

lost in space:

Changes in physical, legal and linguistic frameworks relating to the New Zealand public toilet.

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*"Ooh sharda! Nada to vada in that cottage!
That antique Auntie with the coddly eek tried
to charver Alice in there. Omee cull thinks
the fish and chips hide the fact he's family. I
tell you a ride in the dog wagon down to
central and it'll be all over for the straight
and narrow!"*



"No you won't see that troll around for a while. The filth got him after a milk run. Poor thing dropped in to the Country Club for a bit of cut lunch and there was a D on the other side of the glory hole, dressed up as the woofy trade of your dreams! Sprung him gutless. But what do you expect? That thing's so brazen, it thinks because it swans around with the mullet in tow, no one will know it's into trade! I tell you, a naff beard can only hide so much. You can bet there'll be no full-house in that bog for a while!"



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ABSTRACT

These monologues both tell the same story, in the same language form, almost 40 years apart.

This paper examines the metamorphosis of the underground language of public toilet cruising in New Zealand. Using a historical framework it examines the bogs as sexualised spaces in which significant shifts in language and ritual have occurred. These changes have been affected by the changing physical and cultural nature of these buildings and their environs. Using references to specific bogs and a broader overview based on interviews with 130 New Zealand men who use, or have used these spaces, the paper discusses the influences of changing legislation, spatial design, language influences, and reactions to police and public harassment.

Consenting sex between men in private was decriminalised in New Zealand in 1986 but consenting sex between men in public places, which include parked cars or public toilets remains an imprisonable offence. The political and social changes that have contributed to this current situation are varied and complex.

1863- 1900

In the early years of settlement in New Zealand, men outside of the home environment either used facilities provided by hotels or open space as toilets. However, by 1860 New Zealand, as with other nineteenth century cities considered public urination indecent and in response began to design public toilets for men in its civic centres.

The Cottage

Among the most significant designs for men's conveniences in this period was a structure that came to be known in bog-speak¹ as the Cottage.

"The thing was that cottages like Myer's park were tucked respectably up in the bushes so chaps could be in there getting up to all sorts of mischief but people passing by couldn't see because there were always the big metal screens that kept you hidden from view. All sorts went on in there, sometimes five or six fellows at a time." Ewan



Source: (Welby Ings, 1976)

Figure 1. Cottage Myers Park Auckland, circa 1898.

The word cottage was British in origin and generally referred to an architectural design that resembled miniature country cottages. These buildings normally contained one or two lockable cubicles and a separate urinal. Baker² suggests that the word cottage first appeared as a term for toilet at the beginning of the twentieth century, although these buildings were in evidence in New Zealand in the decade preceding this. Although there is little documented material relating to sexual activity in these toilets, the ‘threat’ of homosexual behaviour was clearly understood in New Zealand law at this time.

In 1867 New Zealand passed an Offences Against the Person Act (31 Vict. 5) that defined ‘unnatural offences’ more clearly than they had been following 1840 annexation of New Zealand and the resulting implementation of English law. This new statute provided (s.58):

Whosoever shall be convicted of the abominable crime of buggery committed either with mankind or any animal shall be liable at the discretion of the court to be kept in penal servitude for life or for any term not less than ten years.

The act provided (s.59) for imprisonment for between three and ten years for attempted buggery.³

In 1893 the criminal code (57 Vict. No. 56) saw the first significant alteration to this law. Section 137 provided for up to ten years imprisonment, with flogging or whipping for attempted buggery, assault on a person with intent to commit buggery or for anyone

‘who being a male indecently assaults any other male’, noting ‘It shall be no defence to an indictment for an indecent assault on a male of any age that he consented to the act of indecency’.

Thieves’ Cant

Because of the laws at the time, men who used public toilets to have sex with other men constituted a criminal class in New Zealand, there was in evidence in their interpersonal communication, words borrowed from Thieves’ Cant.

Thieves’ Cant was a secret language used by criminals in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Cant contributed words to bogspeak including omee [man] and nantee [not/nothing]. Words used in bog cruising like pick up, bona, troll, cruise, trade and fish all have documented histories of over two hundred years, as thieves’ cant, parlyaree⁴ or prison slang. All of these words were in known use in the underground language of the bogs in New Zealand by the turn of the century.

