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The gentrification of gentrification
and other strategies of Toronto's creative class

by Adrian Blackwell

"When I first walked into the Drake in the summer of 2001, it was part flop-house and part crack house. I fell in love with the historic spiral stair-case — the centrepiece of the main lobby. I was struck by this touch of glamour in an otherwise seedy establishment. A perfect starting point, I thought, to create a democratic hub and cul-tural pathfinder, in the midst of a re-energized indie art gallery district."[1]

— Jeff Stober, owner and developer of the Drake Hotel

There Goes the Neighbourhood was a forum held at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre in the spring of 2005 to discuss gentrification in the context of the current development of Toronto's downtown neighbourhoods. The panel of invited speakers included: Susan Serran, director of Arts Programs and Services for Artscape, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving production space for artists that develops properties for reasonable rents; Rosemary Donegan, Toronto historian, curator and professor at the Ontario College of Art and Design; Lisa Rochon, writer and architecture critic for the Globe and Mail; and myself. The forum's mission statement implicated "artists and culture workers" as both agents and victims of these changes — acting as "indicator[s] of [an area's] cultural attractiveness," while often being priced out of the very "neighbourhoods that they have helped to establish."[2]

In response to the broad questions around the intersection of processes of *gentrification, local community* and *cultural activity*, panelists fell into different camps distinguished by their divergent definitions of these three terms. Lisa Rochon focused on the plight of artists displaced from gentrifying areas and on innovative solutions for producing artists' live/work space. Susan Serran cautioned against being overly critical of gentrification, arguing that we need to embrace change in order to produce a more creative city. Rosemary Donegan considered the relationship between artists and the neighbourhoods they have inhabited, privileging the complex fabric of the city over a simplified understanding of artist's requirements. And I argued that the class-defined process of gentrification destroys the potential for local communities made up of both artists and non-artists to produce diverse and meaningful culture.

These significant discursive differences produced a fractured dialogue of dissonant trajectories: *gentrification* defined as revitalization or modernization versus predatory displacement; *community* as the "creative community" on the one hand and a broad group of residents on the other; and *cultural activities* produced as cultural capital for the global economy against the local practices of existing residents. This, at times dysfunctional, conversation worked best as an illustration of the gulf that today divides cultural workers who appear at first glance to share many similar desires and intentions.

Over the last few years, North America has followed Europe in its realization that culture can function as a stimulus for urban development, and local governments are taking notice. *The Creative Spaces and Places* conferences initiated by Artscape, held twice in Toronto over the last three years, piggy-back on the popularity of Richard Florida's book *The Rise of the Creative Class,* arguing for the expediency of culture in contemporary urban politics. Florida argues that there is a clear statistical correlation between concentrations of bohemian communities and sites of profitability in the high technology industries that are at the forefront of the North American economy. This statistical resonance has given leverage to many groups interested in locating funding for culture, and as a result the concept of the "creative class" holds currency in the municipal politics of competitive cities. By highlighting the importance of art in a political realm, where it had until recently been losing value, Florida's arguments hold out great promise. At the same time, including cultural questions in discussions of urban change has the potential to substantially redefine culture itself. Perhaps what is at stake is contained in a question once posed by Walter Benjamin: is this an example of the emancipatory practice of politicizing aesthetics or of a regressive attempt to aestheticize politics?[3]

In the move towards the professionalization and empowerment of the arts in the urban scene, what kind of new mutually supportive relationships between art and local communities might be possible? Is the role of art primarily to stimulate economic growth with deleterious social effects, or is culture to be considered first as that complex lattice of diverse practices required to produce healthy social spaces from which new economic opportunities will follow? The answers to these questions are tied up in the stumbling block of gentrification, a concept that makes many downtown residents uncomfortable and a practice whose apparent inevitability inspires feelings of resignation amongst artists.

