Toward a Politics of Municipal Homonationalism in Brampton, Ontario

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Abstract

The politics of homonationalism play a significant role in 2SLGBTQ+ community formation. Homonormative figurations of white, middle-class gays shape the terms of belonging and engagement in both sanctioned and grassroots discourses. Discursive homonormative formations create greater impacts felt beyond citizenship. Emplaced within suburban municipalities such as Brampton, specific impacts register in urban policy, urban planning practice, and public participation. Municipally sanctioned discourses and subsequent governance practices manage diversity as an abstract concept in ways that limit how diversity can be expressed. Queer and trans communities of colour in Brampton have felt the impact of this limited articulation of their intersections most presciently. Limiting the authorship of diversity to selected groups enacts a prioritization that can be interpreted as an expression of white supremacy when the organizations given special license to develop 2SLGBTQ+ diversity are homonormative, white, middle-class gays. Analyzing the municipal discourses that prefigured this arrangement in Brampton, as well as the discourses of resistance to homonormative politics allows this paper to explore the antecedent politics of homonationalism, and the queer and trans communities of colour resisting its persistence into the future. I argue that through a series of urban policies, planning documents, and the use of diversity as an economic development imperative, the City of Brampton has facilitated community development that foregrounds homonational subjectivities. I also argue that QTBIPOC (Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) have resisted these subjectivities through a practice of care that illuminates how 2SLGBTQ+ community can thrive.

Foreword

This paper is the result of a plan of study that integrated a series of learning components which guided my learning while a student in the Environmental Studies program at York University. My Area of Concentration is "Resisting Municipal Homonationalism in Planning and Politics" and this paper is the cumulative assemblage of knowledge derived from my learning objectives. The components of my studies included: neoliberalism, governance, and municipalities; queer citizenships: homonationalism and homonormativity; and urban planning and the politics of space. This paper also fulfills the combinatory learning objectives to develop my knowledge of urban planning processes, queer theory, and neoliberalism in a way that allows me to articulate the research I completed.

I draw from these components, and my own experiences as a former resident of Brampton who lived in the city for eighteen years, as well as being a 2SLGBTQ+ activist and community organizer in the municipality. My lived experiences informed the direction of my studies in the program, and my focus in this paper. I draw heavily from queer theory, specifically homonormativity and homonationalism to develop my argument. These currents of thought are inflected with an understanding of municipal governance as it is impacted by neoliberalism and market rationalities. Learning ethnographic methodologies provided me with an understanding of practices that would illuminate the threads of discourse that I analyzed to uncover iterations of homonationalism both within and informing the municipal governance of Brampton.

My Area of Concentration facilitated an in-depth engagement in scholarship that helped me to understand the conceptualization of homonormativity and homonationalism, and articulate the specificity with which they affect communities. Conducting the research in Brampton within this topic allowed me to expand my knowledge of how complex urban processes are, and how even the best intentions do not always produce a generative path forward for municipalities. I have learned in the Environmental Studies program, and in the process of writing this paper that community development must be focused on dismantling oppressive structures while looking towards a future with hope. My desire is that this research demonstrate how seemingly banal policy-making best practices do not hold as much possibility on their own, as they do when shaped by QTBIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ lived experiences and knowledge.

Acknowledgement and dedication

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I would like to dedicate this paper to the activists whom I organized alongside, and who have taught me more than I ever thought possible about how to care for one another in a way that helps community grow. Before I ever considered grad school, who you are, how you care so deeply, and the work you have done were among my most important teachers. Thank you for everything you do for 2SLGBTQ+ and QTBIPOC community in Peel. Brampton, Mississauga, and Caledon are incredible cities because of you.

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1. Introduction: research background, methods, and lines of inquiry

Living in Brampton for eighteen years inflects this paper with personal meaning, and experiences in academia provided a frame through which to understand the processes I was seeing. The suburbs are equally part of this paper and who I am because I have lived within them for my entire life. Abstractly, the suburbs are often perceived as a homogenous, consumer-friendly playground for nuclear families, which spatializes middle class interests. This is partly true, though where the suburban boundary meets urbanization processes, and 2SLGBTQ+ community, the horizons of suburban life are expansive. Brampton is a rapidly expanding city, in which development and population growth are taking place at corollary dizzying speeds. Community organizations are not far behind regarding how their growth has helped to establish 2SLGBTQ+ visibility, and presence in Brampton's sprawling suburbs. Parallel to the municipality's expansion, another set of struggles arrive from within the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Tensions mark the struggle between promises of 2SLGBTQ+ visibility and inclusion as hallmarks of equality, and the lived realities of racialized 2SLGBTQ+ people whose oppression is not solely based on the right to marry or upon visibility alone. The politics of municipal homonationalism are apparent where these mainstream 2SLGBTQ+ interests, aligned with the white, homonormative, middle class gays, did not address the oppressions facing QTBIPOC (Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) community in Brampton. Political divides of this nature do more to separate, than cohere community, though the processes of racialization that mark the politics of homonationalism are occluded through a politics of acceptability that rely on respectable subjectivities. Built forms that shape homonational politics alongside community organizing characterize the specific municipal homonationalism at work in Brampton. Understanding the power relations, and series of discourses that created these politics required a specific focus in my research questions. After establishing the questions used to write this paper, I clarify terms and their uses in this paper. Finally, I focus on both methods and methodological principles used in my writing and research. The principles address my positionality as a white, queer, non-binary, neurodivergent person doing the research. Thus, this introductory chapter emplaces the research while

also delineating the research process. Chapter two elaborates a theoretical intervention that traces a line through the conceptual relationships between homonationalism, neoliberal rationality, and suburban life. Chapter three shows how discourses of diversity and inclusion were operationalized through economic development imperatives that prioritized white, homonormative gay people as necessary to a thriving economy. The third chapter also demonstrates how governance limits the production of knowledge about diversity, which impacts how it is recognized and amplified. Chapter four outlines how the case study of Peel Pride has acted out an ascendant whiteness through white supremacy and a single-issue lens that centres white, homonormative gay people in Brampton's 2SLGBTQ+ community. I present findings in this chapter that reveal specific patterns of (dis)engagement with QTBIPOC communities that can be read through theorizations of white supremacies. My paper is situated at the intersection of multiple disciplines including geography, environmental studies, and suburban studies and deploys feminist, queer and trans theory.

The primary research question that guided the development of this paper is: How do non-governmental organizations, and neoliberal municipal governance construct homonormative whiteness as the default queer identity, invisibilizing the depth, vibrancy, and diversity of 2SLGBTQ+ community life in Brampton? Wanting to understand not just the particularities of white supremacies in 2SLGBTQ+ community organizing, I have also reflected upon questions that can help to disrupt municipal homonationalism: What do queer communities in Brampton need to thrive and create self-determined spaces to flourish?; How do Brampton's queer communities resist the dominant narratives that serve to reify whiteness while erasing forms of queer racialized thriving and contributions to local organizing? These questions outline a homonational subjectivity that is based upon the ascendancy of whiteness as produced by white supremacies in Brampton. They also help to focus on how QTBIPOC community formation not only creates community for QTBIPOC people, but also provides a framework of care, showing what community organizing in queer and trans communities can look like when divested from white supremacist logics, principles, and cultures.

Terminology used in this paper is mostly straightforward, though there are a few definitions that are important to highlight. I define whiteness as a race, that is often viewed as outside of racialization, or as not being a race at all, but rather, a cultural frame. Hage (2016) defines whiteness in a way that I use as a frame within this paper. He writes that whiteness "is a fantasy position of cultural dominance born out of the history of European expansion" (p.20). Thus, white supremacy as part of the ascendancy of whiteness, in this paper means the supremacy of white people, ideas, and often, Eurocentricity (Okun, et. al, n.d.; Bonds and Inwood, 2016), that operates through unseen, everyday processes (Gillborn, 2006; Bonds and Inwood, 2016) enforcing Black and racialized inferiority (Kharem, 2006) which is based on a mistaken belief that white people are more deserving than others, entitled by their race (Pulido, 2000; Pulido, 2015). Bonds and Inwood (2016) specify that white supremacy is separate from historical events, and that it is "the foundational logic of the modern capitalist system" (p.720) which is also "the *defining logic* of both racism and privilege as they are culturally and materially produced" (ibid.). I also note that within these definitions it does not matter whether someone believes in racialized inferiority because the nature of systemic inequity benefits white people disproportionately. It is a complicated, if not an impossible endeavour to singularly define white supremacy, and my intervention does not limit how it may form in Brampton in the future, nor does it aim to define white supremacy altogether because it may form in ways that I as a white person cannot presently understand or appreciate. In addition to defining white supremacy, it is important to clarify my use of the terms 2SLGBTQ+, queer, and queer and trans.

2SLGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirit and more) contains many variations, though I have experienced it as a term that allows for normative assignation despite 2SLGBTQ+ community historically defying heternorms. I use the term "queer" in a similar political capacity to Kinsman and Gentile (2010) "to point towards the diverse social character of sexual and gender practices and identifications that do not fall under the rigid categories of "homosexual". "lesbian", "gay", "bisexual", or "heterosexual"- or even "male" and "female"" (p.5). In this sense, queer encompasses the acronym 2SLGBTQ+ as well as other sexual identity categories. I recognize that there is no simple way of defining my community because I have seen the diversity of sexual orientations,

identities, and expressions it contains. My intention is not to limit these expressions, but to communicate the existence of the community in an environment that has, as this paper shows, a history of being inhospitable and antagonistic towards its intersections. Within the 2SLGBTQ+ community, my reference to QTBIPOC community specifies Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous People of Colour. I also use queer and trans of colour, or racialized queer and trans community interchangeably in order to avoid a linguistic essentialism that refuses to see queer and trans intersections beyond the acronym QTBIPOC. Establishing the methods used to research this paper, beyond terminology is an important way to understand how I use the terms defined in this section.

Methodological framework

My research paper uses qualitative data to analyze queer and trans communities in the suburban municipality of Brampton. The qualitative data is informed by quantitative census statistics, and municipal demographic data. The primary sources of data are discourses within municipal documents (City Council and Committees of Council minutes, official plans, policies, and reports) as they relate to 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Municipal discourse included twenty years of City Council and Committees of Council meeting minutes, social media posts by politicians, official plans, by-law reviews, and planning documents intended to guide the (re)development of the municipality. Interviews were originally part of the research, though this was disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, and physical distancing requirements. Additionally, many civil servants were unavailable during this period which made the sample size too small to be meaningful. Qualitative data traced the context, and function of queer inclusion through official meetings, and policy. Council and Committees of Council minutes, as well as policies, plans (e.g., *2040 Vision Plan* and *Culture Master Plan*), and reports were found on the City of Brampton's digital repositories. City Council and Committees of Council minutes were searched for specific keywords (e.g., pride, lesbian, gay, bisexual, LGBT, transgender, transgendered (considering dated and transphobic use of the word), peel pride, pride committee of peel, gay straight alliance, homosexuality, and homosexual) related to 2SLGBTQ+ people in order to understand how the

municipality discussed members of this community. The only keywords mentioned by City Council between 2000 to 2016 were "gay", "Peel pride", the "Pride Committee of Peel", and "pride" which appeared annually after the launch of the Pride Committee of Peel's annual picnic in 2001. After the launch of the Inclusion and Equity Committee in 2015, this mention increased because of the presence of an 2SLGBTQ+ role therein. My analysis revolved around understanding the context and power relations that underscored the keyword mentions and their absence as well as the relationships between community groups, and municipal documents that produced them. Emerging from the context of the keywords, were metaphors for 2SLGBTQ+ life that were intelligible when comparing discourses between 2000-2016 and 2016-2020 when 2SLGBTQ+ keyword mentions increased. The creative economy was the most substantial, given the background that informed its integration, particularly Florida's (2005) "3 T's" of attracting technology investments including tolerance that manifests in homonormative gay people. The specific quantity of keyword mentions did not provide enough material for analysis, and I therefore incorporate a content analysis to understand the context, and relationships between municipal documents. Interpreting these findings narrates the development of 2SLGBTQ+ community, and the equal formation of QTBIPOC community (and their resistance to homonormative gay subjectivities) within it. Municipal documents helped provide a background context, and analyzing social media posts by the local non-profit community organizations QTBIPOC Sauga, Moyo, Rainbow Salad, and Peel in Colour further illuminated these contexts.

Social media platforms provide a way for community to cohere and develop outside the bounds of traditional spaces. The digital realm allows community to form, but it also helps articulate a discourse different from the mainstream of Peel Pride and the City of Brampton, in a self-determined articulation of identity, and lived experience. I use social media posts as a secondary, supporting text to understand how mainstream discourses were being challenged through the digital realm. The public social media pages of QTBIPOC Sauga, Moyo, Rainbow Salad Peel (a digital hub created by Moyo), and Peel in Colour are the source of posts analyzed in this paper. I collected posts between 2016 to 2020 and analyzed their texts,

comparing them to the discourses created through municipal documents and social media pages of Peel Pride, and Pride Week in Peel. Collection methods included copying the text from the post, and saving screenshots to analyze the visual content. Pink et. al (2016) describe a digital ethnography which informed my understanding of how the digital realm can be used as a storytelling tool for marginalized communities. It provided a way for me to understand lived experiences outside of traditional interview formats. Focusing on digital discourses expressed on social media was necessary to understand QTBIPOC resistance to homonormative white gay cultural production in Brampton. Unlike the City of Brampton's officially produced texts, there were no specific repositories to understand what else was being said about, or through 2SLGBTQ+ community beyond the mainstream of Peel Pride. Social media posts were a way to access the lived experiences of some QTBIPOC community members and analysis of them illuminated the invisibility and erasure facing QTBIPOC community. To confront the ongoing history of erasure and obfuscation, I also made it part of my research practice to save PDF formatted screen captures of all of Peel Pride's web pages and social media pages during the time this paper was written, to ensure that the data did not become relegated to a local organizing mythos or to my personal opinion with a simple website edit. This is not to place redress out of reach, but rather to ensure that my research practice challenged the discursive ease with which stories can be re-written or changed to obfuscate truths.

Methodologically I also relied on specific principles that guided my research. In particular, this included staying with the trouble and discomfort that the research presented (Haraway, 2016); focusing on the generative capacity of QTBIPOC community rather than harm which alludes to the need to be saved (Tuck, 2009), disrupting the tendency to review community histories through the lens of "evidencing" (Muñoz, 2019, p.27) that simply produces the evidence of a historical existence rather than the systems that created invisibility; and disrupting white framing (Feagin, 2020). These methodological principles are situated in scholarship that highlights the importance of maintaining an awareness of my positionality through theoretical interventions. Haraway (2016) invites us to stay with the trouble of the

Anthropocene, and her evocation of discomfort illuminates an important method regarding my positionality in this paper. I take Haraway's (2016) call as outlining an ethic of sticking with the hard questions that I often had to ask myself about my work, and myself while researching QTBIPOC communities. I based my paper in as much queer and trans of colour scholarship as I could to do the necessary and deliberate work of dislocating whiteness from theorizations about communities in Brampton that are mostly racialized. Tuck (2009) invites researchers to stop viewing marginalized communities through the lens of "damaged" to challenge the notion that they are in a continuous state of repair requiring saving, rather than generative. Staying with the trouble of this paper meant interrogating how and if my work reproduced "damage-centered research" which Tuck (2009) explains, "operates, even benevolently, from a theory of change that establishes harm or injury in order to achieve reparation" (p.413). It was important to outline this as a methodological principle so that my paper focused on the invisibilizing processes that the findings reflected were part of white supremacy, but that it would also demonstrate that Brampton's QTBIPOC community is already articulating its growth. Staying with the trouble (Haraway, 2016) is also an ethic of discomfort that was necessary to continue dismantling my own complicity in the systems that have historically benefitted my whiteness, and continue to do so. While nearing the completion of this paper I was faced with another opportunity to understand how white supremacy is not something that we escape because we write about it, or learn about it in a way that compels us to produce an academic product for scholarly consumption. I understood that regardless of how much knowledge my neurodiversity allows me to absorb, there are still several processes, and ways of engaging in the world that I am still unlearning. Another of these principles includes moving beyond the act of simply presenting evidence of harm through research and focusing instead on the capacity of community. "Evidencing" (Muñoz, 2019, p.27) cautions against historicization that does not address uneven power relations and situate a practice of remembering based only on presenting compelling evidence. While interpreting the findings, and writing the story of municipal homonationalism in Brampton, Muñoz's (2019) intervention prioritized a view of the systems affecting the evidence of erasure in the archive of community history. The nature of the temporal queer and trans of colour slippage

in Brampton means that remembering alone does not change the systems that produced QTBIPOC community as a surplus of the white homonormative gay community that Peel Pride manufactured. It also disrupts the idea that equity is simply a matter of resource parity, rather than a situated redistribution thereof that looks toward a queer horizon that neither abandons, nor relies upon the past to structure the future.

My positionality as a white researcher and activist played a significant role in my decision to employ queer of colour theorizations as methodological principles to prevent harm. While analyzing the findings, and interpreting the data, I used the concept of the "white racial frame" (Feagin, 2020, p.5) to understand how my gaze may impact QTBIPOC communities in Brampton, and even the interpretation of my findings. I do not intend to essentialize the parameters of research, though Pulido (2002) summarizes this sentiment by stating "this does not mean that whites cannot empathize, research, or stand in solidarity with those who are racially subordinated, but it does mean that the voices and experiences of nonwhites are almost always filtered through a white lens" (p.46). Therefore, even though I find myself at intersections that can relate to oppression, my writing and research will always flow through a white lens. The complicated positionality of my work necessitates more than a basic methodological review because, as Feagin (2020) writes "we need more powerful concepts like *systemic racism* and the *white racial frame* that enable us to move beyond the limitations of conventional social scientific approaches" (p.12). Beyond platitudinal overtures, I bring these principles into my methodology out of respect for the queer and trans people of colour whose work I was fortunate enough to learn from during the research process.

