race politics” experience that Lai refers to in the 1980s and 1990s (Conversation with Suzette) or the women’s or gay and lesbian movement politics that began in Canada in the late 1960s to count as “identity politics” or if he refers only to a politics that directly mirrors the American Black civil rights movement. Nevertheless, the rise of identity politics in the Asian Canadian community in Vancouver, particularly around the Japanese Redress movement *is*, in fact, coeval with the rise in Asian Canadian literary publications and criticism.

²⁷ The content of this chapter is perhaps at the edge of English literary study, which has posed some disciplinary difficulties. However, this particular section, because it is also at the furthest remove from my own subject position (as a White dyke doctoral student in English), has been the most challenging. It seems inevitable that whatever I write will be negatively affected by the necessarily limited perspective I have on the Asian North American community, which includes the networks within it that most directly involve Lai and *Fox*.

²⁸ *Yellow Peril: Reconsidered*, a production of On Edge Productions (of which Wong and Sage are the principals), is an exhibit of film, video, and photography-based works mounted at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver in 1991. The show subsequently toured Canada and there is an eponymous book for which Lai wrote the foreword (Wong et al.). Although this important exhibit, the visual arts network, and the ACWW are also discussed under the Literary community section, the role of assertive Asian Canadian identity politics in their work means it merits attention here as well.

²⁹ Interestingly, in terms of the importance of personal networks within community, Lai acknowledges Karlyn Koh for her “feedback on various drafts” of *Fox* (Lai Acknowledgements). Like Kong, Koh also shares with Lai a connection to the Academic community.

³⁰ Bing Thom, an early Chinese community activist, says Chinese emigration started “in the late 1800’s but only in large numbers by the early 1900’s” (33).

³¹ Although beyond the scope of this work, it would be interesting to investigate whether middle-class habitus and certification is a similar predictor of literary success across racialized and non-racialized groups.

³² For a documentary account of the redress movement and process, see Roy Miki and Cassandra Kobayashi’s *Spirit of Redress: Japanese Canadians in Conference* (primarily a proceedings of the May 1987 conference that took place in Vancouver), and *Justice in Our Time* (a documentation of the Redress struggle). For later reflections and analysis, see Miki’s *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*.

³³ In Toronto, the Redress movement seemed to lead to more splintering within the Japanese Canadian community. Miki describes this in the long and evocatively titled chapter:

“The Toronto Cauldron: Community Conflict and the founding of the ‘Toronto Chapter’”
(*Redress: Inside 187-214*).

³⁴ A material sign of this energy is the number of new literatures insisting on a place in (and revitalizing) the literary canon: Black, Women's, Queer, First Nations, and Asian North American literatures to name several.

³⁵ For an overview of these wrongs, see *Unspoken Territory*, written, produced, and directed by Marusya Bociurkiw, a lesbian cultural worker with ties to queer feminist academic and artistic communities in Vancouver and Toronto. She describes the video as a “docu-drama exploring the history of racist and xenophobic acts in Canada” (http://marusya.lazarapress.ca/films_video_radio.php).

³⁶ Lai also says, “My Mom studied with Imre Lakatos at UCSD [University of California at San Diego] and that Angela Davis was in her class. She even took me to that class once. So I can boast that I went to class with Angela Davis!” Lai’s mother is a prominent Canadian feminist who played an active role in the leadership of the Canadian Advisory Council for the Status of Women.

³⁷ I mean to suggest here that it is unlikely that PGP’s desire to have a radical anti-racist multicultural publishing program could dismantle the aspects of the federal government’s multicultural program that seem aimed at assimilation and containment of difference.

³⁸ Penny Goldsmith was active in Women’s Press from 1972 through 1976 when she left Toronto (“Re: Question”). Once she arrived in Vancouver, she was active in Press Gang from 1976 until the publishers and the printers split in 1982, after which she founded Lazara Press, which, according to its website is:

[a] small, progressive publishing house located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada and founded in 1982 by Penny Goldsmith, its current owner. We publish poetry, literature, broadsides, and chapbooks. We also publish the *Discussions* series — a forum for provocative and challenging essays and speeches which address current issues of interest and concern. <<http://lazarapress.ca/>>.

³⁹ Usukawa also gave workshops at the annual ACWW conferences and acquired SKY Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Café* for Douglas & McIntyre.

⁴⁰ For instance, Rita Wong won a competition sponsored by the ACWW, which gave the winner one thousand dollars towards publication. Subsequently, various publishers bid to become Wong’s publishers. Press Gang won that competition and published Wong’s poetry collection, *Monkey Puzzle*, in 1998.

⁴¹ Although this meeting took place in 1996, the record resides in a fond labelled 1995.

⁴² The Astraea Lesbian Writers Fund was founded in 1991 by writer Joan Drury, and awards grants “to support writers whose voices have been silenced by our society’s homophobia and sexism” <<http://www.pw.org/mag/ga9501.htm> oct. 14/04>. The mission statement reflects the umbrella organization’s principles: “The Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice works for social, racial and economic justice in the U.S. and internationally. Our grantmaking and

philanthropic advocacy programs help lesbians and allied communities challenge oppression and claim their human rights" <<http://www.astraea.org/PHP/AboutUs/Mission.php>>, Nov. 13, 2004>. Since this award is restricted to Americans, Lai's birthplace in La Jolla, California and her residency at Hedgebrook (see 54n below) may have helped her to qualify.

⁴³ The FBN maintains a list of feminist bookstores on their website at <<http://www.litwomen.org/WIP/stores.html>>. They also recommend Rose Norman's article, "Keep Women in Print: Writing What is Wrong, for further historical information about North American feminist bookselling and publishing.

⁴⁴ Debby Yaffe, a member of the former collective, assures me that "[t]he spelling was Everywomans - no apostrophe, but the traditional form of 'woman'" ("Re: alternate sp.")

⁴⁵ Tellingly, the National Film Board's Studio D also closed in 1996, which demonstrates that feminist networks productive of feminist culture, in general, suffered this dissolution ("The Death" 26).

⁴⁶ Others have suggested that this timing may be more logical than ironic, that as minoritarian literatures gain mainstream attention, the minoritarian supports become less necessary and so disappear. While there may be some truth to this rather provocative view, it does not take into account the market entrance of high volume bookstore "empires" such as Chapters and online discounters such as Amazon.com. This shift is widely held to have had devastating impacts on independent booksellers across the social spectrum. Nor does it take into account the changes in print technology that Marilyn Fuchs of Press Gang Printers notes as the primary cause of that group's demise. My own concern is that such an analysis overlooks the continuing need for small publishers and independent booksellers to bring new authors and new communities, which have not yet gained a literary niche, to still underdeveloped audiences. The timing also coincides with the rise in cultural and governmental neo-liberalism, which is not thought to be supportive of feminist, queer, or collective enterprises.

⁴⁷ My use of queer here points to the fluidity and range of sexualities present in these networks.

⁴⁸ Perhaps this was because *Kinesis* was too familiar to PGP or perhaps PGP considered the more broadly-based arts publications more impressive and therefore better contributors to *Fox's* marketability. Definitely the arts publications reach networks beyond the Feminist community, which is not necessarily true of *Kinesis*.

⁴⁹ Emma Kivisild is a lesbian author and performance artist who writes and performs under the pen name Lizard Jones. PGP published her novel, *Two Ends of Sleep* in 1997.

⁵⁰ There has been mixed response to Marlatt's novel. Although it has generally been praised, at the 2002 ACCUTE conference, fellow panel member Glen Lowry claimed that *Ana Historic* objects First Nations women.

⁵¹ Although *Many-Mouthed Birds* is an important and well-known anthology of Chinese-Canadian writing, it is not the first. That distinction belongs to the East Asian Canadian anthology, *Inalienable Rice: A Chinese and Japanese Canadian Anthology*, which was published twelve years earlier as a joint project of the Powell Street Revue and the precursor to the ACWW,

the Chinese Canadian Writers Workshop. However, as Goellnicht notes, Stephen Gill's *Green Snow*, published in Ontario in 1976, is the first collection of (primarily South) Asian writing (though Joy Kogawa is included) (13).

⁵² This poem was also published the previous year (1990) in the Feminist literary journal, *Room of One's Own*, as is acknowledged in *Many-Mouthed Birds* (viii). The dual publication makes a good symbol of Lai's multiple enrolments.

⁵³ Lai administrated an artist-run video production centre in Ottawa and curated exhibitions at the Grunt Gallery in Vancouver in 1992-93 (Earthly Pleasures and Telling Relations) as well as writing reviews for *Kinesis* and *Fuse* (Interview by Ashok 5).

⁵⁴ Since Gagnon and Mootoo are also Asian Canadian feminists, the writing group, a mini-network, might have been included under the Asian North American or the Feminist community; however, I include it here because the primary function of the group is literary – they met to support each others writing.

⁵⁵ This biography is from the McClelland and Stewart edition, which is the edition referenced throughout. I use it rather than the original Press Gang Publishers edition because it is now the edition most readily available to Canadian readers.

⁵⁶ Women in View was an annual event at this time and featured literary, dance, and other performances by women at a number of different arts venues throughout Vancouver. The W.I.S.E. (Welsh, Irish, Scottish, English) Hall, near Commercial Drive, is primarily a folk venue, but often hosts literary and other “alternative” events. The name of the reading echoes Kwa's 1994 poetry collection, which was published by Women's Press, *The Colours of Heroines*.

⁵⁷ Publication in *Angles*, a Vancouver gay liberation newspaper also shows that each author and their node novels were important to the Queer community.

⁵⁸ Jennifer Glossop edited both texts, although Nancy Pollak also worked on *Cereus* and the overall editorial processes was overseen by PGP's Managing Editor, Barbara Kuhne (Mootoo Acknowledgements). Mootoo elaborates: “if you read the acknowledgements in *Cereus* you will see the list of people and the variety of ways I got support . . . but I wanted to mention Barbara, as I hadn't intended to be a writer, as I think you know. I really did have a thriving art career, and it was her and Della who pushed, guided me towards this thing I love doing, and so I feel a huge debt of gratitude to them for their attention and persistence (“Re: Questions”).

⁵⁹ Hedgebrook was founded in 1988 by lesbians Nancy Skinner Nordhoff and Sheryl Feldman. The new foundation used Nordhoff's financial investment to purchase and develop 48 acres on Whidbey Island in Washington State. The site now supports six handcrafted cottages for writers-in-residence. It continues as a “public benefit organization, [which] empowers women writers to be catalysts for change in their own lives, in their communities, and around the world” <<http://www.hedgebrook.org/about.htm>>, as their mission statement read in May of 2005. By August 2008, their mission statement altered slightly to read: “Hedgebrook invests in women who write by providing them with space and time to create significant work, in solitude and community, and by developing an international network to connect writers and audiences” <<http://www.hedgebrook.org/>>. The change seems to de-emphasize “politics,” but highlights the importance of networks. The “politics” of *Fox* would have made Lai an appealing candidate.

⁶⁰ Lai thinks it may have been the American author of *The Good Negress*, Angela Verdelle (Personal Interview).

⁶¹ Women and Words had the same policy as Writing Thru Race, but did not produce the same level of media frenzy, possibly because anything that women do by themselves isn't deemed to be that important. Nevertheless in the Vancouver Sun, Lee Backus did question Daphne Marlatt on the issue: "Why the exclusion of men? . . . Isn't a situation that bristles the other sex only going to aggravate and perpetuate the problem?" The formation of this question is markedly similar to Valpy's suggestion that TWUC in supporting the conference supports "multiculturalism turned cancerous."

⁶² At this exhibit, Lai explains, "The shit hit the fan of course because there were lots of white artists that were circulating around the Western Front and they felt excluded" (Personal Interview). Apparently some White artists felt they had expertise in Asian art and should, therefore, have been included.

⁶³ Press Gang was among the donors (PGPF "Meetings 1987 -89"). Kuhne, McCreary, and Speidel also wrote letters to the editor critiquing the "red herring of 'reverse racism' (PGPF), the parallel that Michael Valpy drew between the conference and apartheid, and offering support for both TWUC's sponsorship of the conference and the conference's delegate policy.

⁶⁴ Indeed *Kinesis* reports that in 1993 "[m]ore than 1,500 women came together in Toronto for a groundbreaking conference aimed at exploring the connections between anti-racism and feminism" ("Through" 24) that made the front cover of the Dec / Jan 1993 issue (17).

⁶⁵ Robinder Kaur Sehdev's thesis, *Anti-Racism and Public Spheres: An Examination of the Politicization of Anti-racism at the Writing Thru Race Conference, 1994*, argues that the Writing Thru Race Conference "was a formative moment in Canadian cultural politics" (abstract).

⁶⁶ For instance, Daniel Coleman and Donald Goellnicht mention TAV and WTR as "the most spectacular examples of this form of public controversy over race" (13).

⁶⁷ For a more detailed discussion of this issue see Eva Mackey's *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* or the synopsis of the issues in *Challenging Racism in the Arts* (Tator, Henry and Mattis 260-61).

⁶⁸ It is worth recalling here that 1990 is the publication date of *Telling It*.

⁶⁹ Kim suggests that the publishers being able to get funding while the printers could not contributed to their separation and the earlier demise of the Press Gang Printers ("Politics" 247). For additional verification, I asked former PGP printer, Marilyn Fuchs, whether she thought the fact that the publishers started using outside printers for their books hastened their demise. Fuchs responds:

[W]e printers were pretty understanding about why the publishers had to go elsewhere to print. We did some comparison estimates and we just couldn't compete with the bigger printers. . . . Yes, it had a huge impact on the printers financially, but it was only one nail in the coffin. Tech change continued to

make our operation less and less viable, as printers were having to specialize in either being extremely cheap instant print/photocopy kinds of places, or else have big capital and very skilled workers to purchase and run extremely expensive, high tech presses (not to mention all the other equipment).

⁷⁰ Following the Explorations Grant, Lai was awarded a number of other arts grants in the 1990s. She received a Canada Council, Curators and Critics, Short-term Grant (1994); a Cultural Services Branch, Writing Grant (1996); a Cultural Heritage Canada, Writing Grant (1996); and a Canada Council, Writing and Publishing Grant (1999) (Lai *c.v.*).

⁷¹ In the *Georgia Straight* article that placed Lai in the context of “bidding wars” and new female authors of the West Coast, Pantzar cites Toronto-based agent, Denise Bukowski’s observation that “young female writers are currently very marketable internationally” (45). Although Bukowski doesn’t mention it, many of those young female writers are First Nations or women of colour. Lai demonstrates an awareness of the increasing commodification of the writing body and its fictions. In 2006, at a reading at the University of Victoria, Lai explained that she viewed her “turn to poetry as a return to community” and referenced “the corporatization of fiction” as a disincentive to her continuing involvement with that genre. This has an interesting resonance to Linda Garber’s view of “poetry as a vital locus of cultural meaning” (*Identity* 11) and to “the importance of lesbian-feminist poets in defining lesbian identity and lesbian community” (14).

⁷² Kim explains that small presses cannot manage the expenses involved in having a book nominated for a prominent prize like the Giller prize, as *Cereus* was, and concludes that “[w]hile small publishers are willing to take risks and produce texts that might not appeal to the market, they are unable to reap the economic and cultural rewards when these texts become successful” (“Politics” 289). This is the economic reality that made it necessary for Press Gang to facilitate *Cereus* being taken over by McClelland and Stewart.

⁷³ Beauregard mentions “attempts to incorporate Kogawa’s *Obasan* and the various writings of the Eaton sisters into an Asian American literary canon” (“Comparative” 221).

⁷⁴ This is according to my count of the “Asian Canadian Publications,” which, however, has not been updated since 2000 <<http://www.asian.ca/books/booklist.htm>>.

⁷⁵ There is provocative bio-behavioural research by Shelley E. Taylor et al. that presents compelling evidence that “females create, maintain, and utilize these social groups, especially relations with other females, to manage stressful conditions” (411). In combination with the research of this chapter, this suggests that Bourdieu’s claim that, in a field of restricted production, “the dynamic of competition for specifically cultural consecration becomes the exclusive principle of the production of works” might need revising for a field that includes women (140). The networks discussed in this chapter appear to draw on bonding and support to produce literary works within a social environment that is, arguably, stressful because of hegemonic domination. This is not to say that competition may not be present within the network relations; however, it is definitely *not* the “exclusive principle.”

Chapter 6: The Vancouver Node: Literary Thirdspace

“I suppose change happens from within many movements. And all of us together, feeling the pain and the joy and the interchangingness of the struggles, form a strong bond and reinforce each other.” Joy Kogawa ("Panel Two" 124)

After focussing on the material context of *Fox* and the Vancouver node in the Chapter Five, this chapter turns again to give literary close readings of Shani Mootoo’s *Cereus Blooms at Night*, Persimmon Blackbridge’s *Sunnybrook*, and Daphne Marlatt’s *Taken*. While the close reading of Chapter Four explored a significant *internodal* connection between the Vancouver node of the mid-1990s and the Montréal node *circa* 1980, here the focus is *intranodal*, exploring literary strategies of the Vancouver node authors and novels that, like *Fox*, share queer bodies and queer aesthetics. Although the novels, at first glance, appear to have more differences than similarities, observing them *ensemble* prompts a re-evaluation that reveals a significant commonality: the deployment of a strategy that I have named “literary thirdspace.” Literary thirdspace, as I theorize it, is grounded in Bhabha’s “Third Space”; that is, in language and hybridity. Nevertheless, it is markedly different from Bhabha’s project, which focusses on postcolonial and diasporic uses of Third Space. New queer thirdspace narrative, on the other hand, encourages widespread social change in the direction of greater inclusivity through its deployment of literary thirdspace as a literary strategy. This reading will demonstrate that each novel in the Vancouver node displays a significant literary and ethical concern with interlocking multiple identifications of sex, gender, racialization and sexuality on both the individual and the community level.

The Vancouver node novels and authors alike partake in the feminist shift away

from viewing multiple identifications as additive and towards viewing identity as interlocking or intersectional. The novels and authors reveal at least one more vector of marginality or “beleaguered” (Miki “Asiancy” 145) identification that intersects with being female and queer. On the level of narrative form and content, the novels themselves present ways to, as Judith Butler suggests we must, “pose the question of ‘identity,’ but no longer as a pre-established position or uniform entity; rather, as part of a dynamic map of power in which identities are constituted and/or erased, deployed and/or paralyzed” (“Phantasmatic” 117). Although each of the Vancouver node authors is differently, and multiply, identified and each novel employs varying strategies to explore difference and community, each creates a fictional site that may be read as literary thirdspace. In this site, intersectional identities are able to perform themselves and, in so doing, undermine the power of hegemonic norms. Each author creates an imaginative space that invites change, a change that the novels, taken together, reproduce in the space of Canadian literature itself.

Rita Wong, in an unpublished essay, suggests that “both *Fox* and *Cereus* operate within an unsettled and unsettling third space” (“Queerly” 18). Her observation alerted me to thirdspace as a possible commonality across the node novels.¹ Bhabha argues that, similar to Derrida’s notion of *différance*, “Third Space” can be understood as the “indeterminate space of the subject(s) of enunciation” (55). It arises as an inevitable ambivalence within language out of the necessary gap between the utterance and its represented subject. This slippage within language “constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and

read anew” (53). Importantly, Bhabha links “Third Space” to hybridity through his reading of Franz Fanon. He reminds us that, according to Fanon, “the liberatory people who initiate the productive instability of revolutionary cultural change are themselves the bearers of a hybrid identity” (55). It is this connection that has underwritten the currency of “hybridity” and “Third Space” within postcolonial theory. Subsequently, it has proven useful to other fields and theories and to other non-hegemonic and hybridized groups. It is the basis for my own naming of literary thirdspace, which is a strategy that arises from what I call “a thirdspace of intersectionality.” The presence of the literary strategy that I suggest might be called Thirdspace Queer Narrative is a common to the Vancouver node novels as hybridity / intersectionality is common to its authors.

However, the North American academy’s deployment of Bhabha’s “Third Space” and its attendant terminology of cosmopolitan hybridity have set off an important critical debate. On the one hand, Rey Chow cautions against “the euphoric valorization of difference” and the “insufficiency of hybridity” that “in North America at least . . . must be recognized as part of a politically progressivist climate that celebrates cultural diversity in the name of multiculturalism” (62). On the other hand, many critics have been inspired by the possibilities that Bhabha’s hybridity and instability imply for postcolonial subjects and wish extend them to subjects of gender and sexuality (i.e., every body). Bhabha himself lays the foundation for the extension of “Third Space” beyond the postcolonial body. Although, in some instances, he declares that it is “significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance” (Bhabha "Commitment" 56), in others, he recognizes that “[w]hat is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities . . . the limits of any claim to a singular or

autonomous sign of difference – be it class, gender or race” (“Newness” 313). This intangible thirdspace is expanded and rendered more productively ambivalent and unstable as additional elements of hybridity are interwoven into identifications.

Literary thirdspace differs from “Third Space” in that, in addition to hybridity and its instabilities, it suggests that witnessing, kindness, safety, and radical acceptance of self and other are necessary bases for thriving individuals and communities. Literary thirdspace inaugurates integration with a difference, an *intergration* that I deliberately misspell to parallel Bhabha’s “*international*,” which places the emphasis on betweenness, on “*inter*” (56). My neologism signals an integration that actively refuses to homogenize the different parts of an individual or a community whilst nevertheless achieving a degree of harmony. It is perhaps “How Newness Enters the World” to borrow again from Bhabha (303).

I will demonstrate that each text explores “newness” by creating a textual thirdspace within the environment of the novel. Each “site” is a place of relational geography, social and physical, where the qualities of hybridity, instability, and ethics within community are explored – literary thirdspaces are “grounded.” In the following sections, I locate the site of thirdspace in each novel. Each site offers a different perspective on thirdspace. Although each site is institutionalized (and therefore mainstream to some extent), Mootoo creates a productive, relatively successful thirdspace, while Blackbridge’s novel represents “failed” thirdspace, and Marlatt offers a thirdspace that is impossible, criminal. However, each author demonstrates shared ethical concerns that are similar to those also demonstrated by Lai. Their work enables the identification of the qualities necessary for successful literary thirdspace.

Cereus Blooms At Night

Mootoo's *Cereus* is an ideal text with which to begin a discussion of how the Vancouver node novels collectively mobilize thirdspace to enact, and create space for, hybrid identities within communities because the novel foregrounds issues of racialization, gender, and sexuality within a postcolonial setting. As Coral Ann Howells states:

Mootoo writes about liminal identities positioned on the margins or between worlds. Such issues relate not only to the immigrant condition but also to sexual and racial politics and the legacy of colonialism, figured here in a narrative that shifts between reality, fantasy, and dream in the mode of magic realism. (7)

Cereus comments on the on-going hybridity debate as part of its engagement of textual thirdspace and utilizes a narrative style that enhances the sense of productive instability.

As the narrative of *Cereus* entwines familial and colonial history in the town of Paradise on the fictional Caribbean island of Lantanacamara, Mootoo creates literary thirdspace in the unlikely setting of The Paradise Alms House. It is at the site of The Paradise Alms House, a place just outside the ironically named Paradise, that hybridity, intersectionality, kindness, and *intergration* come together to create the beginnings of open, productive community. Mootoo's textual thirdspace is grounded in a tiny newly created residents' garden, which offers fertile soil for the cereus plant itself and for various human (trans)identifications to enact themselves socially and successfully.² The "resident" that inspires the garden is the elderly Mala, who has been "taken into the alms house . . . to receive proper care and attention until the end of her days" after being

exonerated from the charge of murdering her father, Chandin Ramchandin (8).³ Both Mala and the cereus cutting are the only survivors to escape the Ramchandin property, where Mala has lived most of her solitary life in the wild garden that surrounds the house.

Although I argue that literary thirdspace is found only in the resident's garden of The Paradise Alms House, there are several other sites that might be considered, and that have attracted critical attention. One is Mala's wild garden refuge, another might be her house. However, the house itself becomes a site of trauma and betrayal. When Mala is still a child, her mother, Sarah, and Sarah's lover, Lavinia, decide to take Mala and her younger sister, Asha, with them to the Shivering Northern Wetlands (an obvious renaming of the British Isles), where they believe they will be able to live together as a family.⁴ However, in the course of their departure, Pohpoh (Mala's childhood name)⁵ returns to the house for "her bag with all the seeds and the shells and the cereus cutting" (67). At the same time, a suspicious Chandin returns home early. In the confusion, Pohpoh becomes paralysed and will not accompany Lavinia back to the carriage that is waiting to drive them all to the last ship to depart Lantanacamara that year. Asha follows Pohpoh and is caught by her father as Lavinia gives up on retrieving the children and the two women flee Chandin's rage.

Each element of this traumatic moment, in which everyone dear to Pohpoh is screaming, is burned into her young psyche, symbolized by a vision of "the sun [that] had caught on the jagged edge of the porch's iron roof and the spot [that] dazzled like a blinding star" (68). The event turns Lavinia's encouraging early words to Pohpoh: "You shall have your collection,"⁶ into a terrible prophesy that echoes in the minds of readers as the annual realignment of the sun with the torn porch roof causes the traumatic

moment to echo in Pohpoh's mind. It is the first of the many traumas that will lead her to a mute state that verges on madness. Most of the novel's traumatic events occur within the house. It is there that Mala's father sexually abuses Mala and her sister, Asha and where he later attempts to kill Mala. Eventually, it becomes a mausoleum of sorts as it continues to house Chandin's body after he dies in that attempted murder.