1. Gentrification Effects
What's wrong with gentrification?

The word "gentrification" was developed by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 to describe the makeover of city space inhabited by one class of people by another, more affluent, class. It was used to describe the process of turning working-class neighbourhoods into places for the gentry.[4] Over the last forty years, this clear definition has been refashioned as an ambiguous term that describes the slow improvement, revitalization or rebuilding of downtown neighbourhoods. In the process it has been cleansed of its literal focus on the issue of class and its localization in space. In what

geographer Neil Smith has called the gentrification of language,[5] right-wing ideologues have invested heavily in discrediting Glass' definition in an effort to disengage the transformative profit-generating aspects of gentrification from its predatory social processes. In North America, where many people believe the hard divisions of class were transcended long ago, and the right to own property acts as the founding principle for urban development, it has been possible to naturalize gentrification under the complex phenomena of urban change, where positive developments carry with them a few unavoidable side effects. The genius of this linguistic turn is that it allows people to frame development as disinterested revitalization, while implying the original meaning of gentrification at the same time. It names a process, defined not only by the desire to physically improve urban space in decline, but also to empty it of the stain of poverty. The gentrified term is perfect for Canadian politesse, stating one thing officially, yet suggesting exactly its opposite beneath the surface.

Drivers of gentrification: the value of land and inter-urban competition

While clarifying the term's definition provides us with a crucial linguistic tool for attacking regressive forms of urban development, it is not self-evident that all forms of downtown development constitute clear processes of gentrification. Many are complex processes with motivations and effects that must be unpacked. The fight against gentrification is not about resisting change but guiding it in a direction that improves living conditions for local residents.

Beyond this struggle over language and ideology are the mechanisms by which gentrification operates. Neil Smith argues that gentrification is driven by forces of capital at two distinct scales: the "rent gap" at the local scale and the competition between cities at the global scale. A rent gap, a significant difference between current ground rent, reflected in the price of property, and the potential ground rent under a changed situation of use, is the primary local mechanism for gentrification.

This differential is the basis for extracting profit in real estate speculation. It can be manufactured through the depreciation of land prices in a specific area due to landlord or municipal neglect, or through appreciation due to changed zoning, infrastructure improvements or the increased value of adjacent property. When driven by depreciation, the displacement caused by gentrification is the second part of a double humiliation, following on the heels of divestment and disrepair in a declining market.

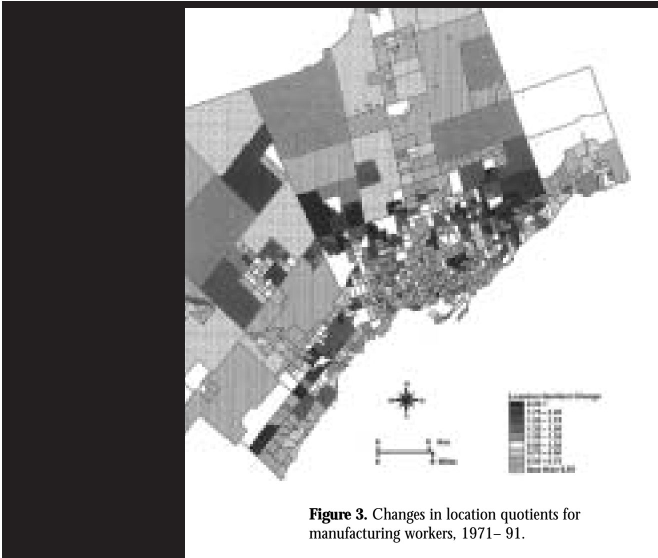


Figure 3. Changes in location quotients for manufacturing workers, 1971– 91.

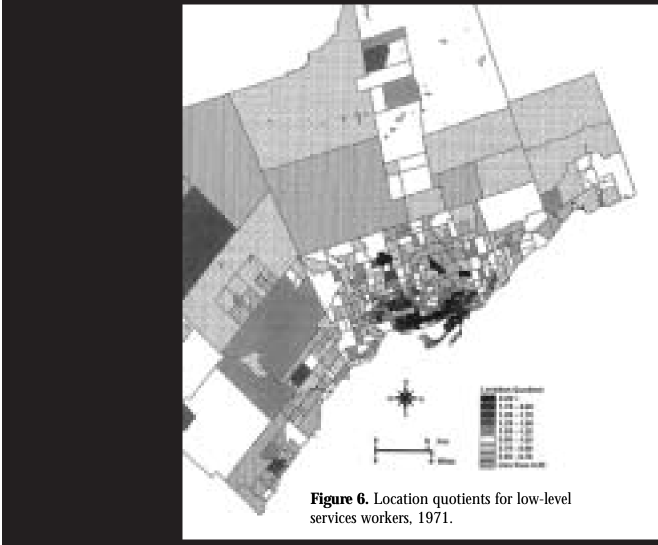


Figure 6. Location quotients for low-level services workers, 1971.