2. Theorizing municipal homonationalism and queer suburbanisms

This chapter establishes an interdisciplinary analytical vocabulary with which to explain the formulation of a municipal homonationalism and how neoliberal rationality can characterize queer suburbanisms. Different disciplinary frames – geography, environmental studies, suburban studies, feminist studies, as well as queer and trans theory- can be used to bring epistemologically disparate processes together to understand how homonationalism establishes itself in a municipal context. Homonationalism is a theoretically layered analytic frame that articulates 2SLGBTQ+ subjectivities (Puar, 2006, 2008, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2015, 2017; Puar and Rai, 2020), through homonormative valuations of sexual citizenship (Awwad, 2015; Bell and Binnie, 2000; Bell and Valentine, 1995; Cossman, 2007; Dryden and Lenon, 2015; Duggan, 2002; Phelan, 2001; Plummer, 2003; Wahab, 2015), which relies on a form of neoliberal exceptionalism (Dryden and Lenon, 2015) in order to configure the ideal 2SLGBTQ+ citizen. Broadly, I understand homonationalism in the municipal context, to be a Foucauldian invocation of biopolitics and power relations that illuminate citizenship discourses. Homonationalism articulated further in the Canadian context outlines the "foundational Canadian national mythologies that inscribe whiteness as the embodiment of legitimate citizenship and belonging" (Dryden and Lenon, 2015, p. 5). Dryden and Lenon, (2015) delineate some of the ways in which whiteness and sexual identities come to be inscribed in the nation. They write that "such processes include the incorporation of lesbian and gay identities into economic and legal registers, where equality becomes linked with individual freedom, access, opportunity, and choice, and where private property not only of objects owned but also one oneself becomes constitutive of self-worth" (p.5). When homonationalism is situated within a city, it takes on a local character that employs these processes in service to the nation state as well as to provincial and municipal government. Local narratives of exceptionalism for example, are upheld through the work of non-profits and the non-profit industrial complex (INCITE, 2017; Beam, 2018). These supports provide municipalities with a way of negating the possibility that they are responsible for perpetuating exclusions based on racial difference, based on the number of people that feel included around the operation of local non-profits. Stern and Hall's (2015) "proposal economy"

exemplifies another way that municipal neoliberalism creates a different avenue through which homonationalism is articulated locally. Understanding the specific nature of homonationalism requires a review of the literatures spanning the conceptual constellation within which homonationalism orbits.

Municipal homonationalism

Discursive subjectivities: governmentality, biopolitics, and power relations

Foucauldian conceptualizations at the interstices of governmentality, biopower, and power relations that are reified by the apparatus (Foucault, 1980; 1990; 2003; 2004) form the basis of the theoretical framework in this paper. Brown's (2015) explanation of governmentality simply as the methodologies of governance, provides a starting point in which to analyze uneven power relations at work in Brampton. Dean (2010) and Brown (2015) take up Foucauldian governmentality in ways that illuminate the pretense and precision with which homonationalism operates in everyday life. Governance in this sense refers to the seemingly distant realm of federal legislation that scales downward to the municipal forms of government that manage policy and by-law creation. It can also refer to the ways that non-governmental organizations (NGO's) are required to conduct themselves in limited relation to the provincial state. Governmentality can take on the effect of what Puar (2012) calls "diversity management" which she suggests is "an alibi for the re-centering of white liberal feminists" (p.54). Theoretical frameworks that ground this management of diversity in my paper as relating to Foucauldian power relations signals another relationship between securitization, surveillance, and knowledge production. Dean (2010) for example, provides a conceptual explanation of how the state creates varied subjectivities which creates a conceptual pathway for the ideals of homonationalism to come to the fore of municipal governance. He explains Foucauldian "apparatuses of security" (p.29) defined as the institutional tools that secure "proper functioning of the economic, vital and social processes that are found to exist within that population" (ibid). Apparatuses of security are manifold, though one of the more powerful tools, as revealed in this paper, is discourse. Where discourse is embedded within power relations, it takes on a weaving character such that it appears nowhere and everywhere at the same time.

Foucault (1990) outlines the connection between power relations and discourse. Specifically, he explores the ways that power shapes and strengthens knowledge through discourse. Foucault (1990) writes of discourse that it is "a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy" (p.101) wherein it limits power's reach and "exposes it, renders it fragile and make it possible to thwart it" (ibid). Where Foucault outlines the helpful uses of a discourse analysis, Mills (2004) provides a subsequent discourse handbook for challenging power relations. She delineates and demonstrates the mechanics of discourse, the power relations that legitimize and normalize it, and the ideologies best served by its capacities. Contrasting the construction of authority in discourse, Applebaum (2010) explains that critique as a form of resistance operates "from within rather than external to existing discourse structures" (p.188). Furthermore, she articulates that this form of discursive resistance illuminates the "regimes of truth and discursive practices they allow" (p.188) which lends helpful insights into the discursive, social construction of the subject. The question of how a subject becomes knowable, and more importantly how a subject comes to know itself, elucidates the relationship between biopolitics and discourse in knowledge production. I make these theoretical interventions in the context of Brampton to understand how subjects are created both through silence and amplification as part of a cyclical process of knowledge production. The production of knowledge in this paper relates to how rights discourses have shaped the cisgender and heteronormative understandings of 'ideal' 2SLGBTQ+ citizens. It is at this point that homonormativity marks a useful place to bring my theoretical framework into discourses of subjectivity through mechanisms of legislation and human rights.

Legislation, queer and trans rights discourse, and the homonormative subject

Biopolitics have varied applications, transcending disciplinary boundaries that established its relationship to a few epistemes. Mills (2018) chronicles the interdisciplinary journey that biopolitics has taken, specifically its early Foucauldian applications. She articulates that Foucauldian biopolitics are concerned with the government's management of the life of the political subject, including how said political subject is constructed. The intersection of biopolitics and homonationalism, according to Puar

(2008) include a focus on the white European subject which becomes "engendered through scientific observation, classification and taxonomy, the production of data, detail, and description, leading to the micromanagement of information and bodies" (p.44). Chow's (2002) concept of "the ascendancy of whiteness" (p.3) is taken up by Puar (2008; 2017) as a central mechanism of homonationalism, and one in which it renders intelligible subjects as white. For Puar (2008) the ascendancy of whiteness involves the careful and precise management of populations and ensuring that multiculturalism is at once a source of recognition and promise. Whiteness, as part of its ongoing ascendancy was inscribed into marriage rights as a biopolitical tool designed to ensure that white people are the beneficiaries of the state. Further to Puar's (2008) conceptualization of homonationalism as relying on the work of biopolitics to create subjects, Rohrer (2018) writes of "marriage as a biopolitical technology that is part of organizing populations into differential access to resources for health, safety, and survival" (p.51). Rohrer's explanation clarifies the role of Duggan's (2002) concept of homonormativity within homonationalism, particularly where it concerns the formulation of normative, and non-normative subjects. Duggan (2002) defines homonormativity as a relation that "does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption" (p.50). Homonormativity then, uses the biopolitical technology of marriage to create a subject that becomes worthy of the benefits that come from being "folded into", which is then used by the state to justify and undertake national projects. Puar (2013a) notes in this vein that homonormative marriage rights "have become a barometer by which the right to and capacity for national sovereignty is evaluated" (p.336). The fight for recognition and rights for 2SLGBTQ+ people was played out in juridical theatre that limited the discourse which could create 2SLGBTQ+ subjects. Legislative changes under the banner of "gay rights" have shifted the terrain of cultural values upon which the suburbs were built, to include gay couples in the heteronormative fold. Marriage rights in Canada specifically, were won within a settler-colonial context that shapes the genealogy of homonationalism in Canada. Kinsman and Gentile (2010) characterize the specific nature of settler homonationalism in Canada within which the single-issue turn took place. He

notes that "these shifts occurred within a settler homonational context, where an earlier opposition to Canadian national security and sexual policing grew to identify with Canadian nation-state formation based on the colonisation of indigenous peoples" (p.117). It also allowed marriage to become a technology of control that constructed ideal subjects use as a measure of "normal". Homonormativity and marriage rights in many ways, marked a culmination of the ongoing depoliticization and whitewashing of gay and lesbian identity. Within this white homonormative subject, Spade (2015) theorizes that relying heavily on legislation as central to the politics of recognition also has implications for trans people, and intersections of trans identity. He writes that limiting resistance to a search for legislative recognition "erases the complexity and breadth of the systemic, life-threatening harm that trans resistance seeks to end" (p.44). Relying solely on this method as a way of both upholding 2SLGBTQ+ rights as a function of inclusion, and as a way that 2SLGBTQ+ lives are to be understood as citizens has far-reaching implications: making white gays a subjective norm.

Reinscribing whiteness: the single-issue turn, queer necropolitics, and the market rationality of homonationalism

Ferguson (2019) describes the single-issue turn in queer politics that gradually dismantled the original intersections of the 2SLGBTQ+ movement. When queer publics became mainstream, new priorities were established which, as part of the fight for marriage rights included "civic ideals of respectability, national belonging, and support for the free market" (Ferguson, 2019, p.8). The reconfigured priorities also "constructed the critique of racism, capitalism, the state, and their overlaps as outside the normal and practical interests of gay liberation" (p.9). The gay ideal and norm subsequently became white, middle-class, and implicated in a politics of acceptability for white people, and invisibility for queers of color. Lines were therefore well drawn, that created the expected beneficiary of marriage rights: white, middle-class, property owning, market participating, and depoliticized gay and lesbian subject. Puar (2013b) further articulates that "homonationalism is fundamentally a critique of how lesbian and gay liberal rights discourses produce narratives of progress and modernity that continue to accord

some populations access to cultural and legal forms of citizenship at the expense of the partial and full expulsion from those rights of other populations" (p.25). Puar's (2017) concept of homonationalism articulates the creation of a racialized queer Other, who does not fit with homonormative ideals. Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco (2014) elaborate on this process of negation. They explore the ways that queer subjects are deemed worthy of inclusion or marked for physical or social death through the process they call queer necropolitics. Puar (2017) notes the role of biopolitics within the queer necropolitics of homonationalism whereby "biopolitics delineates not only which queers live and which queers die…but also *how* queers die" (p.xx). Historically speaking, it was largely political participation that revealed one's proximity to power. While the present day does not totally alter this configuration, Foucault (2004) articulates an alternative that focuses on the centrality of the market. He writes about the effect of the transformation of citizenship whereby the market became power's primary intelligibility. Despite the absence of overwhelming delineations of neoliberalism specifically as is the case with several of his contemporaries (Jessop, 2002; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Harvey, 2007, 2017; Brown, 2015, 2019), Foucault (2004) nonetheless threads biopolitics through his early conceptualization of neoliberalism's dynamics. He demonstrates how biopolitics and neoliberalism were in many ways, mutually constitutive and how the rationality of the market was a crucial component in justifying the use of power to control and manage death. It is this juncture of market and biopower that Mbembe's (2003, 2019) work enters the literature. He theorized a necropolitics wherein broadly, a market rationality guides the control and management of death. Puar (2008) proposes a queer necropolitical intervention to complement necropolitical theorizations of control. More than just providing a theoretical anchor for homonationalism, biopolitics are thus at the heart of its existence, and are crucial to its inscriptive valuation capacities. Haritaworn (2016) adds further, that "the vitalization of (white) queer subjects often stays close to the sites where queer and trans people were (and often continue to be, post-homophobic and -transphobic claims to the contrary) sentenced to social or actual death" (p.110). Locating the specific sites of vitalization adds a spatial character to the form of homonational politics. Biopolitics, as a means of managing populations under the benevolence of the state, scales in ways that

make homonationalism intelligible at different levels of government. The market rationality of homonormativity animates the queer necropolitics of homonationalism in the everyday. For example, Haritaworn's (2016) notion of "social or actual death" registers and is realized differently in municipal government compared to the provincial, and national scales of governance in Canada. Fundamental to the local character of homonationalism is its neoliberal market rationality, claims a place in a contested field of socioeconomic, and political meaning.

Neoliberal economic formulations

Whose neoliberalism is it anyway?

There are a variety of ways of both applying and conceptualizing neoliberalism that have been theorized extensively within interdisciplinary contexts (Brenner, B, Peck, and Theodore, N, 2010a, 2010b; Brown, 2015, 2019; Ferguson, 2009; Harvey, 2007, 2007; Jessop, 2002; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2004; Sandel, 2012). The terms neoliberalism, and neoliberalization are bound in a contested terrain of meaning, and uneven application. Peck, Theodore, and Brenner (2009) for example call neoliberalism "elusively dispersed yet deeply embedded form of social rule" (p.101). Ferguson (2009) notes too, the "imprecise" (p.171) character of neoliberalism without further narrowing the disciplines to which it is being applied and notes that "we have to come up with something more interesting to say about them than just that we're against them" (p.169). Peck and Theodore (2019) further note that the concept "has been portrayed as a "conceptual trash heap"" (p.251) and affectionately refer to it as the "weasel word, unruly signifier, and rascal concept that it undoubtedly is" (p.255). Beyond basic conceptual identification, neoliberalism can be understood as part a series of processes, but the history of the term leaves it flailing without proper contextualization. It is clear that neoliberalism has made the dreaded descent into categoric buzzword when applied recklessly, in an attempt to articulate the particular ire of a researcher. Rather than foreclose the possibility of ever understanding the term, Peck and Tickell (2019) advocate for using it "as a prompt to find, specify, and learn from adaptive processes, recurring patterns, constitutive connections- across sites, domains, and registers, including those made in resistance" (p.255). The authors

note that the term still has use when placed in service to its economic and political origins in a well articulated manner. Brown (2015) intervenes by presenting a neoliberal rationality as a primary organizing principle of political economics. She (2015) writes that "neoliberalism activates the state on behalf of the economy, *not* to undertake economic functions or to intervene in economic *effects*, but rather to facilitate economic competitions and growth and to economize the social" (p.62). She has largely been concerned with the impact of this economization of everyday life on democracy as an extension of neoliberal rationality. Brown (2019) theorizes the social realm as the site where the inequities resulting from market rationality are played out. In this sense, neoliberalism cannot conceptually hold itself up, but is instead part of an economic processual network with socioeconomic and political consequences, particularly regarding its effects on the public sphere. She outlines the way that "the social is what binds us in ways that exceed personal ties, market exchange or abstract citizenship. It is where we, as individuals or a nation, practice or fail to practice justice, decency, civility, and care beyond the codes of market instrumentalism and familialism" (p.41). Neoliberalism then, gains traction in very specific applications but is barely recognizable outside of them. For clarification purposes within the broad scope of neoliberalism, my paper employs Brown's (2015) neoliberal rationality. Neoliberalism has a slippery history that has been difficult to pin down and its present iterations show little sign of relenting their stubborn epistemological grips. Despite the bleak actually existing character of neoliberalism at the writing of this paper, it remains a worthy endeavour to understand the scalar manifestation of concepts like homonationalism.

Historicizing the manifestations of neoliberalism in Ontario provides significant insights into how its processes have been utilized, and how they might still be in use. The presence of multiple regional economies in Ontario, necessitates the review of Ontario-specific literatures. Kinsman and Gentile (2010) trace the history of neoliberal economics in Canada wherein neoliberalism "was introduced in Canada unevenly and not until the 1980s did it begin to centrally inform state policies" (p.114). He elaborates on the well-intentioned neoliberalism envisioned as an evolution of capitalism's processes, contrasting its nefarious present nature, characterized by its "dismantling" (p.114) capacity. Deploying a market

rationality definition of neoliberalism in my paper requires a further understanding of how these policies took hold in Ontario. Reviewing these theorizations contextualizes the foundations that economic policies in Brampton are built upon which align with a specific rationality focused on the market.

Scaling neoliberal rationality: provincial and municipal contexts

There are varying levels of governance in Ontario, and it is important to understand how a neoliberal rationality became the status quo and took on a specific municipal form. Albo and Evans (2018) trace the lineage of a neoliberal economic policy passed down through non-partisan leadership regimes in Ontario, resulting in an embedded neoliberalism. It is difficult to envision the province as ever having any other form of economic policy. Albo and Evans (2018) establish that "market imperatives are inscribed in the institutional apparatuses of the regional state, that is, in budgetary mandates, in departmental operational plans and organization, in forms of governance of boards and agencies, and so on" (p.11). They caution that the history of neoliberal market rationality they are describing is not meant as bipartisan or directed antagonistically at one provincial party over another. They note that before and after the Conservative's *Common-Sense Revolution* the public sector looked quite different than it did before the Mike Harris era. Particularly concerning municipalities within this period was the "extensive downloading of programs and service provision to municipalities (without a parallel shift in revenues and policy capacities); the pushing of commercialization models on hospitals, school boards, and municipalities; a dramatic curtailing of public oversight and consultative processes" (p.21). The authors note that the Liberal party regimes in Ontario did little to change the course of neoliberalism, and instead embedded it into the fabric of the province's economy. According to the authors, "the political elites, across all three main political parties, only offer rival sets of policies that operate within the neoliberal regime, with Ford proposing not to break the system but take a few further radical steps to entrench it" (p.35). Fanelli (2018) details the specific "municipal neoliberalism" (p.247) configuration of economic policy. Transferring previously provincially managed aspects of the public sector means that municipalities are left with higher costs and little way to make up the difference. They are unable to

implement taxation policies, or incur debt (Fanelli, 2018) as with private organizations who are required to make up shortcomings in their budgets. Focusing primarily on economic development ends then, becomes the only way for municipalities to stay afloat "regardless of the social costs" (p.249). Fanelli (2018) describes municipal neoliberalism as "a policy regime promoting local processes of marketization, fiscal austerity, and flexibilization of work relations; and a process of internationalizing the local economy" (p.249). He ultimately notes that using property taxes as a source of revenue leaves municipal services at the will of the housing market, and in a precarious position that does not secure ongoing sources of funding for service provision. Fanelli (2018) intervenes into calls for better policy alone where "an alternative politics, even radical urban praxis, may yet emerge to address the social divisions of an increasingly divided province" (p.268). Municipalities are often responsible for social service provision and therefore must turn to creative means of economic development. Furthermore, threats to their access to funding, be it through narratives, or branding are therefore significant because they have so few policy levers to pull for revenue. It is also important to add Ong's (2007) point that despite the palpable nature of neoliberalism in municipalities, it may often take on verbiage such as "market-based policies" (p.2), or "neoconservativism" (ibid) in everyday political language. Stern and Hall (2015) posit that this turn took the shape of "the proposal economy" in Ontario municipalities. They focus on the specific technologies of governance emerging from neoliberal rationality, that impact not only how a person understands their citizenship, but also themselves in relation to it. Stern and Hall (2015) establish that "public resources are now allocated on the basis of grant competitions that work as a technology of governance; individual communities have been made responsible for producing the conditions necessary for their own economic growth, and individuals have been made responsible for developing competencies that are seen as key to their economic security" (p.6). Economic development then, can become integrated with a person's self-perception and the failure to produce economic results can lead to value judgements about the worth of the cause or organization in question. There is a wide range of impacts that municipal neoliberalism can have in policy, and on residents. The spatialization of these dynamics into an even more specific context

such as a *suburban* municipality further illuminates the conditions under which municipal homonationalism thrives.

Queer suburbs in the context of the region of peel

History draws the suburbs as culturally desolate, homogenized, consumer-friendly spaces that are family-oriented and car-centric. Much research has focused on understanding this history, and how the suburbs continue to develop. Literatures that have focused on the suburbs have reviewed themes of consumer-based citizenship, privatization, patriarchal family formations, and forms of governance (Hayden, 1982; Hayden, 2002, 2003; Harris 2004; Hamel and Keil, 2014; Lo, et. al, 2015; Keil, 2018).