1900-1930

By 1900 most public toilets in New Zealand’s municipal centers appear to have been controlled by local councils. There were few public toilets for women and considerable disquiet about the cleanliness and monitoring of facilities for men.⁵

Underground bogs

The search for a design that might afford a level of discretion for women users and also provide a sense of modernity for civic centres was eventually realised in the imported concept of the underground toilet.

England had been dealing with the issue of public conveniences since the Great Exhibition of 1851 and travellers returning to New Zealand had seen in operation this form of public facility that was ornamental, functional and clean.

As towns around New Zealand sought to engage with ideals of modernism and civic respectability, these underground structures with their tiled walls, monolithic porcelain urinals and individual washing facilities appeared to be a tailor-made solution.

However, the design of the underground toilet was also a tailor-made solution for cruising. These locations, because of their heightened levels of privacy and positioning of urinals in full view of cubicle doors, meant that discrete contact could easily be made between men using them for initiating sexual encounters.

The doors on these toilets were lockable and in general there was ample space inside individual cubicles for men to have sex. During this period a behaviour called ‘pegging’⁶ came to describe a man who watched the stairway entrance leading down to a bog. A pegger was able to warn others engaging in sex at the urinals of the imminent approach of a stranger.

“There was a lot of trade through the underground bogs because it was easy to know if someone was coming. Normally some aunty would peg for you and they’d signal because they could hear shoes on the steps and the light above them would get blocked off. By the time the police got down there ... though in the end they learnt to rush down the steps... the chaps by the urinal were just buttoning up and ambling over to the basin to wash their hands.” Patrick



Source: (Welby Ings, 2006)

Figure 2. Underground toilets Wellesley St. Auckland.

Because cruising in public toilets for men was an established phenomenon by the first two decades of the century, many local councils were forced to act on complaints from local citizens. A letter in 1919 from the Dunedin Town Clerk requesting police surveillance of the men-only underground toilet at Customhouse Square is indicative of correspondence surrounding the issue at the time.

Complaints have been made as to the conduct of a number of young fellows who are in the habit of using the Underground Convenience at Customhouse Square... I would be obliged if you would be good enough to arrange for one of your officers to pay periodical visits of inspection to the Convenience, more particularly in the evenings, with the object of checking any tendency in the direction complained of.⁷

Coded bogs

As significant changes in the design of the public toilet occurred in the first thirty years of the new century, so too did the language form used by men frequenting these spaces for same sex contact. By this stage words used to define the language form spoken by bog cruisers in Britain included 'nelly' or 'nonce words'.⁸ However, in New Zealand the term in popular use appears to have been 'code'. Through words surfacing in this argot during these decades we can gain some insight into the cultural architecture of the public toilet.

Beyond the over-ground naming of public toilets by their location (St Claire bogs, Custom Street bogs, Civic Garden bogs), 'code' words also appear to have been used to describe specific toilets. Two of the most commonly applied in large cities were catacombs or stations.⁹

Perhaps in New Zealand one of the most famous catacombs at this time was the underground, porcelain-lined toilets at the front of the Auckland War Memorial Museum. These operated as a cruising venue from 1929 until 1996 when their refurbishing made sexual contact more difficult.

While the word catacombs began to decline in popularity over the following decades, the term 'station' appears to have still

been in use amongst some men frequenting the bogs in the early 1960s.

Wedding, discussing this period in an oral history interview recorded in April of 2004 says,

We referred to the underground bogs as the Underground and named them as stations and that was different. Well... there was an underground toilet in Victoria Street so that was Victoria station, there was one in Howe Street and that was the Howe Street Station and so it went. We also threw a couple of other stations ...which were like picture theatres and so on, to throw anybody off.¹⁰

1941- 1961

By 1941 there was a significant change to New Zealand law as it affected men charged with homosexual acts. At this time the requirements for flogging and in 1954 the provision for hard labour, were removed.

At this time bog cruising was a phenomenon in most cities in the country. This was because in a highly heterosexist environment without alternative meeting places, the buildings and their environs provided the only way that the majority of men who had sex with other men could meet each other. Cruising communities it appears were often discretely networked and large numbers of the men using specific toilets knew each other (though often not by name).