Isobel Hoving observes that "the father's crime is situated within the context of colonization: he is one of the tragic persons meant to be part of the Caribbean colonial elite, a mimic man who found at a crucial moment that he was not quite white and British" (217).⁷ Were it not for Mootoo's careful delineation of the damage done to Chandin by the workings of his colonial condition, he could not be considered tragic. Early on, readers, along with the immigrant workers who discuss his rare good fortune in being informally adopted by the Reverend Ernest Thoroughly, are exhorted to "Remember that name." Chandin Ramchandin becomes the "first Indian child in Lantanacamara to get a [professional] title" (31). However, the pain of the young Chandin's interpellation by the Wetlandish (British) church and state, though successful in forwarding the goals of those institutions,⁸ cruelly mocks any early optimism. By novel's end, Chandin's hybridity has contributed to an alienation that allows him to become an incestuous, abusive drunk instead of an exemplary man of God. It is understating the case to say that cultural hybridity has served neither Chandin nor his family well, a fact which alone interrogates any simple celebration of hybridity.

After the younger daughter, Asha, escapes Chandin, Mala becomes the sole recipient of his sexual abuse. A decade later, Chandin arrives home to find a young man, Ambrose, visiting Mala. In response, Chandin attacks Mala, wielding a cleaver "high

above his head, arching his body back for leverage” and Mala fells him in self-defence (245). However, his subsequent death is ambiguous,⁹ which leads to some confusion in the novel and amongst critics.¹⁰ Later she “drags his inert body downstairs, and after locking him up in the sewing room, she builds a barricade of furniture to protect herself against him” (Howells 155). It is, fittingly, the sewing room, a women’s space, which Joanna X. K. Garvey notes first “sheltered and hid the transgressive love of Sarah and Lavinia [that] ironically now serves as crypt for the abusive father” (102). Subsequently, Mala “never lit a lantern in that house again. Nor did she, since that day, pass a night inside its walls” (249).

Mala takes refuge in the garden, and it thrives while Mala survives.¹¹ Howells claims that “[l]ike the wilderness landscape of much Canadian women’s fiction,¹² the garden functions as the site of spiritual and emotional healing for a damaged female psyche” (155). Mala becomes part of the ecology of the garden, removed from human discourse and at some distance from her culture’s definitions of sanity. Her “companions were the garden’s birds, insects, snails and reptiles” (137). The level of her integration into the garden’s ecology is later seen in her ability to articulate “perfect imitations of all the species of birds that congregated in the garden” as well as to mimic crickets and frogs (25). The landscape and Mala protect each other and become entwined.

But neither the house nor the garden ultimately provide a site for the literary thirdspace that *Cereus* opens. A sign of the impossibility of the house’s reclamation, which mirrors the impossibility of Chandin’s recuperation, is the fire that burns both to ashes. Given that coloniality is *thoroughly* implicated in the brutal and sexualized violence that Chandin visits upon his daughters, it is not surprising that the house built by

him with his mimic man wages is too tainted to provide thirdspace in the novel.

However, the Ramchandin garden, too, is burnt, which suggests that, despite the significant critical attention it receives, it is not a possible site for literary thirdspace.

Christine Kim notes that *Cereus* “is typically packaged as post-colonial” and this may, in part, account for critical attention that tends to focus on the Ramchandin garden to the exclusion other sites (“Troubling” 154). Typical is Sarah Philips Casteel who, despite noting that “much of the action takes place” in the Paradise Alms House (24), asserts that “the centre . . . is a semi-magical garden that is set against the experience of displacement . . . that is so characteristic of the Caribbean and its literature” (16). The garden is indeed a compelling image in *Cereus*. However, the overwhelming focus on it, may also be because, in *Cereus*, as Judith Misrahi-Barak observes, “the traditional [Caribbean] theme of childhood is intertwined with the two more unusual ones of homosexuality and incest, which are not immediately associated with Caribbean writing” (94). In the face of these unusual (and perhaps disturbing) themes, the focus on the garden may represent a retreat to the familiar.

Nevertheless, there are many other indications that Mala’s garden is neither a paradisiacal pre-colonial space nor a paradisiacal postcolonial opening. In particular, once the men of Lantanacamara find the mudra tree and the rare peekoplat birds that Mala has charmed back to her protective garden space, they destroy the heart of the garden by “harvesting” both immediately after Mala is removed by the police (201). Their greed and rapaciousness forestalls a too optimistic view of the postcolonial situation. Before this attack, the garden is simply de-colonizing itself, becoming not paradisiacal, not pre- or postcolonial, but simply non-colonial. Instead of being

thirdspace, the Ramchandin garden offers not only refuge, but a perhaps necessary step towards *Cereus*'s literary thirdspace: a place where hegemonic identities (of colonialism, patriarchy, and heterosexism) within the novel decompose along with Chandin's body. Even the all-too-human tendency to prioritize human life over all other life forms falls away as Mala integrates into the garden that is freeing itself from the previously imposed, unnatural hierarchies. But, significantly, Mala, herself, remains disintegrated and enjoys Pohpoh's "adventure[s]," which seem to be the "fantasies" experienced by Pohpoh during dissociated states that she entered while being abused (254).¹³

Despite its movement towards non-coloniality and its limited approach to thirdspace, the surest sign that the garden is not the novel's destination is that neither garden nor owner can any longer relate to human community. For the garden that might be read as a benefit since it returns to a "natural" state; however, humans are typically relational and human relations are precisely what is lacking in Mala's garden refuge. The garden becomes a site divorced from human language. Without language, and despite its "fecundity" (Kim "Troubling" 162), the garden cannot be a space where *intergration*, whether of individual or social intersectional identifications, can be enacted successfully because it is the foundational instability in language itself that underwrites literary thirdspace and revolutionary change.

The narrative action of the novel reinforces this view. Especially as "the life-robbing cloud" of smoke and particles from the Ramchandin fire envelops the town and does not lift until Judge Bissey exonerates Mala and entrusts her to the care of The Paradise Alms House, which "let[s] light shine in Paradise once again" (8).¹⁴ It is telling that both the cereus plant and Mala must be removed from proximity to the site of Mala's

abuse before the novel's most positive Lantanacamararian transformations are enacted.¹⁵ The cereus plant is the key symbol of *Cereus* and its importance is noted by most critics. Casteel notes "its powers of metamorphosis" and argues that "as a metaphor for identity, the cereus plant simultaneously points to hybridity, mutability, and mobility on the one hand and to attachment to place on the other" (26). Casteel's analysis forms a welcome link between the cereus and the concept of literary thirdspace; however, I would add that the cereus plant is also symbolic of a specific identity in the novel: Mala herself.¹⁶ Howells, as well, notes that "[t]he cereus plant is intimately associated with Mala Ramchandin" (151).

The cereus may also be read as acting for Mala. When Mala wishes "that she could go back in time and be a friend to this Pohpoh" the text informs readers that she would not only eliminate her father, but also that she "would pull the walls of that house down, down, down" (153). The cereus growth that breaks down the wall of the house is part of the cycle of life, death, and rebirth that Mala honours and protects. The relationship is reciprocal as the cereus also protects Mala. As Johanna X.K. Garvey notes, it shelters Mala "from the traces of trauma. . . . [f]or it resembles the inner barrier she builds in the house" (104). It is also "a growing rhizomatic wall [that] hides the sewing room from outside eyes." At the same time that it protects Mala, the cereus plant is also (re)covering the house on behalf of the land itself, which reinforces Mary Condé's contention that Mala "comes the closest to being a personification of Lantanacamara" (69).

For literary thirdspace, it is most significant that both Mala and the cereus cutting, the survivors of this tainted house and garden, are able to start new lives at The Paradise

Alms House, which offers Mala the beginnings of human community. Of course, The Paradise Alms House is not itself, thirdspace, which is “unrepresentable in itself” (Bhabha "Commitment" 53). Instead, it provides the location where cultural meanings are reworked by the characters so that they may perform self-coherent versions of themselves and be appreciated *as themselves* by others. It becomes a site of hybridity and integration in spite of, and certainly not because of, its colonizing role as a religious (and, therefore, also political) institution. Nevertheless, the idea of need, kindness, and caring within community that informs the ideal of an alms house are germane to its suitability as literary thirdspace.

There are, however, many other narrative indications of the importance of The Paradise Alms House. Perhaps most significantly, it is the source of *Cereus*' complex and multi-layered storyline,¹⁷ which is framed as an open letter to Mala's sister, or anyone who might know her, from the transgendered “Nurse Tyler” (3). In addition to being the narrative heart of the novel, The Paradise Alms House is also where the main characters gather together in the beginnings of community that conclude the novel. Tyler and the gardener, Mr. Hector, work there, but the abused, reclusive, and mad Mala, is sent there by court order, which draws her childhood sweetheart, Ambrose and his now-grown child, the transman, Otoh, as visitors. The cereus plant, symbolic of Mala and Lantanacamara, almost a character in its own right, is brought to The Paradise Alms House by Otoh. By novel's end, all six are set to bloom.

The text self-consciously alludes to the site's possibilities as literary thirdspace. In a distinctive small caps font that is used only here, it declaims: “POINT NUMBER ONE: The Paradise Alms House is not en route to anywhere” (131, small caps in text). The

comment implies that the site is a kind of elsewhere, “off the main road.” Moreover, “[t]here is nothing beyond.” Garvey interprets this passage, usefully, as an indication that The Paradise Alms House is a “paradoxical space . . . both destination and nowhere, presence and lack, clearly not center . . . and yet complete in itself. It is a peculiar ‘home’” (106). As well as being, as Garvey has it, “home” to a Butlerian kind of kinship, it is also home to a thirdspace of intersectionality and *intergration* in *Cereus*. The Paradise Alms House is the only space where intersectional identifications are allowed to enact themselves socially and successfully in an expression of open hybridity. Thus, it is a site of community for those whose identifications exceed the norm and a site of psychological *intergration* as well, as Mala begins to recover from the psychic splitting induced by a life of repeated traumas. This is only possible because, as Emilia Nielsen observes,¹⁸ The Paradise Alms House “is a place where extreme mental, physical, and sexual violence are not overt threats” (5). Her comment underlines the importance of safe space, which Garvey also notes, and which Mootoo’s *Cereus* suggests is a critical attribute of literary thirdspace (103).

Bhabha explicitly links postcolonial hybridity to agency through Judith Butler’s theory of performativity, when he argues that: “[t]he iterative ‘time’ of the future as *a becoming ‘once again open’*, makes available to marginalized or minority identities a mode of performative agency that Judith Butler has elaborated for the representation of lesbian sexuality” (314). In *Cereus*, this agency is seen in Otoh’s repetition of his father’s aborted youthful relationship with Mala. Otoh’s reiteration *transforms* several solitudes into a nascent supportive community. Empowering performance is also crucial to the recognition of a “shared queerness” between Mala and Nurse Tyler, which

becomes the source of the narrative itself (52). However, neither Mala nor Tyler, who becomes her primary caregiver, witness, and scribe, is initially welcomed by The Paradise Alms House –literary thirdspace in *Cereus* is created, not given. In particular, it is created by the witnessing, openness, and kindness exchanged between Tyler, Mala, Otoh, and the gardener, Mr. Hector.

At the beginning of Tyler's tenure, gender concepts are so fixed at the Paradise Alms House that they take precedence over his professional nursing status and the home's need for trained nurses. Tyler is given cleaning and "handyman" jobs rather than nursing assignments. He scrubs the concrete paths, moves furniture and is assigned to help the real handyman, Toby, repair the roof (11). In a demonstration of the layered nature of oppression based on gender and sexuality, Tyler's effeminate manner of performing these tasks leads directly to an expression of homophobia by Toby, who vows "to leave the job if he was ever put to work with this pansy again."

The *transformation* of this hostile location into a thirdspace of possibility and intersectionality rests on a complex interweaving of key acts of kindness and witnessing that are initiated by Mr. Hector, who as a decent heterosexual man, is unique in the novel. When he tells Tyler that his mother sent his brother away because "He was kind of funny. He was like you" (78), Tyler is impressed and relieved by the bravery of his openness, which "suddenly lifted a veil between [them]" and leads to Tyler's first "feeling of ordinariness." This incident is the start of a "bond forming between Mr. Hector and [Tyler]" (79), which is strengthened by their mutual desire to improve Mala's life at The Paradise Alms House.

Tyler feels "seen" by Hector and his second feeling of ordinariness comes when

he is similarly “seen” by Mala, who has become his patient. After she overhears the significant conversation between Tyler and Mr. Hector, Mala steals a (female) nurse’s uniform for Tyler, which she gives to him only once they are safe within her room. This gift touches Tyler, who reflects, “But she had stolen a dress for me. No one had ever done anything like that before. She knows what I am, was all I could think. She knows my nature” (82). But the dress is not Mala’s only gift to Tyler. Once he dons the uniform, she does not exclaim over him because his gender performance was “not something to either congratulate or scorn – it simply was” (83). Once again, Tyler receives the gift of normalcy, this time from Mala. He exults, “I had never felt so extremely ordinary, and I quite loved it” (84).¹⁹ Mala’s gift to Tyler signals an important *intergration* for Tyler, but also marks a breakthrough in her own mental health because it demonstrates her ability to understand, empathize, and witness in a reciprocal way.

However, the role of public and private space is also important in witnessing. Kim argues that “Tyler’s exploration of the ambiguities of gender is framed as an act of confidence that is made possible within the confines of Mala’s room” (“Troubling” 156); however, I suggest that it is significant that Mala’s room is “only yards away” from the new residents’ garden. Hector began the garden with two plants that have been given to Mala: “a full gerbera plant, flowers, leaves and roots protruding from a large ball of soil” and the cactus cutting from her own garden (77). Thus, the new garden represents Mala’s psychic *intergration* and her gifts – not least her gift for radical acceptance. As Tyler says, “She was not one to manacle nature, and I sensed that she was permitting mine its freedom” (83). Nielsen notes that “the garden functions in marked contrast to Paradise, or anywhere else on Lantanacamara, where queerness is repressed” and,

significantly, the garden is where Tyler expresses his “nature” publicly (6).

Moreover, Tyler takes on this public performance in company with the transman, Otoh, when through their mutual involvement in Mala’s care, they are poised to become lovers. Garvey argues that, in order to heal, Mala “needs the assistance of Otoh and Tyler, the former as catalyst and the latter as witness and scribe” (103). However, Tyler’s reconstruction of Mala’s story echoes Otoh’s earlier role when he wins her trust by dancing with her, as his father had, while he himself is “awed that he should be privy to [her voice’s] sound, and a witness to her past” (173). As the first to enter Mala’s garden at the Ramchandin property, Otoh is both catalyst and witness. Quite consciously, Otoh takes on his own father’s early role as Mala’s suitor. He imagines “how his father might have appeared as a dapper, young man on the way to court his lady” (150). Subsequently, Otoh dresses in his father’s pants which “fit him as though they had been custom tailored” (151). It is significant that the narrator informs readers that Otoh “might have passed for a pallbearer if it weren’t for his colourful necktie and elegant posture. In his father’s get up, Otoh looked more like a dancer” (152).

Otoh eventually fulfils this vision of him as pallbearer *and* dancer. Language returns to Mala first through Otoh, the dancer, who is Mala’s “first human visitor in over a decade” (162). Mala then leads Otoh to the still-rotting corpse of her father and, just like his father, Ambrose, he runs.²⁰ His subsequent actions have a widening circle of effects that result in him also becoming a pall-bearer of sorts. When Otoh sets fire to the Ramchandin house, he figuratively carries Mala’s father to rest as he cremates him. He also protects Mala by destroying any evidence that might be used against her. Otoh is the novel’s queer man of action and “rescues” both Mala and the cereus from the

Ramchandin place: when he reappears the night of the fire, “he clutched clippings from a cereus plant” (203). The fact that Mala and the cereus are the only living beings from the Ramchandin property to be “*transplanted*” to The Paradise Alms House underlines their reciprocal identification in the novel and the significance of the site itself.

The successful transplanting of Mala’s cereus is dependent on relationship and goodwill.²¹ It is the outcome of actions by Otoh, the novel’s change agent,²² who *transports* the cereus cutting; by Hector, who offers part of “his yard” (73) to Mala for a “resident’s garden”; and by Tyler, who tends both Mala and the cereus cutting. It is this trio of Tyler, Otoh, and Mr. Hector, who engage in a key exchange that occurs, tellingly, in front of the new garden. In the last scene of *Cereus*, Hector demonstrates the respectful attention and kindness that is the hallmark of literary thirdspace in *Cereus*. Despite his shock at seeing the couple promenading with Tyler wearing make-up and his new uniform and Otoh in his masculine whites, Hector offers a welcoming response: “I wish my brother could meet you two” (268).

Following his comment, Otoh drops to the ground in front of the cereus “with no regard for his white trousers and proceeded to pack the soil around its base. . . . not because it needed work but rather to show it some attention and, I imagine, to honour its place in Miss Ramchandin’s life” (268). Otoh’s action underlines the importance of a kind attention to life, in all its forms, as a necessary part of Mootoo’s literary thirdspace. Otoh’s lack of concern for his colonial whites may also be read as a postcolonial gesture – while he wears what he has found appealing, he is a transman, not a mimic man. He does not allow his trousers, his “whites,” to interfere with his caring for the individuals, human and otherwise, that surround him. The trio exemplifies what it means to stay and

break new soil, as Hector has with his new friends as much as with this new little plot at The Paradise Alms House. Interestingly, Ann Cvetkovich suggests that *Cereus* seems “to link lesbianism with the traumatic effects of migration,” since “Sarah and Lavinia’s flight from Lantanacamara . . . [is] central to the Ramchandin family trauma” (147). However, their flight may simply result from an awareness of the greater challenge to hegemonic norms presented by an adulterous inter-racial female couple.

Garvey suggests that “perhaps it is the cereus cactus itself that finds a safe space and a home, rooted in the garden of the alms house, tended to by a queer quartet . . . antidote as well as witness to multiple traumas” (106). Although Garvey’s “queer quartet” of Tyler and Otoh, and Mala and Ambrose comments directly on the queering of heterosexuality that *Cereus* effects, it overlooks the significance of the cereus being in the “resident’s garden” and the importance of Mr. Hector, who is clearly not included in the “queer quartet” (268).²³ The trio that does include him, and his affection for his “funny” brother, is united in caring for the cereus plant and for Mala – by extension, for Lantanacamara itself.

All five characters “find their agency in a form of the ‘future’ where the past is not originary, where the present is not simply transitory. It is . . . an interstitial future, that emerges *in-between* the claims of the past and the needs of the present” (Bhabha “Commitment” 313). Thirdspace queer narrative offers this in-between site in *Cereus*. Moreover, *intergration*, both within and between this group of individuals forms the basis for a radical *interconnection* that makes hybrid community not only possible, but productive. The literary thirdspace that Mootoo creates at The Paradise Alms House is not (as Nielsen also argues [2-3]), the “utopic community” that Heather Smyth envisions

(147). Rather it offers an opening to living with and through difference in community. This makes Mootoo's thirdspace a very Canadian exploration, albeit within a postcolonial Caribbean setting. The radical *intergration* that *Cereus* presents requires characters to recognize and accept, in themselves and in each other, what Bhabha calls "the incommensurable elements – the stubborn chunks – as the basis of cultural identifications" (Bhabha "Newness" 313). Not only does Mootoo's thirdspace avoid homogenizing in order to enjoy community, but *Cereus*' inclusion of safe space, witnessing, and kindness as integral elements of literary thirdspace also begins to address Chow's critique of overly optimistic uses of hybridity theory.²⁴

Sunnybrook

If the Paradise Alms House is an unlikely location for thirdspace, *Sunnybrook: A True Story with Lies*²⁵ presents an institutional candidate, Sunnybrook, that cannot provide an adequate home for productive thirdspace or for kinship. Although Blackbridge is equally engaged with a literary exploration of the thirdspace of intersectionality, with representing and commenting on hybridity in community, *Sunnybrook* demonstrates failed thirdspace. *Sunnybrook* is based on Blackbridge's installation art exhibit that showed in Vancouver at the Charles H. Scott Gallery on Granville Island in the early 1990s. As Joy James puts it, "the book incorporates and then goes beyond its earlier life as a fine art installation . . . to engage in a form of witnessing that chronicles a litany of complex difficult topics: adult illiteracy, learning disabilities, mind problems, and outlawed sexual identities" (150). The original large-scale mixed media installation, which included narrative and wood construction, also

inspired the 1995 *Sunnybrook* video that was produced and directed by Persimmon Blackbridge and her then partner, Lorna Boschman, an artist-performer in her own right.

Since there are a surprising number of similarities between The Paradise Alms House site and Sunnybrook, it is worthwhile investigating Sunnybrook to identify what makes it fail as thirdspace. Both physical sites are occupied by institutions, both institutions include nurses as primary staff, and most of the characters in each novel have various hybrid intersectional identifications. Moreover, at least one character in each is considered mentally ill and dangerous. These characters are restrained – Mala in *Cereus* by “leather straps that still held her firmly” (18) and Janey in *Sunnybrook* by “a strait jacket” (58). While The Paradise Alms House is, as its presiding sister proclaims, “an alms house for poor people. . . . not the place for psychiatrics” (9), *Sunnybrook* is named after a psychiatric institution in Ontario (James 150). However, the Sunnybrook of the art installation, video, and the eponymous novel is specifically referred to as “the Sunnybrook Institution for the Mentally Handicapped,” which is not a psychiatric designation (3).

There are also numerous textual references that indicate that this Sunnybrook is not located in Ontario, but rather on the West Coast of British Columbia in the suburbs of a large, unnamed urban centre that has Vancouver as its most likely referent (23).²⁶ One indication of this is that whenever the main protagonist, Diane, refers to her time in Ontario, she does so using the past tense with language defaults that imply she is no longer there. For instance, she “waitressed in a small town in Ontario” (3) and “had worked at a child guidance clinic in Ontario” (4). Similarly, Diane “had just come back from Ontario” when her mother, over a bottle of wine, tearfully confesses to using

behaviour modification on her as a child to teach her to talk (16). A more definite indication of Sunnybrook's location occurs when, on her way to work, Diane picks up "take-out coffee from her local . . . West Coast theme McDonald's, featuring frolicking killer whale wallpaper" (23). The novel's Sunnybrook clearly differs from the Ontario institute in significant ways.

However, in using the well-known (and cruelly ironic)²⁷ "Sunnybrook" name, Blackbridge also calls that now-closed institution into the novel. This literary act may be read as a deliberate attempt to critique all such health institutions while meeting the narrative imperative of grounding the novel in one material location. Like her narrators, Blackbridge's Sunnybrook is a fictional composite that draws on a variety of "real-life" models. This composite, which deliberately conflates "mentally handicapped" and "psychiatric," is congruent with one of the novel's last comments by the meta-narrator: "*Learning Disabled is really just another psychiatric label used to divide people into normal and not normal*" (86). By creating a composite, Blackbridge challenges readers' anticipated desire to keep these two categories separate and to question the foundations of such a desire.

There is little critical work on Blackbridge's novel,²⁸ which might be more usefully described as a fine art graphic novella (87 pages), although *Sunnybrook's* author biography asserts that it "is her first *novel*" (89, my emphasis). It tells the story of a young woman, who finds employment at Sunnybrook, but discovers that the job challenges her perceptions of herself and her ability to relate to others in a meaningful way. The artwork is a prominent, integral feature of the narrative. There are no graphic novel style panels per se, but each page is divided into several discrete and short sections.

Almost all pages have three parts: one or more photographs of the Sunnybrook installation; a titled section of primary first-person narrative; and a ruled-off sidebar section that contains commentary on the primary narrative, but which encodes this commentary in typefaces that represent two distinct voices. James rightly argues that the novel's layout and varying typefaces interrupt "habitually linear patterns of reading" (155). Blackbridge's novel proceeds through "blocks of text . . . [that gain] the capacity to be constitutive of a number of different assemblages, rather than . . . fixed moments in the unfolding of a particular narrative." In keeping with James' project, which utilizes Nietzschean subjectivity to look at *Sunnybrook* as an example of Deleuzian "assemblage" (153), she finds that narration cannot be attributed to a single subject position, which leads readers "to respond to the book as the inscription of a polyvocal telling that describes multiple voices tracing a multiplicity of subject positions" (155). Moreover, James argues that "any attempts by the reader to distinguish a single trajectory moving through all these linguistic and imagistic eruptions – that is, to narrativize – are thwarted" (156).

While James notes relevant postmodern features of the novel, I argue that it *is* possible to distinguish recurring and significant patterns within Blackbridge's layered narration. Furthermore, it is also possible, without doing reductive violence to the text, to identify three distinct narrative voices. The first is that of Diane, the central character, who describes her work as a waitress, the process of acquiring and performing her job as a "one-to-one counsellor" at Sunnybrook, and her two lesbian relationships (5). Diane narrates the main sections, which are short, set in Fournier type²⁹ and given titles. When compared to typical book chapters, these sections are "sound bites of text" (James 157).