Toronto's current transformations are driven by both factors. Declining amenity for industrial tenants and the wear and tear on the historic fabric of working class neighbourhoods depreciated ground rents in areas adjacent to the downtown, causing landlords to forgo investment and await the greater profits available through redevelopment. In response, the city transformed land uses in the core in the mid 1990s, allowing residential and commercial functions in former industrial zones. In a project colloquially known as the "Two Kings" for its axis along King Street, industrial areas east and west of downtown were rezoned to mixed uses under the guidance of Mayor Barbara Hall and Chief Planner Paul Bedford. This change increased land value in these areas, spurring a real estate development boom in the downtown. Many small businesses and low-income tenants were evicted, to allow for renovations and upgrade, while others simply moved away as rents skyrocketed. At the same time, the public spaces of the neighbourhood changed until its recognizable spaces and forms were rendered entirely unfamiliar.

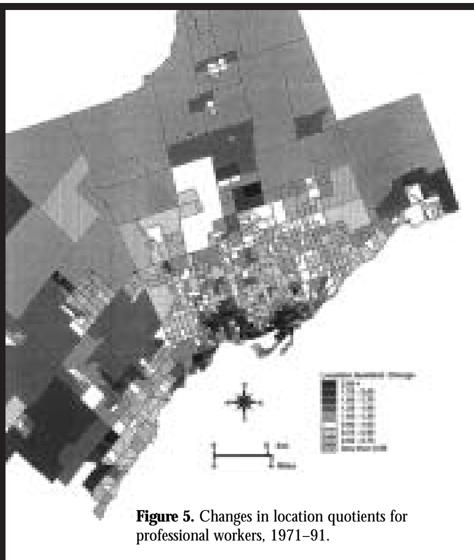


Figure 5. Changes in location quotients for professional workers, 1971–91.

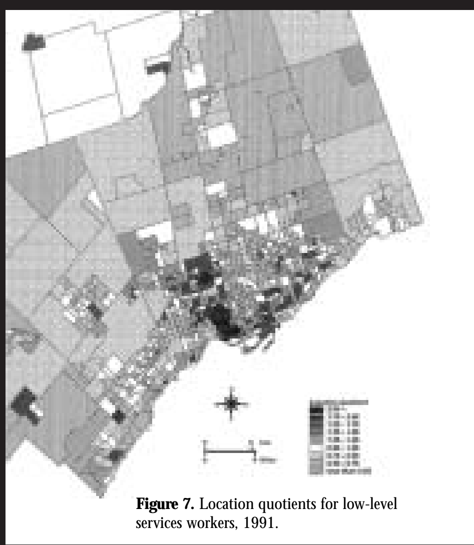


Figure 7. Location quotients for low-level services workers, 1991.

Maps reprinted from Allan Walks' "The Social Ecology of the Post-Fordist/Global City?" *Urban Studies* 38:3 (2001), pp. 407-447.

This process of redevelopment and the municipal policies that enabled it are not only the result of local development forces, but also of contemporary global processes: changing labour relations in a world market, radically improved telecommunications networks, their counterintuitive geographic centralization in urban spaces, and the move from industrial to financial investment as the driver of developed economies. Saskia Sassen has characterized these changes as reconfiguring the globe from a set of adjacent territories into a system of global cities, functioning as command and control centres for the global economy.[6] This change has made cities forms to be consumed, creating a new emphasis on the diverse qualities and affective experiences of leisure spaces and professional workplaces, rather than on the post-war demand for the accumulation of commodities that suburban expansion provided.