The naming of specific bogs by code continued well into the 1960s although few of their names are familiar today.

Polari

By the late 1950s the language of the bogs began to show the influence of a British gay argot called Polari.¹¹

Polari was a language form brought to New Zealand by Merchant Seamen and later popularised through the Julian and Sandy sketches on National Radio. Polari slowly became a familiar language form in certain coffee houses, gay bars and bogs of the time.

Terms from Polari were used to describe both architectural features and the nature of bogs.

A lockable door was known as a brandy latch, but the door itself was called a trade curtain.¹² A homie ajax was a man in a neighbouring cubicle. A nanti bog was one that was ineffective for cruising. Nochy and sparkle bogs described public toilets that were cruised at night or in the daylight respectively. Gardening described the act of cruising in open places near a public toilet.

A bog that had its lights broken to provide some security of darkness at night was called a nochy bog, though the act of removing or breaking a bulb was called blacking out.

Polari arrived into a world with a bog language that evidenced several definable strains of metaphor. The first, regency, profited in adaptive nouns like Queen.

In New Zealand a bog queen was a man who frequently cruised public toilets for sex. He might also be called a wall queen if he

was known to wait for long hours in a cubicle in answer to advertisements written on the wall. If he was in a cubicle for a lengthy period of time he was said to be enthroned. If he was in a cubicle with viewing access to the urinal he was said to be in the royal circle. If the police or queer bashers threatened him he might be forced to abdicate or if he was arrested he was dethroned.

A flush of queens became a droll, collective noun used to describe a full house.¹³

The feminising of nouns between the 1920s and 1960s was another feature of bog language although again, it was used more commonly by gay-identifying men than by others using the bogs for sex. This approach to language profiled strongly in feminised terms used to describe the constabulary and Paul Baker suggests that this was a method used by men at the time to remove some of the police's power.¹⁴

Changes in law and attitudes

In the 1960s, although there were amendments made to part 7 of the 1961 Crimes Act that reduced the penalty of imprisonment for 'indecent' between consenting males,¹⁵ public attitudes still framed men who did the bogs as social pariahs. Anger at increasing police harassment of cruisers during this period began to grow and reached a crescendo in the 1980s. By this time droll wit had disappeared from terms for the police and words like Demon, D, shaker, pigs and filth were the standard descriptions.

Reach arounds

In the 1960s when sex in private public places was still framed as a social anathema, larger towns were restructuring to attract increasing numbers of shoppers into their burgeoning retail centres. With the change to decimal coinage in 1967 the penny operated locks were removed from the doors and many large civic toilets underwent a significant shift in use.

In examples like Hamilton's central city bogs (Garden Place) adjacent cubicles situated in long rows were known as 'reach arounds'.

'Reach arounds' described cubicles where the dividing walls did not butt flush against the back wall. As the dividing walls in these bogs also failed to touch the ground, men using the toilets were able to make contact either by pressing themselves up against the back of the partitions or by lying on the ground under them. While the later approach put users at risk of exposure to police who would often run down the steps and crouch onto their hands and knees to catch anybody positioned between cubicles, making contact via spaces at the back of the cubicles enabled sexual contact to occur in comparative safety.

THE 1970S

Entrapment and harassment

In the 1970s, while there was talk of law reforms regarding consensual sex between men, New Zealand was still a country

where many gay men knew of people in their communities who were in prison or who had received sentences and exposure to a highly censoring public.¹⁶

While newly emerging clubs in the larger cities provided some men with alternative ways of meeting others, for the majority of gay New Zealanders, especially men in rural areas and small towns and young gay men under the legal drinking age, the bogs remained the only available way of making contact.

THE 1980S

In the early 1980s police harassment of gay venues and the increasing use of agent provocateurs in public toilets ran parallel to the clear signs of an impending challenge to laws that had traditionally criminalised men who had sex with other men.¹⁷

Bogspeak and the police

At this time, as in over-ground gay slang, there was a decline in the use of Polari. Words relating to activities and spaces within the cruising environment in New Zealand were gradually replaced by localised and often more aggressive language. Indicative of this were terms like urinal sniffer and lace-up.