The second narrative voice also belongs to Diane; however, it is represented as her inner voice, and always occurs in the sidebar region of the page in Trixie typeface, which mimics old typewriter script. As James notes, this typeface encourages “a sense of intimacy . . . the feeling that these are personal messages written directly to us” (155). This narrator encourages readers to believe that she is giving them the “inside scoop” on the main action. The following brief example demonstrates the interaction of these two narrative voices. When the primary narrator says, “I got the interview at Sunnybrook because I put on my application that I ‘had worked at a child guidance clinic in Ontario’” (4), the sidebar narrator tells readers, “Actually, I’d been a patient there, but I knew the jargon and I knew the routines, so what the hell.” The sidebar gloss on the main narrative offers information that differs in tone as well as content.

The sidebar narrator becomes increasingly “familiar” with readers and, about a third of the way through the novel, explains, “Persimmon was my other name, the name my friends called me” (30). This is an important step in establishing intimacy with readers, and Persimmon stresses it by adding, “Only shrinks and landlords and people at work called me Diane.” The textual attribution of the name, “Persimmon,” to a narrative voice introduces a level of autobiographical authenticity to the narrative because that name also appears on the spine of the book and on its title page as part of the author’s proper name. It invokes “the identity (‘identicalness’) of the *name* (author-narrator-protagonist)” that Philippe Lejeune defines as “[t]he autobiographical pact [which] is the affirmation in the text of this identity, referring back in the final analysis to the *name* of the author on the cover” (Lejeune 14, emphasis in text).

The likelihood that the text is autobiographical is enhanced by artwork on several

pages that includes photographs of Persimmon Blackbridge's face in several of the situations in which Diane finds herself. An example of the implicit narrative layering contributed by the artwork has Blackbridge's face appear in a nurse's cap trying "to imagine [her]self talking with Nurse Thompson the way that [the romance fiction Nurse] Holly did with her friends" in a book that Diane is reading (35). Another picture, in the upper right hand corner of the same page, shows Blackbridge's head looking down and laughing, perhaps at the idea of herself as a slightly demonic-looking Nurse. While her laugh is open to varying interpretations, there is no doubt that a reader's response to it would be mediated by her recognition (or lack of recognition) of the author, Persimmon Blackbridge, in each picture. Blackbridge also appears as Diane surrounded by keys (57) and with Lizard Jones, a colleague from the Kiss and Tell Collective, in a graphic that illustrates a hot flirtation that Diane enjoys with Shirley-Butch (82-83). These images of the author as the main protagonist contribute to the sense of identity between narrator(s), protagonist, and author that is characteristic of autobiography.

However, there is a break in the identicalness between Blackbridge, the author, and the protagonist-narrator, Diane, and even sidebar Diane/Persimmon. At the outset, "Dr. Carlson," the psychiatrist who hires Diane, says, "So. You're Diane Anderson," to which Diane responds, "Yes" (4). This undermines the autobiographical pact to some extent because the names Diane Anderson and Persimmon Blackbridge are clearly not identical. However, because the sidebar narrator has already told readers that there are lies on the application form, and that "Persimmon" is her other name, the ones her friends use, there is a certain pleasurable postmodern confusion. Readers cannot be sure how much information is "true" and "truth" is the underlying (though never fully realized)

promise of the autobiographical pact. The novel's sub-title, tellingly set in the same revelatory Trixie typeface as the sidebar narration, addresses the novel's "truthiness": *Sunnybrook* is "a true story with lies."

The third narrative voice takes up this issue in her³⁰ first comment, which also appears in the sidebar and directly beside the section title: "TRUTH." This never named narrator informs readers that "All this was a long time ago. This isn't truth, it's memory" (6). This underlines the promise of the subtitle in two ways. Firstly, there are lies in this story, which is an implicit undermining of the autobiographical pact. Secondly, it may be a "true story" because if the story is based on "memory," even if this memory is not "truth," the presence of memory implies someone to whom the memories belong and who is remembering. This prompts the question, "Whose memory?" The likely source of this memory is the author who has animated this trinity of narrators and given (at least) one of them³¹ her author's name, Persimmon. The sense of verisimilitude is enhanced by the dedication of the novel, which is to "Mary, Stuart, Janey, Pat, Geneva, and Shirley," the names of the residents with whom Diane works at Sunnybrook.

The meta-narrator reminds us of the power the author holds over our imaginative engagement with her text. She says, "I could tell you anything, you weren't there" (6). The use of the pronoun "I" in this context adds to this narrator's identification with the author. However, this suggestion cannot be fully verified within the text, nor is it obvious how much of the text is memory, whether the memories themselves are "true" (i.e., accurate), or whether there are deliberate and / or artistic lies. This is part of the productive uncertainty that James describes:

Blackbridge's text suggests that any move toward cohesion . . . must always be held in productive tension with simultaneous movement of fragmentation. Furthermore, her text shows that it is the tension resulting from an oscillation between cohesion (unity) and fragmentation (multiplicity) that makes it possible to avert the dangers that would result in simply speaking for, in the place of, an/other. (152)

The narrators do not speak with one voice and therefore do not present a unity of author, narrator, or character subjectivity, a situation that James interprets as Nietzschean (154). However, the author biography in *Sunnybrook* reinforces both James' interpretation and the implications of the autobiographical pact. Blackbridge is described as a "learning-disabled-lesbian-cleaning-lady-sculptor-performer-video-artist" as well as "an internationally acclaimed writer and visual artist" (89). The identifications of learning-disabled, lesbian, and cleaner are shared between author and protagonist. The difficulties that surround claiming the "Learning Disabled" identification in particular is discussed by the both sidebar narrators as part of the novel's alternative "*happy ending*" (85).

The meta-narrator's layer of *Sunnybrook*'s narrative presents an interesting connection to the world beyond the text and to the author. Her comments occur in the sidebar section of the page, as do the Persimmon-narrator's "typewritten" comments, but they are much less frequent and they maintain a different tone. Although the meta-narrator occasionally uses first-person narration, more often she delivers third-person pronouncements. Whatever her style, her comments add a level of meta-narration, which seem to come from outside of the action of *Sunnybrook*. Whereas the second narrator gives the impression of being the inner voice of the protagonist, this third narrator creates

the impression that she is the voice of the “real” author. This effect is typographically reinforced by the Fournier typeface that her comments share with the main narration, but which are italicized and in a lesser font size. This follows a common convention in which italics are used to indicate “thoughts,” presumably because italicized script mimics cursive writing rather than typescript.

This more *author*-itative narrator is more aware of the outside world and is a source of political analysis in the text. For instance, when the protagonist narrator sees an ad aimed at “parents of children with learning disabilities” and tells readers that she has “no trouble reading the message,” it is the unnamed meta-narrator who actually interprets the message for readers (23). This narrator also alerts us to the unreliability of not only the main narrator, but also of the author herself when, for instance, she points out an anachronism in the main text. In the “ROCK ME” section, there is a reference to “the other babes on the dance floor,” which provokes the meta-narrator to note, “*Diane would never have used the word babes in 1975*” (22). This creates a sense of *unheimliche* in readers since it implies that Diane is not a “real” character and is not even doing a proper job of pretending to be “in” her fictional time of 1975. This creates uncertainty in readers because it implies that the author is not in control. Either Blackbridge is not in control of the text because an in-control author would avoid an anachronism of which she was aware or she is not in control of the meta-narrator: if she were, surely the meta-narrator would not critique her writing. An out-of-control narrator is more unsettling to readers than a narrator who is simply unreliable.

Alternatively, perhaps these levels of narration and writing do not spring from a single consciousness, which is equally unsettling for readers because it challenges notions

of essentialist identity. The latter possibility reinforces James' comment on the deliberate challenge to cohesion that adds to the affective power of the novel by unsettling readers.

However, my analysis is somewhat at odds with James' assertion that

even when the several typefaces used *can* be tentatively traced to particular positions, a variety of inflections produce a multiplicity of voices that together radiate geographies of experience even as they relinquish any sense of subjects as discrete and knowable entities. (155)

While the narration of *Sunnybrook* is fragmented and multivocal, its three distinct narrators *are* identifiable, as I have just demonstrated. Of course, in common with many other narrators, not one of these is entirely reliable. Similarly, none are fully identifiable with the author. Although Blackbridge has clearly flirted with the autobiographical pact, she is not wedded to it and, in fact, its primary use seems to be to provoke an instability that challenges hegemonic rigidities and might anticipate the creation of what I am calling literary thirdspace.

Thirdspace, again, seems teasingly possible in James' assertion that *Sunnybrook* has "no subject, nor unifying system of any description, of which to take hold. If there is any logic here, it is the logic of images, the logic of the prism, which is located by the light glancing off its surfaces" (157). But while these assertions invoke Deleuzian surfaces and freedom-seeking lines of flight, they exaggerate the incomprehensibility of the text. *Sunnybrook* has a definite narrative arc and it is the meta-narrator who informs readers of its trajectory. In her first comment, she foreshadows not only Diane's failure, but also that Sunnybrook will be a "failed" thirdspace. This occurs in the context of

establishing this narrator's power over the narrative. She claims, "*I could pretend Diane never fucked up,*" which is a clear indication that Diane will "fuck up" (6). However, at the end of this warning about narrative power and unreliability, the meta-narrator offers, simultaneously, advance forgiveness for Diane and more respect for readers, when she allows that readers might "*know what Diane learned and how it didn't change anything*" and that "*there's no way not to fuck up in that place.*" These comments point to a kind of failed bildungsroman as well as a failed literary thirdspace.

The narrator's "free world" (20) encounter, affair, and conversations with "Shirley-Butch" (22) confirms this reading of *Sunnybrook* as well as the importance of the composite nature of Sunnybrook as an institution. Shirley-Butch, who spent time "locked up in the loony bin," says to the protagonist, "I can't believe I'm in bed with someone who actually works in an actual nuthouse!" (41). When Diane protests, "It's not a nuthouse. . . . it's an institution for the mentally handicapped," Shirley responds, "Same difference. Christ. It's like fucking a prison guard." Diane's concern with how she should identify her role is central to her eventual awareness of how she "fucks up" and the impossibility of "getting it right" at Sunnybrook. She responds fiercely to Shirley-Butch: "I'm not a prison guard!" This retort resonates with similar frustrated outbursts aimed at the Sunnybrook-Shirley, "who knew how to get to [her]" by calling her "nurse" (25). There Diane exclaims, "I'm not a nurse." Variations on this exchange take place with Sunnybrook-Shirley several times over this very short novel, but Diane's response does not change until just before she leaves Sunnybrook.

However, most importantly, the repetition of the question-and-response dialog (down to the names of the participants) indicates a significant connection between

“nurse” and “prison guard.” It also identifies, and critiques, the authoritarian and arrogant attitude towards “inmates” that the novel suggests attends those positions. I argue that the prison-like systems in place in Sunnybrook doom it to being failed thirdspace, despite the fact that, as a site of multiple hybridities, it presents as much theoretical potential for literary thirdspace as *The Paradise Alms House*. Directly after Diane is hired, readers are introduced to the “system at Sunnybrook [which] was simple. You were either nursing staff or psych staff, or an inmate” (5). The staff groups are headed by nurses or shrinks, respectively. Orderlies inhabit the bottom of the nursing group while counsellors, like Diane, are in the bottom of the psych group. It is obvious that nurses are the authority figures on the ward.

Initially, Diane (mis)identifies with the inmates and inclines towards an anti-authoritarian position, which is why it disturbs her when Shirley calls her “nurse.” However, as Diane adapts to the job, she begins to adopt some of the perspectives of the authorities around her, particularly the nurses, who are her primary institutional colleagues. In this respect, James is right to draw attention to Diane’s “becoming nurse” persona, although it is inaccurate to imply that she is *actually* becoming a nurse. In this context, James sees the romance novel’s Nurse Holly as a “normative shadow” form for Diane while Florence Nightingale provides a “beyond reproach, but sacrificial” model (157). However, the text and illustrations of Diane as nurse and Persimmon laughing show that Diane cannot picture herself either as Nurse Holly or as a friend of her ward nurse, Nurse Thompson. A more promising “normative shadow” for Diane is her “perfectly good girlfriend,” who contrasts strongly with Shirley-Butch, “the [sexy] obnoxious jerk,” who offers another alternative model (42).

These two offer Diane (and readers) opposing points of view on many situations in *Sunnybrook*. Diane's ethical struggle places her in between these two extremes, as may be observed in the dilemma posed by her inadvertent discovery of the female resident, Pat, and an unnamed male resident making love in the basement of the administration building. In a section entitled "TELL," which is provocatively juxtaposed with the section entitled "LIES," Diane's good, and also unnamed, girlfriend says that Diane must "tell Nurse Thompson about Pat and that guy"; however, Diane insists that she "can't tell on Pat" (50). Nevertheless, Diane worries about the incident and, in her discussion with Shirley-Butch, finds herself repeating the words she heard from her "good" girlfriend: "I can't just do nothing" (65). This repetition is an indication of Diane's increasing acceptance of the institutional point of view and of her position in between the attitudes of her two girlfriends. It is instructive that Shirley-Butch calls Diane "Nancy Nurse" when she says that she wants to help Pat "in ways that another inmate couldn't" (64).

Shirley-Butch's anger is directed at Diane's naïve belief that she can "help" Pat and the scene becomes a negative turning point in their relationship. Their conflict culminates outside the gates of the institution, which is the next and last time that Diane sees Shirley-Butch. There, Shirley-Butch literally and unerringly points to the primary reason that Sunnybrook represents "failed" thirdspace as she urges Diane to "decide which side of the fence [she's] on" (71). Diane continues the metaphor of the fence by asking, "Why does there have to be a fence?" Shirley-Butch's response links the metaphoric fence to the real fence: "There doesn't have to be a fence. But there is a fence. It's right behind you and there's a guard at the gate" (71). The guarded fence is,

of course, a spatial feature that Sunnybrook shares with a prison. This exchange emphasizes incarceration, not only as a significant problem within the “helping” institution of Sunnybrook, but as a counter to the possibilities of literary thirdspace. It is as if the presence of hard, authoritarian, and hierarchical boundaries neutralizes the positive potential of hybridity.

This insight builds on Diane’s earlier perception of Sunnybrook. When she begins her job, Diane is overwhelmed by how unusual the residents seem and explains that “[t]his was hundreds of people and you could tell just by looking at them that they didn’t belong to the free world. Someone had locked them up. They were locked up people” (6). It is significant that this perception is accompanied by fear, which is also inimical to thirdspace. Over time, Diane, too, becomes prey to Sunnybrook’s prison-like atmosphere. At first, it is only that she’s always checking her keys so that she knows she *can* get out, but eventually she begins to feel that “everyone in [her] life was watching [her]” (74). This seems a natural response to a working life spent inside an institution that is too close to the panopticon for comfort. Both the carceral element and the depersonalizing scale of Sunnybrook are key factors in creating a location in which hybridity does not have even the promise of blooming, as it did in the relative freedom of the more human-scaled Paradise Alms House.

Unlike The Paradise Alms House, at Sunnybrook there are no gifts and no (apparent) visitors from the outside. However, in both novels a well-meaning queer caregiver is the purported source of a multi-layered narration. There is also a possible, though inexact, parallel between the generous gardener in *Cereus*, and the perceptive orderly, Michel, in *Sunnybrook*. Both men are at the lower end of the institutional

hierarchy, yet both give significant thought to how they might improve the life of the residents. It perhaps speaks to the importance of the natural world in both novels that each man suggests activities that will get the residents out of the institutional rooms and into its grounds. Michel intervenes early on, before Diane even knows who he is, to suggest that she take Stuart “off the ward . . . [because h]e never gets off the ward” (8). He later interrupts Diane’s attempts to teach Stuart to tie his shoes to reinforce his earlier suggestion and also takes the opportunity to introduce himself and to raise Diane’s consciousness about their respective roles in the institutional hierarchy (63). Diane is open, smart, and kind enough to understand and to act on his advice. She also takes Janey to the comparative freedom available outside of the buildings. However, after she integrates these beneficial acts into her “counselling,” she questions their overall benefit while watching Stuart, who is sitting on the “manicured lawn” with her for the first time:

He lay face down, embracing it with his whole body, breathing the smell of the grass and earth. I tried to weigh this moment against the hours of Ward 5 rocking, against Mary forced to play at signing and Janey in the side room. But I couldn’t make it count. It was meaningless, crushed under the weight of institutional indifference. (75)

Diane turns to Stuart and asks, rhetorically, “So what’s the point?” This begins an exchange that, minimal as it is, fleetingly demonstrates the potential for thirdspace and the importance of both nature and human kindness in developing that space. Diane answers her own question negatively: “There is no point.” Stuart, however, who, like Mala, does not normally communicate using words, speaks. Significantly, his answer is “Bushes,” the only word he has learned to describe plant life. His one-word answer is

important enough to the ethical action of the novel that his response is interpreted for readers: “Apparently he disagreed” with Diane’s negative assessment of the importance of his moment of joy. Nevertheless, neither Stuart’s joy nor Diane’s witnessing of it translate into literary thirdspace at Sunnybrook. The difference between *Cereus* and *Sunnybrook*, in the development of successful literary thirdspace, does not seem to be located in individual caregivers or their patients, but rather in the levels of depersonalization of the institutions, which seem to increase in proportion to institution size and the restrictive measures employed. The more authoritarian institution, Sunnybrook, with its large-scale, prison-like environment neutralizes acts of kindness, which are “crushed under . . . institutional indifference” (75), as are expressions of individuality, relationship, and community within its guarded perimeter.

These “natural” outcomes of incarceration not only inhibit positive thirdspace, but actively encourage the depersonalized atmosphere that allows staff to “forget” that they are dealing with “real people.” The violent event that precipitates Diane’s departure from her position provides a brief glance into the resulting “malevolent practices cloistered inside Sunnybrook’s walls” (James 151). As Diane returns from outside with Janey, she sees two orderlies chasing Shirley. Initially, Diane is angry and concerned that this scene will disturb Janey. Even the sidebar narrator is annoyed at Shirley; however, once the orderlies knock Shirley down and sit on her, the sidebar comments change tenor and the meta-narrator interjects, “This is Shirley. The real person Shirley” (79). This epiphany helps the sidebar narrator see through and question the institutionalized attitude that let her think only of how Shirley was going to upset Janey (78) and make her “job harder” instead of being horrified by the sight of a bleeding woman, who was being chased. The

orderlies ask Diane to help them restrain Janey, who is upset. Janey has been identified as “violent,” so they seek her caregiver’s help; however, the newly aware Diane “turned around and walked out, unlocking the door with [her] Ward B key and letting it close behind [her].” She can no longer depersonalize Janey as simply “violent” nor use that reductive identification to paralyze her compassion while she takes part in institutional violence.

This disturbing event helps Diane decide which side of the fence she’s on. Although she refused to help the orderlies, she realizes that she can’t help Janey or Shirley either. This insight changes Diane’s relationship to her position within Sunnybrook. The next time she sees Shirley, she approaches her and asks, “Do you really think I’m a nurse?” (81). Shirley’s response is positively instructive. She initially replies, “Your name is Diane,” but then yells out as Diane walks away, “Hey nurse! . . . You’d better go now.” Diane takes the instruction, decides that Shirley is “probably right,” and quits. She accepts that she is unable to overcome either the depersonalization or the hierarchical system of this “locked up” place.

Sunnybrook’s “happy ending” reinforces the idea of Sunnybrook as a literary example of failed thirdspace. In fact, the happiness of the ending is predicated on Sunnybrook’s closure, which is prefigured in Shirley’s attempt “[t]o burn down Sunnybrook” while she is still a resident (39). Although there is non-hegemonic difference of many kinds, a veritable cornucopia of hybridity, in Sunnybrook, hybridity is not necessarily freeing in and of itself. *Sunnybrook* demonstrates decisively how instability and hybridity can be “locked up” instead of being used to build productive rhizomatic community. When difference is suppressed and oppressed then there is no

chance for the kind of productive *intergrated* thirdspace of intersectionality that started at The Paradise Alms House. As Shirley-Butch says in response to Diane's desire to "help," "It's possible, OK? But not in Sunnybrook" (65).

Sunnybrook's closure and the movement of its residents into community housing is a step towards establishing greater hybridity in the mainstream as well as towards improving the quality of life for the former residents. The changes that follow allow no-longer-Sunnybrook-Shirley to present on a panel at a "Workshop on Women and Disability." These changes are paralleled by an increased social awareness around disabilities that allows Diane to become "tough enough to go" to the workshop as a woman with a learning disability herself (85). Both changes rest on former "inmates" being part of society rather than "locked-up" away from it, where they became (unknown) objects of fear rather than subjects.

The productive thirdspace that might be claimed for *Sunnybrook* occurs extra-textually. James argues that "the condition of possibility in this scenario is . . . in the ongoing activation of spaces between the audience and the play, the reader and the text, and in the *affective* constitutive work that is done in these in-between spaces of trans- and intra-cultural encounter" (153). James' "condition of possibility" corresponds loosely to literary thirdspace. *Sunnybrook* shares this ability to perform social action through literature with the other novels of the Vancouver node, particularly Lai's *Fox* and Mootoo's *Cereus*.

Interestingly, Blackbridge also uses similar literary techniques to interrupt the hegemony of Whiteness as the default in English Canadian writing. For instance, readers first hear about Pat from Shirley, another patient on "Ward D, the good ward" (5), who

says of Diane's assignment to work with Mary, "Oh boy, Mary. Better work with Pat instead" (17). The narrative gives no racialized descriptors of either woman at this point, which, as was discussed in Chapter Four encourages mainstream readers, especially White readers, to assume the default racialization of White. However, when Diane hallucinates seeing the Sunnybrook patients in the "FREE WORLD," she sees "Pat on the bus, laughing and talking in Cantonese with two other women and five children" (20). Again, Blackbridge uses no marker of racialization; however, there is a strong likelihood that Pat is of Cantonese heritage because few other Vancouverites speak Cantonese. However, the fact that readers are now aware of Pat's likely racialization does not change how the narrator describes her in subsequent scenes. There are still no racialized markers used the next time readers hear from Pat, which is when she gives Diane the information that "Mary [presumed deaf] can hear" (24). Readers' assumptions are challenged because the hegemonic defaults of English Canadian reading culture do not necessarily apply in this text. As with Lai's text, this interruption in readers' assumptions may also act as an implicit invitation to question other hegemonic and racist assumptions that "go without saying." Mootoo achieves a similar effect and makes South Asian and Black identities, which are racialized in Canada, default identities by virtue of setting *Cereus* in a (fictional) Caribbean country. *Sunnybrook* deploys a similar strategy by placing Diane, who has a learning disability and a mental illness, in a novel where these characteristics are shared by most of the characters.

Taken

An unexpected trajectory emerges in Daphne Marlatt's *Taken*, the third node

novel to be examined in this chapter. If Blackbridge presents readers with a site that may be read as failed thirdspace, Marlatt presents a transient site of literary thirdspace that is recognizably criminal in its failure. Marlatt's layering of story implicitly compares the situation of three women, all "taken" in various ways, but above all, taken unawares. There is the primary narrator, known only as "i"; i's mother, Esme, whose Malaysian, Australian, and Canadian history is the focus of the narrative; and a female prisoner of war. Although the latter is unnamed, she may be Peggy, one of Esme's friends from Malaysia, who has been captured by the invading Japanese army during WWII. I refer to her as Peggy throughout for convenience, but note that her identification in the novel is inconclusive. The women at the almost outrageously unlikely site of hybridity and potential thirdspace in *Taken*, the itinerant "war camp," are "taken" by armed forces. There are parallels here with both *Sunnybrook* and *Cereus*. In all three novels the women are taken by patriarchal institutions – Mala and the residents of Sunnybrook by the combined forces of justice and healthcare, Peggy and other war prisoners by the army. *Taken*'s prisoners, like Mala, are taken by physical force, taken by surprise, captured.

The comparison is shocking. Nevertheless, the elements that preclude the possibility of positive transformation ensuing from the hybridity and instability that is present in the space of imprisonment of the female civilians are similar in kind, though obviously different in degree, to the elements that forestall productive thirdspace in Sunnybrook. Similarly, the beginnings of community are also present – the Butlerian kind of kinship that Garvey identified in *Cereus* (106). Beverley Curran captures both levels of similarity in her summation of this strand of Marlatt's intricately woven text:

The nameless narratives of suffering in war camps in the italicized passages within the novel tell us of women, taken, ‘*yes, but not completely*’ (67), acquiring strategies for survival; learning new definitions of time and space, of family: ‘*your heart swells to hold this ragtag retinue lost somewhere in a mapless world*’ (88). (67)

Although the comparison of Sunnybrook with an illegal³² prison camp is painful because Sunnybrook is a social institution meant to “help” people while prison camps are known sites of horror, the presence of violence towards women that occurs in both spaces is incontrovertible. In Sunnybrook, a bleeding Shirley is chased and brought down by the orderlies (78-79); in the camp, a soldier responds to an objection by Mrs. G. by beating her with his rifle (63). In both Sunnybrook and the war camp, depersonalization of the inmates is a condition that encourages abuse. Again, the difference is in degree rather than kind. Marlatt’s text also directly compares wartime and peace time violence against women. She implies the potential of violence against the women of the camp to be sexualized through describing a soldier “*looking you up and down with that look you’d seen on men looking at women, a look that meant something you’d only begun to imagine – was it then you knew you were old enough after all?*” (72, italics in text). Lest readers forget that this happens in civilian life and that respected and trusted men also commit violence against women, *Taken* gives the example of “the hacked-up bodies of those women in the French doctor’s wardrobe in Paris” (91). Moreover, the “i” narrator overtly questions this state of affairs: “But why women, why was it always women whose bodies were found this way? . . . With or without war” (92).