The abandonment of public funding for housing by national and provincial governments in the early 1990s marked a shift in emphasis that helped to increase potential ground rent in urban areas, encouraging the transformation of Canada's largest downtowns at the hands of foreign capital: Vancouver's False Creek development and Toronto's CityPlace were both developed by Concord Adex, a subsidiary of Lee Ka-shing's Hong Kong-based Cheung Kong. Canada is not, however, simply subject to capital from abroad. Local developers such as Toronto's Olympia and York pioneered immense downtown gentrification projects in New York's Battery Park City and London's Canary Wharf.

These projects act as evidence for gentrification as an increasingly lucrative strategy for capital accumulation, at moments when investment in commodity production tends toward a lower rate of return. In light of these local and global processes, gentrification takes on a meaning well beyond a subjective phenomenon driven by the tastes and predilections of individuals. More clearly, it is shown to be the result of changing circumstances and locations of profitability within worldwide real estate markets.

Spatial trajectories: local homogenization and social polarization

According to many local accounts, Toronto appears to be emerging into a spectacular cultural renaissance. Key architectural additions to local museums and schools by prominent architects, a new opera house, thriving commercial art districts and world-renowned festivals of film and literature all serve as evidence of tremendous changes. At the same time, news reports create the impression of a downward spiral of violent crime concentrated largely in the dispersed spaces of Toronto's mature high-density suburbs. These contradictory aspects of Toronto's current development should be understood as related effects of gentrification processes. On the one hand, gentrification has involved the physical reorganization of poverty and affluence within the Greater Toronto Area. This process has consolidated wealth in strategic areas of professional services, consumption and amenity, while concentrating poverty in fabric fragmented by industrial, warehousing and logistical infrastructure. On the other hand, gentrification is a tool in an ideological battle, remaking visible areas of the central city to create the image of a new more affluent city of leisure, while hiding marginal spaces from view.

In his study of the "social-ecology of the post-Fordist/global city," geographer Allan Walks makes it clear that Toronto was already much more spatially segregated by class in 1991 than it was in 1971.[7] In the restructuring of the 1970s and 80s, unionized industrial workers either lost their jobs and moved into service jobs, or if they remained employed in industry they tended to move out of the city proper into more distant exurban municipalities. During this same period, low-income service workers moved into those parts of the mature suburbs that industrial workers left behind. For their part, professional workers flooded previously working-class spaces downtown (see maps by Allan Walks). If this process was well underway in the 1970s and 1980s, it accelerated rapidly in the 1990s with Ontario's "Common Sense Revolution." These combined processes marginalized many Toronto residents in enclaves that are poorly serviced and far from employment opportunities. Low-income service workers are now concentrated in neighbourhoods that are separated from the rest of the city by highways, railways and ravines and internally fractured by a modernist urbanism of autonomous housing projects. This has produced enclosed communities in ways that the connected and open streets of the downtown grid do not.

So while high-density suburban zones function by default as reservations for immigrants, service workers and an unemployed labor reserve, Toronto's downtown is steadily changing from an ethnically and economically diverse space of cultural production into a homogeneous zone of consumption. This transformation is a war of both repressive strategies and spectacular aesthetics. Starting in the early 1990s, gentrification has been increasingly accompanied by the militarization of city streets. Mike Harris' provincial government reduced its interest in urban policy to the repressive "Safe Streets Act," following closely on policies pioneered by Rudy Giuliani in New York City with his zero tolerance for nuisance offences. This hostile attitude towards urban precarity has been reinforced at the municipal level by new policies of overtime policing, and a vigilant monitoring of vagrancy in downtown parks. The recent proposal to remove homeless Torontonians from Nathan Philips Square is the latest move in the momentum toward the disciplining of urban space.

However, every bad cop needs a good cop, so the corollary of the intensification of state violence in the city has been increased attention to the situation's optics. Recent interest in urban design and architecture is part of a process of making cities look good. The shift in zoning policy in the 1990s from modernist techniques of density and land use controls to a complete reliance on design guidelines, regulating form through height and setback limitations, is just one of many changes that have reoriented urban development toward appearances. These regulations operate ideologically, allowing a partial reality to materially dominate spaces of power, while the rest of the city remains untouched and abandoned.

