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Title of presentation: Yoga in Vancouver: A Study in Cultural Exchange

Abstract

What happens to cultural practices when they move across time and place? Yoga, an ancient spiritual, physical and philosophical practice has become a cultural focal point of leisure, fitness, wellness, fashion and capital in the 21st century. Rising to prominence in Europe and North America in the 1960s as part of the counterculture movement, yoga took root. It gained a significant following amidst the surf, slopes and parks of the Pacific Northwest. Emblematic of this is the position of yoga in Vancouver, British Columbia. The presentation will use yoga culture in Vancouver as a case study to gesture at trends of appropriation and absorption of cultural ideas in the Pacific Northwest and Canada. This analysis creates a preliminary framework with which to describe the ways ideas are transferred and developed as they move through, fracture and expand through various societal prisms.