Walks (2013) usefully articulates suburbanisms as different from the suburbs, answering Forsyth's (2012) call to employ the concept of the suburbs in more specific ways. Walks (2013) expands on the built form of the suburbs to conceptualize the ways of life that circulate within them. He notes that suburbanisms are "a multidimensional evolving process within urbanism that is constantly fluctuating and pulsating as the flows producing its relational forms shift and overlap in space" (p.1472). Suburban ways of life within its spaces are therefore characterized for Walks (2013) by the movement therein, which disrupts the notion of a singular suburban experience. Thinking within the multiplicity of suburbanisms is useful to also understand the way that neoliberal rationality may impact, or structure queer suburbanisms. For example, though Keil (2018) ignores questions of sexuality within his substantive research agenda on global suburbanisms, he does detail how the suburbs provide a uniquely favorable environment for neoliberalism to become the dominant socioeconomic frame. He notes that privatization processes find particularly fertile ground in the suburbs. Privatization in suburban landscapes undoubtedly shapes the experiences of marginalized communities therein and Keil (2018) renders the suburbs as "an ideal field for a comprehensive restructuring of social and spatial relationships" (p.38). Podmore and Bain (2020) articulate the constellation of concepts in their review of literatures on queer suburbanisms and through their work, I understand queer suburbanisms to be neither monolithic or singularizing but are rather, the product of social, political, and economic processes from which built suburban forms emerge. The

suburban municipality of Brampton, written from and within this paper demonstrate these themes of economic processes that lead to restructuring and of diverse groups that can be affected by such spatial reorganizations. Diversity within the suburbs has been written about in a broad sense (Lorinc and Pitter, 2016) and there have been important, though minimal theorizations about Brampton specifically (Ahmed-Ullah, 2016).

Literature reviews of the contours of queer suburban life in Canada are still unfolding. Podmore and Bain (2020) however, provide a necessary review of theoretical interventions made about and through the suburbs by "assembling the disparate strands of the urban studies and geography literatures that create openings for the queer and suburban" (p.4). The authors displace the binary that typifies suburban theorizations, moving past the assumption that queer visibility is possible only in the city as others have noted of queer rural life often conflated with suburban queer visibility (Schweighoffer, 2016; Gray, Johnston and Gilley, 2016; Thomsen, 2016). According to Podmore and Bain (2020) these are views that do not necessarily disrupt the view of the suburbs as a space of heterogeneity but rather a homonogenous social and built form. The authors offer a reminder "that is it now time to extend the queer metropolitan to include the suburban, to cease researching and writing as though there are "no queers out there"" (p.9). It is an invocation that to expand the scholarship, research and theory must together look at the suburbs and queer people within them very differently than has been done before.

Queered and queering: 2SLGBTQ+ suburbanisms

Beyond the general literatures on life in the suburbs, is the emerging research taking place surrounding both queer suburban built forms, and queer suburbanisms. Research on queer suburbanisms in Canada also includes the "Queering Canadian Suburbs" SSHRC-funded research program led by urban social geographers Alison Bain and Julie Podmore, focused in part, on the Region of Peel, where my research is located. While published findings from this project are forthcoming, there are three articles specifically addressing the topic of life in the queer suburbs through the lens of print media (Bain and Podmore, 2018; Podmore and Bain, 2019) and activism, particularly in the public spaces of libraries

(Bain and Podmore, 2020) and high schools (Bain and Podmore, 2019). These articles reflect themes of isolation, invisibility, negotiating changing terrains of safety, and resistance to racial homogenization and racism. Participating as a research assistant in their "Queering Suburbs" research program gave me an understanding of themes unique to the Greater Toronto Area including QTBIPOC (Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, People of Color) resistance to erasure, invisibility, public libraries as facilitating the creation of queered counterpublics, and the use of those counterpublics for community generated thriving. The idea of a public sphere for all to access is fundamental to democracy and civic engagement, though it has been historically inaccessible to marginalized communities (Fraser, 1992; Warner, 2002). Fraser (1992) theorized the way that marginalized groups formed counterpublic to contest uneven power relations. Counterpublics provided a platform, forum for discussion, a way to express their distinct identities, and a sense of self-determined discursive belonging. She notes that historically, counterpublics "contested the exclusionary norms of bourgeois public, elaborating alternative styles of political behaviour and alternative norms of public speech" (p.116). Set against the backdrop of Ferguson's (2019) articulation of a single-issue politics playing out in queer communities, the presence of counterpublics are a necessary form of community survival. The public sphere is assumed to be hospitable to all, and counterpublics fundamentally challenge this assumption.

Applying these theoretical frameworks to Brampton in my paper, allows me to show that despite the belief that the queer publics Peel Pride creates are accessible to all, the existence of queer and trans of colour counterpublics signals an uneven distribution of resources. Warner (2002) built upon Fraser's (1992) definition of counterpublics to specify the nature of *queer* counterpublics. Rather than view counterpublics from the negative space of marginalization, he establishes the generative capacity of queer counterpublics to expand a person's experience of citizenship and belonging. Warner (2002) delineates this effect whereby queer counterpublics "are scenes of association and identity that transform the private lives they mediate. Homosexuals can exist in isolation; but gay people or queers exist by virtue of the world they elaborate together, and gay or queer identity is always fundamentally inflected by the nature of

that world" (pp.57-58). Where the suburbs are generally sites of private encounter, a queer counterpublic

contributes an important intervention into how queers in the suburbs create and experience queer

suburbanisms; It is how we find one another. Fraser (1992) notes importantly that counterpublics are a

place of public participation and "arenas for the formation and enactment of social identities" (p.125).

Despite their advertisement as departures from the invisibilizing politics of the public sphere,

counterpublics are not exempt from the injecture of homonational politics. Awwad (2015) writes that

"homonational rhetoric, as constitutive rhetoric, call a queer public into being, but it equally calls its

antagonists into being" (p.24). The presence of homonational politics therefore indicate that

homonormative gay publics, use queer and trans of colour communities to construct themselves as

mainstream, while forcing the racialized Other they construct, to the margins of a counterpublic.

Community organizations and organizing invoking the term "queer" have also been shown to participate

in the same use of publics as a strategy of social ordering. Wahab (2015) makes this important distinction,

where the existence of a queer counterpublic does not negate the possibility that homonational politics do

not also shape these spaces constructed as discursively radical. Frameworks of the suburbs, queer

suburbs, publics, and counterpublics help to ground the unfolding of events in Brampton's queer and trans

community histories within established processes. Additionally, they provide a vocabulary to articulate

the power relations that structure these spaces and create rules of engagement.

Conclusion

The combinatory effect of mapping neoliberalism onto queer suburban spaces illuminates the

processes that create normative, white gay subjects. Expressing the depths and complexities of the

discursive relationships between homonationalism, neoliberal rationality and queer suburbanisms

necessitates a rigorous review of literatures. Locating the expression of homonationalism in a

municipality, grants a clear view of the everyday ways in which queer people can be marked for social

exclusion, or for thriving by the state. Brampton as a research site, spatializes queer and trans of colour

erasure facilitated by the themes most common to suburbia: sprawl and disconnect; consumerism and

consumption; As well as privatized and depoliticized ways of life. Neoliberal logics and market-friendly rationalities that justify homonormative conceptualizations of queer and trans life underpin the major forms of homonationalism in Brampton. Homonationalism is therefore both the analytic frame and concept through which I illuminate the ascendancy of whiteness, and the homonormative basis of citizenship from which it forms.

3. The emergence of homonational politics in Brampton

Local knowledges develop over time, and in part through discursive formations that help narrate the status quo, and a common-sense understanding of a place. This chapter is located at the birthplace of these given understandings of Brampton's queer and trans communities, tracing them through their discursive becoming: the narrative of a municipal homonationalism. As part of this municipal homonational politic, I focus on the governance of diversity in Brampton, how it has been consolidated, and performed with the intention of attracting an audience focused on economic development, and investment, rather than serving its existing diverse populations. The performance of diversity is clarified through the operationalization of diversity through the application of creative economy practices and principles, to attract technology for economic development. I also argue that using diversity as a tenet of economic development illuminates a possessive investment in whiteness (Lipsitz, 2018), underpinned by the logics of white supremacy (Smith, 2012) at work in Brampton's suburbs. The processes I write about in this chapter are not unique to Brampton, and have also been deployed in Toronto (Grundy, 2004). He writes that across North America, cities are "taking stock of whatever cultural resources and ethnic enclaves may enhance urban branding strategies and function as "authentic" exotica for tourists and middle-class urban dwellers" (p. 28-29). The disparities between advertised diversity, and the quality of life available to marginalized populations reveals contradictions that pull the curtain back on the theatre of multiculturalism and diversity that cities, including Brampton, have branded as their cause celebre. Grundy (2004) notes these disparities and the efforts of "place marketers" (p.28-29) to use diversity as a commodity to advertise a city towards economic development ends.

There are many harms that can come from a Council made of mostly white, or all-white Councillors because the issues they address in their positions of power are framed by an understanding that is shaped by their whiteness. Even with good intentions, a power relation that is structured by white racial homogeneity can still create a racialized Other who is juxtaposed against the state, rather than written as part of it. Racial homogeneity was mostly the case in Brampton before the 2018 election. Brown (n.d.)

noted that Brampton's 2018 elections marked historic shifts in which "for the first time ever Brampton

has a black woman — Charmaine Williams — on council, as well as a Filipino woman, Rowena Santos.

It's also the first time Brampton has had two turban-wearing Sikhs on Council: Gurpreet Dhillon who was

the only visible minority on council prior to 2018, and Harkirat Singh" (n.p.). Tolley (2018) writes of the

damage that this configuration can cause where white people have exclusive access to policymaking

decisions, and budgetary allocations that affect or ignore racialized populations. She notes that the

absence of diversity makes the idea of democracy questionable, and notes that it delegitimizes democratic

processes and renders city building, policymaking, and civic engagement meaningless if it is decided by

those who do not represent the diversity of constituents. Dominant whiteness in this form creates one of

the main conditions of homonationalism: the ascendancy of whiteness (Puar, 2008). This chapter traces

this ascendancy and supremacy through its discursive forms in municipal documents. When the creative

economy's economic development figuration of diversity utilizes suburban landscapes of 2SLGBTQ+

invisibility, alongside white supremacies, a politics of homonationalism emerges.

Creative investments in whiteness: urban planning and white supremacist logics

Economic development and urban planning have gone through various transformations in

Brampton, changing the built form of the city and the spaces it has created for 2SLGBTQ+ communities

and more. These changes were not the initial focus of Brampton's official plan and relied on previous

discourses and decision-making to take their present shape of the *2040 Vision Plan*. The arc of these

developments culminates with the adoption of Richard Florida's (2005, 2012) concept of the creative

economy. In City Council and Committees of Council meetings, the focus on science, technology,

engineering, and mathematics (henceforth referred to as STEM) was the metonymy woven through

municipal discourse that supplanted direct reference to Florida's constellation of creative theorizations. I

focus specifically on this aspect of the Council notes because the creative economy provided an impetus

for the City of Brampton to prioritize diversity, and organizations who were doing diversity work because

according to Florida (2005), diversity branded as tolerance was the key to securing economic

development. Haritaworn (2016) writes that the popular view of white gay men as beneficial to the economy preceded the creative economy, but it was one that the creative economy fused into the toolbox of best practices for urban planners to optimize cities. According to the creative economy, sexual orientation was a positive factor that promised economic growth which highlighted that diversity could be a constitutive force for economic development (Florida, 2005). Subsequently, the absence of gay community would be hazardous to the health of the local economy. Urban planning policies such as those aligned with economic development have a long history of producing unintended consequences. Rutland (2018) writes of planning practice that "efforts to produce a healthier or more secure population, in many cases, have assumed a particular, normative human subject as the constituent of this population and have offered protection and care strictly to those who exhibit this assumed normality" (p.16). The assumed normality of a population takes on many forms, and here I trouble the normality of white homonormativity the creative economy relies on in its figuration of economic development. The creative economy facilitates many economic development outcomes. One aspect of its function that I focus on is the rationality that informs who is prioritized over others. The reliance on white gays to prefigure economic prosperity (Florida, 2005) elucidates a white supremacist way of thinking, and planning cities. Smith (2012) outlines white supremacist logics that I argue are at work in the dispossession and marginalization of QTBIPOC interests and voices from Brampton through its deployment of the creative economy that results in a municipal homonationalism. She (2012) notes the logic of slavery, or viewing people as property; The logic of genocide which works to continuously disappear Indigenous people from a place; And orientalism, which "marks certain peoples or nations as inferior and deems them to be a constant threat to the wellbeing of empire" (p.2). These logics cannot be ascribed as a force that guides policy as though white supremacy has its own agency, but rather that economic policies are "punctuated by racial logics" (Bhattacharyya, 2018, p.120). The rationalities that have upheld these logics are grounded in what Lipsitz (2018) calls a "possessive investment in whiteness": a defensive investment in the privileges and power that whiteness grants individuals. The work of occluding, erasing, and manipulating power to preserve whiteness reflects an investment in the benefits it provides. The

governmentality inherent in diversity governance also indicates an intended use, meaning that analyzing

the discourses that diversity is directed away from are as important as what diversity discourse is directed

towards. Fundamental to this understanding is knowing how the creative economy and diversity were

woven together in Brampton City Council, and subsequent urban planning practice. Equally important is

establishing the rationality that sought to prioritize white homonormative gays as the arbiters, and

gatekeepers of 2SLGBTQ+ community in Brampton, including what maintained it over time.

Establishing a diversity mandate, and discourse through governance

Brampton's landscape has changed significantly, driven by an economic development push to

bring science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) based businesses to the city. There have

been similar changes that rendered diversity intelligible, taking place in tandem with the rise of STEM

vernacular in economic development, albeit in tokenistic ways, as this section will demonstrate.

Brampton's application of the creative economy means that the city has been planned to benefit white

gays and lesbians over its racialized queer and trans populations. It is well known that city planning

experts prioritize diversity, but often left out, is why diversity has so endeared itself to economic

development. Valverde (2017) writes that planners "now see diversity mainly from the point of view of

global markets in capital and labor, and thus think of cities not as democratic political entities but rather

as economic actors needing to exhibit the type of urban diversity that represents a competitive advantage"

(p.209). She (2017) therefore suggests a transformation of economic policy that established a basis of

rewards for successfully performed diversity. Configurations of economic policy that focused on diversity

as a main metric determining worthiness of investment (signalling competitive marketing practices) can

be traced back to economic precarity that the *Common Sense Revolution* left in its wake (Fanelli, 2018).

Provincial funding dwindled to the point where cities had to search for new ways to make up funding

shortfalls. Limited policy levers available to raise funds meant that municipalities had to find solutions

that could weather increasing economic uncertainty. The creative economy initially produced a seemingly

tidy development outcome, while offering an attractive solution to unpredictable conditions: make the city

livable for gays, competitively market to them, and economic prosperity would follow. Though the creative economy specifically markets a trendy urban lifestyle evidenced by the gays living there, it also demonstrated a turn towards diversity as a marketing strategy in service to economic development. With more at risk if this conceptualization of development were not capitalized upon, cities introduced diversity as the object of governance. Controlling how diversity was discussed, and which actors could participate in the discussion was central to managing how knowledge about it was produced.

The Business Development and Marketing Advisory Team meeting minutes from May 28, 2007 show that in 2005, the City of Brampton began gathering data to update its economic development plan. The minutes show that one of the main points of the strategic plan was to focus economic development efforts towards attracting cultural investments that would secure future prosperity and provide a way of marketing the place Brampton was becoming. Further committee meetings show that staff were reviewing "markets of opportunity" (Business Development and Marketing Advisory Team, 2008, p.8) through tourism and economic development departments, under which pride proclamations already fell. The relationship between Brampton's gay community, and economic development emerged clearly in this regard. In addition to the departmental focus through which the proclamations were shared by City Council, further municipal documents show that the creative economy was quickly becoming a priority. The creative economy became the focus of the City of Brampton's economic development in 2011 in which a Heritage, Arts, Culture and Entertainment (henceforth referred to as HACE) roundtable discussion brought Florida's (2005, 2012) ideas to Brampton (Heritage, Arts, Culture and Entertainment (HACE)), 2011b). There was no mention of diversity regarding Florida's (2005) gay index however, working mostly through the allegories of diversity as different from the majority (ie: straight, white, cisgender). There was a concern of how to control who could contribute to the creative economy map that would guide development efforts (Heritage, Arts, Culture and Entertainment (HACE), 2011b, p.3), speaking directly to the need to manage how discourses about it would emerge, foreshadowing the controlled administration of diversity. The first roundtable meeting articulated the clear economic

development goals that the creative economy was set to serve: job creation and future growth (Heritage, Arts, Culture and Entertainment (HACE), 2011a). The HACE Roundtable meeting minutes noted that "place matters" (p.5) which relates in the creative economy literature (Florida, 2005) to the ability of cities to market themselves based on whether gays view them as favourable places to live. Florida (2005) writes that "gays not only predict the concentration of high-tech industry, they are also a predictor of its growth" (p.131). He further notes that "gays, as we like to say, can be thought of as *canaries* of the creative economy and serve as a strong signal of a diverse, progressive environment" (p.131). Beyond the connection between place-marketing to gay communities as encompassing an important part of the HACE Roundtable strategy, there was no mention of gay people, or gay community in the HACE Roundtable's meeting minutes from 2011, the year it was formed to its conclusion at the end of 2015. Despite Florida (2005) directly referencing gay people as a core part of the creative economy, the City of Brampton's silence demonstrates a deliberate silence. Where the municipality later sought to expand its diversity discourse, it was in a capacity of extraction when the Inclusion and Equity Committee was formed in 2015. Focusing on investments, and economic development also necessitated that the gays featured prominently in diversity discourse would be friendly to the market, further indicating the need to control how gay community could be expressed. Duggan (2004) refers to these market-oriented gays as homonormative, and articulating a "privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption" (Duggan, 2004, p.50). Focusing on market-friendly versions of diversity foreshadowed the types of 2SLGBTQ+ organizations that would be close partners with the City of Brampton: white, homonormative gays.