If gentrification operates as a mature process in early twenty-first century Toronto, it remains to be seen how its processes will evolve as it consumes the city beyond the centre, colonizing new low-income neighbourhoods. So far, it is traveling northwest along the rail corridor, as former industrial sites adjacent to the tracks are remade as lofts and urban townhomes. A 2003 report written by Dr. Pamela Blais and published by the Neptis Foundation, a Smart Growth think tank based in Toronto,[8] has called attention to the poorest suburbs of Toronto, ironically claiming these densest of urban spaces as regions with excess capacity and highlighting them as potential sites for future intensification.[9] While the study happily projects attention toward areas that have been relegated to the urban unconscious, it does so without critically assessing the displacement that might result from aggressive development of these low-income neighbourhoods by the real estate market, raising the terrifying spectre of gentrification in Toronto's most marginalized suburban spaces.

2. The role of culture in gentrification Reform Toronto and the birth of the of the artist-run centre system

Since the early 1970s, the breaking point between Fordist and post-Fordist models of production, art infrastructures have gone through a set of transformations. In the 1960s, funding for the arts that began at the federal level in 1957 with the creation of the Canada Council was reevaluated to respond more closely to the demands and needs of practicing artists through "soundings" with the community. This process resulted in the initiation of artists-in-residence and short-term grants, the creation of the Art Bank and funding for "parallel" galleries, or artist-run centres, by the mid-1970s.[10] Much of the diversity and critical energy of Canada's art production since then can been seen as resulting from the limited autonomy afforded to artistic practices by these programs and other grants at the provincial and municipal levels.

The rise from the 1960s to the 1970s of a vocal community of artists expressing politicized demands coincides with the politicization of city spaces in Canadian urban centres. In Toronto, the 1970s mark the rise of demands for the preservation of downtown neighbourhoods. A broad coalition of Toronto residents including councillors like John Sewell, urban social critics like Jane Jacobs and architects like Jack Diamond and Barton Myers all argued for a moratorium on the construction of high-rise modernist housing projects on the east side of Toronto's core and the cancellation of the Spadina Expressway that would have overrun the Annex. These successful battles over urban space were part of a complex reorientation of urbanization toward the city, a shift that was radical in its concern for the agency of existing neighbourhoods and communities, but reactionary in its strategies of "white painting" and urban cleansing. With their architecturally innovative low-rise, medium-density "infill" urbanism, architects like Diamond and Myers tried to densify housing, while respecting the form of existing neighbourhoods. They produced some of the most innovative public housing projects of the period, such as Sherbourne Lanes and Hydro Block, while also renovating the existing fabric of Yorkville to produce York Square and helping to turn the neighbourhood from the countercultural scene it was then to the centre of consumption it is today.

As the Canadian focus on landscape painting, and its sublimation in abstract expressionism, gave way to more experimental practices of video, performance, film and architecture, artistic practices in Toronto were also urbanized. These incorporated the demands of women, homosexuals and class struggle through radical institutions such as *The Body Politic*, A Space, the Kensington Arts Association, The Funnel and many other new artist-run centres. These groups used the city as a laboratory. One of the most radical, the Centre for Experimental Arts and Communication (CEAC), was in 1977 the first artist run centre in Canada to buy a building to use as an experimental centre for video production, seminars, performances and screenings. In a 1973 article in *The Body Politic*, "hetero-burbia," Amerigo Marras, one of CEAC's founders, argued polemically that the suburbs operated as an intense apparatus of socio-sexual control, repressing communication between strangers. The corollary of his argument was that urban space afforded a sufficient combination of adjacency and anonymity, liberating new social potentials from existing societal structures.

Just as the 1970s emphasis on urban values in municipal politics stemmed from an alliance between conservatives, liberals and activists, the construction of an urban infrastructure of alternative art institutions, with funding from national, provincial and municipal governments, was also a process that aligned contradictory motivations. In her 1986 history of CEAC, Dot Tuer argued that the 1970s in Toronto were a time of radical discussion over the role of culture in society. Art's complicity with spectacular media and capitalist control was questioned by artists from Marxist, feminist, anarchist and autonomist perspectives. However, much of the energy behind these debates was suddenly cut short in the late 1970s after *The Body Politic*'s offices were raided by the RCMP and CEAC had its public funding cancelled as a result of its public support for the Italian Red Brigade in its publication *STRIKE magazine*. The arts community suddenly saw its own fortunes tightly bound to its access to public grants. This realization provoked a reactionary turn within artist-run centres, which began looking inward towards their own cultural struggles, rather than linking outward with like-minded social movements. The 1980s saw a turn from experimental practices toward the art market and traditional media like sculpture and painting.[11] This move away from the radical critique of culture did not provoke a move away from urban spaces by arts organizations, but it slowly changed the relationship they held with the city.

