

ACAB
TIMES SQUARE RED, TIMES SQUARE BLUE
SAMUEL R. DELANY
TALKING POINTS

1 Form

Personal experience and theory

2 Gentrification

"With the rush to accommodate the new, much that was beautiful along with much that was shoddy, much that was dilapidated with much that was pleasurable, much that was inefficient with much that was functional, is gone."

Public and private space, development of New York

Places for sex to happen, for a more interesting urban landscape, extension of Jane Jacobs (streets become safer with many eyes, needing less cops. Living spaces, commercial spacing, eating establishments, repair spaces, and entertainment spaces must all be intermixed. (appearance of no planning, see also page 166 and 178)

Policing vice—moral puritanism becomes justification for making more money, part of larger project of changing public to private space, privatization of public sphere, neoliberal attitude towards public space.

"As, in the name of "safety," society dismantles the various institution that promote interclass communication ..." (also see page 164)

Application to rural (e.g. dogging in UK)—don't need to have a house or to take a stranger there

Homelessness

Architecture

3 Interpersonal relationships

Non-monogamous yet non-exploitative sexual lifestyles also arose in *The Dispossessed* and *The Fifth Sacred Thing*, anarchist separation of sex from partnership (Delany estimates he has had 50,000 sexual partners, but in a committed partnership for 27 years)

4 Gender

5 Race

"The population was incredibly heterogeneous—white, black, Hispanic, Asian, Indian, Native American, and a variety of Pacific Islanders ... playwrights, carpenters, opera singers, telephone repair men, stockbrokers, guys on welfare, guys with trust funds, guys on crutches, on walkers, in wheelchairs, teachers, warehouse workers, male nurses, fancy chefs, guys who worked at Dunkin Donuts, guys who gave out flyers on street corners, guys who drove garbage trucks, and guys who washed windows on the Empire State Building."

6

Networking and Contact

Chance meetings (enabled by various institutions) versus mediated contact and atomized bubbles (today extended to digital sphere with apps/social media)

Interclass contact in public space, current US discourse.

Thesis 1: "Given the mode of capitalism under which we live, life is at its most rewarding, productive, and pleasant when large numbers of people understand, appreciate, and seek out interclass contact and communication conducted in a mode of good will."

Thesis 2: Class war perpetually works for "the erosion of the social practices through which interclass communication takes place ..."

Thesis 3: "Therefore, it is only by a constant renovation of the concept of discourse that society can maintain the most conscientious and informed field for both the establishment of such institutions and practices and, by extension, the necessary critique of those institutions and practices ..."

Marxian "infrastructure determines superstructure" (page 162)

"The practice of landlord visits was a social arena of communication, which, when utilized fully, meant that both landlord and tenant had to expend more time, energy, and money in order to maintain a generally higher standard of living for the tenant and a generally higher level of property upkeep, which restricted the abuse of that property for the landlord."

"But what I see lurking behind the positive foregrounding of "family values" ... is a wholly provincial and absolutely small-town terror of cross-class contact."

7

The Future

"The polemical passion here is forward-looking, not nostalgic, however respectful it is of a past we may find useful for grounding future possibilities."

"Because we have a system where the public's perception is, indeed, as powerful as it is ... it can also promote the planning and construction of civic spaces designed to encourage contact rather than discourage it, and make it appear a profit-making process."

"... the world to which we have access is constituted entirely of language ..." (page 163)

"Both language and social habit perform many more jobs, intricately, efficiently, and powerfully, unto shaping not just what we call social reality, but even what we call reality itself ... the appearance of social categories: rich, poor, educated ... ontological categories: male, female, black, white, Asian, straight, gay, normal ..." (page 188)