There are two specific ways in which the creative economy helped foster a municipal homonationalism in Brampton through its market-centric vision of diversity. Firstly, Peel Pride (or as they are also called: The Pride Committee of Peel) has historically been led by mostly white gay consumers interested in market participation more than politicization. Arranged in this way, Peel Pride fulfilled the need for a depoliticized, homonormative version of community whose focus would be on

consumption, and celebration through Pride events. Secondly, the City of Brampton had good reason to protect those white gays and lesbians because they prefigured a thriving economy for the City of Brampton. Working in tandem with the development, and implementation of the creative economy's policies, diversity and inclusion were quickly at the fore of municipal discourse. The harmful effects of the creative economy have been established (Haritaworn, 2016; Wetherell, 2017; Ferguson, 2019) such that its promise was sufficiently deflated. Despite the creative economy being named "dysfunctional for, even destructive of, a progressive future for cultural policy" (O'Connor, 2016, p.2), it was still taken up by the City of Brampton to guide several decades of development. Important as the HACE Roundtable was to signal the entry of creative policies, it is equally crucial to focus on what happened shortly afterwards. The HACE Roundtable fulfilled its projected mandate as per the creative economy strategic plan created in 2011 (Heritage, Arts, Culture and Entertainment (HACE), 2011a) and as a result, it disbanded at the end of 2015. Directly after the HACE Roundtable was disbanded an Inclusion and Equity Committee was formed to advise City Council on matters related to diverse communities. The introduction of the Inclusion and Equity Committee marked an important departure from talking about diversity, to creating ways of governing its application and existence in Brampton. The pivot towards a sanctioned way of "doing" diversity marks an improvement in that the Inclusion and Equity Committee was preceded by silence. It also marks a turn towards the precision through which diversity was managed, to articulate a tool for place-marketers to realize more of the City of Brampton's strategic plans for development.

Diversity management and the politics of homonational authorship

The abstract concept of diversity takes on a specific meaning when its expression is managed in a way that creates boundaries around how it can be understood. Ahmed (2012) refers to this as "diversity language" in which

> the language of diversity certainly appears in official statements (from mission statements to equality policy statements, in brochures, as taglines) and as a repertoire of images (collages of smiling faces of different colors), which are easily recognizable *as* images of diversity. "Diversity" can be used as an

adjective, as a way of describing the organization, a quality, or an attribute of an organization. The language of diversity can also be used normatively, as an expression of the priorities, values, or commitments of an organization (pp.51-52).

There are specific places in which discourses of diversity have thrived in Brampton, and through which the concerns of diverse communities, and their marginalized members are given license to speak. Managing the authors of diversity has also secured a definition of community that is not only favourable to the market, but that also re-writes the rules of citizenship and terms of belonging. Diversity governance therefore produces knowledge about what it means, and who is included in its parameters. The governance of diversity in Brampton has been acted out primarily through limited consultative processes (as with the abstract advisory capacity of the Inclusion and Equity Committee), and specific community partnerships that secure a consistently boundaried understanding of diversity. I focus on how diversity governance has favoured professionalized organizations, and how this dynamic can lead to voices missing from planning documents. Where diversity is associated with the municipal brand, discourses of diversity are limited in their capacity to politicize and critique the conditions that produce marginalized lived experiences which also limited the ability for any "diversity" focus to produce meaningful change.

Residents, and community members have been able to speak about diversity outside of the municipal-state sanctioning that authors its official narratives. Public concerns about matters of diversity can be brought before Council, though it usually requires a thematic association with one or more items on a Council, or Committee of Council agenda that are generally filtered through contacts with the member of Council in a resident's ward. The ability to raise an issue, however, is not necessarily indicative of a willingness to integrate feedback, critiques, or concerns into how it has operationalized diversity governance. The introduction of the Inclusion and Equity Committee at the end of 2015 marked the first public-facing mechanism specifically mandated to speak about, for, and on matters of diversity. There was, however, an interview process that acted as a background check to assess the professionalism that a citizen appointee would bring to the City of Brampton (City of Brampton Clerk's Office, 2017). It is debatable then, whether the Inclusion and Equity Committee included all voices, because only those

most agreeable with, and favourable towards the municipality would be selected as well as based on a resume accompanying applications. Lived experiences and their accordant knowledges were not sufficient to warrant a place on the Committee because an application had to first be deemed outstanding enough, and then the interview process had to support these conclusions. The Inclusion and Equity Committee therefore marked a direct investment, and visible thread where the City of Brampton openly spoke the words "diversity" in a way that brought residents together in an advisory capacity. It was a shift from diversity as a demographic feature of Brampton, to diversity as something that could be authored by the City of Brampton to direct municipal storytelling in a way that benefits the market.

Before this turn toward diversity, the City of Brampton's diversity discourses were referential of those mandated by constitutionality, human rights codes, and workplace protections. Community partnerships facilitated by community grant programs were the most prevalent form that diversity took on in Brampton, through City Council support for festivals, celebrations, and cultural events. It was the work of partner organizations in the early 2000s to foreground diversity as a feature of the population available for consumption as with festivals like Carabram, and Pride events that have taken place in the Region of Peel. Celebrations of difference as a form of inclusion also demonstrated an important sign of diversity governance that allowed diverse groups to speak through their capacity for economic development. Hage (2016) highlights how multicultural festivals can create a "white national zoology" (p.141) that showcases diversity "an exhibition of a collection of other cultures" (p.160). He establishes the expression of diversity governance through celebrations and festivals in colonial forms where "this exhibitory multiculturalism can be seen to belong to a long, White colonialist tradition of exhibiting the national self through the exhibiting of otherness" (p.151). The intersection of culture, race, sexual and gender identities complicate the way that festivals and celebrations can be viewed as a self-determined expression of identity. Given the ongoing erasure and oppression of QTBIPOC people by Peel Pride, I also connect Hage's (2016) intervention into 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion discourses that defer to the nation in a turn towards homonational subjectivity. Expanding the understanding of the consequences of this view, Hage (2016)

also notes that "this relationship of power that is on show and from which the exhibitor derives his or her cultural capital" (p.153). I take cultural capital in the context of Brampton to also mean economic development, investment, and literal capitalization through diversity. These forms of governance also impacted how marginalized communities would be given power and the ability to speak for themselves, rather than spoken for through municipal diversity and inclusion discourses. Governance in this way also ensures that though some voices are invited to a decision-making 'table', they are being observed and singularized by their capacity to contribute to economic development. The governance that rendered diversity as available for consumption in Brampton meant that diversity was largely the purview of economic development initiatives in the municipality, under the pretense that they could bring in tourism dollars that would provide economic boosts during the events and beyond.

The specific way that diversity was managed in Brampton emplaced knowledge production in organizational capacities that limited who could participate in its creation and maintenance. The field of participation was limited to service providers who were seeking ways to address the needs of their clients, many of whom belonged to marginalized communities. The most prescient example of this is the Regional Diversity Roundtable (henceforth referred to as RDR) in Peel. It is a membership-based organization funded by the Region of Peel, which required an organization to become a member before someone would be allowed to "speak" about diversity, or from a place of being diverse. The RDR developed a charter that, according to its website, was for organizational benefit, rather than specific client-based needs. The website notes that the RDR was mandated by, and

> developed with the vision that everyone who lives, works and plays in Peel Region can participate in and engage with their communities in meaningful ways, the D&I Charter is a living document that supports the implementation of existing national and provincial legislation. Its goal is to promote social justice at all levels; from our political institutions to our health and education systems, from our businesses to our service delivery mechanisms and our communities (n.p.).

Diversity was therefore governed, and authored mostly by the City of Brampton, or Region of Peel in official sanctions not with the intention of participatory contributions from residents, but to implement legislation to protect organizations. Simply stated, diversity was governed by organizations in ways that

did not include public participation, unless otherwise mandated by the municipal-state; When it did include the public, it was under the auspices of economic development and tourism, as was the case with Peel Pride. Further exemplifying the significant limitations to participation, the first meeting of the Inclusion and Equity Committee featured participants based largely on the organizations to which they belonged (Inclusion and Equity Committee, 2015). Governing diversity in Brampton by narrowing the parameters of who could contribute to the discourses acted as an important way for the municipality to control, and invisibly author diversity. Much of this took place by regulating the direction that the discourses expressing diversity took, which Ahmed (2012) calls "diversity language". Diversity language is an important conceptual tool to understand the circulation of discourse about diversity, and the effects of professionalized diversity governance in Brampton. The use of the word diversity and its spread throughout an organization or across organizations can provide the appearance of diversity which also creates an assumption that it is also already being done or acted out (Ahmed, 2012). Circulating the idea of an already existing diversity is the end that I argue governance in Brampton implemented up to 2018, which is still impacting the capacity for QTBIPOC community development. This is not to abandon any mention of discourse because it is the work of tokenism, and whiteness trying to assert itself through communities of colour, but to say that the findings suggest diversity discourse was adopted for capital gain, rather than making a city more livable for its diverse residents. Additionally, diversity language depoliticizes the political realities facing marginalized communities where "diversity offers practitioners a way of sounding "in tune" and thus "in place" by *not* sounding abrasive" (Ahmed, 2012, p.63). The politics of acceptability and respectability that limit the way that marginalized communities express their oppression also find a useful home in professionalized conceptualizations of diversity where

> [d]iversity appeals are often made because diversity seems appealing: it is more consistent with a collaborative style. If the word "diversity" is understood as less confronting, then using the language of diversity can be a way of avoiding confrontation. Diversity is more easily incorporated by the institution than other words such as "equality," which seem to evoke some sort of politics of critique or complaint about institutions and those who are already employed by them. Diversity becomes identified as a more inclusive language *because* it does not have a necessary relation to changing organizational values (Ahmed, 2012, p.67).

Diversity governance then, by virtue of its use and reliance on diversity language does not aim to disrupt a status quo or challenge a positivist rendering of suburban diversity. The professionalization of diversity governance provides a way for community needs to be articulated, though they also limit who gets to speak, and on what terms. The Inclusion and Equity Committee demonstrates a pivot towards directly referencing diversity, and it also demonstrates how governance can create a feedback loop that does not affect substantial change.

Beyond organizational contributions to the way that diversity was governed in Brampton, the Inclusion and Equity Committee also provided another way of participating in discussions about diversity. Advisory committees are broadly established to provide feedback to City Councils, though they also play an important role in contributing to municipal discourses. According to the minutes from the Inclusion and Equity Committee's first meeting, the committee was established to "assist with the development of an inclusion and equity plan for the City" (Inclusion and Equity Committee, 2015, p.3). This mandate set the terms of engagement for the Committee and outlined what it was meant to accomplish, though the metrics by which it was deemed successful changed course through its existence. Local media declared the Committee a failure, based upon its failure to regularly achieve quorum (Frisque, 2018c). The effectiveness of the Committee was brought into question when it was revealed just how many issues the Committee had in achieving quorum. Local media failed to detail the complex dynamics at work and the extractive capacity that such a committee served and occluded the violence that this form of governance caused. The issues facing the community were those of "waning interest" (Frisque, 2018c, n.p) rather than any attempt to interview members of the Committee, and selectively represent its function through City Council members. The simplicity of this explanation, and the framing the Mayor equally used, all but naming the Committee a failure, was predicated on the expectation that an Inclusion and Equity Committee would fix the issues facing marginalized communities in Brampton. The dissatisfaction of Council members express the fault lines between how diversity is governed, and how it actually exists in the municipality through the eyes of its residents. The idea that a Committee who was

never given items to consider by City Council, was then expected to advise them on these same items is an example of white supremacy seeking to absolve itself of the harm it causes. It also demonstrates the psychological violence facing marginalized communities who do participate, because in Brampton it revealed the expectation that their presence should solve diversity problems. It allows the municipality, and its political leaders to say that if diversity is rendered a failure or a problem, it was the fault of the contributors to the Committee, rather than the intention behind its implementation. Grundy (2004) noted the ineffective use of an Inclusion and Equity Committee in Toronto that was instituted in 1999 (almost twenty years before Brampton used the same model), proving that the Committee was not necessarily a best practice. I suggest this because the Committee was created after the creative economy strategy became enmeshed in urban planning practices in Brampton, bringing its intended capacities into question. Grundy (2004) wrote of Toronto's committee that "the under-resourced committee proved to be quite powerless" (n.p.), in an identical manner to Brampton's Inclusion and Equity Committee. Mayor Jeffrey was quoted by Frisque (2018) as stating that "I would say the committee itself hasn't worked the way I'd like it to" (n.p.) without also acknowledging that there were never any advisory items that came to the attention of the Inclusion and Equity Committee. I can attest to the powerlessness of the Committee because I was appointed to it in February 2017, and that no Council members provided us with items for consideration or advisement. Ahmed (2012) cautions of participating in diversity governance such as the Inclusion and Equity Committee because when "our appointments and promotions are taken up as signs of organizational commitment to equality and diversity, we are in trouble" (p.43). She notes the arrival of diversity, or the presence of marginalized communities as heralding the arrival of diversity in a forever capacity in which "any success is read as a sign of an overcoming of institutional whiteness" (p.43). The Committee failed to fix the racism that was systemically embedded in Brampton, and within the City of Brampton, and as a result, despite its initial warm reception, according to former Mayor Linda Jeffrey (Frisque, 2018) the Committee was deemed a failure. In a sense, the Committee did fail because it reflected the City's white supremacies back to itself rather than abdicating it from their increasingly public expressions. These include but are not limited to former Regional Councillor John Sprovieri's

racist remarks about newcomers needing to adhere to white values (Joseph, 2017), and former Regional

Councillor Elaine Moore's defense of Sprovieri's display of racism (Criscone, 2017). Despite being

sanctioned for his previous racism, he exhibited more of it while being asked to account for anti-Black

racism on Regional Council (Steward, 2018). It proved that instituting a channel for extracting unpaid

labours of marginalized communities after noting diversity as being important for economic development

would not fix the structural racisms and inequities at work.

The Inclusion and Equity Committee was strategically deployed shortly after the disbanding of

the HACE Roundtable which sought to establish a framework through which to develop the City of

Brampton's creative economy attempted to broadcast diversity. Ahmed (2012) refers to the violence of

this kind of diversity work in institutions not committed to fixing structural issues where "diversity work

is hard because it can involve doing *within* institutions what would not otherwise be done *by* them"

(p.25). She also writes of the hostility directed towards diversity projects like the Inclusion and Equity

Committee that fail in branding institutions as inclusive, particularly those absent of any politicization

that characterizes life as a member of marginalized communities. Ahmed (2012) writes of this dynamic as

being more about whiteness distancing itself from an awareness of the systemic inequities that it produces

than any meaningful attempt at inclusion:

> When diversity becomes a form of hospitality, perhaps the organization is the host who receives as
> guests those who embody diversity. Whiteness is produced as host, as that which is already in place or
> at home. Conditional hospitality is when you are welcomed on the condition that you give something
> back in return. The multicultural nation functions this way: the nation offers hospitality by integrating,
> or by identifying with the nation (p.43)

The lack of dedication to inclusion beyond extraction and Ahmed's (2012) reference to hospitality as

mentioned above, is made even more clearer by attempts to save (or revive) the Inclusion and Equity

Committee. Vision Brampton (Vision Brampton, 2018) delegated to City Council to save the Inclusion

and Equity Committee in a way that further emphasizes this point. The organization stated that it was

important to have multiple citizen voices as well as professional input on the Inclusion and Equity

Committee and working on matters of Diversity and Inclusion within the municipality. They also noted

that it was important for equity and anti-oppression to be "meaningfully mainstreamed across the City of

Brampton. We believe that work of equity is a continuous, collaborative and iterative process, one that

needs constant feedback from diverse voices as new issues will inevitably emerge in our rapidly growing

city" (Vision Brampton, 2018, n.p.). The delegation was not successful in its attempt to save the Inclusion

and Equity Committee, even though it demonstrated a need for more equitable representation at City Hall.

It made it clear that the Inclusion and Equity Committee outlived its usefulness and raises questions about

what it was intended to communicate to residents about the municipality. It is a strong example of how a

banal, depoliticized notions of diversity fail to produce meaningful change for the community. It also

demonstrates that the governance of diversity from above relies heavily on unpaid labours from below

which only recreates the process of marginalization. The fate of the Inclusion and Equity Committee also

demonstrates that diversity governance shapes a political landscape . Furthermore, this participatory

contour highlights the politics of respectability inherent in the City of Brampton's governance of

diversity.

The *2040 Vision Plan* provides a compelling vision of Brampton's future, and boasts substantial

public engagement. While participating in one of the charrettes for the vision plan in 2017, I spoke to a

member of the community who noted that the Black community was under-consulted through the process.

It was not until the published vision plan, in the form of *Living the Mosaic* reached the public that it

became clear just how underrepresented these interests were in the planning process. According to the

planning document, residents were consulted beginning June 19, 2017, in 117 engagements (Beasley &

Associates & CIVITAS Studio, 2018, p. 94-95). Feedback from residents also took the form of focus

groups, events where the project team were present, comment card locations, website interactions,

newspaper ads, videos, advertising in "ethnic media", and decals (p. 94-96). There were "two grand

workshops" (p.96) in November 2017, and March 2018 where residents synthesized the information

gathered, before it was subject to peer review (p.96). There was no noted budget allocated to the vision

plan undertaking, nor was any dollar amount listed in the plan (Beasley & Associates & CIVITAS Studio,

2018). Public engagement is a central tenet of the vision plan but there were significant limitations in consulting racialized communities; many community groups and their networks were left out of the consultation process. For example, there was no engagement with key organizations who assist Brampton's most vulnerable, such as the Peel Poverty Action Group, QTBIPOC Sauga, the Peel Aboriginal Network (now The Indigenous Network), and the Black Community Action Network (Beasley & Associates & CIVITAS Studio, 2018, p.94-95). Consultation efforts prioritized contact with members of the Inclusion and Equity Committee, and the Regional Diversity Roundtable where organizational needs were over-represented. Feedback mechanisms that rely on professionalized organizations can do little more than reproduce the needs and interests of their employer. If they speak out of turn with their professional capacity, they risk speaking against their employer and thusly, a politics of respectability impacts the potential for participation. This is not to suggest that those who did provide feedback, did so in vain, but the findings demonstrated that the absence of 2SLGBTQ+ community and mention across municipal documents was indicative of other marginalized silences. Governance of conceptual diversity established in this manner helps to create an apparatus that polices the conduct of organizations who may not have access to the tools of bureaucratization that also create or reproduce a social order and hierarchy of acceptability (Rodriguez, 2017). Accordingly, these professionalized renderings of activism make it easier for the state, rather than marginalized communities to control how advocacy is done. This operational limitation influences "the staunch criminalization of particular political practices embodied by radical and otherwise critically "dissenting" activists, intellectuals, and ordinary people of colour" (Rodriguez, 2017, p.26).