It is remarkable, but not unheard of, that people trapped in traumatic situations

manage to create new connections, new communities that cross and include a variety of hybridities. This movement towards community based on the sameness of “who is here?” – a spacialized identification, rather than an identification based in the difference of “who are you?” – an ontological, essential identification, based on class or racialization, represents survival for the women prisoners. Marlatt’s second-person narrative³³ imagines how the basis for community changes for Peggy:

you found yourself housed with strangers, women you wouldn't ordinarily speak to, let alone share a pot of rice with. but there you were chopping charred roof beams together for firewood, and with too dull axes – was that when you knew that everything had changed, and irreversibly? (67)

The women become family, there is acceptance, but this is not a community that has the potential to thrive or bloom because there is not the safety that was found at The Paradise Alms House in *Cereus*. *Taken*'s prisoner camp more closely resembles Sunnybrook in that the women are incarcerated in a hierarchical authoritarian situation, where community is only possible between the ones who are guarded. In place of the Sunnybrook fence, there are the war camp's armed soldiers. This, too, differs from the situation at The Paradise Alms House, where “Nurse Tyler” actually anchors the nascent community. Instead of a blossoming of literary thirdspace there is the continual eruption of violence, illness, and death.

The significance of physical space to the development of a sense of belonging is a concern that runs through *Taken*. For the women in the prisoner camp, there is no permanent site, no physical location with which they can establish relationship:

sometimes you and your current “family,” your kongsee as you call it, think back through the camps and moves but time is unreal. what you know is this camp now, your particular barrack, your own bali-bali where you sleep between B and S. (87)

This is a negative echo of the importance of connection with the surrounding ecology, which grounds literary thirdspace in the residents’ garden in *Cereus* and that is gestured to in *Sunnybrook* by Stuart’s joy in “bushes.” In *Taken*, the only earth to which each woman belongs, finally, is her grave. It is the last gift they give to one another until none is left even to dig “graves with makeshift tools . . . no markers, nothing left” (129). This (death) sentence is textually marked by *not* being set in italics as the rest of that narrative is. It is further emphasized by being followed by the only poem in *Taken*, which is set on the page like a memorial marker:

*Each in a burial space,
By women’s hands, filled in and beautified*

. . . a cross of twigs so simply tied . . . 129

In *Taken*, there is no alternative “happy ending” to this thread in the narrative, neither is there any promise of personal or botanical blooming, which suggests that the bond with the land itself may be another critical element for literary thirdspace.

Marlatt’s narratorial “i” also implicitly suggests this as that first person narrative foregrounds elements of land as well as elements of autobiography. Her home is “island, yes, but temperate island. Cedar and fir . . . along the lakeshore . . . straits between our island and the next. . . [e]agles and ravens . . . owls . . . raccoons” (7). Marlatt had a similar home on Saltspring Island, one of the Gulf Islands that lie between the mainland

of southern British Columbia and Vancouver Island, where she lived with her then partner, Betsy Warland. Those who have been to Saltspring may recognize not only “the runaway rabbits of North End Road perched very still in the mist,” but also that “North End Road” is a Saltspring road (77). The Gulf Islands are widely held to be a place where there is a focus on people connecting closely with the land and, with Lori gone, the narrator’s relationships are with the landscape and the creatures in it, with nature’s “[a]morous intent. Insistent rhythm even abandoned orchards feel.” Curran observes that Marlatt’s “story is in the connection between things” whether between words, objects, or beings (61). However, unlike Mala, the Gulf Island narrator remains apart from nature and continually questions her right to belong. She observes with envy that “[o]tters live here with all the pleasure of beings who belong” (15).

Marlatt’s loss of her Saltspring home and her relationship with Warland echoes in the Gulf Island narrator’s loss of Lori, which prompts her to trace the memories behind “the idea of family with its unbroken bond, [which] haunts [their] connection” (77). In this re-remembering, Marlatt, as a founding practitioner of *écriture au féminin*, is “reaching for another kind of story, a story of listening way back in the body. And is this memory? Or fiction?” (25). *Taken* has fiction theory’s determination to remain embodied within a postmodern, self-reflexive questioning of the boundary between memory and fiction, “truth,” and “lies” that it shares with *Sunnybrook*. However, in a move that is the reverse of *Sunnybrook*’s strategy, it is only three-quarters of the way through the novel that readers discover that the i-narrator is identical with the daughter of Esme and Charles, “Suzanne,” in the third-person narrative (98). This is a definite repudiation of the autobiographical pact and insists that *Taken* is fiction, despite its many intersections with

Marlatt's life story, which, like Persimmon's picture, affects readers who recognize "identicalness" differently than it affects others.

Curran argues that *Taken* demonstrates "a profound ecological consciousness" (66). Suzanne, like Lori, is determined to avoid the "fatal idea of islands cut off from the main" (16) and to recognize "[t]he connections between. Trade and royalty. Armies and trade" (98). Marlatt connects the Gulf War with the Gulf Island and with human and non-human animals: an "oil slick on a different gulf drifts towards a herd of breeding sea cows soon to be forgotten in the human struggle for dominance" (86). However, Suzanne's island home, like Mala's garden, may offer refuge, but, in the absence of human community, it cannot offer an example of literary thirdspace. The recognition that a prison camp site may be as close to literary thirdspace as a the relatively idyllic site of a Gulf Island underlines my contention that literary thirdspace is not a disguised utopian concept, but rather a serious attempt to imagine what supports and what hinders establishing ethical communities of difference.

Marlatt's deliberately empathetic inclusion of animals in *Taken* is, however, a gesture towards both *intergration* and hybridity. *Taken's* invocation of globalization and its recognition of networks that differ in length, but not kind, creates an extra-textual potential for positive thirdspace that has been observed in the other Vancouver node novels. Like Mootoo, Marlatt investigates a transnational world in which people are not rooted in one place, but are, instead, forced by circumstance from country to country. *Taken* also takes a hard look at colonialism and its effects, and connects the macropolitics of war to the micropolitics of community, family, and individuals. As Miriam Nichols argues, "[T]his is present-tense cultural work that acknowledges the inevitability of

beginning from where one finds oneself (or from where one has been put), and insists on the importance of reworking the position at micro political levels” (45).

Taken brings the personal and the political together repeatedly and irrevocably. Marlatt in common with other node authors reflects her own hybridity.³⁴ Marlatt shares Suzanne’s history of growing up in Malaysia before immigrating to Canada and, therefore, might be familiar with the hybrid juxtaposition of “pouring melted butter into milk in this West Coast kitchen . . . visited suddenly by the smell of new cloth at the Chinese tailor’s in Penang” (43). Marlatt also suggests that Suzanne’s mother and grandmother are Eurasian with both Asian and British ancestors (107). As Nichols notes, the strength in *Taken* and the “specificity of Marlatt’s poetics lies in her willingness to work with, rather than discard, the cultural script she finds herself in as an Anglo-Canadian, middle-class female feminist subject” (42). Oddly, Nichols neglects to add “lesbian” or “queer” to that litany of identifications, an oversight that adds force to my earlier claim that it is necessary to name this specific identification because it remains subject to erasure, even by the well-intentioned.³⁵

The Vancouver Node and Literary Thirdspace

The three novels discussed in this chapter and Lai’s *Fox* are unusual, perhaps queer, bedfellows on a number of counts. It is currently more common in Canadian literary criticism to separate authors of colour and racially hegemonic authors, whose light pigmentation carries heavy power and gives us “naturalized” presence in Canadian culture. Moreover, the node novels have significant differences and each author’s interlocking identifications also differ. Not surprisingly, these identifications inform their

work and queer women of many stripes (lesbian, bi, trans, questioning) populate all four node novels. Viewing them *ensemble* encourages critical recognition of other surprising parallels that might otherwise go unnoticed.

I have mentioned several commonalities, but another overarching likeness is each author's use of multiple narrative threads to weave intensely layered and historicized stories. Even *Sunnybrook*, the most local in time and space, historicizes shameful issues such as "the sterilization of 'mental defectives' . . . in the late 1920s" (50). Moreover, each is concerned with the intersection of memory, truth, and fiction – "preoccupied with memory, taken with illuminant desire" (Marlatt *Taken* 96). Each text also concerns itself with transnational issues, both historical and contemporary. Although it is less obvious in *Sunnybrook*, the characters' identities and backgrounds are in keeping with the racially mixed Vancouver culture. Marlatt and Mootoo more explicitly examine the effects of British colonization in countries outside of Canada from the perspective of those in both colonizing and colonized cultures, respectively. Each novel is concerned with marginalized and intersectional identifications and how to live these complex selves within thriving communities. My own approach to the texts argues that these authors explore their similar concerns through initiating an exploration of literary thirdspace and presenting readers with the results: productive, failed, or criminal.

Another commonality is an opening towards literary thirdspace that is achieved by making central, within the narrative world of the novel, identifications that are marginalized within Canadian culture. *Fox* accomplishes this on the microlevel by using the defaults of language while *Cereus* achieves it on the macrolevel by setting the novel in a location where being brown or black is the norm and Whiteness the mark of the

outsider, even if that outsider remains powerful. *Sunnybrook*'s approach is similar to *Cereus* in that Blackbridge places the main narrator, who has a learning disability and a mental illness, in a position of power within a site where many people have disabilities and illnesses. This has a normalizing effect. *Taken*, on the other hand, explores a transnational culture where all the main characters are immigrants, which normalizes the alienation and marginalization felt even by privileged immigrants. Each author opens to a space of possibility in terms of how to live difference individually and within community.

In *Fox*, literary thirdspace is, arguably, represented by the migrating Fox herself; however, in the end, the Fox retreats from the human world, leaving the earth-bound companions to sort themselves out. Nevertheless, the Fox, with her trickster-like ways, creates conditions of learning for her human connections before abandoning them. Despite the personal difficulties between the individual characters in *Fox*, their gathering together in a kind of witnessing ceremony to mark Ming's death is a movement away from earlier betrayals and towards forgiveness, kindness, and support – the beginnings of community. Although this seems to comply with the implicit suggestions inherent in *Cereus*' representation of successful literary thirdspace, it is only on the imaginary Caribbean isle of Lantanacamara that literary thirdspace is supported, poised to root and bloom in concert with the also migrating cereus cutting. Literary thirdspace appears to be built on "chosen" queer kinship groupings, kindness, and a conscious connection to the surrounding social and physical environment. *Fox*'s beginnings may lack the connection to the land that is found in *Cereus*. Although, in the first edition, the contemporary narrator is represented by a tree, the roots are bare; there doesn't seem to be a grounded

site for thirdspace.

Taken, *Sunnybrook*, and *Cereus* all demonstrate that the earth and the plants are necessary sources of healing and strength for individuals and interconnection. The connection with land seems partially to offset the institutionality of the potential sites for literary thirdspace found in each of these three novels. However, in *Sunnybrook* and *Taken* readers are presented with the spectacle of failed literary thirdspace. In both, forcible confinement and violence foreclose an opening to thirdspace despite the presence of a plethora of hybrid characters. Their narratives make it clear that hybridity alone is an insufficient condition for productive thirdspace – a conclusion that coincides with Chow’s critique of the too-easy critical valorization of hybridity and which marks a place where literary thirdspace diverges from “Third Space.”

Nevertheless, hybridity is important in the novels and each author implicitly raises the issue of hybridity within the nation, as well as within community. Although many critics embrace the post-national, Arun P. Mukherjee, in an article published in the key node year of 1995 argues against “Western Marxists’ and postmodernists’ condescending disavowals of nationalism” (422). From this perspective, she investigates why “racial minority women have expressed such negative views about Canada” (424). Mukherjee cites many of their views and also cites White Canadian literary critics, whose comments demonstrate the hegemonic and exclusionary attitudes that have inspired the negative response from racialized women. In particular, she quotes critic David Staines, as “quite representative of the criteria that have been applied to devalue the work of racial minority writers” (430). Staines says that “[t]he truly Canadian writer writes out of his or her own world, making resonances” unconsciously; whereas, “transplanted writers . . .

struggle to impose references that are unnatural in their context” – unless they are Michael Ondaatje, of course, who is ““exceptional”” (431). Mukherjee argues that the “old paradigms of nationalist criticism and the white-only canon no longer convince all Canadians” and that “Canada needs a new nationalism, a nationalism whose grounding premise will be Canada’s heterogeneity” (441). Literary thirdspace is a movement in that direction.

Christine Kim cites Mukherjee and argues that “[i]n many senses, *When Fox Is a Thousand* participates in precisely this kind of project” (“Troubling” 166). I would extend Kim’s contention to all four node novelists: Lai, Mootoo, Blackbridge, and Marlatt. Though not all racialized minority women, they are all “transplanted” authors whose work is “very Canadian.” Moreover, each text actively creates heterogeneity within Canadian literature by presenting what may be read as literary meditations on how to live difference. From the micro level of the individual in community to the macro level of national interactions, the novels contribute to a meaningful articulation of hybridity that is neither essentialist autoethnography nor theoretical optimism isolated from lived experience beyond the academy.

Eleanor Ty and Christl Verdun suggest:

Going beyond autoethnography or critical ethnography means moving away from questions of ‘authenticity,’ essentialist identity politics, and a view of a cultural group that is static, rather than evolving. (Introduction 4-5)

Each of the theoretically aware node authors uses multiple postmodern strategies that undermine essentialist readings of individuals, culture, or history. The novels are

more interested in communicating across differences rather than remaining caught in any one “identity politics” – multiplicity is a key factor in each text. However, their sensitivity and empathy produce texts that do not negate the harsh experiences of lived lives that Chow has found have often been ignored by academic theorists in their desire to move away from autoethnography and valorize hybridity. Instead, a grounded site of inter-connection and heterogeneity is presented as the basis for a literary thirdspace that can thrive as community only in the presence of witnessing, empathy, kindness, acceptance, and safety. It is remarkable that each node novel exhibits this core interest in how to live with multiple identifications individually, within communities, cultures, nationally and *internationally*, even *interspecially*. More remarkably, this profound similarity might have gone unrecognized were it not for the node approach, which suggested examining these disparate texts as an interrelated group.

 Notes

¹ The several versions of this concept are variously spelled as “Third Space” (Bhabha), “third space” (Wong), and my own version: “thirdspace.” I find that one word better reflects my deployment of thirdspace as a single sign, ineffable as well as ambiguous, that differs in kind from the two linguistic signs that produce it. For me, to separate the words “third” and “space” evokes the binary-producing terms “first” and “second,” which have no further role in the discussion. I choose not to capitalize “thirdspace” because, if thirdspace must be a “proper” noun, the space itself is not as useful as a critical term as I hope it will be.

² While it is surprising that thirdspace finds a home in a Catholic alms house, which surely is an expression of colonial institutionality and religious hegemony, mitigating factors are found in the fact that it is run by local people and that its colonial relation is to the European Catholic Church rather than the Wetlandish / British Anglican Church that has been the more active, and therefore more hated, colonial power in Lantanacamara.

³ References to Mootoo’s *Cereus* will be given as page numbers within the text and the edition referenced is the McClelland & Stewart 1998 edition, which I have selected over the more significant PGP first edition because of its greater availability.

⁴ It seems likely that it is the Wetlanders who named Paradise after the originary garden in Christianity. The lush Caribbean landscape might well seem like paradise to the British. The terrible irony with which this nominally pre-lapsarian site becomes the setting for gendered and racialized sexual violence is indicative of the culpability Mootoo lays at the feet of British religious and sectarian imperialism. Moreover, as the British have obviously named “Paradise,” so Lantanacamaramarians seem to have named the British homeland the Shivering Northern Wetlands, as it would certainly seem to them. Naming locations in *Cereus*, though fictionalized, is a reminder of the importance of perspective and the power of naming. It affords anyone who identifies with the British, who exercised their power to name many parts of the globe, the salutary experience of being named by someone else.

⁵ As Mala grows up enduring her father’s abuse, she eventually “could no longer bear the name . . . Pohpoh [which] was what her father had lovingly called her since she was a baby, long before the crisis in the family” because he still whispered it to her as he raped her (217). It is an interesting choice as “Mala” has resonances to “bad” as in “maladroit” and also to “malady” as in sickness. Mala’s splitting of her personality into two so that Mala can protect Pohpoh is a kind of illness, whose healing is symbolized by Pohpoh’s return, an *intergration* that takes place at The Paradise Alms House (269).

⁶ Lavinia’s words are also an echo of the British imperialist passion for collecting and so demonstrate that no Wetlandish character is untainted by the colonialist project.

⁷ Since, as Christine Kim notes, *Cereus* is most often read in a postcolonial context (161-62), the destructive effect of colonization on Chandin is generally recognized, including by Kim herself (“Troubling” 161).

⁸ Readers are informed that “even before he entered the Reverend’s seminary he was unwittingly helping to convert Indians to Christianity” (31).

⁹ Mootoo is masterful in shielding her protagonist from the charge of manslaughter. Very early in the narrative, readers learn that “Judge Walter Bissey had dismissed the case [against her] in minutes” (7). However, the story that unfolds layer by layer also exonerates Mala. Her self-protection also protects Chandin from becoming a murderer in addition to being an incestuous pedophile and rapist (245). Moreover, once he is down, it is Ambrose who “yanked open the door” to leave, which “heavy door hit Chandin’s head with enough force to stupefy him, and he slumped down, his eyes open” (246). Only after Ambrose deserts her does Mala, in an obvious traumatic state that has returned her to the terrors of the past, return to her father’s body and copy Ambrose’s act with the door deliberately and repeatedly (247). Mootoo portrays Chandin’s body as showing signs of death even before Mala’s acts: he “lay still on the floor, his eyes open and glazed, his legs limps, spread apart, his hands curled” (247). Readers may appreciate the ironic touch whereby, in death, his posture mimics his victim rather than his oppressors.

¹⁰ Although it is impossible to determine when Chandin dies, several characters and critics assume Mala’s agency. The chief constable, who has no knowledge of the actual events, suggests that “the old man was trapped down there alive for a long time before he died. Or was murdered” (199). Howells seems to attend to the Chief Constable’s version of events and asserts that “the reader has to assume that he died of injuries and starvation,” a view I contest (155). Kim calmly observes that the garden is “overrun with life after Mala kills her abusive father,” which assumes Mala’s agency despite the doubt that the text inscribes (“Troubling” 162). Ann Cvetkovich refers to “Mala’s attack on him” without noting Chandin’s cleaver-wielding (141). I argue that the obfuscation of agency is deliberate and protects Mala from any potential judgement on the part of readers – like Otoh, Mootoo protects Mala from charges of wrong-doing.

¹¹ The dynamic difference between the house and garden sites in *Cereus* reflects Mootoo’s own life experience. She explains that her childhood “garden was the safest place, the best place. . . much safer than inside the house, because there were repercussions from me being abused inside the house” (Mootoo “Interview by Sherman” 3). As a result of her early attachment to that particular (Trinidadian) garden, gardens form an important element even in Mootoo’s visual work. *Cereus*, however, is not simply autobiographical. For instance, Mootoo’s abuse did not occur at the hands of her parents. Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe how the author’s experience of an unsafe house and a garden refuge plays out in the narrative of the novel. In this case, the translation of the writer’s lived experience into fiction somewhat mirrors fiction’s ability to transform experience. This dual motion underlies the mutually constitutive relationship between literary and social thirdspace.

¹² Mootoo’s wilderness garden may be an example of productive hybridity in the novel, in that gardens are a common postcolonial trope and wilderness a common Canadian trope. It is another indication of how *Cereus* is “very” Canadian. Mootoo herself points to another way in which the novel is typical of Canadian literature: “Recent immigration has brought people like me who write about elsewhere from here. I think this is very Canadian” (Christiansen). In this regard, it may be telling that “Canada” is the only geographic location in the novel to be given the name by which it is currently known.

¹³ Mootoo’s evocation of these states is subtle and Pohpoh’s adventures are usually read as fantasy, which may be why the novel is thought to have the style of magic realism.

Cvetkovich interprets these states as fantasies that keep Mala's incestuous memories at bay (148-49), but I argue that these are the memories themselves. Each "fantasy" recalls a state of dissociation in Pohpoh just before her first "adventure": "Except for a silver-edged harshness there was not the slightest suggestion of emotion on Pohpoh's face. In the corners of her eyes, however, a saline spring slowly welled up and bubbled out. The tears fell in spite of her stoniness" (153). The "adventure" that follows contains obvious metaphors for the abuse that is happening simultaneously. For instance, "She knew better than to try to calm Tail. . . . She squeezed her eyes shut and prayed that if she were perfectly still Tail would lose interest. She tightened the muscles between her thighs against an urge to pee" (158). In this context, "Tail" is overdetermined as a sexual connotation, being a euphemism for sex and also a penis image.

¹⁴ Mary Condé asserts that the cloud is "the visible metaphor for Paradise's wilful ignorance" (67).

¹⁵ The escape of Lavinia and Sarah, and, eventually, Asha are positive transformations, but they are accompanied by great loss: the loss of kinship, home, and country. Interestingly, Mootoo connects the intra-subjective personal journeys undertaken by Tyler and Mala to the journeys taken by those who physically travel to different countries. In an interview in *Herizons*, she comments that "[t]hey have not left their countries but are migrants of sorts" (Personal Interview 30).

¹⁶ Mootoo also deliberately links the blooming of the highly perfumed cereus to "another blooming, that of the moon," which in many Western mythologies is presented as a gendered object related to female energies and to love (144). *Cereus* reflects this as readers learn that in Lantanacamera, "when the moon blossoms, so, traditionally, does love" (144). The relationship between the cereus, the moon, the feminine, and love in no way detracts its more direct connection to Mala.

¹⁷ As Mary Condé notes, when "the narrative moves from Tyler it becomes omniscient, and is composed of unchronological fragments which only form a coherent whole when they are reassembled in retrospect" (65). This omniscient narrator tells the story that Tyler pieces together from Mala's "mad" ramblings. However, Tyler also describes vignettes that happen at The Paradise Alms House that illuminate his and Mala's integration and bonding. Further complicating the narrative are sections where Tyler's "Cigarette Smoking Nana" tells him about the Ramchandin family history (26).

¹⁸ This was in the course of a paper Nielsen contributed to the Queer Nationalisms session I organized for ACCUTE in 2008.

¹⁹ There is a further indication of Mala's keen perceptions here in that she prefaces her gift to Tyler with a reference to Asha. When Tyler allows that he knows that Asha is her sister, who "disappeared long, long ago," Mala pointedly asks him, "'Where Asha?'" (81). Tyler says he doesn't know and, with delectable irony, muses that it is "a shame . . . that her first real communication was to be thwarted by [him]." Of course, the framing conceit of the novel is that Tyler is "placing trust in the power of the printed word to reach many people. . . . [with] the ardent hope that Asha . . . will chance upon this book" (3). In short, Mala's kind acceptance of Tyler recruits him to her cause, which is to find Asha, and far from thwarting this communication, Tyler eventually responds by extending it.

²⁰ Once in the street, he faints, and returns to consciousness surrounded by a crowd forming a “halo of heads” above him (178). Significantly, it is the space in the centre of these heads which Mootoo emphasizes. Remarkably, Otoh opens his eyes to see a version of the novel’s symbol for Mala’s trauma: “a sliver of cold, sharp silver sky,” which effectively represents the opening of his eyes to her trauma (178). A literal witness, Otoh then babbles of the body to the police constable, who arrives on the scene. By symbolically connecting Otoh with Mala’s trauma, Mootoo prepares readers to recognize that the trauma that has been kept private within the garden’s refuge must be publicly resolved. Otoh later “[f]ears he might have exposed more than he intended,” but is reassured, as are readers, when Ambrose tells him, “It was your duty, my unfortunate son, to be the man who unleashed the business of an ugly, lurking phantom” (183).

²¹ Garvey cites Glissant’s contention that the Caribbean is a “multiple series of relationships” as the frame for her own analysis (94) and also notes that, in *Cereus*, “relations exceed the biological and may extend rhizome-like in many directions” (96). Garvey also observes that there is a “chain of those nurturing the cereus plant,” citing its origins in Mrs. Thoroughly’s garden, and its transplantations, first to the Ramchandin’s garden, and then to The Paradise Alms House. Inexplicably, in naming those who care for and carry it, she cites Lavinia, Mala, and Otoh, but neglects Asha (Lavinia gives an original cutting “one each for Pohpoh and Asha [57]), Sarah, whose garden it joins, Tyler, who tends the cutting Otoh brings, and Mr. Hector, who plants it for Mala. In some ways, the travels of the cereus invoke gift culture, a generous challenge to colonialism and capitalism.