Municipal urban policies followed a similar trajectory toward privatization. The 1972 election of David Crombie's "reform council" in Toronto had focused the problem of urban regeneration on the provision of affordable housing through the "Mayor's Task Force on Housing." The most substantial result of the city's initiative was the St. Lawrence neighbourhood, a radical reversal of modernist public housing precedents. It was the first large-scale development in Canada to attempt to create a mixed income community, containing different tenures of housing and integrated with the fabric of the surrounding city. However, St. Lawrence stands as an isolated example, since no projects of similar ambition have been undertaken since. In 1992, Brian Mulroney's conservative government cut the cooperative housing programme; by 1993 the federal government stopped funding new housing; and then upon election in 1995, Mike Harris' conservative government completely cut public housing in Ontario, rendering the redevelopment of urban spaces an entirely free-market affair. This move finally left the city at the mercy of the forces of development, and by the late 1990s the municipal government was pursuing a project of gentrification with abandon, through its rezoning policies, planning approvals and aggressive policing.

Art as symbolic legitimation and the creative class as class discrimination

As Hans Haake has long argued through his sculptural practice, art is often asked to function as cultural legitimation for the most unsavory techniques of capitalist accumulation. Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Ryan's 1984

essay "The Fine Art of Gentrification" firmly directs this argument towards the gentrification of urban spaces, through an analysis of the overheated art market of the early 1980's on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Confirming Neil Smith's insistence that the ideological project of gentrification involves the construction of a wild and uninhabited frontier, Deutsche and Ryan deconstruct the aestheticization of dangerous urban space in the neo-expressionist work of many Lower East Side artists.[12] This process of othering is palpable in Jeff Stober's description of his own first discovery of the Drake Hotel in Toronto as a "seedy establishment…part flophouse and part crack house." In this narrative he self-identifies as yet another progressive urban pioneer attempting to restore value to historic urban spaces, while displacing housing for low-income criminals. This unsavory story might simply appear ridiculous to street-smart artists, were it not for the other half of Stober's argument: the new Drake will become a "democratic hub and cultural pathfinder, in the midst of a re-energized indie art gallery district." With the notable exception of the place's democratic qualities, this last sentence has been realized. The Drake has become a cultural centre on Queen Street, acting as a catalyst for other restaurants and bars and a marketing tool for adjacent condominium development.

Despite its large size in relation to most other entertainment developments along this section of Queen West, the Drake remains a relatively small player in the local real estate market. Projects such as the Candy Factory at Queen and Shaw, recent development along King from Strachan to Sudbury and the proposed redevelopment of the Queen Street Mental Health Centre, are the real drivers of urban regeneration here. However, the Drake brings with it what these other developments do not, the symbolic capital to draw the arts community on-side with the area's gentrification. In his own narrative Stober uses culture as surplus legitimation: not only will the area be cleaned up, free of crime and poverty, but better still it will have cultural value. By buying into the Drake's aggressive courtship through its artist-in-residency programs, music, lecture, performance and projection events, its in-house exhibitions, video programming in private hotel rooms and sponsorship of Power Plant events, the artistic community cynically validates the process of displacement at work in the neighbourhood. The Drake's program appears as a perverse inversion of CEAC's laboratory for the interrogation and refusal of societal forms of spectacular control.

Richard Florida's contemporary ideology of the creative class also inverts the 1970s identification of certain art workers with class struggle. Consisting of a broad group of arts, information, scientific research and financial workers, the creative class is always in search of the right living context. Talented and mobile, they will travel great distances to find a metropolis with the requisite cultural amenities. While Florida warns followers to be aware of the negative "externalities" lodged within creative cities — socio-economic polarization, high cost of housing and the resultant displacement of those creative people unlucky enough to form part of that class — he insists these crises are not structural, but are rather irrational deviations that can and must be solved within the theory. Unfortunately these externalities tend to disappear from sight as "Creative City" logic is taken up by municipal governments as a way of making their cities more competitive, and by arts organizations interested in wrestling scarce funding from governments and private donors. Florida's emphasis on the economics of his argument allows readers to focus on dollar signs, rather than side effects.