Diversity governance therefore provides an important insulation from significant critique because diversity has been defined by a circle of professional experts. Managing diversity in this way also reproduces favourable narratives about the relationship between diversity and economic development in Brampton. It can also rationalize the inclusion of sanctioned authors of diversity that not only align with their interests but adhere to the respectability politics of what they have defined as urban progress. Social

ordering of this variety delineates what kind of diversity, and which sources of diversity the municipality will amplify. This process is consistent with how the City of Brampton conceptualized itself as diverse, and then operationalized this categorization to instantiate an image of diversity that would maintain a convivial, if not vitalizing relation to the market. Incorporating a group of experts named as such by their professionalized, and marketized organizational status creates an apparatus that serves the purposes of maintaining the discourses of diversity the municipality produces. Beam (2018) writes of the effect this has in the queer and trans community whereby the non-profit assemblage is productive of "something called 'the LGBT community' as the bureaucratized, regulatory nonprofit apparatus acting as the connective tissue between affect and the biopolitical management of life and death" (p.83).

Governance can, by virtue of who is deemed authors of diversity, help to create an image not just of who they believe the 2SLGBTQ+ community is in general, but who in this formulation is marked for life or death. Writing about this process in the context of the national imaginary, Beam (2018) also writes that the idea, and discursive creation of community "is increasingly the logic through which some queer bodies are protected and folded into (national) life, while others are located outside the life of the nation, a threat to it, and exposed to early death" (p.83). I also wish to note that in keeping with Haritaworn's (2016) conceptualization, death in this sense can mean physical death, but it can also (and quite often) means social death. The "community" that governance produces is therefore the object of municipal state management. It is up to the municipality to authorize which narratives are helpful, and most importantly which discourses are truthful and factual because they are the authors of diversity by virtue of their use of organizational assemblage to construct the biopolitical "community" requiring help thriving. The municipality now decides "which bodies are of the community, who must be regulated, how they must be regulated, and for what reasons" (p.83). Contrasting this focus on regulating life, Haritaworn's (2016) understanding of this necropolitical process as a "social death" aligns with Puar's (2008) conceptualization of a queer necropolitics where "death is never a primary foci, rather a negative translation of the imperative to live, occurring only through the transit of fostering life. Death becomes a

form of collateral damage in the pursuit of life" (p.52). Suburban queer necropolitics emerge through economic development and social policy.

Governance as gatekeeping: a personal account of erasure and invisibility

Citizen-based Advisory Committees serve an important theoretical function of providing a process through which a municipal resident can participate in the democracy of their local state. The theoretical concepts that underpinned the Inclusion and Equity Committee of which I was a part did not live up to its democratic potential based on the queer necropolitics that emerged, as an extension of municipal governance. I learned that those who are not white, homonormative, middle-class and cisgender are either invisibilized or tokenized, face substantial barriers to public participation, and are often denied authorship of their lived experiences.

The Citizen-based Advisory Committee Guideline and Appointment Procedure (City of Brampton Clerk's Office, 2017) notes that committee members will be interviewed, and while in this interview applicants, and Council members discuss their applications, and one section of the application (City of Brampton, n.d.a) directly states "Experience, Ethics and Integrity - Please describe any relevant experience you have including employment positions you have held, roles you have played that can contribute to the City. Please explain, through real examples, how you demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in consideration of challenging situations" (p.4). I was asked to be part of the committee because the former member representing 2SLGBTQ+ interests resigned, so I was not part of a formal interview process but was instead appointed to the Inclusion and Equity Committee as of April 2017, though I was not included in the meeting minutes formally until June 2017 (Inclusion and Equity Committee, 2017). As a member of the Committee from April 2017 to its end in 2018, I was vocal about the absence of the trans flag at pride flag raisings, and trans visibility in general. I intended to problematize the transphobic actions of Peel Pride, trying to speak the language of vitalization and generative community practices that would appeal to the municipal state. Understanding the coded professionalization and respectability politics governing the discussion about diversity, I knew I had to play within this field for any hope of

being heard. My goal was to show that despite Peel Pride's ongoing erasure of the trans community, there was a place that could be built for the entire 2SLGBTQ+ community to belong in Brampton. I knew this was possible because I was organizing in the community during a time when trans visibility was at its peak. I saw too, that existing callouts were not enough to disrupt the ongoing invisibility of trans people in Brampton. The standards put forth by the regulations of the Inclusion and Equity Committee limited me to a single way of expressing feedback that would later allow my actions to be labelled as self-interested or entitled. It was also important for me to articulate that these inclusions would not come from within Peel Pride. If they were going to, they would have already taken place when there was an abundance of trans visibility organized by queer and trans of color organizers within Pride Week in Peel as far back as 2011. Navigating bureaucratic logistics to raise the trans flag took a great deal of mental and emotional energy. Persistent questions about why the trans flag raising was important indicated that despite trying to remedy my own invisibility, I would first have to present a business case that justified the flag raising. It was a struggle to articulate a reasonable explanation for why I would want to see myself reflected in Pride celebrations, however ideographical a flag raising may be. I did not know how to say at that time that if my non-binaryness, and subsequent transness was missing from 2SLGBTQ+ community it felt as though the city was not built with my inclusion in mind.

Despite my misgivings, I worked hard on a presentation that I hoped would articulate how many other municipalities were doing the same and argued for gender inclusive washrooms at the same time. I still faced resistance where I was required to articulate how absence, can be a form of transphobia. Realizing that my experiences were called into question despite simultaneously being consulted for my knowledge by the municipality was the point where I internalized that there was something wrong with me. Trans lives were not important enough to be visible or viewed as worth it because they exist. I did not know how to both do the extensive labour of presenting a case for the importance of trans inclusion without coming out before I was ready, while also adhering to the respectability politics demanded of participation in municipal spaces. I was told that the clerks would first need to check with Peel Pride to

make sure that it was indeed a form of transphobia. Regardless of my years of living and working in the community, and my self-awareness as a non-binary person (who had not yet 'come out' publicly), my knowledge was rendered untrue because it did not match up with the narrative of community that Peel Pride created with the City of Brampton; Peel Pride was not already raising the Trans flag, and so it was considered unnecessary. This experience solidified my understanding that Peel Pride and the City of Brampton were willing co-authors of community that not only erased trans people from its landscape, but QTBIPOC communities too, based on the case study of Peel Pride in chapter four. I realized that it did not matter how much work I did or how well I articulated the needs of community; The City of Brampton would only ever see me as an outsider as long as Peel Pride was their gateway (and community gatekeeper) standing between me and any hope of truly belonging to the city I called home for eighteen years. My community work qualified my knowledge as worthy of a seat on the advisory committee, but who I was disqualified my entire person from being able to do anything on it. I was relegated to the deferential role of agreeing with the City of Brampton that Peel Pride knew my experience better than I did. The vocabulary to articulate this experience fell beyond my grasp at the time, and I lacked the expertise required to speak about my experiences as a diverse person. This experience and many others like it did, however, force me to learn the language of my oppression and how those same tools of oppression were used to reproduce other necropolitical social deaths for QTBIPOC community members. Peel Pride in this sense, has been assigned the powers of authorship over defining the basics of what "2SLGBTQ+ community". Within this, they are also granted the authority to say what is and is not true about 2SLGBTQ+ lives based on their role as experts, arbiters, and translators of 2SLGBTQ+ community in Brampton. It is revelatory of the harm that can come from relying on organizations as the authors of diversity rather than the lived experiences of those who are diverse. Throughout the process of trying to advocate for trans inclusion, and QTBIPOC inclusion I felt like a ghost trying to scream my validity and worth into every word of performative excitement that I knew no one would hear. I would be left to grieve my own absence, alone, while performing the right affect so no one would fear my difference in queerness or the transness I was discovering as a non-binary person. It was hard to be excited about the

flag raising but I hoped it would let other people who did not fit the gender binary like me, see that at least one person cared enough to ask why the Trans flag was missing. I took to Facebook and other media outlets to try to perform the right amount of gratitude, so that I did not lose the 'seat at the table' that allowed me to get one piece of representation past the wall of Peel Pride's dominance. It was a crushing epiphany that it did not matter what activism was done, or what decisions were made: Brampton was not being built to include everyone who lived in it because of how diversity was established through organizations, rather than through the people who embodied diversity.

I felt that I had to perform gratitude even though I experienced several levels of transphobia just to see a symbol for trans community flown in the city where I lived. I learned that when the collective good for everyone does not include you, any act to highlight who you are and how that is missing from mainstream discourse will be labelled selfish because it is a refusal to be invisible. I did not 'come out' through this process, but I was aware of how demanding visibility by referencing the pain of your absence can be used by cisgender people as evidence of self-interest. It also reinforces a power dynamic that placed me with truly little of it. Coming to a greater understanding of my non-binary identity, I see now that it was not just about a flag raising but a fight for survival. I internalized the idea that recognition comes from the municipality and so I kept turning to these places, and even Pride events to find traces of acceptance beyond the gender binary. Seeing myself within the city was the confirmation I needed that I had some worth in my transness. It was easy to dismiss concerns about trans visibility as a departure from calls for solidarity that privilege cisgender representations of community pride. It was a profound invisibility that stretched beyond the trans flag raising.

Peel Pride would not even recognize the existence of the trans community in either its history, or reference to the challenges of being 2SLGBTQ+ (Peel Pride, n.d.), I did not think it likely that the organization would agree that raising the trans flag was important, but instead see it as a way to continue co-opting the discourse of diversity for their personal gain, despite their practices of inclusion being completely different. Unsurprisingly, Peel Pride co-opted the flag raising as their own work, even though

they have done a great deal of work to delegitimize any voices other than their own, and did none of the work to ensure the flag was raised. On the sponsorship page where Peel Pride seeks donations, the trans flag raising is now listed as "our work and accomplishments" (Peel Pride, n.d.) even though it was not, and has not ever been the result of Peel Pride's efforts. QTBIPOC Sauga also used social media to intervene into these processes that perform inclusion but use diversity narratives to distance themselves from systemic changes that impact how white supremacy manifests in everyday ways.

Figure 1: QTBIPOC Sauga Instagram post that pride month is complicated (QTBIPOC Sauga, 2019a).

Spade (2015) writes that a reliance on legal reforms and legal inclusion (including Pride proclamations and municipal flag raisings) does not disrupt the everyday ways that trans communities are oppressed and in many ways upholds the homonormative valuation white and market-friendly even in trans identities. The refusal to admit that several members of the Inclusion and Equity Committee organized the flag raising means that even trans visibility can be operationalized in a normative capacity that maintained a convivial relation to the market.

Public participation in the hopes of making more space for community proved invalidating and emotionally violent. Furthermore, the trans flag has not been raised since that initial event. Peel Pride has therefore been able to archive the event as a success and testament to a story about their inclusive practices, (the City of Brampton gets to use it in the same capacity). I came to understand that this was

part of a larger deferential process that the City engages in with Peel Pride regarding the 2SLGBTQ+ community, singularizing the kind of 2SLGBTQ+ person that would or could matter. If Peel Pride did not render you personally, as important, it followed that the version of community they created would not do the same, either. This power ensures that the leaders of Peel Pride have license to develop community as they want to see it, not as it exists. The danger here, is that Peel Pride is led by homonormative, white, upper middle class, cisgender gays with no interest in working with QTBIPOC community (as will be demonstrated in chapter four). Beyond Peel Pride demonstrating white supremacist logics (Smith, 2012) of ownership of community (and the ability to punish those who do not adhere to their vision of how their property should act), disappearing racial difference, and orientalism, they embed these white supremacist logics into and across Brampton. The nature and depth of the City of Brampton's investment into Peel Pride means that the City reproduces white supremacist logics, that necropolitically mark dissenting 2SLGBTQ+ people, trans people, and particularly queer and trans people of colour as worthy of life on the margins. Discursive erasure acts as a signature praxis of a white supremacy that is intended to both silence critiques, constantly re-write history, and ensure that white narratives maintain a supremacy.

Conclusion

Economic development in Brampton has the demographic subject of diversity into a manageable object through diversity is capitalized. Managing the discourses around diversity secured a future thriving but it also allowed the municipality to market itself as particularly gay friendly. Florida (2005, 2012) conceptualized a creative economy in which this gay friendliness is synonymous with the investment worthiness. Central to this image of investment are white, middle-class, homonormative gays who rely on the same state-granted rights that heterosexual people enjoy, to argue for their full legal recognition. These rights include marriage, divorce, adoption, reproduction, property ownership, and life insurance designation, to name a few. In this way, equality takes on an idealized form, in an idealized subject who looks exclusively to the state for access to their community. The City of Brampton has operationalized this ideal subject who turns toward the municipality for rights, recognition, and the benefits of community

membership. Beyond the market rationality that promotes the city as consumer centric in redevelopment formulations, the invocation of diversity as investment has also demonstrated a gentrifying power. Revitalization, and redevelopment projects have begun in areas with higher racialized populations in ways that stem from economic development policy, creative economy frameworks, and the deployment of market rationalities. These market rationalities make it easier for one form of 2SLGBTQ+ community to be featured through governance, municipal celebrations, and justifies (albeit problematically) their prioritization. Amplifying mostly white gays signals homonormative prerogatives that are favourable to gentrification and these become clearer in the context of the documents being used to guide development or argue for its implementation. Brampton's gentrification processes have begun in many forms and data shows that because of the redevelopment projects, racialized communities will primarily be displaced. Displacement processes demonstrate that there is a racialized 'Other' the city is being reclaimed from, in order to articulate that Brampton is not only cool, but that it can be billed as a luxury experience. The use of homonormative subjectivities, and community organizations to accomplish this, marks a stage in the development of a municipal homonational subject. Where homonormative gay people are invoked within and as part of processes that will displace racialized people, there is a clear normative figure who is cleared from the landscape of the city in a way that favours another. This process serves multiple ends and has been exacted in many different areas of policy within the City of Brampton. Beyond economic and business development mechanisms, this is also achieved through the complicated processes of community organizing.

The case study of Peel Pride demonstrates the way that organizations are operationalized through diversity governance and discourses, to enact a silencing mechanism. The silence erases QTBIPOC communities from the city, and this invisibilizing function assumes that the only gay life is the most market-friendly configuration of it. The narrative this produces is one that does not need to pay attention to the communities being disappeared. There are complex logics at work in this figuration, among them

white supremacist logics that act as justification for erasure, and invisibilization. I turn now to the case study of Peel Pride's homonormative dominance at the City of Brampton.

4. Bearing witness to whiteness: the single-issue politics of Peel Pride

The suburban municipality of Brampton has many organizations contributing to the landscape of queer and trans community. Among these organizations, are Peel Pride (also known as The Pride Committee of Peel), Moyo Health and Community Services (formerly the Peel HIV/AIDS Network, and henceforth referred to as Moyo), QTBIPOC Sauga, QTBIPOC Brampton (in association with QTBIPOC Sauga), Peel in Colour, and Vision Brampton. Organizations who work specifically for and within 2SLGBTQ+ populations in Brampton include Moyo, Peel Pride, Peel in Colour, and QTBIPOC Sauga. Various organizing capacities come together between June and July for Pride Month festivities related to the Stonewall Riots, and for Pride celebrations that take place in the Region of Peel. However, Moyo, QTBIPOC Sauga, and Peel in Colour are the only organizations who hold events for the community throughout the year. QTBIPOC Sauga and Peel in Colour organize through, for, and with community directly. Moyo too, organizes directly, and they also leverage partnerships with other formally designated non-profits to create space in Brampton. Peel Pride does not have a non-profit designation, though the organization maintains a partnership with the following organizations through proclamations and pride month organizing: Peel Regional Police, The City of Brampton, The Region of Peel, Caledon Pride, and Rainbow Sauga. The social media pages for Pride Week in Peel indicate that Peel Pride has also taken over their organization, based on the photos of the organizations featuring Peel Pride's name and logo. Peel Pride has the sole partnership with the City of Brampton that brings Pride events to the municipality, despite several other organizations providing services to the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The most significant difference among them, is that in a city whose population is 73.3% racialized (Region of Peel, 2017a), only Moyo (and its virtual hub, Rainbow Salad), QTBIPOC Sauga, and Peel in Colour are led by, and serve community in a way that foregrounds QTBIPOC intersections. QTBIPOC organizing however, has consistently been erased, or suppressed to the point of committing community members to the margins. There are a wide variety of organizations and mandates that serve queer and trans communities in Brampton. The recognition these organizations receive formally however, are all a footnote to Peel

Pride's dominance as sanctioned by the City of Brampton's relationship with them. Specific forces shape not only this privileged relationship, but also the way that Peel Pride has treated other organizations and tried to shape community in their image (white, gay, and middle-class). Peel Pride has also been given substantial powers to narrate community which have led to Peel Pride being the main source of information about the 2SLGBTQ+ community, and the de facto face of the community. Using the example of Peel Pride, this chapter argues that a singular non-profit organization cannot adequately represent the diversity of the 2SLGBTQ+ community within Brampton and in attempting to do so can damage community, silence community members, and force non-normative community to the edges. In this chapter I focus on how white supremacy in 2SLGBTQ+ community organizing creates a racialized Other whose abjection is used to help define normative terms of belonging. I also articulate the complex mechanisms involved in maintaining the wellbeing of a white homonormative subject: white supremacy culture (Okun, et. al, n.d.; dRworks, 2016), white supremacist logics (Smith, 2012), the refusals of white supremacy (Gibbons, 2018) as part of white ignorance (Mills, 2017), and the possessive investment in whiteness (Lipsitz, 2018). These concepts work together as the defense for white supremacy that ensures whiteness never has to answer for itself even as it excludes community and spatializes inequities.

Consolidating community, articulating supremacy: on naming and claiming

The name Peel Pride places both community and organization into a place, which is a helpful signifier for those looking for pride events in a specific place. It also sounds as though it is a publicly funded extension of the Region of Peel's operations, though it is not. According to Peel Pride's website, the first Pride celebration in the Region of Peel took place in 2002 and that "for over 15 years, The Pride Committee of Peel serves the Brampton, Mississauga and Caledon areas. The Pride Committee is a volunteer organization, with the goal of bringing Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals, Transgender, and our allies together in Peel Region" (Peel Pride, n.d.h.). Immediately, it becomes unclear whether the *organization* is named Peel Pride, or whether the *celebration* is Peel Pride. No manner of clarity is offered on the City of Brampton website, or the Region of Peel website either. Peel Pride also uses other organizational names

across various platforms such as social media, in formal media interviews, and on mailing lists. These include: Peel Pride (Peel Pride, n.d.a.), The Pride Committee of Peel (Peel Pride, n.d.a.), Pride Events Peel (Peel Pride, n.d.d.), Pride in Peel (https://www.facebook.com/PrideinPeel/), and Pride Week in Peel (https://www.facebook.com/PrideWeekinPeel/) simultaneously. Ensuring that all the possible configurations of 2SLGBTQ+ community belong to Peel Pride, dominates the discourse about who Pride belongs to, and who is to be associated with LGBT2+ life in Brampton. Where naming is concerned, it is true that there are no guarantees that usernames have not already been taken, though overwhelming the discursive landscape with different names of Pride belonging to Peel Pride ensures that its power and prioritization are constantly reconstituted and remain in a position of supremacy over others. Furthermore, it ensures that any grassroots groups who wish to participate in their own variation of Pride within the Region of Peel must choose a name that does not include Pride, or Peel, rendering its efforts subservient to those of Peel Pride. Evidence of this use of power and privilege to silence opposition is also evident in the description for Peel Pride's Facebook group, intended to supplement their social activities as a year-round forum to share information and community. The digital realm has been a useful tool for community formation, though in other instances it can be harmful to community formation. Anonymity can be useful when navigating 2SLGBTQ+ identity, though it can be harmful when individuals use an organization's power to pursue personal issues or promote personal beliefs.