The term urinal sniffer referred to the police habit of suddenly dropping to their hands and knees at a urinal so they could quickly check under cubicle doors to ascertain if there were more than one pair of feet in each stall. A lace-up alluded to the fact that in the in the Waikato at this time, many plain-clothes policemen, acting as agent provocateurs still wore their uniform [lace-up] shoes when going in to public toilets.¹⁸

The agent provocateur became an increasingly common phenomenon as the decade moved closer to changes in legislation, and men using the bogs for sex became adroit at identifying him. A man who was too clean-cut and too anxious to make contact while standing at a urinal was cause for suspicion. Suspicion might also be aroused if there was an absence of alcohol on his breath, or if he missed cues for discrete behaviour. Outside the bog, men also became wary of taxi drivers as some were encouraged by the police to use their radio phones to report 'suspicious' activity.

Law reforms and interpretation

Eventually, on March 8, 1985 Fran Wilde, the junior government whip introduced a bill that gave equal age of consent (16) and provided for the Human Rights Commission to deal discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.¹⁹

While this was a well-documented change in New Zealand law as it related to gay men, it was preceded at the opening of the 1980s by an amendment to the Summary Offences Act that was used as a method of empowering more stringent prosecution and punishment of bog cruisers.

Section 28 (1) created the offence of "being found in a public place preparing to commit a crime". The new offence was designed to replace the more benign offence of "frequenting a

public place with felonious intent” under the Police Offences Act 1927.

In November 1984 a significant decision by Judge Hobbs, in sentencing a man appearing in the Wellington District Court on a charge of indecently assaulting a plain-clothes policeman, received widespread coverage in the gay press. The judge called for the suppression of the defendant’s name and identity (even though there had been no application by the man’s council for this). He also instructed the man to come up for sentence in six months only if called upon.

The decision of the judge was a noted reaction against the escalating numbers of police entrapment cases that were coming before the courts at the time.

Floor mirrors

At this time, fear of entrapment meant that being unable to ascertain the nature of another cruiser before initiating an approach became a significant issue. Although glory holes²⁰ between partitions had been part of cruising rituals since the turn of the century, they offered very limited opportunity for assessing potential danger.²¹ As a result certain bogs in the 1980s and 90s that afforded greater levels of identification came into more popular use.

Toilets with highly polished floors that gave men in one cubicle a clearer view of someone in the next became a comparatively safer alternative.

The penchant for installing glossy tiling on floors in many men’s toilets in the 1980s and 90s produced what were known as Floor Mirrors. These surfaces were easily washed and offered reduced potential for vandalism. However, when polished they also became highly reflective. This propensity for reflecting details of a man in an adjacent cubicle contributed significantly to the popularity of certain bogs in the new malls and cinema complexes of the period.

“There are lots of kinds of floor mirrors. Early in the morning when they wash down the bogs the wet floors can work as mirrors for up to three hours. The best are the white tiled floors because they reflect really clearly. You just have to lean back at a bit of an angle and you can see everything. You shuffle your feet a bit or pull a lot of toilet paper out of the dispenser but don’t get up to leave, that way the guy next door knows you’re interested.” Don



Source: (Welby Ings, 1993)

Figure 3. Floor mirrors

1990-2006

In 1990 the release of Chetwynd’s Profiles of Gay and Bisexual Men: Report No. 6 (The Toilets)²² represented the first non-repressive, government-funded intervention into bog culture in New Zealand. The principal legitimising factor behind this research was the rapid spread of HIV. Her report was significant not only in providing the first reliable profile of bog users in New Zealand, but also in helping to support the establishment of the New Zealand BEATS project.

The BEATS initiative

BEATS was an educative outreach and support initiative. Developed by the New Zealand AIDS Foundation, it used volunteers in peer-based information dissemination programmes that focused on AIDS awareness and safe sex practices.

Under the initiative these men operated in and around the bogs between 1990 and 1997, talking with cruisers and distributing safe sex information packs.