²² Jannit Rabinovitch introduced me to this term, which, although she uses it in a quite different context, also serves as a good description of Otoh’s role: “the change agent acts as a bridge between the community with the identified need and those decision makers and administrators who can support the solution” (26). In *Cereus*, there is an identified need to free Mala from her trauma and Otoh becomes the bridge that links her and the legal system that exonerates her and directs her to The Paradise Alms House.

²³ Perhaps this is an oversight based in class, since Mr. Hector is *only* a gardener. Nevertheless, attention to labour is part of the situation of The Paradise Alms House, which requires visitors to travel through a cane field to approach it and, once they arrive, offers them an “excellent view of the cane fields” (131). For Casteel this is an indication that the “paradisal vision of Caribbean landscape is superimposed upon the landscape of slavery [and indentured labour] but does not efface it” (24). Certainly, Mootoo presents the harsh situation of the South Asian immigrant fieldworkers respectfully and from their own point of view, whilst in no way minimizing their hardships. Therefore, I do not think it an accident of the narrative that it is a working class straight man, who by his name and physical description is probably black, who plants the cereus for Mala, who misses his gay brother, and who offers the first acceptance of Tyler and Otoh.

²⁴ If met with unfriendliness (from self or other), hybridity can lead to painful alienation, as Chow traces in the personal essays of culturally hybrid writers (67). It is the combination of self-and social actualization of “the incommensurable elements” with positive social reception that leads to *interpersonal*, *intercommunity*, and, ultimately, to *international* relations that rest in an appreciation of difference that is more meaningful than the containing, homogenizing ideologies of official multiculturalism and corporate diversity.

²⁵ All further references to *Sunnybrook* will be to the hardcover edition published by Press Gang Publishers in 1996, and will occur in the body of the chapter.

²⁶ In 1975, there were several large institutions in the suburbs of Vancouver: Riverview, a psychiatric facility; Valleyview, a psycho-geriatric facility; Colony Farm, a forensic psychiatric facility; and Woodlands, an institute for the mentally handicapped. Woodlands, like the Sunnybrook of the novel, is now closed.

²⁷ I thank Debby Yaffe for pointing out that, in addition to “sounding” cheerful and evoking sunny days, “Sunnybrook” also invokes the relentless optimism of Shirley Temple’s role as Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.

²⁸ It is perhaps telling that the only critical article is found in *Unfitting Stories: Narrative Approaches to Disease, Disability, and Trauma*, an interdisciplinary collection that focusses on physical and mental health issues. This critical neglect may be because the novel is (mis)perceived as being of interest primarily to those living within spaces of marginalization, especially lesbians with mental disabilities and illnesses, and so deemed to be of little interest to traditional literary studies. It is an oversight that deserves to be corrected.

²⁹ The copyright page gives the fonts used in typesetting *Sunnybrook*.

³⁰ It seems safe to assume this narrator is female as the other two narrators are female (as is the author) and because there is no contrary indication.

³¹ Readers do not know whether or not Diane or Anderson might also be names that “belong” to the author, Persimmon Blackbridge.

³² The camp is criminal morally, but also criminal from a legal standpoint because the prisoners are non-combatants.

³³ The second-person narrative may act to bring the reality of war’s suffering closer to the novel’s implied readers, whom, I suggest, are relatively comfortable North American women. The italic font that marks this narrative reinforces the sense of intimacy here as it also did in *Sunnybrook*.

³⁴ Marlatt’s work itself is also hybrid both in terms of genre (she is poet, dramatist, and novelist) and in its cultural contexts. For instance, in the Steveston Noh project, Marlatt used the Japanese Noh form in collaboration with Japanese practitioners, to create *The Gull*, which was performed at Vancouver’s Gateway Theatre May 10-14, 2006.

³⁵ Having studied with Nicols, I am confident that this is not a homophobic oversight.

Conclusion

When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.

Max Planck

This dissertation has argued that examining literary, historical, and material data together leads to useful, often unexpected insights into both literature and society. This argument emerged in response to my original curiosity as to why there seemed to be concentrations of queer women's publications attached to certain places at certain times. As part of the process of answering this question, I have developed an original, multivalent approach using what I call "node theory and methodology." It is an emergent theory on several levels, the most obvious being that it evolved over the course of my attempt to examine the concentration of queer women's literary publications centred in Vancouver in the mid-1990s. However, it is also philosophically emergent in that there are commonalities of node texts that only become apparent as they are being studied together. This leads to work that is itself emergent since each new discovery alters the direction of research.

The steps involved in practicing the node work that the preceding chapters loosely track, may be summarized as follows:

1. quantify a minoritarian literature and observe where the points of densification in time and place occur – choose one point to be a representative node;
2. historicize the node by investigating a key contextual event (e.g., *Telling It*);
3. select a text that seems representative of the node and investigate it using literary critical textual analysis (e.g., *Fox*);

4. use media notices of the representative text's emergence to establish which communities have a significant interest in the text;
5. investigate the social and material conditions of the representative text's production and distribution through following the relevant networks within those communities (may involve interviews and archival work);
6. explore commonalities across core node texts;
7. observe possible connections to other relevant nodes.

This outline of a nodal critical practice begs the question of why anyone (else) would undertake such an onerous and time consuming process. For general purposes, the answer is that the exploration enhances understanding and satisfies curiosity, which provides sufficient reason for some scholars. However, there is a more pressing reason. When the nodal approach is applied to literature that is in danger of erasure, as is the literature in this study, node work simultaneously buttresses the literature itself and its communities. The study keeps alive, reactivates, and pays respect to what might otherwise be an ephemeral literary history and, by materializing the literature's communities, supports the continuation of both communities and literary texts.

Nodal critical practice brings the theoretical and the material together. I argue that each is enhanced by the process. Node methodology enables literary *and* social ideas to be at once speculative and grounded. Over the period of time in which the node researcher examines both data and theory, both appear in changing configurations, which leads to new perspectives and insights. Because node methodology includes quantitative analysis, this may suggest that it is merely the application of "scientific method" to literary criticism, which would be a misreading of my approach. It is closer, perhaps, to a

post-scientific methodology. My use of material data begins from the position that empiricism which is unconscious of its ideological biases is unacceptable. The theoretical tethering of node theory acts to bring self-consciousness to unexamined assumptions that may lurk in empirical analyses. Conversely, material data also act as a corrective to unquestioned theoretical assumptions and excesses. Node theory suggests a process that uses “factual” information as vectors to indicate significant starting points for broader literary investigations. It is an oscillating, self-correcting methodology that remains open to relevant information whether that information is factual (i.e., publication information) or perceptual (i.e., ANT). In this way, node theory participates in a nuanced contemporary literary (re)turn to the material.

Nodal practice offers an alternative mode of doing literary history. My work may share with the core node texts a self-conscious relationship to historiography: node theory is an interpretive methodology, which is open to story. To some extent, this dissertation narrativizes the 1990s Vancouver node. I argue that, for the literary works of (sub)cultures that have been neglected (or actively marginalized) in the public record, both preserving and narrativizing historical information are useful, indeed necessary, processes. Archival investigations led me to recognize the role of community in producing the Vancouver node novels while Bourdieu and ANT provided a theoretical framework for my discussion of the circumstances that conditioned their queer outburst. The examination of how individual node authors and editors, political activists, and various institutions formed networks that were productive of material texts, which themselves became active participants within those and other networks, also provides insight into how literature performs social work. The very existence of these

heterogenous networks changed the relational geography of Vancouver itself while the node's literature extends those changes chronotopically.

The Vancouver node, like the city itself, presents a plethora of marginalized communities, several of which intersect in the novels and their authors. This characteristic gives the node novels a significance well beyond communities of queer women, who might be expected to have a special interest in the novels on the basis of shared queerness. Each close reading reveals a novel that complicates issues of sexuality and gender with layered explorations of racialization, colonialization, ableism, and classism. For this reason, the novels of the Vancouver node do the work of culturally encouraging Canadian mainstream culture in the direction of greater inclusivity and increased cultural competence. For queers that cannot or do not identify with that mainstream, the emergence of these texts, and their reception, encourages greater confidence in our ability to survive, and to change, particularly, Canadian culture.

Christine Kim's observations that Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night* is "typically packaged as postcolonial" ("Troubling" 154) and that Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* "has recently been taken up by critics interested in Asian Canadian writing" (165) speaks to continuing and even increasing academic network strength for both of these novels. It is to be hoped that increasing interest in Disability Studies may extend critical interest in Persimmon Blackbridge's *Sunnybrook* as well. However, it is to be hoped that focus on the issue of disability will not erase the novels' heterogeneity and that academics will respect the novel's queer focus. In the case of *Cereus*, Kim notes that in "many critical studies . . . the novel is transformed from lesbian feminist novel to a queer postcolonial text" (155). Once again, my concern that lesbian / queer women's

texts be studied together, at least some of the time, appears well-justified. Although the Vancouver node texts foreground lesbian queerness sufficiently that readers will be affected by their engagement with thirdspace queer narrative whether they consciously engage its queer component or not, that effect would be more certainly achieved by studying the texts, as I have, *ensemble*.

Final Comments

The fact that reading the node texts as a group provides unexpected critical insights indicates that node theory and methodology offer significant benefits to literary critics. It is an approach that could easily and productively find application in a range of cultural contexts. The usefulness of the approach also suggests that it is beneficial to view literary texts through a number of perceptual grids, rather than advocating a single lens. While this might seem to be an obvious point, it is not necessarily so. Donald Goellnicht and Eleanor Ty suggest that it has been problematic that “the texts of Asian Canadians have been studied by Canadianists and postcolonialists rather than by Asian Canadian critics” (Introduction 2). In an earlier article, Goellnicht also takes issue with including Asian Canadian writing homogeneously in academic journals of ethnicity and objects to critics considering Asian Canadian texts alongside White English Canadian texts (25). My own work is a call to consider queer women’s writing discretely, which, since it is written by a queerly lesbian feminist Canadianist, might imply that I share their perspective, but apply it to queer women’s literature. However, I argue that this dissertation explicitly argues that multiple critical perspectives are both useful and necessary, although it might be most practical to pursue them separately.

My engagement with Asian Canadian queer women's novels may well exhibit failings in the area of understanding racialization and its issues since Whiteness is bound to hinder my critical perceptions there. However, to make the case for the necessity of my own queer approach to these texts, I cite the introduction of the otherwise excellent, *Asian Canadian Writing: Beyond Autoethnography*, to note that the word "lesbian" is not mentioned until page 15 and the word "queer" is never mentioned (Introduction 1-27). This circumstance occurs despite the fact that over half of the authors and texts studied in the anthology are queer. Once again, I argue that this makes the case for studying queer women's literature discretely, *not* discreetly. There has been far too much of the latter approach.

I had initially thought to confine my study to the Asian Canadian novels, including the novels at the beginning and end of the 1990s, despite the fact the latter were clearly *not* in the node. This was partly because the prominence of Asian Canadian texts within queer women's literature was new, while texts by White lesbians were expected, the norm and therefore, like Whiteness itself, less visible, especially to a White critic. Even when my bibliographic research presented me with non-Asian Canadian texts, I was inclined to dismiss them in favour of focussing exclusively on the Asian Canadian texts. It is here, in the face of the perhaps exoticizing and racially hegemonic conditioned movements of my habitual mind that developing a node methodology and adhering to it was most useful. Ethical adherence to the nodal approach and to the historical and material data I uncovered interrupted the "natural" tendency to "discover" only what was already seen and to think what was already thought to be known.

However, because node theory demanded that I create a "queer grouping" of the

four node novels, I brought together texts by Asian Canadian and White writers despite fearing censure from my critical colleagues. The result is that my preconceived assumptions about the texts and their social contexts were challenged. It is ironic that it was only accepting the hybridity of the node itself that forced me to look for lines of connection between *Fox*, *Cereus*, *Sunnybrook*, and *Taken*. Once I read the texts together, I conceived the idea of literary thirdspace to encompass their common interest in the ethics of hybridity, community, and interlocking marginalized identifications. In combination with authors' participation in the creation of social thirdspace in multiple Vancouver networks, the literary thirdspace of the novels represents a layered and significant contribution by this queer quartet. Perhaps this conclusion seems banal given the politics and histories of the time; however, for me, the key point is that I wouldn't have *a priori* suggested it but for *following my nodes*.

However, while it is useful to examine queer women's literature separately, as Goellnicht and Ty suggest it is for Asian Canadian critical studies, that study needn't take precedence over all other approaches. Nor need such studies be undertaken solely by queer women. As Roy Miki has argued in terms of racialization, in that signal year, 1995:

A one-dimensional oppositional positioning is hardly an adequate basis for new cultural forms which can represent the localized subjectivities of writers of color. While such contests of will and confrontation may be a pragmatic strategy for certain instances requiring immediate interventionist action, they do not instigate the internal transformations necessary for moving beyond the constraints of racialization to make

spaces where difference and diversity are constantly being (re)negotiated.
 ("Asiancy" 138-39)

I argue that Miki's argument also holds true for queer positionings and that the node authors and their texts make exactly the same point in the affective register as their texts argue for heterogeneous communities that queerly thrive on difference. That is the cultural effect that enters Canadian consciousness within the trojan horse of the Vancouver node's literary achievement.

This dissertation feels incomplete to me. There are many areas where I have had to curtail my scope and research. I had originally intended to write a chapter focussed on texts that were ex-centric to the node; that is, sharing many of its definitional elements, but differing significantly in one or two ways that would preclude them from being node texts. However, this proved impracticable due to the space and time constraints of the dissertation genre. Still, I remain passionately interested in exploring novels that are "ex-centric" to the node, in part because that would demonstrate another facet and use of the nodal approach. As a gesture towards this possibility, I mention several key eccentric texts besides Anne Cameron's *The Whole Fam Damily*, which was mentioned in an early chapter. Also ex-centric to the node, albeit for different reasons, are Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Wayson Choy's *The Jade Peony*, and Nancy Richler's *Your Mouth is Lovely*. Luanne Armstrong's *Bordering*, appropriately, borders the core node novels and the eccentrics and would also be discussed in such a chapter. All have a demonstrable relationship to the node, are supplementary to it and, therefore, would add an interesting chapter to this study, but are put aside for later research.

Other lacks are inherent to my chosen parameters. In particular, First Nations

communities have not been addressed significantly, in part because I chose to accept the imposed national borders of Canada. Although PGP published Chrystos during this time frame and her influence on PGP through her friendship with McCreary and her participation in Vancouver area anti-racist workshops make her important to the Vancouver node, I wasn't sure I could justify considering her "Canadian." Conveniently, the fact that I limited myself to studying only novels made this question moot since her node contribution was in poetry. Nevertheless, Chrystos' books provide an important context for the node and might have also been considered in an eccentrics chapter. First Nations writers Lee Maracle and Beth Brant also played important roles as influences on PGP and on node authors. For instance, Maracle co-edited *Telling It* with Marlatt and her Afterword was edited by Brant. Although these facts were mentioned, the influence of, especially, Lee Maracle on the Vancouver node exceeds what is touched on here.

Disability issues have also received short shrift, even though they are of primary interest in *Sunnybrook*. Nor is *Sunnybrook* anomalous in addressing this aspect of subjectivity at this time. In 1996, during the node time, Toronto's Women's Press published *Pushing the Limits: Disabled Dykes Produce Culture*. This collection of poetry and prose "includes work which articulates the idiosyncratic character of the homophobia, ableism, racism, oralism, and classism, that disabled dykes variously confront" (22). Although heavily weighted towards central Canada, the collection includes some work by BC queer women, "Andrea Lowe . . . a writer and photographer living in Vancouver," and the late Margot K. Louis, a professor of English at the University of Victoria (242). Closer to the node, geographically and in terms of genre, is Lizard Jones' novel, *Two Ends of Sleep*, whose central character is a lesbian who lives on

The Drive in Vancouver and has Multiple Sclerosis. Published in 1997, *Two Ends of Sleep* has a relationship with *Sunnybrook* that is similar to the relationship that *Cereus* has with *Fox*. Authors Jones and Blackbridge both belonged to the Kiss And Tell Collective and both were involved with PGP, which published both texts. Both novels also share the postmodern narrative style that is typical of the core node novels and a concern about living with difference in community.

Another community that has received almost no attention, but which is significant for Mootoo, Marlatt, and myself is the Buddhist community. As with the other “communities” discussed in this dissertation, it too is composed of many different networks that, nevertheless, share commitments to several core principles. Kindness is one of those principles and, therefore, some acknowledgement of this community would be appropriate since *Cereus* suggests that kindness is a necessary element of dynamic literary thirdspace. It would be interesting to examine the influence of Buddhist spirituality on the node novels; however, that, too, is beyond the scope of this project. These last two communities might have been included in the “social ecology” chapter had I chosen a novel other than *Fox* as the representative node text. As well, from a more literary perspective, it would be interesting to investigate the poetry of the Vancouver node, and also its short story collections.

These aporia create tempting openings for future work and other nodes also beckon. However, this exploration does make a substantial and specific contribution to the more general fields of Canadian, Women's, Asian North American, Lesbian and Queer literary history – it is part of an imaginary transnational examination of queer women's literature. Mapping the Vancouver node in the 1990's is a local materialization

that I hope will encourage other similar investigations of other publication concentrations of all kinds.

I hope this work will operate as an introduction, a signpost, an annotated archive, and / or a micro-history that is useful to other scholars, but also to future communities of queer women. It says: “something happened here!! It looks like this is how it happened. If it’s not happening now, perhaps how it happened in Vancouver in the mid-1990s might suggest ways you could encourage yet another queer outburst. Begin again . . . start here.” I offer something a little easier to follow than the holographic fragments of Sappho’s poetry.

Appendix One: “Total Population by Visible Minority Population (1),
for British Columbia, 1996 Census (20% Sample Data)”

Total Population by visible minority population	3,689,755
Total visible minority population (2)	660,540
Chinese	299,860
South Asian	158,430
Black	23,275
Arab/West Asian	20,090
Filipino	47,080
Southeast Asian	25,355
Latin American	17,655
Japanese	29,815
Korean	19,050
Visible minority, n.i.e., (3)	8,070
Multiple visible minority (4)	11,850
All others (5)	3,029,210

(1) This table provides counts of the visible minority population as defined for employment equity purposes. The 1996 Census was the first census to ask a direct question to provide data on visible minorities. The data included in this table are obtained from the population group question (Question 19).

The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as ‘persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour’. The mark-in groups, other than "White", listed in the population group question are those that are likely to be members of a visible minority group.

(2) Includes respondents who have been identified as members of a

visible minority group, based on employment equity definitions.

(3) Includes respondents who reported a single write-in response indicating a Pacific Islander group (for example 'Fijian' or 'Polynesian') or another single write-in response likely to be a visible minority group (for example 'Guyanese', 'Mauritian', 'South American' or 'West Indian').

(4) Includes respondents who reported more than one visible minority group by checking two or more mark-in circles, for example 'Black and South Asian'.

(5) Includes respondents who reported 'Yes' to Question 18 (Aboriginal Identity, known in the 1996 Census Dictionary as Aboriginal Self-reporting), as well as respondents who were not considered to be members of a visible minority group.

This table contains data selected from Catalogue Nos. 93F0026XDB96004, 93F0026XDB96005 and 93F0026XDB96006 in the Nation Series” <<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/feb17/vmbc.htm>>.

Appendix Two: Vancouver Publications 1964-2003 (116 texts)

- Armstrong, Luanne. *The Bone House*. Vancouver: New Star Books, 2002.
- . *Bordering*. Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Gynergy Books, 1995.
- . *Breathing the Mountain : Poems*. Lantzville, BC: Leaf Press, 2003.
- . *Castle Mountain : Poetry & Stories*. Victoria, BC: Polestar Press, 1981.
- . *The Colour of Water*. Prince George, BC: Caitlin Press, 1998.
- . *Into the Sun*. Vancouver: Hodgepog Books, 2002.
- Blackbridge, Persimmon. *Prozac Highway : A Novel*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1997.
- . *Still Sane*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1985.
- . *Sunnybrook : A True Story with Lies*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1996.
- Bociurkiw, Marusya. *Halfway to the East*. Vancouver: Lazara Press, 1999.
- . *The Woman Who Loved Airports : Stories and Narratives*. 1st ed. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1994.
- Brooks, Brenda. *Blue Light in the Dash*. Vancouver: Polestar Press, 1994.
- . *Somebody Should Kiss You*. Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Gynergy Books, 1990.
- Brossard, Nicole, and Daphne Marlatt. *Mauve*. [Montréal]: nbj/writing, 1985.
- Brushwood Rose, Chloë T., and Anna Camilleri. *Brazen Femme : Queering Femininity*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2002.
- Cameron, Anne. *Aftermath*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1999.
- . *The Annie Poems*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub. Co., 1987.
- . *Bright's Crossing : Short Stories*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 1990.
- . *Child of Her People*. 1st ed. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987.
- . *Daughters of Copper Woman*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1981.
- . *Deejay & Betty : A Novel*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1994.
- . *Dreamspeaker*. New York, N.Y.: Avon, 1980.
- . *Dzellarhons : Myths of the Northwest Coast*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub. Co., 1986.
- . *Earth Witch*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 1982.
- . *Escape to Beulah*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1990.

- . *Family Resemblances*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 2003.
- . *Hardscratch Row*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 2002.
- . *The Journey*. New York, N.Y.: Avon, 1982.
- . *Kick the Can : A Novel*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1991.
- . *Sarah's Children*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 2001.
- . *Selkie*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 1996.
- . *South of an Unnamed Creek*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1989.
- . *Stubby Amberchuk & the Holy Grail*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub. Co., 1987.
- . *Tales of the Cairds*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1989.
- . *Those Lancasters*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 2000.
- . *Twin Sinks of Allan Sammy*. Toronto: Playwrights Coop, 1973.
- . *Wedding Cakes, Rats and Rodeo Queens*. Toronto: HarperPerennial, 1994.
- . *A Whole Brass Band : A Novel*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1992.
- . *The Whole Fam Damily*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1995.
- . *Women, Kids, & Huckleberry Wine*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1989.
- Cameron, Anne, and Playwrights Co-op Toronto. *We're All Here except Mike Casey's Horse*. Playwrights Co-Op, Toronto : Pre-Production Series. 1st ed. Toronto: Playwrights Co-op, 1974.
- Chase, Gillean. *The Distress of Harvest*. Fiddlehead Poetry Books ; 286. Fredericton, N.B.: Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 1981.
- . *The Square Root of Female*. Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Ragweed Press, 1984.
- . *Triad Moon*. Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Gynergy, 1993.
- Coyote, Ivan E. *Close to Spider Man : Stories*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000.
- . *One Man's Trash*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2002.
- Crossland, Jackie. *Collateral Damage : The Tragedy of Medea*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1992.
- Elwin, Rosamund, and Karen X. Tulchinsky. *Tangled Sheets : Stories & Poems of Lesbian Lust*. Toronto, Ont.: Women's Press, 1995.
- Fife, Connie. *Beneath the Naked Sun : Poetry*. Toronto: Sister Vision, 1992.
- . *Poems for a New World*. Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2001.
- . *Speaking through Jagged Rock*. Fredericton, N.B.: Broken Jaw Press, 1999.

- Fleming, Anne. *Anomaly*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2005.
- . *Pool-Hopping and Other Stories*. Victoria, BC: Polestar Book Publishers, 1998.
- Hamilton, Jane Eaton, and League of Canadian Poets. *Going Santa Fe*. Toronto: League of Canadian Poets, 1997.
- Jones, Lizard. *Two Ends of Sleep : A Novel*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1997.
- Kwa, Lydia. *The Colours of Heroines*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1994.
- . *This Place Called Absence : A Novel*. Winnipeg: Turnstone, 2000.
- Lai, Larissa. *Salt Fish Girl : A Novel*. Toronto: T. Allen Publishers, 2002.
- . *When Fox Is a Thousand*. 1st ed. Vancouver, BC: Press Gang Publishers, 1995.
- Lee, SKY. *Bellydancer*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1994.
- . *Disappearing Moon Cafe*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990.
- Marlatt, Daphne. *Ana Historic : A Novel*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1988.
- . *Ghost Works*. Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1993.
- . *Here & There*. Lantzville, BC: Island Writing Series, 1981.
- . *How Hug a Stone*. Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1983.
- . *Leaf Leaf/S*. Los Angeles: Black Sparrow Press, 1969.
- . *Our Lives*. Lantzville, BC: Oolichan Books, 1980.
- . *Salvage*. Red Deer, Alta.: Red Deer College Press, 1991.
- . *Seven Glass Bowls*. Vancouver, BC: Nomados, 2003.
- . *Taken*. Concord, Ont.: Anansi, 1996.
- . *This Tremor Love Is*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2001.
- . *Touch to My Tongue*. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1984.
- . *Vancouver Poems*. [Toronto]: Coach House Press, 1972.
- . *What Matters : Writing 1968-70*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1980.
- . *Winter/Rice/Tea Strain*. Salt Spring Island, BC: (m)Other Tongue Press, 2000.
- . *Zâocalo*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1977.
- Marlatt, Daphne, and Robert Minden. *Steveston*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1974.
- Marlatt, Daphne, and Betsy Warland. *Double Negative, Double Negative*. Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Gynergy Books, 1988.
- . *Two Women in a Birth*. Essential Poets Series ; 58. Montréal : Guernica, 1994.
- Mootoo, Shani. *Cereus Blooms at Night*. 1st ed. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1996.