Peel Pride created a digital space where, in the absence of accountability mechanisms, its digital community became a place of derision and exclusivity. The rules created for Peel Pride's social group on Facebook for example, demonstrate how the digital realm can be used to exclude people from participation. The description reads: "We don't have many rules. 1. Be respectful 2. Make sure you use current dates on any events you are promoting and make sure the location is clear 3. Blocking an admin means immediate removal from the group" (Peel Pride, n.d.k.). These rules are problematic in several ways. If someone were to block a member of Peel Pride for reasons related to personal safety they would immediately be disqualified from access to other members of their community, regardless of whether

their claims of not feeling safe are valid. It also indicates that the members of Peel Pride are constructing community based on who reveres them most, which creates a deferential respectability politics based on popularity rather than an ethics of care. The inability to block a member of Peel Pride indicates that one must also be visible to the organization, and their social media identities are written as parts of their life that Peel Pride is entitled to if they are to gain access to 2SLGBTQ+ community. This rule therefore complicates consent because simply saying "no" to any single member of Peel Pride cuts them off from community. Peel Pride members therefore claim an ownership to community as their personal property which is legitimized and empowered by their relationship with the City of Brampton. It also constructs a rule of respectability, implying that those who are removed from the group are disrespectful, when some may be attempting to protect themselves from Peel Pride's members. The respectability discourse also implies that there is a legacy of disrespect that necessitated the implementation of this rule, immediately constructing Peel Pride as the long-standing victims of an outsider they need to protect themselves from. Importantly, QTBIPOC Sauga events do not list the dates for safety concerns (QTBIPOC Sauga, n.d.), meaning that their events, and attendees are not considered part of Brampton's 2SLGBTQ+ community, even though they also serve Brampton. In this sense, Peel Pride is covertly obstructing queer and trans people of color from being part of the 2SLGBTQ+ community or having access to QTBIPOC events, subtly erasing QTBIPOC communities through their rules. They are also condemning queer and trans people of color to social death by excluding them from public discourse, and participation in 2SLGBTQ+ community. Haritaworn (2016) outlines and defines this process wherein "the vitalization of (white) queer subjects often stays close to the sites where queer and trans people were (and often continue to be, post-homophobic and -transphobic claims to the contrary) sentenced to social or actual death" (p.110). The City of Brampton reproduces this violence by virtue of its inexplicably singular partnership in bringing Pride events to Brampton.

The absence of any accountability mechanisms ensures that harmful behaviours remain obfuscated because members of Peel Pride have the final say on all things 2SLGBTQ+ by virtue of their

partnership with the City of Brampton. All they must do is rewrite the story, as they have already done, and once again they are painted as victims to community members who are raising concerns with their praxis. The need to be the sole arbiter of the narratives of community serves as an example of how municipal homonationalism manifests. QTBIPOC residents, and community members in Brampton do not get to simply critique the work of Peel Pride and ask why the organization does not look like them or facilitate the inclusion of QTBIPOC people. Asking the question poses a threat, and challenge to what community Peel Pride has claimed as their property.

Community as property: the power to erase and the logics of exclusion

2SLGBTQ+ community organizing is a wide field in Brampton that includes a variety of groups which provides an imperative for power to be spread across these groups. Traditionally, and at the time of this paper there has been a great deal of privilege and power granted to Peel Pride to develop community as its members see fit. The power relation that establishes this degree of authorship and control can lend a sense of ownership over not only Pride events, but the community that an organization creates. When done in the context of white supremacist logics this turns the possibility of ownership as accountability, into ownership as an organizational entitlement to shape the community. Despite having worked with Peel Pride to establish 2SLGBTQ+ community within and beyond pride celebrations, the organizing histories of Queer Xposure, Queer It Up, QTBIPOC Sauga, and Pride Week in Peel in 2014 and earlier, have been all but erased by Peel Pride.

The history of 2SLGBTQ+ organizing in Brampton involves a variety of organizations, and individuals who contributed to a landscape that featured inclusion beyond homonormative white gays. These are organizing histories that prioritized trans experiences, and QTBIPOC experiences as well. I was part of the first trans flag raising in Brampton, through my work on the Inclusion and Equity Committee (Inclusion and Equity Committee, 2017) but Queer Xposure, and the queer and trans of color organizers in Mississauga ensured there were Trans Day of Remembrance and Trans Day of Visibility organizing taking place as early as 2010 in Peel (Associated Youth Services of Peel, and East Mississauga

Community Health Centre, 2011). Furthermore, PFLAG Peel also worked with former iterations of Pride Week in Peel to facilitate community events that engaged numerous families, despite its much publicized refresh (Warren, 2016), where national media constructed a narrative that upheld the idea that there had not already been queer and trans of colour (specifically South Asian) organizing taking place where the headline of the news read "Pioneering South Asian parents start Peel chapter of PFLAG" (Warren, 2016, n.p.). It blatantly erased a legacy of QTBIPOC community in Brampton and Peel, because it saw the narrative Peel Pride was constructing alongside Pride Week in Peel: 2SLGBTQ+ community organizing was mostly white. The headline and story itself also take part in the construction of a racialized Other as not being accepting and alludes to an impossibility that someone can be both queer and South Asian. Puar's (2017) concept of homonationalism directly addresses the binary logic that one cannot be both queer and Muslim (or in this case racialized), and makes a clear connection between the homonational discursive formations that Peel Pride has played a significant role in creating. It also shows that queer and trans of color organizing was not permitted, but when these same communities could be co-opted to demonstrate an exceptionalism in Peel, they were allowed to speak and were featured as a representation of community. Therefore, only when QTBIPOC people could defer to white community organizers as being more powerful, they were given agency to speak on their own behalf. It is true that the organization is specifically for South Asian families which is important in the context of an overwhelmingly white 2SLGBTQ+ community, but I nonetheless complicate the view of the South Asian PFLAG as "pioneering" (Warren, 2016, n.p.). Invoking language whose origins are in that of early colonization, as with pioneers and frontiers, becomes a discursive implication that racialized communities are part of a landscape that requires taming with homonormative whiteness. Haritaworn (2016) writes of this language that it can create discourses where "wild, dangerous landscapes must be tamed, cleansed and regenerated" (p.51). The erasure of QTBIPOC organizing histories within this landscape provides an understanding of whom the landscape was being cleansed of (people of colour) and regenerated for (white people). This example doubly demonstrates how erasing histories of QTBIPOC organizing acts as a significant machination of municipal homonationalism. It names this organizing as a new cause celebre, when queer

and trans people of colour already existed in Brampton and Mississauga, and denies the work and labours of queer and trans people of colour. These efforts and histories existed previously, though never in a way that white supremacy in 2SLGBTQ+ organizing could appropriate.

Part of the organizing efforts for Pride Week in Peel 2013 included a session with Peel PFLAG involving queer and trans families.

Figure 2: Widely distributed poster from Pride Week in Peel 2013 (PFLAG Peel, 2013).

The important question these discourses generate is, if the organizers of Pride Week in Peel were mostly people of colour, and it was "sharing with our families" on the poster, to whom did those families belong? Given that the event was being organized mostly by people of colour (Verma, 2017), it would suggest that the event involved families of colour as well. The discourse in local media about the South Asian PFLAG group however, suggests that it was revolutionary for people of color be accepting. Beyond re-writing community histories, local media also worked alongside Peel Pride to construct racialized people as figures that 2SLGBTQ+ people need to be protected from (Frisque, 2018a) where South Asian people were generalized as viewing 2SLGBTQ+ community as "taboo" (n.p.). The creation of a PFLAG group for South Asian parents also demonstrates that the PFLAG Queer Xposure was organizing alongside, changed direction to not being operational, or inclusive. These specific discourses that were shaped by Peel Pride, or influenced by actions Peel Pride had taken directly created a racialized Other presented as a danger to 2SLGBTQ+ community.

The narrative that these parts of queer and trans community history represent is also one that creates a perception that one part of the community requires protection from an outsider. Haritaworn (2016) writes of this as the "hate crime framework" (p.44) in which racialized people are turned into "hateful Others whose own experiences of race and class oppression and backward cultures and inferior gendered intimacies make them prone to prejudice, violence and hostility; a gay community that needs space for its safety, protection, and self-expression" (ibid.). These narratives of Brampton's white gay community needing protection were embedded into the municipal imaginary through the establishment of the Peel Regional Police's Safe Place program. The program was advertised (Peel Regional Police, 2018) as a way for 2SLGBTQ+ people to safely report hate-motivated crimes and was established through businesses placing a sticker with the Peel Regional Police logo on top of a rainbow flag in their window. The hate-motivated crimes report released in 2017 demonstrated a 91% increase in hate-motivated crimes targeting Muslim people (McNeilly, 2018). Local media featured headlines that connected the Safe Place Program to the hate-motivated crimes report in a justificatory manner. One such headline read "*Peel police launch Safe Place program because 'hate motivated incidents continue to occur'*" (Rosella, 2018). Although the crime rates against 2SLGBTQ+ people rose by less than one percent (McNeilly, 2018), the police used the data from the report to justify the program protecting gay people. The visual representation of the community was captured in a photo provided by Peel Regional Police to local media, featuring the white Chairperson of Peel Pride, beside the equally white former police Chief Jennifer Evans (Rosella, 2018). The caption beneath the photo states "Peel Regional Police Chief Jennifer Evans and Peel Pride member Sonya Shorter. Photo courtesy of Peel Regional Police" (Rosella, 2018). Neglecting safety for the racialized populations experiencing the most violence, while also creating a safety program for a homonormative and gay organization signals the creation of a specific subject. Where local media featured South Asian populations as a cause for concern regarding the safety of 2SLGBTQ+ people (Frisque, 2018a), and the prioritization of white gay safety (Rosella, 2018), the Safe Place Program embedded a racialized threat to gay community into the public imaginary. This threat also assumed that queer and trans people could not be or were not both racialized and able to thrive in their

community. Arriving at this subjectivity took multiple erasures, white supremacist logics, and most importantly the consolidation of 2SLGBTQ+ community under Peel Pride's name. It was not until Peel Pride collected community groups in their name, where predominantly queer and trans people of colour used to organize, that the organization secured a clear supremacy in Brampton.

These processes also impacted Mississauga's QTBIPOC community because what erasure had already taken place in Brampton through Peel Pride, was being consolidated in Mississauga through Pride Week in Peel (which is now run by Peel Pride). Although Peel Pride and Pride Week in Peel were credited with the rainbow flag raising in 2016 (City of Mississauga, 2016), it was queer and trans organizers of colour who presented a deputation to Mississauga City Council in 2012 to invite Council members to join the community in celebrating Pride (Pride Week in Peel Planning Group, 2012). It was not until Peel Pride and the now depoliticized Pride Week in Peel solicited a flag raising and recognition, that it was granted. Mayor Bonnie Crombie celebrated the flag raising as a "milestone" (City of Mississauga, 2016b) despite the work of queer and trans of color organizers to achieve the same ends in 2012 unsuccessfully.

Figure 3: Mississauga's first pride flag raising in 2016 (City of Mississauga, 2016b).

Notable to this unfolding is the fact that Peel Pride joined them as an official partner for their flag raising, despite the fact that Peel Pride was not a noted participant in Pride Week in Peel's deputation (Pride Week in Peel Planning Group, 2012) that could have achieved the same ends. The City of Mississauga waited to raise the Pride flag until eight (Verma, 2017) queer and trans workers (mostly of color) left the organization that organized Pride Week in Peel, demonstrates a buy-in of Peel Pride's white supremacist actions. The harmfulness, and pervasiveness of white supremacy is evident in the fact that despite Pride Week in Peel's 2012 deputation, no response came from Council, though for the 2016 flag raising Mayor Bonnie Crombie (City of Mississauga, 2016) stated that "I wish to further recognize the members, organizers and leadership from Peel Pride and Pride Week in Peel for helping organize today's flag raising and for providing important and accessible support services, programs and events year round" (n.p.). Where members of City Council were invited to join the celebrations in 2012, which included then Ward 5 Council member, Bonnie Crombie (Crombie, 2012), they did not do so until Pride events and the face of 2SLGBTQ+ community was significantly, if not completely white. Raising a pride flag is an important event, but it is important to understand that there were others who were written out of this process and history entirely.

There was also a 2SLGBTQ+ organization started in 2018 that began to feature prominently as a service provider for community in Mississauga that Peel Pride played a role in amplifying, again affecting 2SLGBTQ+ community outside of Brampton. Local media wrote of this new group, Rainbow Sauga, as the first of its kind and as celebrated by local politicians who even worked with the group to constitute itself (Marychuck, 2019). It was started by two white men that reflected the homonormative, white, depoliticized image of 2SLGBTQ+ community that Peel Pride's organizing prioritized. Rather than correct the perception that Rainbow Sauga was not the first of its kind, local media also published quotes from its founders talking about how "it's high time" (Marychuck, 2019, n.p) that an 2SLGBTQ+ organization like it existed in Mississauga that could encompass a parade, despite the fact that they have, and do in both the forms of Pride Week in Peel, Queer Xposure, Queer It Up!, and QTBIPOC Sauga.

Queer It Up! Held the first Pride March in Peel, with little recognition from politicians the group was
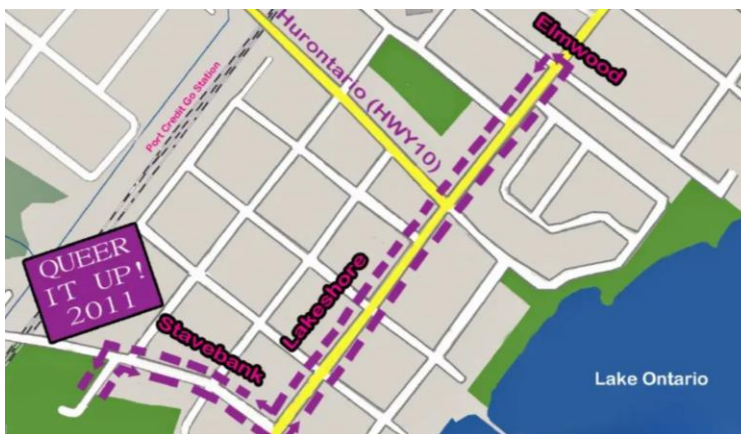
receiving at that time in its history.

Figure 4: Queer It Up! 2011 Mississauga March Route (Pride Week in Peel, 2011).

Furthermore, Queer It Up! was facilitating this event for several years before, with a blog post indicating

that they were organizing it since 2007 (Queer Xposure, 2010). The first Pride March that took place in
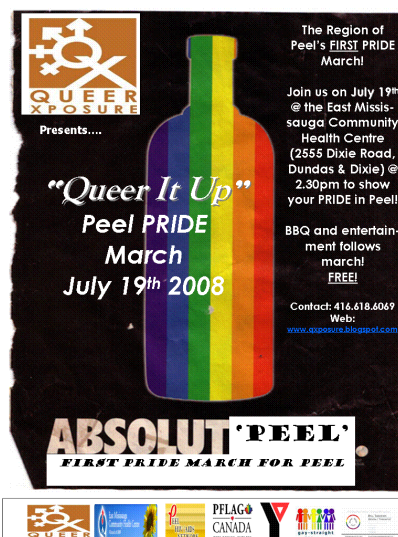
Peel, was advertised through a widely distributed poster from Queer It Up!

Figure 5: The Region of Peel's first Pride March poster (QXposure, 2008)

Queer Xposure, and the largely queer and trans of color organizers that were building community

capacity, and visibility also worked with the first iteration of PFLAG in important ways. They were also

organizing Pride events in Mississauga in Port Credit (Mississauga News, 2011), despite later claims of firsts related to Pride events along Port Credit by the newly formed Pride in the 905 (Pride in the 905, 2018) with no recognition of the QTBIPOC organizing that came before their work.

QTBIPOC organizations and histories are rendered invisible to a white gaze looking for more of itself in a sprawling suburban landscape. It demonstrates how Peel Pride has facilitated a white supremacy through which white ideas, beliefs, and organizing are rendered superior to those of people of color in Brampton, and the Region of Peel. The ascendancy of whiteness that is part of white supremacy leads to the marginalization of QTBIPOC community who are separated from mainstream 2SLGBTQ+ celebrations. Further to this point, the Pride 2020 celebrations being shared by Caledon Pride on Instagram demonstrate a dedication to uphold not only whiteness, but to ignore QTBIPOC efforts, and community (Caledon Pride, 2020). Caledon Pride posted on social media about the events being held and organized for Peel Pride, with both Peel Pride, and Rainbow Sauga who have historically erased QTBIPOC voices, experiences, and events. Caledon Pride named and tagged other organizations which amplifies the discourse of community and draws attention to the partnerships they are prioritizing. QTBIPOC events, and organizations are forced to compete with homonormative whiteness in a way that constructs them as both the discursive Other, and outside the mainstream of 2SLGBTQ+ celebrations. By prioritizing a singular organization, the authority to define community and who gets to belong to it each year is assigned to Peel Pride. It is true that a Pride organization cannot be responsible for amplifying all the voices in their community, though Pride Toronto has, to use an example, has taken up the most basic act of sharing and helping to organize events specifically for racialized people.