In initiating the BEATS project the New Zealand AIDS Foundation was highly aware of the difficult environment into which its volunteers were going. Some toilets most frequently used by cruisers were also amongst the most dangerous. Bogs like Parana Park in Hamilton had a history of stabbings and murder,²³ so volunteers were acutely aware of the safety issues they were facing.

“These bogs go off but you have to be careful. They’ve got a bad name. Once you’re in there, if queer bashers come in there’s no way out. That’s where Claudia got smashed up. After those stabbings and the murder in the bog across the river a lot of guys just stick to the park.” Bruce



Source: (Welby Ings, 1998)

Figure 4. Pirana Park bogs Hamilton.

The sudden academic and governmental interest in men who have same sex encounters in public toilets may be understood if one considers the profiling in the early 1990s of statistics from a range of international studies. These suggested that a large proportion of men who used the bogs for sex defined themselves as either heterosexual or bisexual (Desroches 1990; Goddard 1990; Horn, Chetwynd, & Kelleher 1989; Moore 1995). These men were seen at the time as a significant transmission link of the HIV virus from out of the gay community and into middle, heterosexual New Zealand.

During this period, three other significant changes impacted heavily on the bogs and cruising rituals associated with them. They were the growth of commercial cruise clubs, a paradigm shift in the design of public conveniences, and the emergence of online cruising websites.

In the 1990s, in an increasing number of urban centres, sex-on-site venues began to proliferate. These clubs generally provided a safer environment for men seeking anonymous sex with other men. However clubs like these were not free and despite their discrete facades, they were generally located in built-up areas where men could be seen entering and leaving.

The appearance of cruise clubs occurred at the same time as changes in the design of public toilets in New Zealand. Older cottages and underground bogs were increasingly replaced by more publicly exposed, unisex facilities. These new buildings removed both the ability to make contact at a urinal and to communicate between cubicles.



Source: (Welby Ings, 2006)

Figure 5. Exeloo unit installed in Henderson 2007.

“They’ve replaced a lot of the active bogs with these new things built right out on the footpath. Inside they’re like an evangelist’s bathroom, all polished steel and scrubbed within an inch of their lives. Nobody uses them because there’s no way to make contact. The most you can do, if it’s a traditional beat is cruise the park area behind them.” Don

Indicative of this new form of public convenience was the Automatic Public Toilet [APT] designed and marketed by the New Zealand firm Exeloo.²⁴ These designs are automated, ‘self-managing’, unisex, facilities designed as stand-alone units. The buildings incorporate exposed cubicle doors, impenetrable floor to ceiling walls, and automated wash cycles.

In tandem with these changes, the variety of same sex cruising environments in New Zealand diversified to include a growing number of commercial, venues. In addition to this the Internet also became increasingly popular as a method for disseminating information about cruising locations.

On the 31st of October 2006 the Sydney Morning Herald carried a news item that attracted considerable international attention. The article, Gay sex forces closure of Sydney store’s toilets, concerned a decision by management at Myers’ Sydney city store to close its level one toilet to the public because the facility was being used by large numbers of men as a cruising location.²⁵ While some bogs in large retail outlets have a history of use for cruising, what had become evident in the Myers’ store was the sudden amplification of activity following the location’s increasingly positive reviews on the website.

The website in question was squirr.org. It is a site that currently lists more than 1,500 public and commercial locations where men can meet for sex. Among the services it offers is a number count showing the popularity of the location and a review of its features.²⁶ Bog profiles are often accompanied by photographs and continuously posted arrangements by cruisers enabling them to synchronise visits. Men who cruise specific locations update information on them and the site often has maps or directions for convenient reference.

Recent evolution of bogspeak

Recent research²⁷ suggests that bog cruising still has a distinctive demographic profile that includes a large proportion of married men and large numbers of non-gay identifying, or non-gay community attached men.

Although some traditional words and phrases associated with bogspeak continue to be used by these men, what is significant currently, is the rapidly growing influence of abbreviations and acronyms updating their language form. This phenomenon is occurring as internationally bog cruisers’ discussions move into online environments. Websites like squirr.org and the use of cell phones to text communications have contributed to a recent plethora of new internationally communicated contractions indicative of these are descriptions like, undreuvr [agent provocateur], ct/hung 2bg 4da gl:oryhle m8 [circumcised with a large penis] and n2 str8 act blk [attracted to heterosexual acting men].