- . *Out on Main Street & Other Stories*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1993.
- . *The Predicament of Or*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2001.
- Norgate, Sheila. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1997.
- Richler, Nancy. *Throwaway Angels*. 1st ed. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1996.
- . *Your Mouth Is Lovely : A Novel*. 1st ed. Toronto: HarperFlamingoCanada, 2002.
- Rose, Rachel. *Giving My Body to Science*. The Hugh MacLennan Poetry Series. Montréal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.
- Rule, Jane. *After the Fire*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1989.
- . *Against the Season*. New York: McCall Pub. Co. ; Toronto : Doubleday Canada, 1971.
- . *Contract with the World*. 1st -- ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980.
- . *Desert of the Heart : A Novel*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1964.
- . *Inland Passage and Other Stories*. International Fiction List ; 28. 1st Canadian ed. Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1985.
- . *Love, Romance and Sexuality!* Vancouver: Women's College, 1972.
- . *Memory Board*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1987.
- . *Outlander*. 1st -- ed. Tallahassee, Fl: Naiad Press, 1981.
- . *Theme for Diverse Instruments : Stories*. Vancouver BC: Talonbooks, 1975.
- . *This Is Not for You*. New York: McCall Pub. Co, 1970.
- . *The Young in One Another's Arms*. 1st ed. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977.
- Smith, Pat. *A Book of Ours*. Rhinebeck, NY: St. Lazure Press, 1991.
- . *The Oldest-Living*. Vancouver: Lazara Publications, 1986.
- Stewart, Susan, Persimmon Blackbridge, and Lizard Jones. *Drawing the Line : Lesbian Sexual Politics on the Wall*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1991.
- Taste This (Performance group), et al. *Boys Like Her : Transfictions*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1998.
- Tulchinsky, Karen X. *The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky*. Vancouver, BC: Polestar, 2003.
- . *Hot & Bothered 2 : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1999.

- . *Hot & Bothered 3 : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2001.
- . *Hot & Bothered 4 : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2003.
- . *Hot & Bothered : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1998.
- . *In Her Nature*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1995.
- . *Love and Other Ruins*. Vancouver: Polestar Book Publishers, 2002.
- . *Love Ruins Everything : A Novel*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1998.
- Warland, Betsy. *The Bat Had Blue Eyes*. Not a Luxury Poetry Series. Toronto: Women's Press, 1993.
- . *Bloodroot : Tracing the Untelling of Motherloss*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2000.
- . *A Gathering Instinct*. Toronto: Williams-Wallace International, 1981.
- . *Open Is Broken*. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1984.
- . *Serpent (W)Rite : (a Reader's Gloss)*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1987.
- . *What Holds Us Here*. Ottawa: BuschekBooks, 1998.
- Williams, Jana. *Scuttlebutt : A Novel*. Vancouver, BC: Press Gang Publisher, 1990.
- Wong, Rita. *Monkeypuzzle*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1998

Appendix Three: Vancouver Publications 1964-2003 by Location of Publisher

City	Publisher	Author	Year	Title
Charlottetown	Gynergy	Armstrong, Luanne	1995	Bordering
	Gynergy	Brooks, Brenda	1990	Somebody Should Kiss You
	Gynergy	Chase, Gillean	1993	Triad Moon
	Gynergy	Marlatt, Daphne; Betsy Warland	1988	Double Negative, Double Negative
	Ragweed	Chase, Gillean	1984	The Square Root of Female
Concord	Anansi	Marlatt, Daphne	1996	Taken
Edmonton	Longspoon	Marlatt, Daphne	1984	Touch to My Tongue
	Longspoon	Warland, Betsy	1984	Open Is Broken
	NeWest	Marlatt, Daphne	1993	Ghost Works
Fredericton	Broken Jaw	Fife, Connie	1999	Speaking through Jagged Rock
	Fiddlehead	Chase, Gillean	1981	The Distress of Harvest
Garden City	Doubleday	Rule, Jane	1977	The Young in One Another's
Lantzville	Island Writing Series	Marlatt, Daphne	1981	Here & There
	Leaf	Armstrong, Luanne	2003	Breathing the Mountain : Poems
	Oolichan	Marlatt, Daphne	1980	Our Lives
Los Angeles	Black Sparrow	Marlatt, Daphne	1969	Leaf Leaf/S
Madeira Park	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1982	Earth Witch
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1986	Dzelarhons : Myths of the Northwest Coast
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1987	Stubby Amberchuk & the Holy Grail
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1987	The Annie Poems
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1989	South of an Unnamed Creek
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1989	Tales of the Cairds

City	Publisher	Author	Year	Title
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1989	Women, Kids, & Huckleberry Wine
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1990	Bright's Crossing : Short Stories
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1990	Escape to Beulah
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1991	Kick the Can : A Novel
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1992	A Whole Brass Band : A Novel
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1994	Deejay & Betty : A Novel
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1995	The Whole Fam Family
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1996	Selkie
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	1999	Aftermath
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	2000	Those Lancasters
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	2001	Sarah's Children
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	2002	Hardscratch Row
	Harbour	Cameron, Anne	2003	Family Resemblances
Montréal	Guernica	Marlatt, Daphne; Betsy Warland	1994	Two Women in a Birth
	McGill-Queen's U	Rose, Rachel	1999	Giving My Body to Science
	nbj	Brossard, Nicole; Daphne Marlatt	1985	Mauve
New York	Avon	Cameron, Anne	1980	Dreamspeaker
	Avon	Cameron, Anne	1982	The Journey
	Harcourt Brace Jovanovich	Rule, Jane	1980	Contract with the World
	McCall	Rule, Jane	1970	This Is Not for You
	McCall	Rule, Jane	1971	Against the Season
Ottawa	BuschekBooks	Warland, Betsy	1998	What Holds Us Here
Prince George	Caitlin	Armstrong, Luanne	1998	The Colour of Water
Red Deer	Red Deer College	Marlatt, Daphne	1991	Salvage
Rhinebeck	St. Lazaire	Smith, Pat	1991	A Book of Ours
Salt Spring	(m)Other Tongue	Marlatt, Daphne	2000	Winter/Rice/Tea Strain

City	Publisher	Author	Year	Title
San Francisco	Spinsters/Aunt Lute	Cameron, Anne	1987	Child of Her People
Tallahassee	Naiad	Rule, Jane	1981	Outlander
Toronto	Coach House	Marlatt, Daphne	1972	Vancouver Poems
	Coach House	Marlatt, Daphne	1977	Zâocalo
	Coach House	Marlatt, Daphne	1980	What Matters : Writing 1968-70
	Coach House	Marlatt, Daphne	1988	Ana Historic : A Novel
	Coach House	Warland, Betsy	1987	Serpent (W)Rite : (a Reader's Gloss)
	HarperFlamingoCanada	Richler, Nancy	2002	Your Mouth Is Lovely : A Novel
	HarperPerennial	Cameron, Anne	1994	Wedding Cakes, Rats and Rodeo Queens
	League of Canadian Poets	Hamilton, Jane Eaton	1997	Going Santa Fe
	Lester & Orpen Dennys	Rule, Jane	1985	Inland Passage and Other Stories
	Macmillan	Rule, Jane	1987	Memory Board
	Macmillan	Rule, Jane	1989	After the Fire
	Playwrights Co-op	Cameron, Anne	1973	Twin Sinks of Allan Sammy
	Playwrights Co-op	Cameron, Anne	1974	We're All Here except Mike
	Second Story	Warland, Betsy	2000	Bloodroot : Tracing the UntellingofMotherloss
	Sister Vision	Fife, Connie	1992	Beneath the Naked Sun
	T. Allen	Lai, Larissa	2002	Salt Fish Girl : A Novel
	Williams-Wallace	Warland, Betsy	1981	A Gathering Instinct
	Women's	Elwin; Tulchinsky	1995	Tangled Sheets : Stories & Poems of Lesbian Lust
	Women's	Kwa, Lydia	1994	The Colours of Heroines
	Women's	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	1995	In Her Nature
	Women's	Warland, Betsy	1993	The Bat Had Blue Eyes
Vancouver	Arsenal	Brushwood Rose, Chloë	2002	Brazen Femme : Queering Femininity
	Arsenal	Coyote, Ivan E.	2000	Close to Spider Man

City	Publisher	Author	Year	Title
	Arsenal	Coyote, Ivan E.	2002	One Man's Trash
	Arsenal	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	1998	Hot & Bothered : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire
	Arsenal	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	1999	Hot & Bothered 2 : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire
	Arsenal	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	2001	Hot & Bothered 3 : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire
	Arsenal	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	2003	Hot & Bothered 4 : Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire
	Douglas & McIntyre	Lee, SKY	1990	Disappearing Moon Cafe
	Hodgepog	Armstrong, Luanne	2002	Into the Sun
	Lazara	Bociurkiw, Marusya	1999	Halfway to the East
	Lazara	Smith, Pat	1986	The Oldest-Living
	New Star	Armstrong, Luanne	2002	The Bone House
	Nomados	Marlatt, Daphne	2003	Seven Glass Bowls
	Polestar	Brooks, Brenda	1994	Blue Light in the Dash
	Polestar	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	2002	Love and Other Ruins
	Polestar	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	2003	The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky
	Press Gang	Blackbridge, Persimmon	1985	Still Sane
	Press Gang	Blackbridge, Persimmon	1996	Sunnybrook : A True Story with Lies
	Press Gang	Blackbridge, Persimmon	1997	Prozac Highway : A Novel
	Press Gang	Bociurkiw, Marusya	1994	The Woman Who Loved Airports
	Press Gang	Cameron, Anne	1981	Daughters of Copper Woman
	Press Gang	Crossland, Jackie	1992	Collateral Damage : The Tragedy of Medea
	Press Gang	Jones, Lizard	1997	Two Ends of Sleep : A Novel
	Press Gang	Lai, Larissa	1995	When Fox Is a Thousand
	Press Gang	Lee, SKY	1994	Bellydancer
	Press Gang	Mootoo, Shani	1993	Out on Main Street & Other Stories
	Press Gang	Mootoo, Shani	1996	Cereus Blooms at Night
	Press Gang	Norgate, Sheila	1997	Storm Clouds over Party Shoes : Etiquette Lessons for the Ill-

City	Publisher	Author	Year	Bred Woman Title
	Press Gang	Richler, Nancy	1996	Throwaway Angels
	Press Gang	Stewart, Susan; Persimmon Blackbridge	1991	Drawing the Line : Lesbian Sexual Politics on the Wall
	Press Gang	Taste This (Performance	1998	Boys Like Her :Transfictions
	Press Gang	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	1998	Love Ruins Everything : A Novel
	Press Gang	Williams, Jana	1990	Scuttlebutt : A Novel
	Press Gang	Wong, Rita	1998	Monkeypuzzle
	Raincoast	Mootoo, Shani	2001	The Predicament of Or
	Ronsdale	Fife, Connie	2001	Poems for a New World
	Talonbooks	Marlatt, Daphne	2001	This Tremor Love Is
	Talonbooks	Marlatt, Daphne; Robert Minden	1974	Steveston
	Talonbooks	Rule, Jane	1964	Desert of the Heart : A Novel
	Talonbooks	Rule, Jane	1975	Theme for Diverse Instruments : Stories
	Women's College	Rule, Jane	1972	Love, Romance and Sexuality!
Victoria	Polestar	Armstrong, Luanne	1981	Castle Mountain : Poetry & Stories
	Polestar	Fleming, Anne	1998	Pool-Hopping and Other Stories
Winnipeg	Turnstone	Kwa, Lydia	2000	This Place Called Absence : A Novel
	Turnstone	Marlatt, Daphne	1983	How Hug a Stone

Appendix Four: Vancouver Publications 1964-2003 by Genre

Genre	Year	Author	Title
creative non-fiction	1985	Blackbridge, Persimmon	Still Sane
	1991	Stewart, Susan; Persimmon Blackbridge	Drawing the Line
	1996	Blackbridge, Persimmon	Sunnybrook
	1997	Norgate, Sheila	Storm Clouds over Party Shoes
	2000	Warland, Betsy	Bloodroot
	drama	1973	Cameron, Anne
1974		Cameron, Anne	We're All Here except Mike Casey's
1986		Smith, Pat	The Oldest-Living
1992		Crossland, Jackie	Collateral Damage
mythology		1981	Cameron, Anne
	1986	Cameron, Anne	Dzellarhons
novel	1964	Rule, Jane	Desert of the Heart
	1970	Rule, Jane	This Is Not for You
	1971	Rule, Jane	Against the Season
	1977	Rule, Jane	The Young in One Another's Arms

Genre	Year	Author	Title
	1980	Cameron, Anne	Dreamspeaker
		Rule, Jane	Contract with the World
	1982	Cameron, Anne	Earth Witch
		Cameron, Anne	The Journey
	1987	Cameron, Anne	Child of Her People
		Cameron, Anne	Stubby Amberchuk & the Holy Grail
		Rule, Jane	Memory Board
	1988	Marlatt, Daphne	Ana Historic : A Novel
	1989	Cameron, Anne	South of an Unnamed Creek
		Cameron, Anne	Tales of the Cairds
		Cameron, Anne	Women, Kids, & Huckleberry Wine
		Rule, Jane	After the Fire
	1990	Cameron, Anne	Escape to Beulah
		Lee, SKY	Disappearing Moon Cafe
		Williams, Jana	Scuttlebutt
	1991	Cameron, Anne	Kick the Can
	1992	Cameron, Anne	A Whole Brass Band
	1993	Chase, Gillean	Triad Moon
	1994	Cameron, Anne	Deejay & Betty
		Cameron, Anne	Wedding Cakes, Rats and Rodeo Queens
	1995	Armstrong, Luanne	Bordering
		Cameron, Anne	The Whole Fam Damily
		Lai, Larissa	When Fox Is a Thousand
	1996	Cameron, Anne	Selkie
		Marlatt, Daphne	Taken
		Mootoo, Shani	Cereus Blooms at Night

Genre	Year	Author	Title
		Richler, Nancy	Throwaway Angels
	1997		
		Blackbridge, Persimmon	Prozac Highway
		Jones, Lizard	Two Ends of Sleep
	1998		
		Armstrong, Luanne	The Colour of Water
		Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Love Ruins Everything
	1999		
		Cameron, Anne	Aftermath
	2000		
		Cameron, Anne	Those Lancasters
		Kwa, Lydia	This Place Called Absence
	2001		
		Cameron, Anne	Sarah's Children
	2002		
		Armstrong, Luanne	Into the Sun
		Armstrong, Luanne	The Bone House
		Cameron, Anne	Hardscratch Row
		Lai, Larissa	Salt Fish Girl
		Richler, Nancy	Your Mouth Is Lovely
		Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Love and Other Ruins
	2003		
		Cameron, Anne	Family Resemblances
		Tulchinsky, Karen X.	he Five Books of Moses Lapinsky
poetry			
	1969		
		Marlatt, Daphne	Leaf Leaf/S
	1972		
		Marlatt, Daphne	Vancouver Poems
	1974		
		Marlatt, Daphne; Robert Minden	Steveston
	1977		
		Marlatt, Daphne	Zâocalo
	1980		
		Marlatt, Daphne	Our Lives
		Marlatt, Daphne	What Matters
	1981		
		Armstrong, Luanne	Castle Mountain
		Chase, Gillean	The Distress of Harvest
		Marlatt, Daphne	Here & There
		Warland, Betsy	A Gathering Instinct

Genre	Year	Author	Title
	1983	Marlatt, Daphne	How Hug a Stone
	1984	Chase, Gillean	The Square Root of Female
		Marlatt, Daphne	Touch to My Tongue
		Warland, Betsy	Open Is Broken
	1985	Brossard, Nicole; Marlatt, Daphne	Mauve
	1987	Cameron, Anne	The Annie Poems
		Warland, Betsy	Serpent (W)Rite
	1988	Marlatt, Daphne; Betsy Warland	Double Negative, Double Negative
	1990	Brooks, Brenda	Somebody Should Kiss You
	1991	Marlatt, Daphne	Salvage
		Smith, Pat	A Book of Ours
	1992	Fife, Connie	Beneath the Naked Sun
	1993	Marlatt, Daphne	Ghost Works
		Warland, Betsy	The Bat Had Blue Eyes
	1994	Brooks, Brenda	Blue Light in the Dash
		Kwa, Lydia	The Colours of Heroines
		Marlatt, Daphne; Betsy Warland	Two Women in a Birth
	1997	Hamilton, Jane Eaton	Going Santa Fe
	1998	Warland, Betsy	What Holds Us Here
		Wong, Rita	Monkeypuzzle
	1999	Bociurkiw, Marusya	Halfway to the East
		Fife, Connie	Speaking through Jagged Rock
		Rose, Rachel	Giving My Body to Science
	2000	Marlatt, Daphne	Winter/Rice/Tea Strain
	2001	Fife, Connie	Poems for a New World
		Marlatt, Daphne	This Tremor Love Is

Genre	Year	Author	Title
	2003	Mootoo, Shani	The Predicament of Or
	1972	Armstrong, Luanne Marlatt, Daphne	Breathing the Mountain Seven Glass Bowls
	1975	Rule, Jane	Love, Romance and Sexuality!
	1981	Rule, Jane	Theme for Diverse Instruments
	1985	Rule, Jane	Outlander
	1990	Rule, Jane	Inland Passage and Other Stories
	1993	Cameron, Anne	Bright's Crossing
	1994	Mootoo, Shani	Out on Main Street & Other Stories
	1995	Bociurkiw, Marusya Lee, SKY	The Woman Who Loved Airports Bellydancer
	1998	Elwin, Rosamund; Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Tangled Sheets In Her Nature
	1999	Fleming, Anne Taste This (Performance group); Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Pool-Hopping and Other Stories Boys Like Her: Transfixions Hot & Bothered
	2000	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Hot & Bothered 2
	2001	Coyote, Ivan E.	Close to Spider Man
	2002	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Hot & Bothered 3
	2003	Brushwood Rose, Chloë T.; Anna Camilleri Coyote, Ivan E.	Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity One Man's Trash
	2003	Tulchinsky, Karen X.	Hot & Bothered 4

Appendix Five (A): Bibliography of Media Notices of *Fox*

Reviews, Interviews, and Other Notices of *When Fox Is a Thousand*: 1995-97

- Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *B.C. Bookworld* Winter 1995, sec. Fiction: 12.
- Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Ming Pao Daily* nd, sec. D: 1.
- Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The World* 1996: np.
- Rev. *Picture of Larissa Lai and Shani Mootoo*. *Angles* June 1997.
- "Courtesan's Lament." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *B.C. Bookworld* Summer 1996, sec. First Fictions: 11.
- Beaugard, Guy. "Myths of History." *Canadian Literature*.154 (1997): 162-64.
- Bok, H. Abigail. "Foxes." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Advocate* December 26 1995: 55.
- Bolen, Dennis E. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *sub-TERRAIN* 1996: 40.
- Cho, Charlie. "Lai Like a Fox." Interview. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Ubysey* April 8 1997.
- Christiansen, Lisa. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Vancouver Courier* January 28 1996: np.
- Fong, Petti. "Speaking in Multiple Tongues." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Vancouver Sun* November 18 1995, sec. D: Saturday Review: 14.
- Ford, Julie. "In the Skin of the Fox: An Interview with Author Larissa Lai." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand*. *Siren Magazine* June/July 1996: 17-19.
- Goto, Hiromi. "Larissa Lai." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Bulletin: a journal for and about the nikkei community* March 1996: 18.
- Harvey, Carrie. "Hostile Women: Carrie Harvey Tastes Smashed Skull Ice-ream with Two Young Writers." Rev. of *In the Spice House* by Marnie Woodrow and *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Vancouver Review* Fall 1996: 16-18.
- Keller, Betty. "New Releases Starting for Christmas." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Coast Independent* September 23 1996, sec. leisure: np.

- Koh, Karlyn. "Stories within Stories: In Conversation with Larissa Lai." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Rice Paper* 2.3 (1996): 3-5, 16.
- Kong, Sook C. "History and Other Fantasies." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Kinesis* April 1996, sec. Arts: 19.
- Leung, Eric, and Alfred Lu. "Rev. Of *When Fox Is a Thousand*." Review. *Sing Tao* Oct. 16 1996, sec. A: 3.
- Lim-Hing. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Sojourner: The Women's Forum* 22.7 (1997): 55-56.
- Matson, Trish. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Event Magazine* 1996.
- Morgan, Beth. "From Our Own Presses." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Feminist Bookstore News* 1995: 78-79.
- New, W.H. "Reading 1995." *Canadian Literature*.149 (1996): 200-04.
- Nobile, Anna. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Angles* June 1996, sec. Shortly: np.
- Noble, Jean. "Books: Her Words." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *ICON*.49 (1996): np.
- Pantzar, Katja. "Bidding Wars in the World of Books: In a Novel Turn of Events, International Publishers Scout BC'S Fiction Boom for New Talent." *The Georgia Straight* March 21-28 1996, sec. Arts: 43-45.
- Prendergast, Kathy. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Herizons* Fall 1996: 30.
- Putman, Wendy. "Review." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Room of One's Own* 19.3 (1996): 6.
- Reid, Gayla. "From the Temple of Shifting Vapours to Value Village." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Current* Nov.-Jan. 1995-96: 31.
- Schaberg, Mindy. "Quick as a Fox: Author Larissa Lai Emerges onto the Literary Scene." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *LRC [Lesbian Resource Center] Community News* April 1996, sec. FEATURE: 10-11.
- Sin, Caroline. "3049 Lai, Larissa. *When Fox Is a Thousand*." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *CBRA. Novels* (1995): 175.

- Swindells, Christina. "Heavenly Fox." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The McGill Daily*. March 21-27, 1996: 4.
- Thiessen, Cherie. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Focus on Women* September 1996: 81.
- Tihanyi, Eva. "First Novels: Ninth-Century Fox." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Books in Canada* February 1996: 35.
- Vitt, Marnile. "A Hunger for the Fox: Writing Asian Canadian Lesbian Identity, and History: Comments by Larissa Lai." *The McGill Daily*. March 28 - April 3, 1996: 7.
- Wah, Wayne, and Kwai Au. "A Lively Trickster." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The International Examiner* March 6 - March 19 1996.

Appendix Five (B): *Fox Media Notices by Community, Year, and City*

Community	Year	City	Periodical Title	Author
Academic	1996	Montréal	The McGill Daily	Swindells
	1996	Montréal	The McGill Daily	Vitt
	1996	Vancouver	Canadian Literature	New
	1997	Vancouver	Canadian Literature	Beauregard
	1997	Vancouver	The Ubyyssey	Cho
Asian	1996	Seattle	The International Examiner	Wah & Au
	1996	Vancouver	Rice Paper	Koh
	1996	Vancouver	The Bulletin	Goto
	1996	Vancouver	Sing Tao	Leung & Lu
	1996	Vancouver	The World	unknown
	1996	Toronto	Ming Pao	unknown
Feminist	1995	San Francisco	Feminist Bookstore News	Morgan
	1995	Vancouver	Current	Reid
	1996	Vancouver	Kinesis	Kong
	1996	Vancouver	Room of One's Own	Putman
	1996	Winnipeg	Herizons	Prendergast,
	1997	Boston	Sojourner	Lim-Hing
Literary	1995	Toronto	CBRA	Sin
	1995	Vancouver	BC Bookworld	
	1996	Toronto	Books in Canada	Tihanyi,
	1996	Toronto	ICON	Noble
	1996	Vancouver	BC Bookworld	
	1996	Vancouver	Event Magazine	Matson
	1996	Vancouver	sub-TERRAIN	Bolen
	1996	Vancouver	The Vancouver Review	Harvey, Carrie
Mainstream	1995	Vancouver	The Vancouver Sun	Fong
	1996	Gibson's	Coast Independent	Keller
	1996	Vancouver	The Georgia Straight	Katja
	1996	Vancouver	The Vancouver Courier	Christiansen
	1996	Victoria	Focus on Women	Thiessen
	1997	Vancouver	The Vancouver Sun	Wigod

Queer

1995	San Francisco	The Advocate	Bok
1996	Seattle	LRC	Schaberg
1996	Toronto	Siren	Ford
1996	Vancouver	Angles	Nobile
1997	Vancouver	Angles	unknown

Appendix Five (C): *Fox* Media Notices: Location TableMedia Notice of *Fox* Analyzed by Community and Detailed Location

Community	Texts	City:								
		Vancouver	Victoria	Gibson's	Montréal	Winnipeg	Toronto	San Francisco	Seattle	Boston
Academic	5	3			2					
Asian	6	4					1		1	
Feminist	6	3				1		1		1
Literary	8	5					3			
Mainstream	5	3	1	1						
Queer	5	2					1	1	1	
Totals	35	20	1	1	2	1	5	2	2	1

Works Cited

- Abbot, Sidney, and Barbara Love. "Is Women's Liberation a Lesbian Plot?" *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*. Eds. Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran. New York: Signet, 1972. 601-21.
- Abbott, Joseph Liebling. "Freedom of the Press . . ." *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. Ed. John Bartlett. 16th ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1992. 714.
- Abraham, Julie. "History as Explanation: Writing About Lesbian Writing, or 'Are Girls Necessary?'" *Left Politics and the Literary Profession*. Eds. Lennard J. Davis and M. Bella Mirabella. New York: Columbia UP, 1990. 254-83.
- Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 1999.
- Adelberg, Ellen, and Claudia Currie, eds. *In Conflict with the Law: Women and the Canadian Justice System*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1993.
- Aguilior-San Juan, Karin. "Landmarks in Literature by Asian American Lesbians." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 18.Spring 1992 (1992): 936-43.
- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." Trans. Ben Brewster. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Ed. Althusser. London: New Left Books, 1971. 123-73.
- Anderson, Benedict R. *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London [England]: Verso Editions / NLB, 1983.
- Archibald, Wynn. "Re: A Question." E-mail to the author. 11 Sep. 2008.
- Armstrong, Jeannette C. et al. "Voices from the Conference." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990.
- Armstrong, Luanne. *Annie*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: Polestar Press, 1995.
- . *The Bone House*. Vancouver: New Star Books, 2002.
- Arnott, Joanne. *My Grass Cradle*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1993.
- Asian Canadian Multimedia Inc. "Asian Canadian Publications." (2000): ACMI. 1 Aug 2009. <<http://www.asian.ca/books/booklist.htm>>.

- Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice. "2007-2008 Grant Applications." Website. 21 Apr. 2008. <http://www.astraea.org/PHP/Grants/DeadlinesAllGrants.php4#writers_fund>.
- Atwood, Margaret. Introduction. *The Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English*. Eds. Margaret Atwood and Robert Weaver. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1986. xiii-xvii.
- . *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*. Toronto: Anansi, 1972.
- Bacchus, Lee. "First Steps out of Darkness." *The Vancouver Sun*. June 30. 1983: A7; 14.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. "Epic and Novel: Toward a Methodology for the Study of the Novel." Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Rev. ed. Austin: U of Texas P, 1998. 3-40.
- Ballstadt, Carl, ed. *The Search for English-Canadian Literature: An Anthology of Critical Articles from the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1975.
- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *Critical Theory since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. rev. ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992.
- Beauregard, Guy. "The Emergence of 'Asian Canadian Literature': Can Lit's Obscene Supplement?" *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 67 (1999): 57-75.
- . "Myths of History." *Canadian Literature*. 154 (1997): 162-64.
- . "What Is at Stake in Comparative Analyses of Asian Canadian and Asian American Literary Studies?" *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 75 (2002): 217-39.
- Beauregard, Guy Pierre. "Asian Canadian Literature: Diasporic Interventions in the Work of Sky Lee, Joy Kogawa, Hiromi Goto, and Fred Wah " Diss. U of Alberta, 2000.
- Benstock, Shari. "Expatriate Sapphic Modernism: Entering Literary History." *Lesbian Texts and Contexts: Radical Revisions*. Eds. Karla Jay and Joanne Glasgow. New York: New York UP, 1990. 183-203.
- Berry, Michelle, and Natalee Caple, eds. *The Notebooks: Interviews and New Fiction from Contemporary Writers*. Toronto: Random, 2002.
- Beverley, Andrea. "The Oral and the Archives: Canadian Women Writers Telling It." *ACCUTE*. 2009.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "The Commitment to Theory." *The Location of Culture by Bhabha*. London: Routledge, 1994. 28-56.

- . "Dissemination: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation." *Nation and Narration*. Ed. Homi K. Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990. 291-322.
- . "How Newness Enters the World." *The Location of Culture by Bhabha*. London: Routledge, 1994. 303-37.
- Blackbridge, Persimmon. *Sunnybrook : A True Story with Lies*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1996.
- Blais, Marie-Claire. *The Angel of Solitude*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1993.
- Blais, Marie Claire. *Belle Bete; Roman*. Quebec,: Institut litteraire du Quebec, 1959.
- . *Mad Shadows*. Boston: Little Brown, 1960.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994.
- Bok, H. Abigail. "Foxes." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Advocate* 26 Dec. 1995: 55.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*. New York: Columbia UP, 1993.
- Bowering, George, and Linda Hutcheon, eds. *Likely Stories: A Postmodern Sampler*. Toronto: Coach House, 1992.
- Brand, Dionne. *No Language Is Neutral*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- . *No Language Is Neutral*. Toronto: Coach House, 1990. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1998.
- Brandeis, Tala, Chloë T. Brushwood Rose, and Tricia McDonald. *Boys Like Her: Transfictions*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1998.
- Brant, Beth. *Food and Spirits: Stories*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1991.
- . *Writing as Witness: Essay and Talk*. Toronto: Women's P, 1994.
- Bredbeck, Gregory. "The New Queer Narrative: Intervention and Critique." *Textual Practice*. 9 (1995): 477-502.
- Brossard, Nicole. *The Aerial Letter*. Trans. Marlene Wildeman. Toronto: Women's P, 1988.
- . *Baroque at Dawn*. Trans. Patricia Claxton. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1997.
- . *Baroque D'aube: Roman*. Collection Fictions ; 82. Titre. Montréal: Hexagone, 1995.
- . *L'amèr or Le Chapitre Effrité*. Montréal: Quinze, 1977.

- . *Picture Theory*. Montréal: Nouvelle Optique, 1982.
- Brossard, Nicole, and Daphne Marlatt. *Mauve*. [Montréal]: nbj/writing, 1985.
- Brown, Gillian, and George Yule. *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1991.
- Brydon, Diana. "It's Time for a New Set of Questions." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 71 (2000): 14-25.
- Bulkin, Elly, and Joan Larkin, eds. *Lesbian Poetry: An Anthology*. Watertown, MA: Persephone P, 1981.
- Burke, Kenneth. *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1966.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits Of "Sex"*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- . "Phantasmatic Identification." *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits Of "Sex"*. New York: Routledge, 1993. 93-119.
- Butling, Pauline, and Susan Rudy. *Writing in Our Time: Canada's Radical Poetries in English (1957-2003)*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2005.
- Callaghan, Morely. *No Man's Meat*. Paris: Titus, 1931. Toronto: Stoddart, 1990.
- Cameron, Anne. *Daughters of Copper Woman*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1981.
- . *The Journey*. New York, N.Y.: Avon, 1982.
- . *A Whole Brass Band : A Novel*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1992.
- . *The Whole Fam Damily*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Pub., 1995.
- Carrière, Marie. *Writing in the Feminine in French and English Canada: A Question of Ethics*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2002.
- Casteel, Sarah Philips. "New World Pastoral: The Caribbean Garden and Enplacement in Gisele Pineau and Shani Mootoo." *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* (2003): 12-28.
- Castle, Terry. *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture*. New York: Columbia UP, 1993.
- . "Introduction." *The Literature of Lesbianism: A Historical Anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall*. Ed. Castle. New York: Columbia UP, 2003. 2-56.

- . *The Literature of Lesbianism: A Historical Anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall*. New York: Columbia UP, 2003.
- Chalykoff, Lisa. "Space and Identity Formation in Twentieth-Century Canadian Realist Novels: Recasting Regionalism within Canadian Literary Studies." Diss. U of British Columbia, 2000.
- Chan, Anthony. "Born Again Asians: The Making of a New Literature." *Journal of Ethnic Studies* II.4 (1984): 57-73.
- Chao, Lien. "Anthologizing the Collective: The Epic Struggles to Establish Chinese Canadian Literature in English." *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 57 (1995): 145-70.
- Chen, J.M. "New Challenges, Changes, and Chances: Asian-Canadian Literature/Literature on Asia in(to) the 21st Century". 2007. CFP for panel. (October 13, 2007): ACCUTE. October 29 2007. <<http://www.accute.ca/2008CFP.html>>.
- Chisholm, Dianne. *Queer Constellations: Subcultural Space in the Wake of the City*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2005.
- Cho, Charlie. "Lai Like a Fox." Interview. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The Ubysey* April 8. 1997.
- Chong, Denise. Introduction. *The Penguin Anthology of Stories by Canadian Women*. Ed. Chong. Toronto: Penguin, 1997. ix-xv.
- Chow, Rey. "The Secrets of Ethnic Abjection." *Traces: A Multilingual Journal of Cultural Theory and Translation* 2 (2001): 62-77.
- Choy, Wayson. *The Jade Peony*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1995.
- Christiansen, Lisa. "First-Time Novelist Nominated for Giller." *The Vancouver Courier* November 2. 1997: 31.
- Chrystos. *In Her I Am*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1993.
- . *Not Vanishing*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1988.
- Chung, C., A. Kim, and A.K. Lemeschewsky, eds. *Between the Lines: An Anthology by Pacific/Asian Lesbians of Santa Cruz, California*. Santa Cruz: Dancing Bird, 1987.
- Cixous, Hélène. "The Laugh of the Medusa." Trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. *New French Feminisms*. Eds. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron. New York: Schocken, 1981.

- Coleman, Daniel. *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2006.
- Coleman, Daniel, and Donald C. Goellnicht. "Introduction: 'Race' into the Twenty-First Century." *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 75 (2002): 1-29.
- Condé, Mary. "The Flight from Certainty in Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*." *Flight from Certainty: The Dilemma of Identity and Exile* 2001. 63-70.
- Curran, Beverley. "Swimming with the Words: Narrative Drift in Daphne Marlatt's *Taken*." *Canadian Literature* 159.159 (1998): 56-71.
- Dabydeen, Cyril. "Celebrating Difference." *Writing Thru Race Conference: Final Report*. Books in Canada September 1994 23-25. Ed. Joy Hall. n.p.: The Writers' Union of Canada, 1995. Appendix C. N. pag.
- Daphne Marlatt Fonds: LMS - 0119 3rd Accession 1998-05. "*Morena*." Promotion of *Telling It* and reviews: Box 17. Library and Archives Canada.
- Daphne Marlatt Fonds: LMS - 0119. "Letter to Sky Lee, 25 Jan 1990." *Telling It*: Conference: General Correspondence E:f. 1 Box 21. Library and Archives Canada.
- Davey, Frank. "Surviving the Paraphrase." *Surviving the Paraphrase: Eleven Essays on Canadian Literature*. Winnipeg: Turnstone, 1983. 1-12.
- de Lauretis, Teresa. "Gender Symptoms, or, Peeing Like a Man." *Social Semiotics* 9.2 (1999): 257-70.
- . "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities: An Introduction." *differences* 3.2 (1991): iii-xviii.
- . "Re: Queer Theory -- Current Position?" E-mail to the author. 3 Dec. 2006.
- Dean, Misao. Conversation with author. Feb. 2003.
- . Introduction. *Early Canadian Short Stories*. Ed. Misao Dean. Ottawa: Tecumesh, 1999. xi-xvii.
- "The Death of Studio D." *Kinesis*. Dec./Jan. 1999: 26.
- Decter, Ann. *Paper, Scissors, Rock*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1992.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1987.

- Dill, Bonnie Thornton, Amy E. McLaughlin, and Angel David Nieves. "Future Directions of Feminist Research: Intersectionality." *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*. Ed. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber. London: Sage, 2007. 629-37.
- Donoghue, Emma. *Passions between Women: British Lesbian Culture, 1668 - 1801*. 1993. New York: HarperCollins, 1995.
- Eliot, T.S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent." *Critical Theory since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. rev. ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt, 1992. 761-64.
- Emberley, Julia V. *Thresholds of Difference: Feminist Critique, Native Women's Writings, Postcolonial Theory*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993.
- Faderman, Lillian, ed. *Chloe Plus Olivia: An Anthology of Lesbian Literature from the Seventeenth Century to the Present*. New York: Viking, 1994.
- . *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992.
- . "Preface." *Chloe Plus Olivia: An Anthology of Lesbian Literature from the Seventeenth Century to the Present*. New York: Viking, 1994. vii-xiv.
- . *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present*. New York: Morrow, 1981.
- Faith, Karlene. *Unruly Women: Essays on Confinement and Resistance*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1993.
- Feminist Bookstore Network. "What Is the FBN?". (September 2004). 6 June 2008. <<http://www.litwomen.org/WIP/stores.html>>.
- Fetterley, Judith. *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1978.
- Foster, Jeannette H. *Sex Variant Women in Literature*. London: Frederick Muller, 1958.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*. Trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon, 1972.
- . *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage, 1978.
- . "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." *The Foucault Reader*. 1977. Ed. Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon, 1984. 76-100.

- . "Prison Talk." Trans. Leo Marshall Conlin Gordon, John Mephram, Kate Soper. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings: 1972 -- 1977*. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980. 37-54.
- . "Two Lectures." Trans. Leo Marshall Conlin Gordon, John Mephram, Kate Soper. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings: 1972 -- 1977*. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980. 78-108.
- . "What Is an Author?" *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*. Ed. Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1980. 138.
- Fox, L. Chris. "The Much Migrated Fox: Larissa Lai's Transformation of Écriture Au Féminin in *When Fox Is a Thousand*" *Migrance Comparée /Comparing Migration: Les Littératures Du Canada Et Du Québec / the Literatures of Canada and Québec*. Eds. Marie Carrière and Catherine Khordoc. Littératures De Langue Française Vol. 5. Bern: Peter Lang, 2008. 187-203.
- Fox, Chris. "Queer Discipline: Lesbian Bodies." *Agora: An Online Graduate Journal* 1.2 (2002).
- . "Reaping the Whirlwind: An Annotated Bibliography of Lesbian Literary Criticism." 1996.
- Frost, Wendy, and Michele Valiquette. *Feminist Literary Criticism: A Bibliography of Journal Articles: 1975-1981*. Garland Reference Library of the Humanities. Vol. 784. New York: Garland, 1988.
- Frye, Northrop. Conclusion. *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English*. Ed. Carl F. Klink. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1965. 821-49.
- Fu, Bennett Yu-Hsiang. "From Meta-Morphing T'ien Hu: Sexual Transgression & Textual Transposition in *When Fox Is a Thousand*." *West Coast Line* 44 38.2 (2004): 157-63.
- Fuchs, Marilyn. "Re: Press Gang Question & Idea for Recognition of Our Dear Friends and Their Valuable Work . . ." E-mail to the author. 27 Mar. 2008.
- Fulford, Robert. "George Orwell, Call Your Office." *Writing Thru Race Conference: Final Report. The Globe and Mail* March 30, 1994. Ed. Joy Hall. n.p.: The Writers' Union of Canada, 1995. Appendix B. N. pag.

- "Fuzzy Logic." 2007. *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. (14 Apr. 2007). <<http://search.eb.com/eb/article-251484>>.
- Gagnon, Monika. *Other Conundrums : Race, Culture, and Canadian Art*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000.
- Garber, Linda. *Identity Poetics: Race, Class, and the Lesbian-Feminist Roots of Queer Theory*. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.
- Garber, Linda, and Vilashini Cooppan. "An Annotated Bibliography of Lesbian Literary Critical Theory, 1970-1989." *Sexual Practice / Textual Theory: Lesbian Cultural Criticism*. Eds. Susan J. Wolfe and Julia Penelope. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993. 340-54.
- Garvey, Johanna X.K. "Complicating Categories: 'Race' and Sexuality in Caribbean Women's Fiction." *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies* 10.1 (2003): 94-120.
- Gerson, Carole. "Publishing by Women." *History of the Book in Canada: 1918-1980*. Eds. Carole Gerson and Jacques Michon. Vol. 3. 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. 318-22.
- Gill, Stephen. *Green Snow : Anthology of Canadian Poets of Asian Origin*. Cornwall, Ont.: Vesta Publications, 1976.
- Gilroy, Paul. *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2000.
- Giraud, Lynn, and Sheila Gilhooly. "A Herstory of a Women's Press: Press Gang Printers." *Kinesis* (May 1993): 10-11.
- Godard, Barbara, ed. *Gynocritics: Feminist Approaches to Canadian and Quebec Women's Writing*. Toronto: ECW P, 1985.
- Godard, Barbara, et al. "Theorizing Fiction Theory." *Collaboration in the Feminine: Writings on Women and Culture from Tessera*. Ed. Barbara Godard. Toronto: Second Story, 1994. 53-62.
- Goellnicht, Donald C. "A Long Labour: The Protracted Birth of Asian Canadian Literature." *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 72 (2000): 1-42.
- Goldsmith, Penny. "Re: Queston Re: Yr Involvement Re: Women's Press." E-mail to the author. 22 Mar. 2008.

- Gomez, Jewelle. "The Gilda Stories." *Chloe Plus Olivia: An Anthology of Lesbian Literature from the Seventeenth Century to the Present*. Ed. Lillian Faderman. New York: Viking, 1994. 426-37.
- Goto, Hiromi. *Chorus of Mushrooms*. Nunatak Fiction. Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1994.
- Gould, Karen. *Writing in the Feminine: Feminism and Experimental Writing in Quebec*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1990.
- Grabois, Andrew. "Canadian Book Production, 1999-2001 (All Hard and Paper)". 2001. (2001): Bowker. July 13 2009. <<http://www.bookwire.com/bookwire/canadianbookproduction.htm>>.
- Grier, Barbara [Gene Damon]. *The Lesbian in Literature*. 1967. Tallahassee, FL: Naiad Press, 1981.
- Griffin, Gabriele. "'Romancing the Margins'?: Lesbian Writing in the 1990s." *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 4.2 (2000): 1-6.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Theories of Representation and Difference. Ed. Teresa de Lauretis. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994.
- Hall, Joy, ed. *Writing Thru Race Conference: Final Report*. np: The Writers' Union of Canada, 1995.
- Hall, Lynda, ed. *Telling Moments: Autobiographical Lesbian Short Stories*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 2003.
- Hall, Radclyffe. *The Well of Loneliness*. Paris: Pegasus, 1928. London: Transworld, 1968.
- Harris, Bertha. "The More Profound Nationality of Their Lesbianism: Lesbian Society in Paris in the 1920s." *Amazon Expedition: A Lesbianfeminist Anthology*. Eds. Phyllis Birkby, et al. Albion, CA: Times Change, 1973. 77-88.
- Herringer, Barbara. Conversation with author. 4 Feb. 2006.
- Herringer, Barbara, and Cy-thea Sand, eds. *The Radical Reviewer*. Vancouver, 1981-83.
- Hilf, Susanne. *Writing the Hyphen: The Articulation of Interculturalism in Contemporary Chinese-Canadian Literature*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000.
- Holtz, Nairne. "Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Lesbian and Bisexual Women Authors". 2003. June 10 2003. <<http://www.uwo.ca/pridelib/manifesto.html>>.

- . "Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Literature with Lesbian Content." 2003. November 28 2006. <<http://www.canadianlesbianliterature.ca/>>.
- . "Bibliographer Notes." *No Margins: Writing Canadian Fiction in Lesbian*. Eds. Catherine Lake and Nairne Holtz. Toronto: Insomniac P, 2006. 279-80.
- . "An Introductory Manifesto in Bibliography of Canadian Lesbian and Bisexual Women Authors Selectively Annotated." 2003. March 8, 2007 2003. <<http://www.canadianlesbianliterature.ca/>>.
- . "An Introductory Manifesto" In *Canadian Lesbian Literature: Bibliography of Canadian Literature with Lesbian Content*." 2003. July 4, 2009 2009. <<http://www.canadianlesbianliterature.ca/>>.
- . "Selective Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Literature with Lesbian Content." *No Margins: Writing Canadian Fiction in Lesbian*. Eds. Catherine Lake and Nairne Holtz. Toronto: Insomniac P, 2006. 281-312.
- Hom, Alice Y, and Ming-Yuen S. Ma. "Premature Gestures: A Speculative Dialogue on Asian Pacific Islander (API) Lesbian and Gay Writing." *Journal of Homosexuality* 26.2/3(1993) (1993): 21-51.
- Hom, Alice Y. "Addressing Differences: A Look at the 1989 Asian Pacific Lesbian Network Retreat, Santa Cruz." *Privileging Positions: The Sites of Asian American Studies*. Eds. Gary Y. Okihiro, et al. Pulman, WA: Washington State UP, 1995. 301-08.
- Hoving, Isabel. "Gardening in the Jungles of Post-Coloniality: Representing Multiculturality and Hybridity." *Bridges across Chasms : Towards a Transcultural Future in Caribbean Literature*. Ed. Bénédicte Ledent. Liège: Liège, Language and Literature, 2004. 211-19.
- Howells, Coral Ann. *Contemporary Canadian Women's Fiction: Refiguring Identities*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003.
- Hughes, Nym, Yvonne Johnson, and Yvette Perreault. *Stepping out of Line*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1984.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *The Canadian Postmodern: A Study of Contemporary English-Canadian Fiction*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford UP, 1988.

- Inalienable Rice: A Chinese & Japanese Canadian Anthology*. Vancouver: Powell Street Revue & Chinese Canadian Writers Workshop, 1979.
- "Invisible Colours." *Kinesis*. March. 1989, sec. Movement Matters: 2.
- James, Joy. "Re-Sounding Images: Outsiders in Persimmon Blackbridge's *Sunnybrook*." *Unfitting Stories: Narrative Approaches to Disease, Disability, and Trauma*. Eds. Valerie Raoul, et al. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier UP, 2007. 149-58.
- Jones, D. G. *Butterfly on Rock: A Study of Themes and Images in Canadian Literature*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1970.
- Kaiser, Charles. *The Gay Metropolis: 1940-1996*. Boston: Houghton, 1997.
- Kamboureli, Smaro. Conversation with author. 28 May, 2006.
- Kelly, Sophia. "Challenges Together - Vinetta Lenavat and Lisa Moore of Rhizome Cafe." *Lesbian Quarterly: Unfashionably Lesbian Focussed*. 13 (2007): 1.
- Kertzer, Jonathan. *Worrying the Nation: Imagining a National Literature in English Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998.
- Khoo, Tseen-Ling. *Banana Bending: Asian-Australian and Asian-Canadian Literatures*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2003.
- Kim, Christine. "Cultural Contamination, Asian Canadian Publics, and Roy Kiyooka's Ephemeral Archives." *ACCUTE*. 2009.
- . "The Politics of Print: Feminist Publishing and Canadian Literary Production." Diss. York U., 2004.
- . "Troubling the Mosaic: Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*, Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*, and Representations of Social Differences." *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography*. Eds. Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier UP, 2008. 153-77.
- Knutson, Susan. Introduction. *No Margins: Writing Canadian Fiction in Lesbian*. Eds. Catherine Lake and Nairne Holtz. Toronto: Insomniac P, 2006. 7-11.
- Knutson, Susan Lynne. *Narrative in the Feminine: Daphne Marlatt and Nicole Brossard*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2000.
- Kobayashi, Cassandra, and Roy Miki, eds. *Spirit of Redress: Japanese Candians in Conference*. Vancouver: JC Publications, 1989.

- Kogawa, Joy. "From the Bottom of the Well, from the Distant Stars." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 95-103.
- . *Obasan*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex ; Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1983.
- Koh, Karlyn. "Stories within Stories: In Conversation with Larissa Lai." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Rice Paper* 2.3 (1996): 3-5, 16.
- Kozachenko, John. Photograph of Larissa Lai and Shani Mootoo. *Angles* June. 1997.
- Kuhne, Barbara. "Letter Plus Annotated 1998 Catalogue." 9 June. 2006.
- . "Personal Interview." 14 May. 2006.
- . "Re: Questions for You . . ." E-mail to the author. 10 Apr. 2006.
- . "Re: Questions of a Simple Nature . . ." E-mail to the author. 11 Jan. 2007.
- . "Re: Stepping out of Line?" E-mail to the author. 25 Oct. 2006.
- Kwa, Lydia. *The Colours of Heroines*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1994.
- . *This Place Called Absence: A Novel*. Winnipeg: Turnstone, 2000.
- La Flamme, Michelle. Conversation with the author. 16 Feb. 2006.
- Lai, Larissa. Acknowledgements. *When Fox Is a Thousand*. By Lai. Vancouver: Arsenal, 2004. N. pag.
- . Acknowledgements. *When Fox Is a Thousand*. By Lai. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1995. N. pag.
- . Afterword. *When Fox Is a Thousand*. By Lai. Vancouver: Arsenal, 2004. 253-59.
- . *curriculum vitae*. Nov. 19 2006. <<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~lalai/cv.html>>.
- . "Eighty Years Bathing." *Many-Mouthed Birds*. Eds. Jim Wong-Chu and Bennett Lee. Vancouver: McClelland & Stewart, 1991. 47.
- . Foreword. *Other Conundrums : Race, Culture, and Canadian Art*. By Monika Gagnon. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000. 15-20.
- . "Future Asians: Migrant Speculations, Repressed History & Cyborg Hope." *West Coast Line* 44 38.2 (2004): 168-75.
- . Interview by Ashok Mathur. July 1998. 18 May 2005. <<<http://www.eciad.bc.ca/~amathur/larissa/larissa.html>>>.
- . Personal Interview with the author. 7 Nov. 2004.