Artscape has jumped aboard Florida's creative cities train as an opportunity to further their agenda of serving and promoting artistic producers in the city. Like many arts organizations forced to accept an entrepreneurial model under the rubric of neo-liberalism, Artscape projects its activities in terms of their potential to intensify economic growth. After completing their building at 60 Atlantic Avenue in the heart of Liberty Village, Artscape claimed that "[t]his largely abandoned industrial area quickly became a hot spot for artists,

designers, filmmakers, and new media enterprises."[13] In this proud description of their role as catalyst for the gentrifying effects of subsequent developments, they are deliberately silent on the fact that many affordable artists' studios were lost in the conversion of inexpensive industrial space to high-rent office space.

To ramp up their own activities in a political climate curious about the potential of culture, Artscape recently hosted the second installment of *Creative Places and Spaces — The Risk Revolution,* "a conference dedicated to unlocking the creative potential of people and places through innovative initiatives."[14] The danger imbedded in the fervour of Artscape's creative boosterism, in a city suffering from intense social polarization, is that the creative class will be reified as an exploitive social group, with artists fixed as the spectacular service class for the attraction of elite professionals in high tech and media sectors. In a creative city, profitable creativities are privileged, as a result the creative class is subsidized, while other producers are not. The creative class here plays out Amerigo Marras' argument of thirty years ago, "The artist defends the privilege and the entrenchment he/she holds in a capitalist society."[15]

New directions for creative inquiry

The irony of the creative class is that most artists are bottom feeders, making little money from their craft. While many come from middle-class backgrounds, are relatively privileged, and can afford to risk years of their lives in anonymity, a large number are not and bravely forge a practice in situations of much greater precarity. Most remain objectively poor while working as artists. For this reason, the promise of the creative class in its colloquial usage is another strategy designed to divide the poor into haves and have-nots, giving small doses of privilege to some, at the expense of others, as a way of undermining class-consciousness. In their collaborative works, political philosophers Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have discovered a similar group of "social workers," exploited participants in an increasingly communicative and globalized labour pool, but they argue for a very different class allegiance for these workers, as elements of an exploited multitude of the waged and unwaged. For Hardt and Negri the social worker is not at the top of a power structure, but rather remains subject to the alienating structures of control in a world of postmodernization, and as such has to shake her or his sense of privilege and find solidarity with other exploited workers.[16]

There are many different kinds of artistic practices that try to think creatively about the city without prioritizing creative change over local communities. Last fall, Morton Goll and Tone Nielson created the *Niagara Falls Artist Host Program* at Mercer Union. It was an ambitious project that attempted to link new immigrant artists with no connections to Toronto's art scene to downtown artists through a buddy system, an art exhibit of the works of both groups and a series of events with No One is Illegal, an activist organization fighting for the rights of immigrants. The project inverted the distanciation dynamic of gentrification, by connecting poor immigrants and longtime residents in a productive collaboration sharing knowledge and power. Given Toronto's current concentrations of new immigrant spaces and spaces of poverty in mature high density suburbs, the project created a linking device between high-profile gentrifying spaces and those marginalized spaces that populations have been relegated to. A similar project realized last year by the Art Gallery of Ontario's teen council called Metro-A-Go-Go brought local artists in contact with youth at community centres across the GTA to work on collaborative projects focused on their localities, bringing youth downtown and artists into the nether reaches of the city.

Regent Park Focus, a program intended to keep youth away from addictive drugs in Toronto's oldest housing project, has created a radical training ground for youth media — producing video, a newspaper, a radio show, and local photography. The project aims to transform a neighbourhood from within, improving local access to information and education, focusing on the empowerment of a community threatened by displacement.