Pride events taking place in 2020 demonstrate that Peel Pride still has power over community in a constitutive manner that has facilitated an ongoing white supremacy in 2SLGBTQ+ community organizing in Peel. For example, Moyo (formerly the Peel HIV/AIDS Network) has partnered with the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (henceforth referred to as Black CAP) to hold the Region of Peel's first Black Pride event to the Region. Despite this momentous event and partnership, Peel Pride, Caledon

Pride, and Rainbow Sauga's social media channels have been completely silent about it. Peel Pride has at the time of this paper, also posted no solidarity statements or messages of reflexivity regarding anti-Black racism, or Black Lives Matter movements on their website, or any of their social media channels despite this being widely considered a best practice in community.
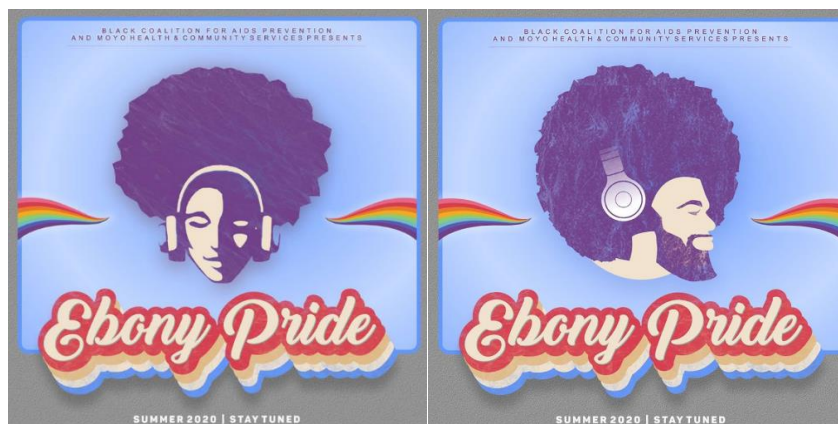

Figure 6: Ebony Pride as part of Pride events in Peel 2020 (Moyo, 2020).

QTBIPOC Sauga has also organized events (QTBIPOC Sauga, 2020) that have not been amplified by either Peel Pride, or their partner organizations (the City of Brampton, Rainbow Sauga, and Caledon Pride). There is no mandate to share these events, but the partnership that Peel Pride maintains with the City of Brampton places it in a position of power and privilege over others in which the absence of mention maintains a citational erasure. It is also a manipulation of power that requires organizations reach out to Peel Pride and engage with them on Peel Pride's terms in order to be featured on social media channels or as part of the organizing efforts that add to Peel Pride's legitimacy. Choosing not to amplify these events and the experiences they represent maintains the position that white ideas are the most important ones to both Peel Pride and the City of Brampton.

Recognizing the efforts of queer and trans of color organizers would also mean that whiteness would not be at the centre of these efforts, which would disrupt the white supremacy that Peel Pride has worked to establish. Recognition of these histories would also mean that Peel Pride would be required to share, rather than consolidate power they held in the community as "experts" on the lives of gay and

lesbian people (because they endeavour to recognize no one else). It would also require a divestment from white supremacy culture which relies on hierarchies, binary logic, "power hoarding" (dRworks, 2016), punitive rules, and accumulation. It can be argued that it is not the work of an organization to maintain an archive of community history. However, when an organization is actively taking over other community groups to consolidate their control it might be considered an exercise in truth-telling; How the 2SLGBTQ+ community belongs to itself, and with those who created space to make the *entire* community visible, not just its present, white, cisnormative stewards. Additionally, the act of a historically, and presently white community organization erasing the histories and contributions of queer and trans people of color further demonstrates white supremacy. QTBIPOC Sauga has also raised these issues on social media by extending an ethic of care to those who have felt left behind by the hegemonic whiteness that persists in a white homonormativity.
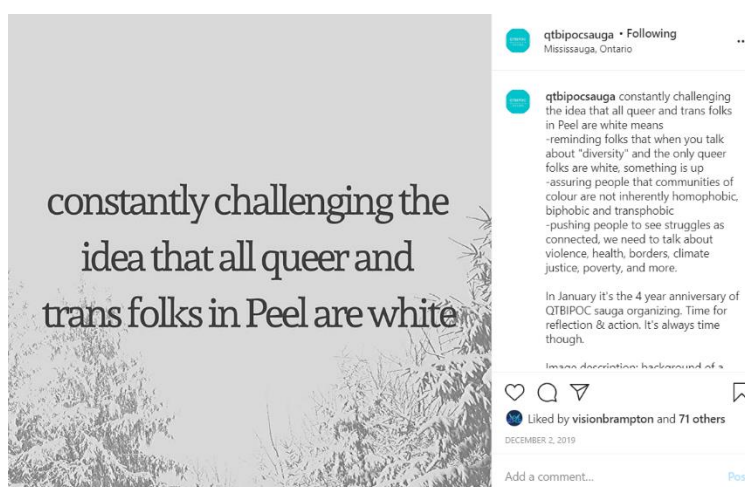

Figure 7: QTBIPOC Sauga highlighting homonormativity in Peel (QTBIPOC Sauga, 2019d)

Continuous citational neglect by Peel Pride and the City of Brampton of the QTBIPOC community prioritizes the contributions of white, homonormative gays above others. The act of erasure ensures that there are no queer and trans of color histories to draw from in mainstream media, or in web searches that produce media features as part of ongoing community histories. Digital searchability of QTBIPOC organizations in municipally funded media in Brampton is a significant way that Peel Pride plays a role in an ongoing occlusion of racialized queer and trans people. Placing Peel Pride at the centre

of 2SLGBTQ+ life in the city establishes a citational silence that assumes a physical absence, and this highlights a key role that local media can play in upholding white supremacy. Initial acts of erasure therefore also create narratives of discovery that mirror colonization: "discovering" spaces of support for queer and trans people that white supremacist logics enacted through Peel Pride have disappeared, as was the case with the South Asian PFLAG group (Frisque, 2018a). These processes continue to dislocate QTBIPOC community in Brampton, while providing further justification for the continued presence and prominence of Peel Pride. The politics of forgetting and memory also ensure that Peel Pride's white supremacy never comes under the scrutiny of the actuaries of community history in a redressive manner.

Peel Pride erased local organizing histories by deferring to national histories, to turn community attention away from the organizations (and people) they disappear from the community archive. Even within these national narratives, it should be noted that atonement for exclusions does not disrupt homonationalism and can serve to further embed it into a homonational imaginary (Catungal, 2017). Referring to histories on the website that explicitly cite perversion write Peel Pride as the organization that mitigates the perception of deviance that straight people hold of 2SLGBTQ+ people. The Peel Pride website assumes an authoritative voices and states that "From a very young age, we're taught to feel and believe that being gay was abnormal, a deviant in a society that believed that to be anyone not straight was evil, a monster, or a pervert. Society is changing, evolving as all things do". (Peel Pride, n.d.j.). This reference of deviance by Peel Pride in its own history operates in a normative capacity where Peel Pride assumes a position of conformity that distances 2SLGBTQ+ people from the labels of perversion and deviance. It also creates homonormative, white gay life as the culturally appropriate form of community. Invoking perversion narratives can act as a boundary forming logic around acceptable behaviours. Peel Pride's actions and website create a narrative that their way is the way of creating community, and as containing the ideal citizens of both nation, province, and municipality. Bader and Baker (2019) write that "symbolic boundaries are maintained by scripts of acceptable behaviour and justified by the values espoused by the powerful within a community" (p.12). Including deviance discourse therefore grants Peel

Pride the powers to name deviance in others because they claim to have shaken free of its label because of historical shifts, rather than political work. Depoliticizing the movements that gave rise to legal recognition as "equality" also occludes the larger narrative at work, which is that political resistance to ongoing inequities are a new form of deviance. Furthermore, as Bader and Baker (2019) note of deviance management in general, that these references of deviance also covertly create roles within the nation for 2SLGBTQ+ community members to play. While this pivot towards national inclusion is not unique to Peel Pride, it is used in a unique way that ignores its own history of erasing QTBIPOC histories in Brampton. It is also a historical shift that McCaskell (2016) outlines as taking place similarly in Toronto where national narratives of state inclusion are highlighted, while local exclusions and racisms are downplayed because they are viewed as the work of individual actors outside of the inclusive state.

Erasing an entire organizing history that queers of color have contributed presents white supremacist logics of both believing people to be property that one can lay claim to, and the need to continuously disappear racial difference (Smith, 2012). By deferring to the nation as the reason for Pride, and articulating "our good work" (Peel Pride, n.d.b.) as theirs when it is actually the work of queer and trans people of color in the community, Peel Pride is effectively exercising white supremacist logics to create their community history. Peel Pride's whiteness and the lengths the organization goes to, to uphold their expertise, and place itself as the arbiter of 2SLGBTQ+ experience both functions as and uphold a white supremacy. Peel Pride claimed credit firstly, for the Trans flag raising in 2017, which was the work of the Inclusion and Equity Committee (2017) and for which I purchased a flag, and pushed through bureaucratic obstacles with the City Clerk to bring to fruition. Peel Pride's donation page also states that they are to be credited with the pride flag raisings at schools across the Peel District School Board. While they may have been invited to the flag raising, the findings suggest an unethical organizing that dishonestly narrates their real role in the community, to construct an image of supremacy and maintain power. For example, Marychuck (2018) outlined the work being done by another community organization, Moyo (formerly the Peel HIV/AIDS Network) alongside those being offered by the Peel District School Board for students as part of ongoing community work through the *Mississauga News*.

National media outlets also covered the Peel District School Board's flag raising (Lucs, 2018b), and in an earlier piece, detailed that it was not the work of Peel Pride, but those of activists that were part of the school board's employee resource group (Lucs, 2018a) who were working to achieve the flag raising. The article writes of retired Peel District School Board Superintendent Caroline Speers that "Speers, a member of the LGBT community for 30 years, will be one of the speakers at a board meeting on Tuesday. She will be representing the Pride Employee Resource Group, an LGBT advocacy group within the school board" (n.p.). The employee resource group was responsible for doing the work to see the flag raised and yet Peel Pride totally erased the work of the employee resource group, and authored themselves as the source of that event on their donation page (Peel Pride, n.d.b.). Peel Pride also credits themselves for the fact that "In 2018 William Osler Brampton Civic Hospital holds its 2nd annual LGBTQ+ Forum for staff and community partners" (Peel Pride, n.d.b.) as their work. It was not publicized by local media, but I know from personal contacts in the community, that Peel Pride had nothing to do with organizing this event, either, as it was internal to William Osler and organized for employees. Beyond homonormative and homonational scripts that these actions lend themselves to, there are also significant financial ethical concerns with this curation of truths. Peel Pride does not have by-laws, governance or regulations listed on their website that would help the community understand how the money they have raised is spent, tended to, and invested, yet they are soliciting donations for the existence of Pride celebrations alone as though their presence in the community made it happen. The presence of a former Regional Council member as a member of Peel Pride (n.d.a.) brings the financial dealings of the organization into a further spotlight.

Former Regional Council Member Elaine Moore is listed as a member of Peel Pride, therefore being the recipient of donations with no accountability mechanisms in place, and is also listed on as a Gold Sponsor, as well as the City of Brampton. This means that donations in excess of $500 have gone to Peel Pride from the City of Brampton annually (because it is still listed on the website as of the writing of this paper) in support of work they have not done, and with no oversight as to how this money is to be

spent (Peel Pride, n.d.i.; Peel Pride, n.d.c.). The sponsorship package is no longer listed on the website,

though the 2014 iteration (which I kept a copy of before I resigned from the organization) states that a

Gold sponsorship involved the following:

> **Gold Level - $500.00 plus – 25% discount applies for 2 year sponsorship**
> Listed on our Friends of Peel Pride section of our website for one year under Gold level sponsors with a hyperlink to your website
> Your logo and hyperlink to your website will appear on our website for one year
> Your logo and website link will be published on any promotional material
> You may have a free double size vendor booth at our annual picnic (2 picnic table sizes)
> Supporter of Peel Pride certificate suitably framed to hang in your establishment

Figure 8: Peel Pride 2014 Sponsorship Package; Gold Sponsor Donation Level (Peel Pride, 2014).

Removing the sponsorship package from the website further removes transparency, and accountability

regarding donations, and the power relations that privilege donations to their organization specifically.

The website also has links on the "Bronze Sponsors" (Peel Pride, n.d.j) page that indicate the presence of

a sponsorship package but whose link is broken, and has been replaced by donations individually

negotiated and received by the members of Peel Pride (ibid.). By laying claim to the work of organizers of

color, and the existence of Pride celebrations in Brampton and the broader Region of Peel, Peel Pride

treats community as their property, and treats their present supremacy as justification for not needing to

observe the queer and trans of color organizing histories of the past while actively obstructing QTBIPOC

access to the social worlds they create. Beyond the work to construct community as homonormative, Peel

Pride has also taken credit for events in the community they did not facilitate, which only reifies their

actions as in service to white supremacy.

Queer spaces of hope: de-centering whiteness, locating radical care

The digital realm, when viewed primarily as a repository of information can be overlooked as an

important source of community. Though a politics of invisibility has characterized parts of queer and

trans suburban life (Bain and Podmore, 2019), the digital realm (taking the form of websites, blogs,

articles, social media, and groups on social media) offers a digital geography that creates space for

community ignored by normative terms of belonging. It also disrupts the power relations mapped onto physical spaces that limit access. The digital realm, specifically Facebook and Instagram, are at the core of how QTBIPOC community in Brampton has cohered, resisted erasure, and established a framework of care despite manufactured invisibility. Kuntsman's (2012) concept of reverberation as a methodology, traces the communities that power relations invisibilize through built forms to illuminate QTBIPOC life in the suburban municipality of Brampton. It locates communities that have defied erasure and left an imprint in local histories, and digital spaces to survive. I use this section to show how QTBIPOC community in the Region of Peel and Brampton, have divested from white supremacy culture and the racialized violence it produces through hierarchies, ordering, and top-down power distribution based on ethics of radical care, and "nurturance culture" (Samaran, 2019). My intent is not to offer a framework for appropriation, but rather to show that queer and trans people of colour are not a footnote in the unfolding of 2SLGBTQ+ community, excavated by an increased awareness of social justice movements.

QTBIPOC organizing in Brampton has established a counterpublic that provides a sense of belonging, and space, despite Peel Pride and the City of Brampton's homonormative and homonational prescriptions. Given the aggressive history of Peel Pride and their community partners obfuscating or obstructing QTBIPOC thriving, Muñoz (2019) offers a vital intervention into the linear knowledge production of archives and historicization. He writes that "the present is not enough. It is impoverished and toxic for queer and other people who do not feel the privilege of majoritarian belonging, normative tastes, and "rational" expectations" (p.27). The possibilities available to queer and trans community in this view, do not abandon the present, and do not singularize the past as the main pathway to understanding the present. I do not present a formula that can be immediately productive of redress, but instead one that relies on self-determined inclusion that is foundational for amplifying QTBIPOC experiences and community care that will benefit many queer and trans communities. In this sense my theorization may seem incomplete, though I leave it this way for scholarship to be filled in by QTBIPOC community from Brampton. Therefore, with this section I explore how QTBIPOC community has

divested from white supremacy culture and foregrounded an ethics of care and nurturance.

QTBIPOC organizations serving Brampton have resisted the normative discourses that sought to invisibilize them. The digital realm provides a way for community to speak on behalf of itself rather than through the limited channels that municipal diversity governance models provide. Instagram and Facebook for example, allowed QTBIPOC Sauga and Moyo to care for their communities in ways that were neither recognized by municipal discourses, nor authored by the City of Brampton. The following figures show how QTBIPOC-led or centred organizations have demonstrated an ethic of care, and resistance to white homonorms.

Figure 9: QTBIPOC Sauga offering care and comfort to community in the suburbs (QTBIPOC Sauga, 2019b)

In addition to offering general comfort, QTBIPOC Sauga has used the digital realm to articulate the voices of those who Peel Pride has so often silenced or viewed from a singular position of antagonism and oppression. The organization has provided a way for racialized queer and trans communities to know that they are not defined by their oppression and done so in what I argue, is a QTBIPOC vitality.

Figure 10: QTBIPOC Sauga amplifying community brilliance (QTBIPOC Sauga, 2019c)

Social media was not just a way of conveying information. It also was not just a way of advertising community events. QTBIPOC Sauga, offered a way through, and out of homonormative renderings of community. It was not just social media posts, but offerings of comfort, care, and collective visioning outside of white supremacist imaginaries that Peel Pride relied on to articulate community. Edelman (2020) writes that while resilience is often at the center of marginalized community narratives of survival, it "is also implicated in the reproduction of one's own subjectification" (p.112). Resilience often celebrates individual survival without fully focusing on systemic inequities, rewarding the most privileged. Rather than reinforce the idea of surviving oppression as a positive character trait, I use Edelman's (2020) writing on trans vitalities, though in this case a "QTBIPOC vitality". This conceptualization refutes resilience, and invokes a horizon beyond oppression. Trans vitalities (and QTBIPOC vitalities in Brampton) help "(a) to disrupt and rethink what valuable, viable, or quantifiable quality of life looks like; (b) to shift our understandings of community toward coalition; and (c) to offer a methodological, theoretical, and application-based set of tools that integrates a radical trans politics and a community-based approach to addressing trans lives" (pp.112-113). I cannot apply this in a singularizing manner to QTBIPOC communities because research by, with and for QTBIPOC communities is ongoing and necessary. QTBIPOC vitalities are, however, the forms of radical care that cohere through the digital realm. It is important that radical care come from QTBIPOC communities rather than be appropriated to

direct it towards them because it can be another way for white supremacy to obfuscate itself. Furthermore, when appropriated rather than coming from within QTBIPOC community "it can be used be used to coerce subjects into new forms of surveillance and unpaid labor, to make up for institutional neglect, and even to position some groups against others, determining who is worthy of care and who is not" (Hobart, and Kneese, 2020, p.2). Divesting from white supremacist structures does not just mean doing the opposite of white supremacy's prominent characteristics. Following a do-the-opposite binary model does not abate the questions of power and hierarchies that are at the core of how white supremacy functions. Gillborn (2006) writes that "supremacy is seen to relate to the operation of forces that saturate the everyday, mundane actions and policies that shape the world in the interests of white people" (p.320). These everyday encounters, if a radical care were *imposed* rather than *coming from within* QTBIPOC communities would only reproduce violence in everyday encounters. Despite any best intentions that the City of Brampton may have, it is important for QTBIPOC communities to find self-determined space, and self-determined organizing capacities that are not bound by a set of municipal expectations.

The ability to be measured, measurable, and to produce an outcome is what creates a hierarchy that subtly brings white supremacy into other spaces. dRworks (2016) demonstrate that hierarchies are a significant part of how white supremacy is reproduced. The spaces that are created through this divestment from white supremacy align with what Pickerill and Chatterton (2006) refer to as autonomous geographies. They write that these geographies are a component of envisioning a new spatiality. Part of this imaginary "does not concern linear progression toward some desired place-bound utopia or equilibrium, but an obligation to recognize co-existence, negotiations and conflict" (p.736). QTBIPOC vitalities emerge through an autonomous geography of QTBIPOC life in the suburban municipality of Brampton, using the digital realm as a primary way to communicate the imaginary of hope, comfort, and strength. Theorizing further regarding QTBIPOC community and life in Brampton requires voices from the community itself, authored by the community so my theorization is fundamentally incomplete. I turn

now from thriving, to the organizational culture that has caused white supremacy to profoundly embed itself into the culture of Peel Pride, and as a result, the City of Brampton.