- . "Political Animals and the Body of History." *Canadian Literature* 163.Winter (1999): 145-54.
- . "Sites of Articulation: An Interview with Larissa Lai by Robyn Morris." *West Coast Line* 44 38.2 (2004): 21-30.
- . "Strategizing the Body of History: Anxious Writing, Absent Subjects, and Marketing the Nation." *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography*. Eds. Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier UP, 2008. 87-114.
- . *When Fox Is a Thousand*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1995.
- . *When Fox Is a Thousand*. Vancouver: Arsenal, 2004.
- Lai, Larissa, and Ashok Mathur. "Reading."
- Lai, Larissa, and Suzette Mayr. Conversation with Larissa Lai and Suzette Mayr.
Interview with Ashok Mathur. 5 Nov. 2004. Vancouver: Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.
- Lake, Catherine. "Editor Notes." *No Margins: Writing Canadian Fiction in Lesbian*. Eds. Catherine Lake and Nairne Holtz. Toronto: Insomniac P, 2006. 13-14.
- Laquer, Thomas. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1992.
- Lee, Sky. "Afterword." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 186-89.
- Lee, SKY. *Bellydancer: Stories*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1994.
- . *Disappearing Moon Cafe*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990.
- Lee, Sky, et al., eds. *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990.
- Lejeune, Philippe. *On Autobiography*. Theory and History of Literature. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.
- Lindsay, Sean. "Writer Inspires a New Generation: Profile." *The Gauntlet*. 6 Nov. 1997: N. pag.
- Liu, Lydia H. *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999.

- Lo, Jenny, and Theresa Healy. "Flagrantly Flaunting It?: Contesting Perceptions of Locational Identity among Urban Vancouver Lesbians." *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 4.1 (2000): 29-44.
- Lorde, Audre. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." *Sister Outsider*. 1984. New York: QPBC, 1993. 110-13.
- . "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power." *An Intimate Wilderness: Lesbian Writers on Sexuality*. Ed. Judith Barrington. Portland: Eighth Mountain, 1991. 147-53.
- Lowry, Glen. "Ana Vancouver: Whiteness and the Space of Marlatt's 'Lesbian-Feminist' Subject." *ACCUTE*. 2002.
- Mackey, Eva. *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 2002.
- MacMechan, Archibald. *Headwaters of Canadian Literature*. 1924. Toronto: McClelland, 1974.
- MacSkimming, Roy. *The Perilous Trade: Publishing Canada's Writers*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2003.
- Makara. Vancouver: Pacific women's graphic arts co-operative association, 1975-78.
- "Makara Calls for Support." *Kinesis* February. 1983: 2.
- "Making Ourselves Visible." Rev. of Making Ourselves Visible: Breaking Barriers of Racism and Art. *Kinesis*. Nov. 1988: 17-18.
- Maracle, Lee. Afterword. *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 173-75.
- . "Moving Over." *Trivia*. 14 (1989): 9-12.
- . "Ramparts Hanging in Air." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 161-72.
- . "Re: A Question for You." E-mail to the author. 7 Feb. 2007.
- Marks, Elaine. "Lesbian Intertextuality." *Homosexualities and French Literature: Cultural Contexts / Critical Texts*. Eds. Elaine Marks and George Stambolian. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1979. 353-77. Rpt. in *Sexual Practice / Textual Theory: Lesbian Cultural Criticism*. Ed. Susan J. Wolfe and Julia Penelope. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993. 271-90.
- Marlatt, Daphne. *Ana Historic*. Toronto: The Coach House Press, 1988.

- . Introduction. *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990.
- . "Musing with Mothertongue." *Gynocritics: Feminist Approaches to Canadian and Quebec Women's Writing*. Ed. Barbara Godard. Toronto: ECW P, 1985. 223-26.
- . Personal Interview with the author. 18 Mar. 2006.
- . *Taken*. Concord, Ont.: Anansi, 1996.
- Martindale, Kathleen. "What Makes Lesbianism Thinkable?: Theorizing Lesbianism from Adrienne Rich to Queer Theory." *Feminist Issues: Race, Class and Sexuality*. Ed. Nancy Mandell. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada, 1995. 67-94.
- McKnight, Peter. "Exploring the Nature of Reality: Buddhism and Science Are Not Always in Agreement, but They Still Have Much in Common." *The Vancouver Sun*. 26 Sep. 2009, sec. Weekend Review: C5.
- Meigs, Mary. *In the Company of Strangers*. Vancouver: Talon Books, 1991.
- Miki, Roy. "Asiancy: Making Space for Asian Canadian Writing." *Privileging Positions: The Sites of Asian American Studies*. Eds. Gary Y. Okihiro, et al. Pullman, WA: Washington State UP, 1995. 135-51.
- . "Redress: A Community Imagined." *Broken Entries*. Ed. Roy Miki. Toronto: Mercury, 1998. 15-28.
- . *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2004.
- . "Sliding the Scale of Elision: 'Race; Constructs / Cultural Praxis.'" *Broken Entries*. Ed. Roy Miki. Toronto: Mercury, 1998. 125-59.
- Miki, Roy, Cassandra Kobayashi, and National Association of Japanese Canadians. *Justice in Our Time : The Japanese Canadian Redress Settlement*. Vancouver: Talonbooks; Winnipeg: National Association of Japanese Canadians, 1991.
- Miller, Carolyn R. "Genre as Social Action." *Quarterly Journal on Speech* 70 (1984): 151-67.
- Miller, Nancy K. "Changing the Subject: Authorship, Writing, and the Reader." *Feminist Studies / Critical Studies*. Ed. Teresa de Lauretis. Vol. 8. Theories of Contemporary Culture. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986. 102-20.

- Minh-ha, Trinh T. "Not You/Like You: Post-Colonial Women and the Interlocking Questions of Identity and Difference." *Making Face, Making Soul / Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color*. Ed. Gloria Anzaldúa. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990. 371-75.
- Misrahi-Barak, Judith. "Beginners' Luck among Caribbean-Candian Writers: Nalo Hopkinson, André Alexis and Shani Mootoo." *Commonwealth Essays and Studies* 22.1 (1999): 89-96.
- Mootoo, Shani. Acknowledgements. *Cereus Blooms at Night*. Toronto: McClland and Stewart, 1998. [271-73].
- . *Cereus Blooms at Night*. Toronto: McClland and Stewart, 1998.
- . *Cereus Blooms at Night*. 1st ed. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1996.
- . Conversation with the author. Oct. 2002.
- . "Copyright Page." *Cereus Blooms at Night*. Toronto: McClland and Stewart, 1998. N.pag.
- . "Interview by Maya Khankoje: To Bend but Not to Bow." *Herizons* 21.1 (2007): 29-31.
- . "Interview by Sherman, Barbara." *BC Institute Against Family Violence Newsletter*. Fall (1993). 11 Dec. 2008. <<http://www.bcifv.org/resources/newsletter/1993/fall/mootoo.shtml>>.
- . *Out on Main Street & Other Stories*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1993.
- . "Re: Questions for You . . ." E-mail to the author. 22 Jan. 2007.
- Moraga, Cherrie, and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds. *This Bridge Called My Back*. Watertown, MA: Persephone P, 1981.
- Morgan, Beth. "From Our Own Presses." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Feminist Bookstore News* 1995: 78-79.
- Morris, Robyn. "Making Eyes: Colouring the Look in Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*." *Australian-Canadian Studies: A Journal for the Humanities & Social Sciences* 20.1 (2002): 75-98.
- . "Re-Visioning Representations of Difference in Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*." *West Coast Line* 44 38.2 (2004): 69-86.

- Mouré, Erin, and Bronwen Wallace. *Two Women Talking: Correspondence 1985-87. Living Archives of the Feminist Caucus of the League of Canadian Poets*. Toronto: Feminist Caucus of the League of Canadian Poets, 1993.
- Mukherjee, Arun. Introduction. *Towards and Aesthetic of Opposition: Essays on Literature, Criticism, and Cultural Imperialism*. Stratford, Ontario: Williams-Wallace, 1988. 4-8.
- Mukherjee, Arun P. "Canadian Nationalism, Canadian Literature and Racial Minority Women." *The Other Woman: Women of Colour in Contemporary Canadian Literature*. Ed. Makeda Silvera. Toronto: Sister Vision P, 1995. 421-45.
- Murdoch, Jonathan. *Post-Structuralist Geography: A Guide to Relational Space*. London: Sage, 2006.
- New, W.H. "Reading 1995." *Canadian Literature*.149 (1996): 200-04.
- Nichols, Miriam. "Tensing the Difference: Daphne Marlatt, Karen MacCormack, and Susan Howe." *Tessera*.27 (1999): 39-54.
- Nielsen, Emilia. "The Plight to Survive in *Cereus Blooms at Night*: Transgression and Strategic Conformity." *ACCUTE*. 2009.
- "Node." *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. (Dec. 2003): Oxford UP. April 3 2007. <<http://dictionary.oed.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca>>.
- Norman, Rose. "Keep Women in Print: Writing What Is Wrong". (30 May 2008). 6 June 2008. <<http://www.uah.edu/english/wip/>>.
- O'Neil, Peter. "Conference in Jeopardy: Feds Won't Fund Writers' Workshop That Bars Whites." *Writing Thru Race Conference: Final Report. The Vancouver Sun*, June 9, 1994. Ed. Joy Hall. n.p.: The Writers' Union of Canada, 1995. Appendix B, N. pag.
- Oikawa, Mona. "Retreat 1989." *Fireweed Special Issue: Awakening Thunder: Asian Canadian Women*. 30 (1990): 104.
- . "Safer Sex in Santa Cruz." *Fireweed Special Issue: Awakening Thunder: Asian Canadian Women*. 30 (1990): 31-34.
- "Panel One: Audience Discussion." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 43-53.

"Panel Two: Audience Discussion." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*.

Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 117-36.

Pantzar, Katja. "Bidding Wars in the World of Books: In a Novel Turn of Events,

International Publishers Scout BC'S Fiction Boom for New Talent." *The Georgia Straight*. March 21-28. 1996, sec. Arts: 43-45.

Paré, Arleen. *Leaving Now*. novel. Victoria, BC

Pollak, Nancy. Conversation with the author. 1 Nov. 2006.

Prendergast, Kathy. Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Herizons*. Fall 1996: 30.

"Press Gang Authors Read Together One Last Time, Vancouver, BC, May 24, 2003."

Womennet.ca: The Canadian Women's Virtual Information Centre (12 May 2003).

15 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.womennet.ca/news.php?show&528>>.

Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-3-0-134. "Biography and Promotion." Larissa Lai - *When*

Fox Is a Thousand, 1994-96 Simon Fraser U Archives.

Press Gang Fonds, F 184-2-0-0-5. "Block Grants to Book Publishers." Canada Council -

- Block Grant Applications, 1991-1992. Simon Fraser U Archives.

Press Gang Fonds, F 184-1-2-0-11. "Board of Directors Meetings, 1995." Simon Fraser

U Archives.

Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-0-3-137. "Canasian: At Journey's End by Terry Watada."

Simon Fraser U Archives.

Press Gang Fonds, F 184-2-0-0-5. "CCA -- Block Grant Applications, 1991-1992."

Simon Fraser U Archives.

---. "CCA Funding Letter 15 Apr. 1991." Canada Council -- Block Grant Applications,

1991-1992. Simon Fraser U Archives.

---. "CCA Funding Letter to PGP, 18 Apr 1996." Canada Council -- Block Grant

Applications, 1991-1992. Simon Fraser U Archives.

Press Gang Fonds, F 184-4-2-0-37. "Kuhne Letter to Marlatt, 11 Sep 1989." Marlatt,

Daphne -- *Telling It: Women and Language Across Cultures*, 1989-1992. Simon

Fraser U Archives.

---. "Kuhne Letter to Marlatt, 18 Dec. 1989." Marlatt, Daphne -- *Telling It: Women and*

Language Across Cultures, 1989-1992. Simon Fraser U Archives.

- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-7-0-0-1. "Kuhne Letter to the Editor, 13 Apr. 1994." Anti-Racism Work File, 1988-1996. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "Kuhne, McCreary, Speidel Letter to the Editor." Anti-Racism Work File, 1988-1996. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-0-3-137. "Lai, Larissa: When Fox Is a Thousand -- Reviews, 1996-97." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-4-2-0-33. "Larissa Lai - When Fox Is a Thousand, 1994-96." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-4-2-0-37. "Letter to Barbara Kuhne from Daphne Marlatt, 20 June, 1990." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-3-0-134. "Letter to Debby Yaffe of Everywoman's [sic] Books in Victoria, 17 Nov 1995." Larissa Lai - When Fox Is a Thousand, 1994-96, biography and promotion. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-1-0-3. "Letter to Fair Participants, 5 May 1988." Third International Bookfair. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-4-2-0-37. "Note to Kuhne, 1989-1992." Marlatt, Daphne -- Telling It: Women and Language Across Cultures. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-2-0-5. "PGP Catalogue, 1986." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "PGP Catalogue, 1987." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "PGP Catalogue, 1988." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-2-0-2. "PGP Catalogue, 1994." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "PGP Catalogue, 1995." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-2-0-4. "PGP Catalogue: Fall, 1981." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-1-2-0-6. "PGP Meetings (v. 3), 1987-1989." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-1-2-0-11. "PGP Meetings, 1984 - 1985." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-1-2-0-3. "PGP Meetings, 1986 - 1987." Simon Fraser U Archives.

- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-1-2-0-9. "PGP Meetings, 1994-1995." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-1-1-0-10. "Press Gang Publishers Celebrates Twenty Years of Feminist Publishing." Program 20th Anniversary, 18 Nov 1995. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-4-2-0-33. "Press Release." Larissa Lai - *When Fox Is a Thousand*, 1994-96. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-6-2-0-4. "Short Description of Press Gang's History, Policy, Aims: Attributed to Pat Smith." Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Fonds, F 184-4-2-0-33. "West Coast Tour, Spring, 1996." Larissa Lai - *When Fox Is a Thousand*, 1994-96. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Press Gang Publishers. *PGP Complete Catalogue*. Vancouver, Fall 1998.
- Rabinovitch, Jannit. "Transforming Community Practice: [Re]Moving the Margins " *School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences* 2004. Union Institute and University 13 Jan 2009 <http://web.uvic.ca/ocbr/assets/pdfs/JRabinovitch_dissertation.pdf>.
- Rak, Julie. Conversation with the author. 28 May 2006.
- Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *B.C. Bookworld*. Winter. 1995, sec. Fiction: 12.
- "Rhizome." 2003. *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. (Dec. 2003): Oxford UP. April 10 2007. <<http://dictionary.oed.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca>>.
- Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." *Signs* V (1980): 631-60.
- Richler, Nancy. *Your Mouth Is Lovely: A Novel*. 1st ed. Toronto: HarperFlamingoCanada, 2002.
- Rose, Brushwood Chloë T., and Anna Camilleri. *Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2002.
- Rubin, Gayle. "Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. Vance, Carole S., ed. *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*. 1984. Eds. Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale and David M. Halperin. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Rule, Jane. *The Desert of the Heart*. 1st ed. Toronto: Macmillan, 1964.

- Santoro, Miléna. *Mothers of Invention: Feminist Authors and Experimental Fiction in France and Quebec*. Montréal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2002.
- Schaberg, Mindy. "Quick as a Fox: Author Larissa Lai Emerges onto the Literary Scene." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *LRC [Lesbian Resource Center] Community News*. April. 1996, sec. FEATURE: 10-11.
- Schendlinger, Mary. "Re: Editing Anne Cameron?" E-mail to the author. 10 Feb 2007.
---. "Re: Yr Title." E-mail to the author. 18 Apr 2007.
- Scott, Bonnie Kime. *Refiguring Modernism: Volume One: The Women of 1928*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995.
- Scott, Gail. *Heroine*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1987.
---. *My Paris: A Novel*. Toronto: Mercury Press, 1999.
- Scott, Joan W. "The Evidence of Experience." *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. Eds. Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale and David M. Halperin. New York: Routledge, 1993. 397-415.
- Seajay, Carol. *Feminist Bookstore News*. Sep / Oct. 1990: 87.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia UP, 1985.
- Sehdev, Robinder Kaur. "Anti-Racism and Public Spheres: An Examination of the Politicization of Anti-Racism at the Writing Thru Race Conference, 1994." M.A. U. of Calgary, 2002.
- Selke, Lori. "O Canada! Northern Native K.D. Lang Pays Tribute to Her Brethren." *Girlfriends* Dec./Jan. 2005: 22.
- Shannon, Esther. "Re: Question Re: Kinesis Editorships." E-mail to the author. 30 Jan. 2007.
---. "Re: Question Re: Kinesis Editorships." E-mail to the author. 2 Nov. 2006.
- Silvera, Makeda. *The Heart Does Not Bend: A Novel*. Toronto: Random House Canada, 2002.
---. *Her Head a Village*. 1st ed. Vancouver, BC: Press Gang Publishers, 1994.
---, ed. *The Other Woman: Women of Colour in Contemporary Canadian Literature*. Toronto: Sister Vision P, 1995.
---, ed. *Piece of My Heart : A Lesbian of Colour Anthology*. Toronto: Sister Vision, 1991.

- Simon Fraser University. "SFU Library Women's Studies Collections Policy." (Sept. 18, 2000). Sept. 11 2008. <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/collections/policies/womens_studies.htm>.
- Smith, Dorothy and Sara David, ed. *I'm Not Mad, I'm Angry: Women Look at Psychiatry*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1975.
- Smyth, Heather. "Sexual Citizenship and Caribbean-Canadian Fiction: Dionne Brand's *in Another Place Not Here* and Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*." *ARIEL* 30.2 (1999): 141-60.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Strategy, Identity, Writing." *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*. Ed. Sarah Harasym. New York: Routledge, 1990. 35-49.
- St. Peter, Christine. Conversation with the author. 4 Mar. 2006.
- Statistics Canada. "Population by Aboriginal Groups and Sex, Showing Age Groups, for Provinces and Territories, 1996 Census". (2001-12-18): Government of Canada. October 6 2006. <<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/jan13/bc.htm>>.
- . "Total Population by Visible Minority Population for British Columbia, 1996 Census". (2001-12-18): Government of Canada. October 6 2006. <<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/feb17/vmbc.htm>>.
- Stevens, Peter, ed. *The McGill Movement: A.J.M. Smith, F.R. Scott and Leo Kennedy*. Toronto: Ryerson P, 1969.
- Stimpson, Catharine R. "Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English." *Writing and Sexual Difference*. (Critical Inquiry Winter 1981 U. of Chicago P). Ed. Elizabeth Abel. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982. 243-59. rpt. in *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 1.2 (1997): 177-94.
- Sunnybrook*. Dir. Blackbridge, Persimmon and Lorna Boschman. Video. Persimmon Blackbridge and Lorna Boschman. 1995.
- Swindells, Christina. "Heavenly Fox." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The McGill Daily* March 21-27. 1996: 4.
- Tator, Carol, Frances Henry, and Winston Mattis. *Challenging Racism in the Arts: Case Studies of Controversy and Conflict*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

- Taylor, Shelley E., et al. "Biobehavioral Responses to Stress in Females: Tend-and-Befriend, Not Fight-or-Flight." *Psychological Review* 107.3 (2000): 411-29.
- Thom, Bing. "Interview with Bing Thom on China, the Chinese Canadian Movement, and the Vancouver Chinese Cultural Centre." *Inalienable Rice*. Eds. Powell Street Revue and The Chinese Canadian Writers Workshop. Vancouver, 1979. 33-38.
- "Through the Lens of Kinesis: 25 Years of the Women's Movement in Canada." *Kinesis*. Dec./ Jan. 1999: 9-28.
- Tihanyi, Eva. "First Novels: Ninth-Century Fox." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *Books in Canada*. Feb. 1996: 35.
- Tinic, Serra A. *On Location : Canada's Television Industry in a Global Market*. Cultural Spaces. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.
- Tötösy de Zepetnek, Steven, and Yiu-nam Leung, eds. *Canadian Culture and Literature and a Taiwan Perspective*. Edmonton: U of Alberta, 1998.
- Tulchinsky, Karen X. *Hot & Bothered 2: Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1999.
- . *Hot & Bothered 3: Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2001.
- . *Hot & Bothered: Short Short Fiction on Lesbian Desire*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1998.
- Ty, Eleanor Rose, and Donald C. Goellnicht. *Asian North American Identities : Beyond the Hyphen*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.
- . Introduction. *Asian North American Identities : Beyond the Hyphen*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004. 1-14.
- Ty, Eleanor, and Christl Verduyn, eds. *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier UP, 2008.
- . Introduction. *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography*. Eds. Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier UP, 2008. 1-27.
- Unspoken Territory*. Dir. Bociurkiw, Marusya. 16 mm. Winds of Change Productions. 2001.
- Usukawa, Saeko. Conversation with the author. 17 Jan. 2006.
- . Conversation with the author. 20 Apr. 2008.

- . "Memories." E-mail to the author. 25 Oct. 2006.
- Valentine, Gill. "Introduction: From Nowhere to Everywhere: Lesbian Geographies." *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 4.1 (2000): 1-9.
- Valpy, Michael. "A Nasty Serving of Cultural Apartheid." *Writing Thru Race Conference: Final Report. The Globe and Mail's Classroom Edition*, April 8, 1994. Ed. Joy Hall. N.p.: The Writers' Union of Canada, 1995. Appendix B. N. pag.
- Van Luven, Lynne. "Voices from the Past Echo through the Present: Choy's *the Jade Peony* and Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*." *Canadian Culture and Literature and a Taiwan Perspective*. Eds. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung. Edmonton: U of Alberta, 1998. 263-72.
- Vitt, Marnile. "A Hunger for the Fox: Writing Asian-Canadian Lesbian Identity, and History: Comments by Larissa Lai." *The McGill Daily*. 28 Mar. – 3 Apr. 1996: 7.
- Wah, Wayne, and Kwai Au. "A Lively Trickster." Rev. of *When Fox Is a Thousand* by Larissa Lai. *The International Examiner*. 6 – 19 Mar. 1996: N. pag.
- Warland, Betsy. Conversation with the author. 26 Mar. 2006.
- . E-mail to the author. 31 Jan. 2006.
- , ed. *Inversions: Writing by Dykes, Queers & Lesbians*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1991.
- . "Where Our Loyalties Lie." *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures*. Eds. Sky Lee, et al. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1990. 191-202.
- Weston, Kath. *Long Slow Burn: Sexuality and Social Science*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977.
- Winterson, Jeanette. *Sexing the Cherry*. Bloomsbury, 1989. New York: Vintage, 1991.
- . *Written on the Body*. Toronto: Knopf, 1992.
- Women's Studies Holdings. *Telling It: (Nov. 1988) grants / on site arrangements*. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "Evaluations." *Telling It: (Nov. 1988) ads / flyer / brochure / evaluations / program pkg*. Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "June 21, 1988: Letter to Carol Geddes from Daphne Marlatt." *Telling it: (Nov. 1988) ads / flyer / brochure / evaluations / program pkg*. Simon Fraser U Archives.

- . "Proceedings." *Telling It: (Nov. 1988) Bibliography, Proceedings, Notes.* Simon Fraser U Archives.
- . "Registration List." *Telling It: (Nov. 1988) speakers, publishers, registration.* Simon Fraser U Archives.
- Wong-Chu, Jim. "A Brief History of the ACWW." *Rice Paper: The Newsletter of the Asian Canadian Writer's Workshop* 1.1 (1994): 1-2.
- Wong-Chu, Jim, and Bennett Lee, eds. *Many-Mouthed Birds.* Vancouver: McClelland & Stewart, 1991.
- Wong, Paul, et al. *Yellow Peril Reconsidered; Photo, Film Video.* Vancouver: On Edge, 1990.
- Wong, Rita. "Jumping on Hyphens: A Bricolage Receiving 'Genealogy/Gap,' 'Goods,' 'East Asian Canadian,' 'Translation' & 'Laughter.'" *The Other Woman: Women of Colour in Contemporary Canadian Literature.* Ed. Makeda Silvera. Toronto: Sister Vision P, 1995. 117-53.
- . *Monkeypuzzle.* Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1998.
- . "Press Gang Questions and Update." E-mail to the author. 10 Feb. 2006.
- . "Queerly (Can)Asian: Constructing Histories in Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* and Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night.*" *unpublished* (1999).
- Woodcock, George. *Strange Bedfellows: The State and the Arts in Canada.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985.
- Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own.* 1929. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1989.
- . *Three Guineas.* Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1979.
- Yaffe, Debby. "Re: Alternate Sp." E-mail to the author. 8 June 2008.
- Zimmerman, Bonnie. *The Safe Sea of Women: Lesbian Fiction 1969-1989.* Boston: Beacon, 1990.
- . "What Has Never Been: An Overview of Lesbian Feminist Criticism." *Feminist Studies* 7. 3 (1981): 451-75. Rpt. in *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory.* Ed. Elaine Showalter. New York: Pantheon, 1985. 200-224.