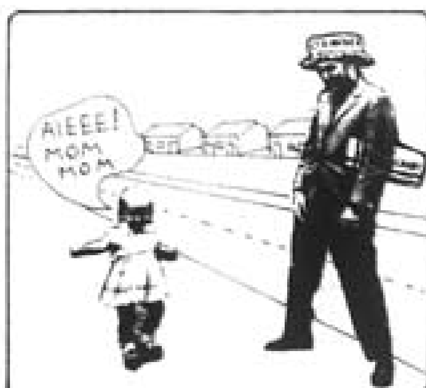
Finally, The Toronto School of Creativity & Inquiry is an autonomous working group, organizing public forums and exhibitions. It has focused on the precarity of work in contemporary flexible economies, food security, the privatization of the university, contemporary transformative tactics and mapping globalization. This organization, working from both an academic and aesthetic perspective, often in collaboration with the Toronto Free Gallery in the east end, works to politicize aesthetics through an experiment in public discourse, at a moment when the city as a whole is privatizing public and counter-public spheres through processes of gentrification.

Through creative city rhetoric artists are being empowered to consider their effects on the transformation of the city. In order to fight the class-defined displacement and polarization that is the result of gentrification, artists have to find models of solidarity with urban communities outside their own solipsistic enclaves. In that choice they define the character of their practice and participate in forming the city around them. This means not arguing for the rights of artists alone, or for a creative city as an end in itself, but rather understanding that it is precisely the city's complexity in terms of class, race and culture that provides the foundation for those possibilities of substantive artistic experimentation and creativity that do exist.

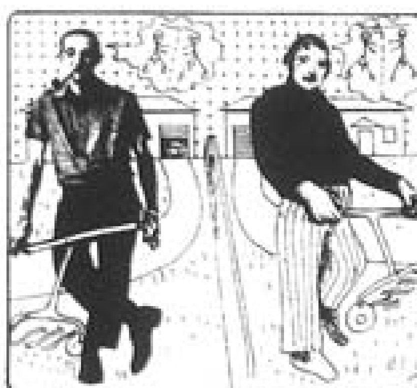
Adrian Blackwell is an artist and urban and architectural designer whose work focuses on the uneven development of contemporary urbanization. This fall he participated in the Shenzhen Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture. With Jen Budney, Blackwell co-edited Unboxed: engagements in social space, *a book of lectures and projects by artists working between the disciplines of architecture and performance. He teaches urban design and architecture at the University of Toronto.*

Notes:

1. Jeff Stober, "Our story" (http://www.thedrakehotel.ca/ourstory.asp).
2. View Points: *There Goes the Neighbourhood* was co-produced by Harbourfront Centre and FUSE Magazine and held at Harbourfront Centre on 7 April 2005. Quotes are from a press release issued by Harbourfront 31 March 2005.
3. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Shocken Books, 1969), p. 242.
4. Neil Smith *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 33.
5. Ibid.
6. See Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
7. Allan Walks, "The Social Ecology of the Post-Fordist/Global City? Economic Restructuring and Socio-spatial Polarisation in the Toronto Urban Region" *Urban Studies* 38:3 (2001), pp. 407–447.
8. The Neptis Foundation's executive director is Anthony Coombs, an architect and urbanist instrumental in the creative reconstruction of global urban space through gentrification, in New York through Battery Park City and in London at Canary Wharf.
9. Pamela Blais "The Growth Opportunity" a report published by the Neptis Foundation for consideration by the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel established by the Government of Ontario and entitled the Growth Opportunity.
10. http://www.canadacouncil.ca/aboutus/history/
11. Dot Tuer, "The ceac was banned in Canada" in *C Magazine 11* (1986), pp. 22-37.
12. Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Gendel Ryan, "The Fine Art of Gentrification," *October* 31 (1984), pp. 91-111.
13. http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/history/
14. http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/cps/
15. Tuer, p. 24.
16. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 402.



Children are trained to mistrust every-body, they belong to the nuclear family AMEN!



The lack of physical barriers hides instead a wall of fear and hate: nobody embraces his/her neighbours.

Single family houses remind one of the pattern of prison cells sharing the same conformity and TV set.

Amerigo Marras, "Hetero-burbia," reprinted from *The Body Politic* 7 (Winter 1973), p. 25.