Homonational arrival: theorizing white supremacy culture

There are specific ways through which Peel Pride has established its supremacy and delegitimized the lived experiences of QTBIPOC people within the 2SLGBTQ+ community. This paper articulates the formation of a municipal homonational subject as developing in a processual manner. Puar (2013b) notes that beyond providing an analytic framework "homonationalism is a process, not an event or an attribute. It names a historical shift in the production of nation-states from the insistence on heteronormativity to the increasing inclusion of homonormativity" (p.26). I draw on this process as a way to articulate the ascendancy of whiteness, and now I turn to the specific machinations that ensured the internal culture of Peel Pride remained unchanged, and dedicated to a white, homonormative gay figure. I do so to outline how it is not just the removal of white supremacist logics required to disrupt white supremacy that underpins the ascendancy of whiteness.

Systemic changes that lead to the production of a homonational subject require more than a new way of thinking, or understanding, but also a thorough organizational redress that emerged because of white supremacy. I use the case study of Peel Pride to demonstrate several facets of white supremacy culture. I deploy this organizational culture to highlight how an internalized supremacy cannot be undone with a change in the way someone thinks about a situation, space, or their positionality (disrupting the notion of diversity training alone as being a sufficient marker of equity practice). I look to the previous in this paper, to demonstrate the specific character that each element of white supremacy culture has taken on within the municipality. Organizations are not agential entities though the practices of the people in them create a culture from an internalized understanding of their power, as inflected by the positionality of those holding power. Okun, et. al, (n.d.) writes about an internalized white supremacy in which a white person believes one or more of the following "I" statements:

my world view is the universal world view; our standards and norms are universal; my achievements have to do with me, not with my membership in the white group; I have a right to be comfortable and if I am not, then someone else is to blame; I can feel that I personally earned, through work and merit, any/all of my success; I have many choices, as I should; everyone else has those same choices; I am not responsible for what happened before, nor do I have to know anything about it; I have a right to be ignorant; I assume race equity benefits only POC; equate acts of unfairness experienced by white people with systemic racism experienced by people of colour (p.19)

Internalized supremacies granted some people within Peel Pride a false entitlement and sense of ownership of the community not because of what they have done for it, but because their whiteness grants them an immediate power over it in a dynamic that has never been disrupted. Pulido (2015) conceptualizes these dynamics beyond white supremacy culture, as encompassing an awareness of doing wrong (though not always the clarity of this wrongdoing), taking resources that affect quality of life or that threaten life directly; And the creation of a population that is rendered disposable because of their race. According to Pulido (2015) this conceptualization characterizes the distinctions between white supremacy and white privilege. Building on these additional organizational traits of white supremacy, dRworks (2016) notes that defensiveness is also part of white supremacy culture that impedes change and assigns immunity that builds on the above "I" statements. D'Angelo (2018) writes of "white fragility" of which dRworks (2016) notes that defensiveness is a significant part.

White supremacy culture also entails protecting the affects of those with power meaning that there are less resources to address systemic change needed to benefit those with the least power. Both facets have been at work in Peel Pride as this paper has shown and the entitlements to community come from a place of white supremacy culture that believes white people have a right to comfort (ibid.). Defensiveness is a strategy that works as part of this internal culture to distance leaders from expressions of supremacy that would force them to see the power dynamics that, when disrupted, would mean they are no longer the privileged arbiters of it. I lack the space to explain on a line-by-line basis how white supremacy culture is at the heart of Peel Pride's operations, though I want to note the important aspect of "power-hoarding" that dRworks (2016) points to as part of organizational culture. They write of this formulation that:

there is little value placed on sharing power. Power is understood to be limited, with only so much to go around; those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests changes to how things could or should be done in the organization; Leaders perceive suggestions for change as a criticism of their leadership and fail to recognize this response as part of power hoarding; Those with power assume they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume ill intent from those wanting change, characterizing the changemakers as uninformed (stupid), emotional or inexperienced; Ideas of leadership are rooted in a culture of 'leader worship,' conceiving of leaders as saviours and/or heroes; Power hoarding often requires secrecy. Those with power control what, when and with whom the information is shared; opaqueness in decision-making and schisms within the organization that can cause additional problems (p.18)

I highlight these points to show that power hoarding provides a significant undercurrent and basis for white supremacist logics to flourish. Among the clearest forms of actions of power hoarding was Peel Pride's ongoing erasure of QTBIPOC organizing histories, and QTBIPOC lives. Furthermore, the willing co-optation of accomplishments that were not their own speaks to the need to hoard power and operate from a place of fear – fear not of an outsider, though this if often the form it takes, but fear of losing the power of authorship. Gibbons (2018) theorizes the refusals of white supremacy that equally align with these organizational culture traits, particularly those of defensiveness and power hoarding. She (2018) notes that "dehumanization of people of color in contrast to white humanity and the centering of white thought through the marginalization of other voices and experiences" (p.741) is achieved through the refusal to recognize histories of oppression. If these histories were to be recognized in any capacity, rather than continuously erased and as existing in the present, it would mean that the fact that it has been white people doing the refusing. The history that Peel Pride has, of ignoring and erasing QTBIPOC histories and its ongoing centering of whiteness demonstrates a clear adherence to this point. Gibbons (2018) builds this theorization upon the work of Mills (2017) who describes this style of accidentally-on-purpose forgetting, as "white ignorance". Where white ignorance specifically applies to Peel Pride is the erasure of an archive of QTBIPOC organizing, and the wholesale co-optation of accomplishments as their own that in fact had nothing to do with Peel Pride.

White ignorance enters this discourse when white benevolence does as well. Mills (2017) writes of this discourse as people acting out a "management of memory" (p.65) such that "forgetting, whether individual or social, will not even be necessary if there is nothing to remember in the first place" (p.68).

Re-writing the archive of QTBIPOC organizing to facilitate not only their ascendancy, but also in a way that adds to their accomplishments gives Peel Pride's organizers the dangerous power to write lives into and out of existence. When this power involves QTBIPOC lives for whom marginalization can mean access to resources from a place of survival, it becomes an act of white supremacy whose nefariousness borders on hate. Furthermore, selective memory ensures that Peel Pride's whiteness is not challenged because it has yet to critically reflect on the white supremacies that animate its actions. The absence of any mechanisms holding Peel Pride accountable have meant that the organization has still managed to connect itself with "good" in the public imaginary, even though it has exacted a discursive violence towards queer and trans people of colour.

The power granted to the organization in its partnership with the City of Brampton allowed ignorance to justify violence because it was done in the name of discursively invoked, invisible "community" good. When this power relation is projected onto the landscape of community organizing, and is amplified by municipal powers, it serves a basic ordering function. Those doing the work deemed "good" by the municipality, gain power over those whose work is not recognized in the same way so that it is up to those to whom "community" is bestowed, to take care of it. Illusory in this formula, however, is the mutually agreed upon and the singularly decided "good" which speaks to the internalized "I" statements listed above. Who received the designation to carry out collective good for the municipality, is as important as who believes it to be their inherent right. For example, "my world view is the universal world view; our standards and norms are universal" (dRworks, 2016, p.19) which speaks to the aspect of white supremacy culture in which "there is only one right way" (dRworks, 2016, p.13). The most basic invocation of the collective good serves as a lever that can be used to justify resource allocation because one person, or one group of people know what everyone in the community needs. More prominent than this, however, is the way that it allows people to claim an external benevolence because they were doing good from within, in the name of an invisible "all".

Invocations of the collective good provides a way for organizations to absolve themselves of the need to address any harm that has come to communities or people who do not fit into the "all" that is applied as a moral imperative. Singular authorship and defining powers granted to Peel Pride within their partnership also demonstrates the absence of a deliberative democracy that considers the way the *entire* 2SLGBTQ+ community might seek to be seen, defined, and understood. Benhabib (1996) writes about deliberative democracy in a way that highlights the importance of collective input. Though there are limitations to the concept of democracy as an ideal that I cannot explore in this paper, I use this intervention to note the absence of a collective decision-making process in Peel Pride's governance. Thus, Benhabib (1996) establishes that "this rule of deliberative rationality that majoritarian decisions are temporarily agreed-upon conclusions, the claim to rationality and validity of which can be publicly reexamined" (p.72). Neglecting an inclusivity that respects the diversity of voices within a deliberative framework, especially within the context of the partnership Peel Pride has with the City of Brampton should not be understated. The belief that one person or organizations knows what everyone needs means that they are never challenged to consider the world beyond the "all" that they understand and that affects them the most profoundly. Narratives of the collective good, in this way, continue to occlude whiteness.

Whiteness was often obfuscated by the discursive invocation of 'community' as the beneficiary of a top-down community organizing structure in which recognition was the goal, rather than systemic redress. Naming the collective good through an invisible community form also removes any of its racialized people, making it possible to ignore the need to politicize issues of race for queer and trans people. Beam (2018) writes of the oppressive potential of a discursive "community" because of the way it is how "some queer bodies are protected and folded into (national) life, while others are location outside of the nation, a threat to it, and exposed to early death" (p.83). The ability for white supremacy to hide in these machinations is a testament to a collective investment in it, allowing it to be fused within people or places because it cannot exist on its own in the absence of people to animate its concepts. The culture of white supremacy in organizations is an extension of its enmeshment with the internalized supremacies of organizers, or investments that might be made in the privileges that whiteness grants people.

Conclusion

Complex figurations of power help to prop up homonormative formulations of 2SLGBTQ+ community in Brampton where the discursive arc of whiteness ends in a homonational crescendo. 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion efforts, and the singularity of Peel Pride as having a supremacy over other organizations have taken place in the context of a push for greater diversity as part of the creative economy's influence in Brampton. Homonationalism as a process indicates that there are steps towards its eventual arrival as a fully formed subjectivity. These steps are facilitated in the case study of Peel Pride by white supremacist logics, white refusal, white ignorance, and a persistent possessive investment in whiteness that all work together to serve the ascendancy of whiteness. The organizational culture that an investment in these mechanisms of an ascendant whiteness relies on is equally implicated in white supremacy. It is not simply the presence of these dynamics that produces a homonational subject, but that they take place within the context of the relationship that The City of Brampton has established. Singularity, authorship, and invocations of collective good in the name of the primary community organization who is assigned the task of animating 2SLGBTQ+ life in Brampton achieves the outcomes related to uneven power relations resulting from white supremacy. The nature of the partnership the City of Brampton established with Peel Pride gave it a legitimacy and though it may not have been the municipality's intention, this resulted in a mostly white organization clearing its organizing field of racialized queer and trans people. Such erasure was accomplished through control over community histories, leveraging local media stories to overwrite QTBIPOC presence, and through the power invested in it by municipal authority. Power investments were a significant way that, through networks and diversity governance articulated in chapter three, it was not seen as nefarious. It was simply viewed as the primary arbiter of queer and trans life in Brampton as articulating an opinion that was held in higher regard because they were the representatives of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The processes that led to this point, however, tell another story about uneven power relations, and community that was deliberately constructed to remove QTBIPOC people from within it. Peel Pride's municipally granted powers serve a biopolitical function that writes white homonormative gays into the public imaginary as useful to the

municipality, and as life-giving to its economic development processes. The absence of community groups should not however, imply that they do not exist. As is the case with Peel Pride, absence signals an invisibilization that, whether deliberate or the unintended consequence of economic development, folds some people into the municipality, and turns others away from it.

5. Conclusion

Brampton has a complex, and contested 2SLGBTQ+ organizing history that has left an imprint on the depth of visibility that all members of the community experience. The story of 2SLGBTQ+ community is not related to Peel Pride alone but is part of a larger development process that has used Florida's (2005, 2012) creative economy to draw economic development and investment into municipalities. Diversity as a form of economic development has enabled symbolic inclusion in the form of pride flag raisings, and municipal proclamations to create a discourse of belonging. This does not address however, the absence of policy and ongoing funding going to community organizations who work throughout the year (not just during Pride celebrations) to address the systemic gaps that leave 2SLGBTQ+ people behind. Specific forms of diversity governance re-write the terms of engagement that allow those belonging to "diverse" communities to speak in their own voice. When diversity is authored by the municipality, it allows singular partnerships to emerge that prioritize the elevation of some organizations over others.

Peel Pride offers a case study into how suburban community organizing can favour white homonormative gay people, and lending insight into how power can be granted unevenly as a result. Such uneven power distribution has a far greater impact than on resources alone, because it shapes how the larger municipality learns about, and forms expectations of who 2SLGBTQ+ people are. When these expectations do not include QTBIPOC people *by design* as has been the case with Peel Pride, organizing capacities can be said to uphold a white supremacy that contributes to the ascendancy of whiteness that is part of municipal homonationalism. Allowing one organization to be the arbiter of queer and trans experiences, when it is led by white people in a city that is 73.3% racialized (Region of Peel, 2017a) includes the municipality as one of the actors upholding white supremacy. Local histories of 2SLGBTQ+ organizing, and QTBIPOC organizing have many entry points and are filled with contestation and tension. What Peel Pride took to another level of writing, however, is actively working to erase the archive of QTBIPOC organizing in Brampton. The actions the organization took cannot be assumed as ignorance when its present leadership includes Peel Pride's (or The Pride Committee of Peel as it was

then known) founders. No one has corrected local media's assumptions of "firsts" that are not actual

firsts, but new to this generation of organizers whose financial privileges permit them to use significant

personal money to create community as they wish to see it. Municipal homonationalism must be scaled

down to the level of municipalities and regions to understand how it allows 2SLGBTQ+ narratives

locally, to contribute to narratives of globalization, and discursive imperial interests of "the West". Within

the local it becomes clear that the suburbs provide a unique spatial character that helps municipal

homonationalism flourish. The primary lever that achieves this end, however, returns to economic

development imperatives. The suburbs are traditionally thought of as sprawling, culturally vacuous places

that make it difficult for community to form. QTBIPOC organizations in Brampton, and the Region of

Peel, however, demonstrate that this is far from the truth. Moyo and their vitual hub, Rainbow Salad, as

well as QTBIPOC Sauga, and Peel in Colour are a testament to the fact that there is an active QTBIPOC

community in Brampton.

The digital realm provided a crucial way for QTBIPOC organizations to reach those who do not

see themselves reflected in mainstream 2SLGBTQ+ community. Operating outside of municipally

sanctioned diversity narratives, digital tools such as social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) have

allowed voices invisibilized by traditional amplification methods (local media, political partnerships) to

form community. This is particularly important given the depth, and aggressive nature of the erasure of

QTBIPOC histories in Brampton and the Region of Peel. Social media is also a way that QTBIPOC

organizations have been able to disrupt dominant narratives and establish a presence that cannot be erased

through a website edit. Furthermore, there is a framework of care that these social media posts illuminate

that demonstrate why QTBIPOC organizing should be at the heart of Brampton's 2SLGBTQ+

community. Relying on visibility as the only way that community is achieved resonates with QTBIPOC

organizing as based on an ethics of radical care that does not need traditional pathways to articulate itself.

Puar (2017) conceptualizes homonationalism as a facet of modernity, and (Puar, 2013b) as a process

extending from modernity that imposes normative views on sexuality that conflate market rationalities

with progress. My experiences, and the scholarship around which they cohere in this paper are an

example of how homonationalism emerges locally within one municipality. This paper also demonstrates the repercussions of the manifestation of a municipal homonationalism including invisibility across the sprawl of suburban built forms and limited physical spaces for community formation. Local homonationalism can also increase surveillance, and structure a politics of acceptability that reflects selective needs of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Furthermore, it can affect what resources are given to racialized queer and trans community groups because dominant discourses of homonationalism create racialized Others as threats to 2SLGBTQ+ community, rather than viewing them as a generative, and necessary part of it. When these particular politics play out they limit the ways that racialized 2SLGBTQ+ people can participate in public life, and share their lived experiences, while accessing self-determined spaces. It does not altogether prevent QTBIPOC community formation, but it uses tremendous energy for survival and expressing an existence, rather than simply being able to access public life with ease. These impacts are however, not without their methods of redress and repair.

Reparative actions by suburban actors within the municipality would help to restore balance to the field of 2SLGBTQ+ community. The City of Brampton should firstly, aspire for inclusivity, understanding that it is not a goal to be achieved with the right amount of training or information, knowing that it is a process of unlearning our role in oppressive systems. The City of Brampton could also reinstate the Inclusion and Equity Committee with input from the organizations serving QTBIPOC communities specifically. This would leverage local knowledge, and build community capacity in order to reach an agreed upon level of awareness of what an advisory committee would do. I would also recommend that any future iterations of an Inclusion and Equity Committee work directly with City Council and are not engaged in an unpaid way to consult with the municipality about internal training programs for municipal staff. Doing so means that trainers or urban life experts are going unpaid, while marginalized communities within the city are being relied upon to do that work without any financial remuneration. Where work that 2SLGBTQ+ people, and QTBIPOC community do directly benefits the City of Brampton, ensuring that these labours are paid is a necessary step to repairing harm, and

committing to stop taking part in processes of extraction that do more harm to a community than good. Additionally, the municipality could immediately end its formal partnership with the organization of Peel Pride, require the organization to rename itself (and its many digital assets) the Pride Committee of Peel so that the City of Brampton could then use the hashtag and name Peel Pride for its events, without associating itself with the actions of those who have done harm to racialized communities in Brampton. The Region of Peel could also, as part of its pride month celebrations, engage the Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives to restore the queer and trans of colour organizing history so that it is not just the members of Peel Pride who are remembered as leaders of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The City of Brampton could consult with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion's help to not just review but rebuild participatory processes that are theoretically equal but not necessarily equitable. These are a few recommendations of steps that can be taken. The most meaningful feedback however, will come from QTBIPOC communities in Brampton who have found a way to thrive. Listening to this feedback, responding to it meaningfully, and integrating its calls to action is the most powerful hope for repairing damage done, gazing through the present to the future of QTBIPOC thriving in Brampton.

Throughout the writing process during the Pride months, and Pride celebrations that took place in Peel involving the organizations I bring into this paper, I saw more QTBIPOC thriving than ever before in Brampton. Municipal homonationalism does not mark an end point or destination of 2SLGBTQ+ community, but a recognition of a struggle that white supremacy continuously projects onto suburban queer and trans communities. Queer and trans people of colour have cared in a way that defied modernity's narratives of progress as indicative of success and in the process, created places that the entire 2SLGBTQ+ community can see themselves in and find comfort in Brampton.

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