This new truncated profile of bogspeak sits alongside newly emerging acronyms like SPU [Sperm Production Unit / man],

HRU [Human Reproduction Unit/woman], and older terms like NTBH [Not To Be Had/heterosexual or dangerous] and KFC [underage youth].

Although bogspeak's words often fall into disuse they are generally replaced in response to changes in architectural design, attitude and environment. What is interesting about the influence of the online environment is that bogspeak is now appearing for the first time significantly in written form. For a language form that has historically resided in the underground, this openness to other parallel cruising communities across the globe may lead to a homogenising where New Zealand forms dissolve into a broader lexicon.

The development will be worth monitoring.

CONCLUSION

Current laws²⁸ are used to control aspects of bog cruising in New Zealand, and as an activity it continues to be looked down upon by many members of gay and heterosexual communities.

Vance²⁹ argues that

“the system of sexual hierarchy functions smoothly only if sexual non-conformity is kept invisible... For dominant sexual groups the appearance of the sexual lower orders produces anxiety, discomfort, the threat of pollution, and a challenge to their hegemony.”

The bog cruiser's challenge to hegemonic constructions of male sexuality continues partly because of his propensity for survival. His metamorphoses of ritual negotiated through changes in language, space and legislation have undergone an extraordinary journey. This journey has forced a reconceptualising of male sexuality, decency and public/private space.

In the idyllic cottages and underground stations of the turn of the twentieth century, with their emphases on discretion and privacy, this community of men developed a complex system of codes and rituals. Across a hundred years that saw increasing levels of police attention and ongoing marginalisation, their language changed from self-denigrating parody to overt hostility.

As the century drew to a close, local councils in New Zealand addressed the issue of cruising by installing more publicly exposed, unisex toilets. This paradigm shift required alternative systems for contact among men who had traditionally used these spaces for sex.

To many men sex in public spaces offers a heightened and alluring level of transgression. New systems of communication made available online now mean that at any time of the day or night, in any part of the country, arrangements can be made to meet other men for sex at prearranged public locations.

This has significant implications.

It is unlikely that continued, physical redesigns of the public toilet will address them.

¹ Bogspeak is a specific type of argot that developed to meet the communicative needs of men in New Zealand who frequent public toilets for same sex encounters. The language variety appears to be made up of four forms: words deriving from thieves' cant, British Polari, gay slang, and words referring to specific New Zealand locations, events or groups of people whose existence impacts upon the bog cruising community. Unlike Polari, bogspeak is still a living, active language. It is also an argot that (unlike a broader New Zealand gay lexicon) has developed in a world made up entirely of men (both gay identifying and non-gay identifying) whose common community is located in public toilets and their surrounding environs.

² Paul Baker. *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men*. London: Routledge, 2002.

³ Between 1872 and 1880 only seventeen convictions for unnatural offences occurred in New Zealand and most of them were for male rape. For a fuller account see Phil Parkinson. 'Strangers in Paradise,' in The Pink Book Editing Team. (ed.), *The Second ILGA Pink Book: a global view of lesbian and gay liberation and oppression*. Utrecht: Interfacultaire Werkgroep Homostudies. 1988, pp. 163-165.

⁴ Parlyaree was the underground language of traveling circus men and itinerant actors in Britain in the nineteenth century. Baker (2002) suggests that the language probably acted as a bridge between thieves' cant and gay Polari, the twentieth century anti-language of gay men living and working in England's large cities.

⁵ By 1906 the city of Dunedin had ten public toilets, all for men, 'with a total accommodation for 27 persons, four of these ten being latrines' (City of Dunedin Annual Report 1905/1906, pp. 23-24).

⁶ Pegging existed in New Zealand as a word in prison slang up until the 1950s. By the 1970s it appears to have been replaced by the term *watch-queen*. This later term may have come into New Zealand via Laud Humphreys. *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. London: Duckworth, 1970.

⁷ Town Clerk to Inspector of Police, 19 June 1919, Dunedin City Council TC 1919 General C4.

⁸ Baker, *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men*. p. 36.

⁹ In Auckland at this time, the use of code names for specific bogs also extended beyond underground structures and included certain cottages, some of the more descriptive included the *Hanging Gardens* in Mt Albert road, *The Black Forest* in Victoria Park, and *Glowworm Grotto* in the Auckland Domain.

¹⁰ Vanessa Wedding & Welby Ings. *Vanessa Wedding: Oral History Interview*. Wellington, Alexander Turnbull library, MS-Papers-0648-01 (2004).

¹¹ Polari is a term used by writers like Cage and Baker to describe a secret language, mainly used by gay men. Cage sug-

gests Polari entered the speech of gay men with the disappearance of large numbers of travelling performers in the twentieth century. For a fuller discussion of the language form see Paul Baker, *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men*. London: Routledge, 2002, and Ken Cage, *Gayle: The Language of Kinks and Queens. A History and Dictionary of Gay Language in South Africa*. Cape Town: Jacana, 2003.

¹² The word appears to have been in most common use in port cities and may have come into use via U.K. Merchant Navy slang. Sailors on these boats sometimes slept eight to a berth. In order to maintain privacy during sex with other men, they hung a curtain around their bunk. (Baker, *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men*. p. 193.)

¹³ A full house is a description of a public toilet where all of the cubicles are occupied simultaneously. The term may be compared to the US slang of the 1970s, *open house*. See Bruce Rogers, *The Queens' Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon*. San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1972, p. 144.

¹⁴ Liz Gill, 'Lavender Linguistics.' *The Guardian*, (July 24th 2003): 4.

By the 1960s Vivian Vice, Nelly-law, Dolly handbag, Alice, Dora-D, Hilda-Handcuff, Lily-lunchbox, Jennifer-Justice, Hilda Box-rot, Petunia Pig, Tilly Tight-twat, Cherie Cunt-stable, and Our Lady of the Golden Brooch, were all in use by New Zealand men under threat of arrest in public toilets.

¹⁵ It should be noted however, that despite the apparent liberalisation, consent was no defense. Indecency between males (consensual) and indecent assault on a male by another male (non-consensual) were considered equally severe (s. 140, 141) and carried penalties of five to seven year's imprisonment.

¹⁶ Underhill's analysis of prosecution statistics for sodomy and indecency between men in New Zealand in 1974 indicates that 386 charges covering sodomy or indecency between males were laid; 56 of these were charges of sodomy of which 30 were proven. Of the 27 males sentenced in the Supreme Court for this crime, 6 were imprisoned for terms ranging from one to seven years. Of the 116 charges of indecency between males, 89 resulted in convictions and 16 people received prison sentences (Graeme Underhill, *Gays and the Law. How big the problem?* *OUT Magazine*. 17, 10, 1978, p.10.)

1974 was also the year that Venn Young introduced a Private Member's Bill to parliament. This *Crimes Amendment Bill* proposed a decriminalisation of homosexuality with an age of consent of twenty. However at the second reading, on the fourth of July 1975, caution kept some twenty-three MPs from the debating chamber and the bill was lost by five votes, 34 to 29 (Parkinson, *Strangers in Paradise*. p. 167.)

¹⁷ Following the abandoning of an unsuccessful attempt at a reform bill by Warren Freer in June of 1980, the New Zealand Gay Rights Coalition approached a group of gay lawyers to draw up a new measure. The resulting Equality Bill was devel-

oped between 1980 and 1983 but failed to gain the necessary support from inside the lesbian and gay communities, partly because it failed to give equity in the age of consent and protection against discrimination.

¹⁸ Welby Ings. A Matter of Convenience. *Pink Triangle*, 64, 1987, 42.

¹⁹ Support for the bill was widespread yet significantly in the process of its passage through the house, the human rights provisions were dropped so that on the 11th July 1986 when the Governor General signed the bill into law as the Homosexual Law Reform Act, it ensured that the same provisions in law applied to sex in private between people irrespective of gender. Human rights issues relating to equal protection on the grounds of sexual orientations became part of New Zealand law seven years later.

²⁰ This term describes a hole generally made between two cubicles. A gloryhole is normally large enough to poke things through. Larger holes are called *blow holes*. Smaller holes only large enough to look through are generally termed *peep holes* or *spy holes*. These may also appear in a toilet door. The word may have its origins in navy slang. A glory hole referred to compartments on a ship or was used as a word to describe stewards' sleeping quarters (Baker, *Polari- The Lost Language of Gay Men*. p. 176).

²¹ In well-maintained bogs gloryholes were often repaired. Many local councils filled these holes with cut nails embedded in panel beaters' bog. They also occasionally covered them with steel plates bolted to the wall. (Paul De Rungs, *Oral History Interview*. MS-Papers-0648-02, 2004). These responses to wall damage and the growing preference for steel partitions between cubicles in new public toilets impacted heavily on the gloryhole as a means of contact.

²² Jane Chetwynd, *Profiles of Gay and Bisexual Men- Report No 6: The Toilets*. A report to the New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Christchurch School of Medicine, University of Otago, 1990.

²³ Dion Newham was sentenced in May 1991 in the Hamilton High Court following prosecutions for both this crime and the stabbing of another man he followed into the Grantham St toilets. In the second case he demanded money and forced the man to drive him to the Matangi Sale yards where he also stabbed the victim in the back. Both victims were hospitalised. Newham's justification for his action was that he '*wanted to kill all homosexuals*'. Newham was convicted and sentenced to 10 years, 10 months prison by Mr. Justice Fisher. (*Regina v Dion Kevin Newham*, 26th and 30th January 1991).

²⁴ Exeloo was established in 1992 and currently has its designs in 143 New Zealand and 193 Australian locations.

²⁵ A spokesman for Myers', in the article confirmed he that he '*had heard that the retailer had been mentioned on a hardcore gay porn website called squirt.org, which men used to arrange meetings at the toilet, and one month ago the store's manage-*

ment decided to make it a staff-only facility” Jamie Pandaram. ‘Gay sex forces closure of Sydney store's toilets.’ *Sydney Morning Herald* (October 31st 2006): 2.

²⁶ The concept of reviewing bogs in New Zealand is not new. Traditionally messages naming ‘active’ bogs were written on toilet walls. In 1992, Paul De Rung’s underground publication *Bog-Spy* produced as an A5 ‘zine’, rated specific Auckland bogs and parodied police activities around them. De Rungs, *Oral History Interview*. MS-Papers-0648-02.

²⁷ Alison Reid, Tony Hughes, Heather Worth, Peter Saxton, Elizabeth Robinson, Rosemary Segedin and Clive Aspin’s, *Male Call, Waea Mai, Tane Ma. Report 4, Casual sex between men*, published in 1997, pp. 10-15, found that 35% of the 1362 men who said they had casual sex with another man in the previous year had been to a bog at least once in that period to look for or meet male sex partners.

The demographic and social milieu characteristics of these 477 men was characterised by higher proportions of men who:

- were aged over 35 (51%:43%) p=0.006
- identified as Maori (12.6%: 5.8%) p<0.001
- did not have any school qualification (15%: 9.7%) p=0.006
- were not gay community attached (37.3%: 30.7%) p=0.02
- were in a relationship with another man (29.6% : 24%) p=0.04 (report 4, p. 15).

²⁸ Currently men arrested for cruising in public toilets in New Zealand are generally charged with one of three offences.

The most common is disorderly behaviour. This crime relates to sections 3 and 4 of the ‘Summary Offences Act’. The charge, normally involves an arrest for a sexual act performed in, or within view of any public place, or where a person behaves in an offensive or disorderly manner. Although the maximum fine for this offence is \$1000.00, in practice the amount is generally much less, and often the police are known to award diversion.

A more serious charge is committing an indecent act in a public place. This is an offence against the ‘Crimes Act 1961’ s.125 (subsections 1&2), and carries a maximum sentence of up to two years imprisonment. It is in dealing with this charge, that recent challenges to the definitions of public and private space have been made.

A third, less common, but more serious charge, is that of indecent assault. This offence relates to Section 141 of the ‘Crimes Act 1961’. If convicted, a man is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years.

²⁹ Carole Vance, *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, p. 19.